

**Question for written answer E-001694/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Jordi Cañas (Renew)

Subject: The Government of Catalonia charging for telephone health information during the COVID-19 pandemic

Following the complaint made to the Commission on 12 March 2020 regarding the Catalan Government charging for the 061 telephone health information service in the middle of the COVID-19 epidemic, it has finally rectified this and temporarily made the service free whilst the pandemic alert remains in force.

The virus' spread caused an exponential increase in calls for information, resulting in citizens waiting for over an hour and, in many cases, not having their calls taken in the end. However, instead of expanding the 061 service's information workforce, the Catalan Government is directing calls towards another paid citizens' advice phone line, 012, costing between EUR 0.34 and EUR 0.83 per minute ¹.

With the foregoing in mind:

Does the Commission consider that, in directing Catalan citizens to a health information service which charges its users, the Catalan Government is violating the principles which have inspired the operation of the single European emergency number 112 since its establishment in 1991?

What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure equal access to quality health information for all Catalans?

¹ https://www.vozpopuli.com/elliberal/politica/Generalitat-habilita-informarse-coronavirus-gratuidad_0_1337266726.html