Question for written answer E-009376/2014
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: European thalidomide victims

Thalidomide, an active pharmacological principle developed by the German company Grünenthal in Germany in the 1950s, was sold as a tranquiliser and anti-morning sickness medicine and declared safe for use in pregnancy. It is estimated that more than two million doses of the drug in several branded pharmaceuticals were distributed throughout Europe, causing the birth of at least 20 000 malformed babies and a 40% fatality rate among newborns in the first year of life.

The Commission has stated on several occasions that systems of compensation for injury do not fall within the jurisdiction of the EU, but of individual States. However, it affirms that European legislation, in particular Regulation (EC) No 44/2001, could help victims to assert their rights.

The problem is not limited to certain Member States, but has a broader European remit due to the circulation of thalidomide throughout Europe.

In the light of the above, can the Commission tell us how it intends to guarantee fair and equitable compensation for all thalidomide victims still living?