

ORAL QUESTION O-0035/00

pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

by Manuel Medina Ortega and Evelyne Gebhardt, on behalf of the PSE Group  
to the Commission

Subject:            Patenting of biotechnological inventions

The European public are confused and disturbed by the granting of a patent in the biotechnological field that includes the genetic engineering of human stem cells and embryos (European Patent Office Patent EP 695 531). Does the Commission know of other such or similar cases? What conclusions should be drawn for the European Union? Does the Commission see any need for action and, if so, what steps has it already taken? Is the law on the patenting of biotechnological inventions clear in the European Union and, in particular, is the protection of human dignity ensured? How can the citizens of the European Union use the law to defend themselves against patents which they believe offend their dignity, integrity and moral sensibility?

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Deadline for reply: 17.03.2000