

**Question for written answer E-005718/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Igor Šoltes (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Microplastic contamination of drinking water

A recent report by a team of U.S. investigative journalists working as part of the Orb organisation has found that as much as 83% of drinking water in water supply systems around the world is contaminated with microplastics. In the United States and Europe, the level of contamination is 94% and 72%, respectively. In light of this new evidence, plastic contamination is a global phenomenon that has even spread to areas we never thought imaginable. An increasing amount of research is finding sea salt being contaminated with microplastic particles. In August, Spanish scientists published a study in the Scientific Reports journal confirming the presence of these controversial particles in all 21 salt samples analysed.

We are clearly facing microplastic contamination of such widespread proportions that not even drinking water and salt are immune. In this way, plastic particles also find their way into the human body – through the food chain practically on a daily basis, which raises considerable concern over its effects on human health. Experts warn that microplastic particles are particularly hazardous and may have a substantial adverse effect on living organisms.

Is the Commission familiar with the findings confirming the widespread occurrence of microplastics in drinking water and salt, and is it going to investigate the adverse effects of this phenomenon on human health?

Is the Commission going to take suitable measures to reduce the contamination of drinking water with microplastic particles, as well as the widespread microplastic contamination?