

**Question for written answer E-000471/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Alex Agius Saliba (S&D)

Subject: Hearing loss

Over 5 % of the world's population is hard of hearing. Untreated hearing loss and ear diseases such as otitis media can have a significantly adverse effect on the academic performance of children. They are more likely to fail exams and are in greater need of education assistance. It is important that optimal learning experiences are provided, but they are not always offered.

Early detection and intervention are crucial to minimising the impact of hearing loss on a child's development and educational achievements. When it comes to infants and young children with hearing loss, early identification and management through infant hearing screening programmes can improve the linguistic and educational outcomes for the child. Children who are deaf should be given the opportunity to learn sign language along with their families.

Therefore, it is extremely important to raise awareness of the role that the EU can play in improving the lives of patients with severe hearing loss, as well as the overall impact of hearing loss on the EU's economy and EU society.

Can the Commission explain what measures it is taking to raise awareness of the impact of hearing loss on the EU's healthcare agenda, in order to achieve more robust hearing health strategies at the national level, including prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and care?