

**Question for written answer E-004939/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Theodoros Zagorakis (PPE)

Subject: Lack of anti-cancer drugs in Greece

According to the Hellenic Cancer Federation, Greece is suffering from a lack of antineoplastic drugs, such as etoposide, which is used in chemotherapy for many forms of cancer and is on the WHO's List of Essential Medicines. This drug appears to have been withdrawn from the Greek market because of a lack of 'commercial interest', while in other EU countries from which it could be imported, there have been production problems.

According to the Hellenic Cancer Federation, this product was unavailable from 15 April 2018 to 20 August 2018. The Greek authorities have announced that they have imported around 1 000 - 1 500 doses of the product per week; however, this has not been enough to fully meet the country's needs.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Can it guarantee timely access to medicines for patients in Greece?

Can it help the national authorities to ensure the circulation of medicines?

2. Are there any criteria in the internal market that determine 'commercial interest' and justify similar withdrawals of products that have been identified as Essential Medicines? What measures does it intend to take to ensure rapid access to treatments for patients in the EU?