

**Question for oral answer O-000312/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

Subject: Addressing the EU diabetes epidemic

Diabetes (Type 1 and Type 2) is estimated to affect more than 32 million EU citizens, with a similar number suffering from impaired glucose tolerance and facing a very high probability of progressing to clinically manifest diabetes. Moreover, 325 000 deaths per year in the EU are attributed to diabetes¹, meaning that on average one EU citizen dies every two minutes of diabetes and related complications.

These figures are expected to increase by 16% by 2030 as a result of the obesity epidemic, the ageing of the European population and other factors yet to be determined on which more research is needed. The costs of diabetes for the Member States' healthcare systems are also extremely high, representing over 10% of the healthcare expenditure in most Member States².

Despite these alarming figures, there is still no EU-wide strategy to comprehensively address diabetes. Indeed, the Council has called upon the Commission to conduct a reflection process about what Europe can do to address chronic diseases by 2012³.

In addition, diabetes has been recognised as one of the four main non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the recently adopted UN Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs⁴ and the European Parliament resolution of 15 September 2011 on NCDs⁵ which 'stresses the importance of establishing an EU strategy on chronic NCDs, to be followed by a Council recommendation, with individual sections dealing with the four most common NCDs'.

Within this context, what are the Commission's plans to scale up primary prevention of, research into and early diagnosis and management of diabetes, including early identification of individuals who are at high risk of contracting or dying from this disease?

Tabled: 30.11.2011

Forwarded: 2.12.2011

Deadline for reply: 9.12.2011

¹ International Diabetes Federation. IDF Diabetes Atlas, 4rd edn. Brussels, 2009
<http://www.idf.org/diabetesatlas/>

² Diabetes – The Policy Puzzle: towards benchmarking in the EU 27 (2007)
<http://www.idf.org/webdata/docs/EU-diabetes-policy-audit-2008.pdf>

³ Council conclusions 'Innovative approaches for chronic diseases in public health and healthcare systems', 7 December 2010, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/118282.pdf

⁴ UN Political declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, 19 September 2011
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A%2F66%2FL.1&Lang=E

⁵ EP Resolution on an 'EU position and commitment in advance of the UN high-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases', 15 September 2011
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0390+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>