

**Question for written answer E-012995/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Worsening shortage of medicinal products

The shortage of medicinal products in the EU has become ever more acute over the last five years.

In that connection, in August 2013 the French Agency for Medicines and Health Product Safety reported that the number of essential products which were unavailable or in dangerously short supply totalled 44 in 2008, 173 in 2012 and 245 at the beginning of 2013. Patients' treatment has been delayed or has had to be altered as a result.

This problem has many causes, but in the end they all boil down to one thing: the relocation of production facilities. In April 2013, the Académie française de pharmacie, a national advisory body on medicines and related matters, condemned the fact that between 60 and 80 % of the production of active ingredients used in pharmaceuticals now takes place outside the European Union, mainly in India and in other Asian countries, as against 20 % 30 years ago.

This situation is now starting to cause problems for people in Europe. Europe's almost complete dependence on foreign suppliers of active pharmaceutical ingredients, combined with the potential loss of industrial know-how, is posing a serious threat to the health sector.

That is why, for the sake of public health, it is vital that we bring pharmaceuticals manufacturing back to Europe, a move which will also make it possible to regulate production and marketing more effectively.

What action does the Commission therefore intend to take in order to bring production back to the Union? Will it contemplate introducing a European directory listing all the sites where active pharmaceutical ingredients are manufactured?