

**Question for written answer E-002774/2021/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Use of disposable face masks in public buildings

The European Union and Member States are taking a range of measures to counter the spread of COVID-19, including the requirement to wear certain types of face masks in public buildings. Staff who work in public buildings are often required to wear disposable medical face masks or disposable FFP2 masks, which presumably meet safety and breathability standards.

A number of scandals have come to light in Europe involving medical face masks and FFP2 masks, which are often produced outside the European Union in a manner not consistent with the relevant safety standards¹. In Italy, it is estimated that one in ten masks do not meet certification standards.

On 10 February 2021, the European Parliament asked the Commission to ensure that products placed on the EU market worked properly, were durable, reusable, easily repaired, non-toxic and could be upgraded and recycled².

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Does it not consider that the use of disposable face masks in public buildings runs counter to the Commission's decision, under the RescEU programme, to establish stockpiles of devices such as reusable masks³?
2. What steps does it intend to take to check that FFP2 masks comply with Regulation (EU) 2016/425, thereby preventing fraud⁴?

¹ <https://ilfattoalimentare.it/mascherine-ffp2-antifrode.html>

² Texts adopted – New Circular Economy Action Plan – Wednesday 10 February 2021 (europa.eu)

³ https://ec.europa.eu/italy/news/20200319_covid19_scorte_attrezzature_mediche_resceu_it

⁴ <https://ilfattoalimentare.it/mascherine-ffp2-antifrode.html>