

**Priority question for written answer P-004923/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Vincenzo Sofo (ID)

Subject: Safety of the COVID vaccine and pharmaceutical companies ducking liability

The economic and geopolitical implications of the race to produce a COVID vaccine cannot come before protecting European citizens' health.

The Commission is already concluding agreements with pharmaceutical companies for the acquisition of vaccines that are still in phase 3 of their trials.

The Commission's announcements include that this last trial stage – perhaps to have it ready before competitors – will be conducted at a much quicker pace than usual and that flexibility will be applied in the European regulatory process for vaccines.

At the same time, news has broken that a clause, currently being agreed with the companies supplying vaccines (such as AstraZeneca), will be included in agreements to enable suppliers to shield themselves from any future liability lawsuits. Such clauses will increase fear among the public that, as it stands, these trials will not ensure that the vaccine is safe.

In view of the above:

1. Can the Commission guarantee that the vaccine will only be distributed once it is certain that it does not cause contraindications?
2. Can it rebut the rumours of the existence of clauses shifting liability away from pharmaceutical companies for the COVID-19 vaccine?