

**Question for oral answer O-000040/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 136

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Subject: Medicine shortages and strategic healthcare autonomy in the EU

Considering the growing scarcity of essential medicines and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) in the EU, we fail to understand the absence of a specific support policy for their production within the EU, particularly given the support policies in place for other key sectors.

The EU experienced a 60 % increase in medicine shortage notifications between 2017 and 2019 and the situation worsened in 2022. The causes of this problem are multiple and complex. The dependence on a few manufacturers, particularly manufacturers in China and India, should set alarm bells ringing about global production concentration, while the EU's competitiveness is dwindling compared to the USA and China.

In light of this situation, it is essential that we focus not only on mitigating drug shortages, but also on implementing a preventive strategy. The non-paper entitled 'Improving the security of medicines supply in Europe', endorsed by at least 19 Member States, underscores these concerns.

Maintaining and increasing both innovation and internal production capacity will not only strengthen the EU's resilience in the face of possible health crises but also accelerate access to treatments for patients, make healthcare systems sustainable and provide significant economic benefits, boosting the European pharmaceutical industrial ecosystem and fostering employment.

1. Could the Commission explore the implementation of initiatives and tools that, similarly to the Critical Raw Materials Act¹ and the Chips Act², and funded appropriately, aim to boost the EU's

¹ Commission proposal of 16 March 2023 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials and amending Regulations (EU) 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, 2018/1724 and (EU) 2019/1020 (COM(2023)0160).

² Commission proposal of 8 February 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's semiconductor ecosystem (Chips Act) (COM(2022)0046).

production of essential medicines, APIs and innovative treatments, such as new antimicrobials and advanced therapy medicinal products?

2. Considering the crucial need to tackle shortages and promote strategic healthcare autonomy, will the Commission commit to adopting a robust support policy during this legislative term? Such a policy would align with the EU's ambitions, complement the pharmaceutical package and empower Europe to effectively handle future health crises, while reinforcing patient care and the EU's economic position.

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