

**Question for written answer E-002636/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
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Subject: Artificial milk: online marketing misleading millions of new mothers – call for strict EU regulation

The artificial milk market is worth USD 55 billion per year and online advertising is increasingly impelling new mothers around the world to choose this over breastfeeding.

As is shown in the World Health Organisation (WHO) report of 28 April 2022 entitled 'Scope and impact of digital marketing strategies for promoting breastmilk substitutes', in some countries over 80% of advertising exposure to breast milk substitutes is online.

These advertisements convey the idea that breast milk is not sufficiently nutritious for newborns, when evidence exists that it can and should be the only food newborns consume up to the age of six months, except in special cases.

An alarming amount of advertising for these substitutes is being channelled via social media, and the WHO has described this as 'unregulated', 'aggressive', 'pervasive', 'unrestricted' and 'unethical'.

In the 1981 International Code on the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, the WHO Member States committed to ensuring safe and proper nutrition for infants by protecting and promoting breastfeeding.

Given the need to protect public health and provide citizens with correct information, can the Commission state:

1. whether it will restrict these pushy and misleading online marketing campaigns by regulating them more strictly?
2. how it intends to shield new mothers so that they can make informed choices regarding breastfeeding?