

**Question for written answer E-000419/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Rosanna Conte (ID)

Subject: EU-Pfizer contract for vaccines, unfair agreement

On 11 November 2020 the Commission signed a contract with the pharmaceutical firm Pfizer-BioNTech for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines among the Member States. However, just a few days after vaccinations started, Pfizer took a unilateral decision to reduce considerably the shipment of doses from what was agreed, to the point that the Italian regions have suffered asymmetric cuts that have created serious difficulties for their vaccination plans.

The Member States, including Italy, have already said that they are ready to take legal action to ensure compliance with the agreements made. Details of the contract in question have emerged in the past few hours, revealing, a posteriori, that it is clearly weighted in Pfizer's favour.

The contract only allows Pfizer's performance to be judged on a quarterly basis, rather than a weekly one: no formal complaints can be lodged before 31 March. Furthermore, even after that date penalties against the pharmaceutical firm will not be triggered automatically.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission confirm whether the details that have emerged about the contract concluded with Pfizer are reliable, and explain why it signed such an unfair agreement that provides only the multinational with protection?
2. What action will it take and what rights will it assert to protect EU citizens whose scheduled vaccination date is now likely to be pushed back?