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Parliamentary questions

24 March 2015

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[Question for written answer
to the Commission](#)

[Rule 130](#)

[Ernest Urtasun \(Verts/ALE\)](#)

► **Subject: Hepatitis C and the TRIPS Agreement**

 [Answer\(s\)](#)

Dozens of thousands of European citizens currently need urgent treatment against the Hepatitis C virus, but the high prices that are imposed by the pharmaceutical industry, which are accepted in many cases by the Member States themselves, make it more difficult for public health services to access the drugs that significantly improve the prognosis and clinical treatment of the disease. Under Article 31 of the TRIPS Agreement, any country is entitled, in the event of a health emergency, to issue a compulsory licence allowing a generic drug to be manufactured, if it considers that this is necessary to protect public health. Bearing in mind that Hepatitis C is to a large extent caused by iatrogenesis in health systems, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Should there be exceptions to the laws on patents in EU countries for the case of Hepatitis C, as there were for HIV anti-retroviral drugs in India, the Sahel and Brazil?
2. Has there been any analysis of the number of people who are likely to die if a solution is not proposed soon and how much would be saved in financial terms if steps could be taken to prevent this disease from becoming chronic in millions of patients?
3. Might it be possible to propose buying the patent at an EU level or that the European Medicines Agency should jointly negotiate its purchase?

Original language of question: **ES**

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