

**Question for written answer E-002901/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Tomislav Sokol (PPE)

Subject: Drug shortages and dependence on third countries in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

Raw materials and all other materials necessary for the manufacture of medicines within the EU come to a great extent from China and India. Such dependence on non-EU manufacturers exposes the European Union to serious vulnerability and a huge shortage of necessary medicines. The EU faced the issue of drug shortages even before the COVID-19 pandemic, but what this pandemic has revealed is the seriousness and depth of the issue of EU manufacturers' capability to respond when needed. One worrying example arose in March when the Indian Government restricted exports of 26 pharmaceutical ingredients and drugs made from those ingredients. This reminded us of the importance of ensuring European independence in such an important and strategic area.

1. How can we use this crisis to systematically and strategically address the serious issue of the manufacture of raw materials and medicines in the EU?
2. What specific action can we take to ensure the competitiveness of European manufacturers against those in China and India?