

**Question for written answer E-007949/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)**

Subject: Electronic cigarettes

With the advent in 2001 of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), which represent an alternative form of smoking, numerous health activists appear to be delighted with their increasing popularity among smokers/consumers trying to quit smoking.

Basically, electronic cigarettes allow habitual smokers to maintain their smoking habit, by enabling them to inhale a dose of tar-free nicotine through the steam produced by the electronic cigarette mechanism.

However, a number of important issues have arisen following the advent and use of electronic cigarettes.

Given that there are no adequate studies or information available as to the efficacy of electronic cigarettes as a substitute for 'traditional' cigarettes, why are they being sold on the market without any form of control? What measures does the Commission intend to take in connection with the production and sale of these cigarettes, which only come under the General Product Safety Directive (Directive 2001/95/EC), and how does it intend to deal with uncontrolled online sales of these cigarettes, which may be of dubious authenticity?

Also, electronic cigarettes can be sold to minors and teenagers. What is it doing to ensure that electronic cigarettes are not advertised and promoted as a 'healthy' form of smoking, thereby 'paving the way' for young people to start smoking further down the line?

Furthermore, electronic cigarettes seriously undermine current legislation banning smoking in public places. Does the Commission intend to include specific provisions in the recast directive, so that we can move towards a joint approach to electronic cigarettes in European legislation?

Finally, in many of the Member States, nicotine is used as a medicinal product; thus electronic cigarettes should be provided for medicinal use only. What are the Commission's comments?