

**Question for written answer E-003500/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Combating breast cancer

Breast cancer is the most common malignant disease affecting women and accounts for more than one-quarter of all cases of malignant diseases. Doctors estimate that up to one-in-eight women will suffer from this disease during their lifetime. According to World Health Organisation data, 1.67 million women fell ill with breast cancer in 2012. In the European Union, as many as 367 000 women fell ill with this disease, of whom 91 000 died.

Sadly, the situation in Croatia is no better. In 2012, over 2 000 women fell ill with breast cancer and 1 033 died of the disease. This marks a worrying 15% rise in the mortality rate.

Breast cancer usually appears after the age of 50, although younger age groups are increasingly falling victim to this illness. The age of women falling ill with breast cancer is dropping constantly. A number of factors could be contributing to this, including stress, pollution and an unhealthy diet.

The fourth and most recent time the Commission issued guidelines on combating this terrible illness was in 2006 – eight years ago. Since then, Parliament adopted a resolution in 2008 which warned of unacceptable discrepancies between Member States in the way breast cancer is treated.

In November 2013, the Commission announced that the fifth edition of the guidelines would be published in cooperation with the Commission's Joint Research Centre.

Given the significant discrepancies in the ways in which breast cancer is treated and the worrying data on the number of women suffering from breast cancer, when does the Commission plan to issue the fifth edition of its guidelines for quality assurance in breast cancer screening and diagnosis, so that we might combat this terrible illness more effectively at European level?