

**Question for written answer E-001633/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Eva Kaili (S&D)

Subject: German ban on medical equipment exports

Germany has banned the export of medical protection gear including masks, gloves and suits. This disgraceful preventive measure to allow an inventory for future use ignored the immediate needs of other Member States currently facing extreme emergencies (including Italy) according to the Financial Times, thus endangering those working in the front line to contain the virus.

Proactive stockpiling of medical equipment cannot be justified in the EU because critical supply chains need to remain functional whenever there is an extreme emergency that requires the frictionless transfer of equipment. Stockpiling equipment for future potential use when other Member States are suffering the dramatic consequences of COVID-19 can only exacerbate the spread of the pandemic, and connotes a failure of the EU to ensure functional supply chains.

How will the Commission act to ensure coordination between the Member States and a common response to the corona virus outbreak, given that such unilateral actions have even entailed suspending the flow of critical equipment and closing borders?

How does the EC plan to restore the functioning of supply chains for critical equipment and make sure that medical instruments or possible treatment will immediately reach areas most affected by COVID-19 by means of an EU task force?