Priority question for written answer P-001131/2020
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Coronavirus testing in Europe. Many cases in Italy due to the higher number of tests carried out

Over the past few hours, doctors from the WHO have suggested there may be a relationship between the number of people infected with coronavirus and the number of tests carried out in EU Member States.

The number of tests carried out in Italy appears to be abnormal compared to what other European countries are doing.

Essentially, the discovery of the cases identified in Italy could be the result of more comprehensive and widespread screening.

According to official health authority figures, Italy has already conducted over 4 000 tests, while in France, for instance, the authorities say that around 400 tests have been carried out.

The decision to carry out tests varies from country to country; in Italy, for example, it is up to the local doctors responsible following an initial assessment of symptoms.

Currently, in Europe 366 hospitals and 73 paediatric sites, belonging to the PREPARE, COMBACTE and PENTA networks, are contributing, through collective efforts, to the standardisation of information collected from the patients concerned.

In order to shed light on the real extent of the risk and of the disease in Europe, can the Commission:

1 give the total and average number of tests carried out by each EU Member State and the percentage of positive test results;

2 say whether it would not consider it appropriate to lay down a standard European procedure also for the tests in question?