

**Question for written answer E-006615/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)**

Subject: Civil liability for COVID-19 vaccines

At the beginning of September 2020, the Commission assured Parliament that the multinational companies manufacturing vaccines against COVID-19 would be deemed to be civilly liable should their product prove to have an adverse effect on public health.

Two months later, at the end of November, the Commissioner for Health, Stella Kyriakides, said that this would not, in fact, be the case.

According to the 1985 Product Liability Directive, the companies are protected when 'the state of scientific and technical knowledge at the time when [they] put the product into circulation was not such as to enable the existence of the defect to be discovered.' The Commissioner added that '[i]f the company is not held responsible, it will not be required to pay compensation'.

This means that contracts for vaccines will render Member States, and thus taxpayers, liable for any adverse side effects.

1. What was the legal basis for the Commission's initial assurance to Parliament that the companies would cover vaccination risks?
2. Can the Commission explain the reason for its subsequent about-turn?
3. Can the Commission give details of the procedure to be followed by any members of the public who believe they have suffered an adverse medical effect as a result of vaccination?