

**Question for written answer E-008651/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)

Subject: Expired medicines

Medicines in pharmacies or private households that are no longer covered by guarantee, having passed their expiry date, may well find their way back to the market or be simply disposed of as refuse, thereby creating a toxic health hazard if they are found and ingested or if they are simply allowed to pollute the environment. The use of expired medicines in which the therapeutic efficacy of the active substance may have decreased or been cancelled out could also provoke allergic reactions, headaches, stomach pains or severe poisoning. Under European law, expired medicines must be returned to pharmacies for packaging, labelling and storage pending collection by the companies responsible for the destruction and disposal thereof. Obviously, it is very important that expired medicines do not fall into the hands of customers or come into contact with pharmaceuticals on sale. However, there have been reports of such products being either sold by pharmacies or mistakenly consumed (especially by children) after they have been discarded.

In view of this:

Does the Commission have a system for keeping track of expired medicines and their provenance (private households or pharmacies) in the Member States?

What initiatives are being envisaged by the Commission in terms of cooperation with academic and research bodies for product recycling or, alternatively, incineration if the recovery of active ingredients is not possible?