

Question for written answer E-003865/2019
to the Council
Rule 138
Frédérique Ries (Renew)

Subject: First death in Belgium attributed to the toxic mixture in an e-cigarette

On 6 November 2019, an 18-year-old from Brussels who had used an e-cigarette containing a cannabis derivative died as a result of respiratory failure. Since the summer, 39 e-cigarette users have died having contracted a lung disease after consuming vitamin E oil that was added to cannabis refills sold on the black market.

According to analyses carried out by the US health authorities, vitamin E is harmful if inhaled or heated, and is responsible for the lesions found in the victims' lungs.

1. What measures will the Council take to ensure that Directive 2014/40/EC is strictly enforced in the Member States, and in particular Article 20(3)(e), which states that, with the exception of nicotine, only ingredients that do not pose a risk to human health in heated or unheated form can be used in the nicotine-containing liquid?
2. Does it intend to introduce new ways of strengthening controls on the sale of e-cigarettes to minors?
3. Given that traditional smoking causes almost 700 000 deaths every year in the EU, what new economic and fiscal measures will the Council take in the coming months to stop the systematic 'targeting' of an increasingly young public by the tobacco industry?