

**Question for written answer E-002190/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Aurelia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Shortage of medicines and medical equipment

Since September 2019, I have spoken twice in Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety in order to warn the EU's executive about the shortage of medicines in Europe and in France.

In my speech during the part-session on 18 September, I said: 'At EU level, this shortage is worrying. Eighty percent of active ingredients are now manufactured outside Europe, compared to 20 % 30 years ago. We must urgently investigate ways of relocating the production of medicines and developing strategic stocks'.

The Commission has not responded to my remarks in any way. Today, the reality of what is happening and the dramatic crisis we are living through confirm that I was right to want to raise awareness of this issue. Everything needed to tackle the coronavirus pandemic is in short supply: medicines, equipment and protection for medical staff who are exhausted and barely able to cope.

That there was a lack of foresight and a failure to react is obvious. But the roots of all this lie once again in the ideological excesses of the executives that have each in turn headed up the European Union.

1. Does the Commission now understand how free trade agreements, free and undistorted competition and the massive de-industrialisation of western Europe can, put together, cause untold damage?
2. If so, will it at last reconsider its poor choices?