

**Question for written answer E-005638/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement and most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) criteria

In order to keep a strong and sustainable pharmaceutical industrial base in Europe, it is crucial to encourage investments in manufacturing through sustainable economic and procurement policies. Single-winner, price-only tenders cause severe price erosion, reducing the number of suppliers on the market and often resulting in short lead times, and disproportionate penalties being applied to companies, which in turn increase the risk of medicine shortages and insecurity of supply. Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement introduced the concept of most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) criteria, which take into consideration aspects other than the lowest price, such as security of supply, environmental investments and long-term sustainability. However, for pharmaceuticals, this provision is not implemented at national level where tenders are used, and the lowest price offers always win.

In the context of the upcoming pharmaceuticals strategy, will the Commission take concrete action to develop, as soon as possible, ad hoc guidance on how to best implement MEAT criteria when procuring pharmaceuticals at national level, with the aim of ensuring more sustainable tender practices and helping to secure existing manufacturing investments in Europe?