Question for written answer E-001424/2020
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Transparency in the pricing of medicines

A study by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, the London School of Economics and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine [1] concluded that the assessment of the development costs of medicines is incorrect. According to information voluntarily made available by pharmaceutical companies, the mean cost was estimated at EUR 2.4 billion. The study, based on objective research, now indicates that the development costs are lower.

In its resolution on options for improving access to medicines (2016/2057(INI)), the European Parliament called for greater transparency in the costs of research and development. Owing to an inadequate traceability of public investment in the licensing terms of medicines, the public funding invested is not sufficiently translated into lower market prices for consumers, which means that taxpayers end up paying twice.

1. What initiatives is the Commission taking to ensure that the pricing of new medicines correctly takes into account the public investment in their development?

2. How can the Commission ensure transparency as regards the development costs of new medicines?

3. In Belgium, a legislative proposal was recently adopted, pursuant to which the Court of Auditors is given insight into financial deals between the government and pharmaceutical companies. What measures is the Commission adopting to ensure more effective traceability of public financing in the development of new medicines?

[1] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2762311