

**Question for written answer E-000732/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Eva Kaili (NI)

Subject: Ethical and legal aspects of brain chips – the implications of microchip implants for human rights

Ethical and legal aspects of brain chips.

The company Neuralink¹ recently announced that it had implanted a microchip in the brain of a human patient. Previous implants have helped disabled people regain some motor² or visual functions³.

The latest implant differs significantly from earlier ones in which microchips transmitted wireless commands from the brain to the body's organs, legs, or optic nerves. In contrast, the latest microchip implant, the first of its kind, primarily targets people unable to use their limbs and enables users to control their phone or computer by thought.

Microchip implants are therefore a revolutionary technology that is expected to have both positive and negative social, ethical, legal and practical impacts. These include bioethical issues, challenges for human rights and accountability issues. Consequently:

1. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure compliance with the principles of human dignity, the fundamental rights of people, and especially patients?
2. How will equal access to technology be ensured to provide equal care?
3. What legislative initiatives will be taken to prevent abuse of such technology and ensure accountability?

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¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/jan/29/elon-musk-neuralink-first-human-brain-chip-implant>.

² <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-65689580>.

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2019/jul/13/brain-implant-restores-partial-vision-to-blind-people>.