

**Question for written answer E-000881/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Pfizer plant in Catania laying off and transferring employees

According to the trade unions CGIL, CISL, UIL and UGL, Pfizer has laid off 130 employees working at its plant in Catania, inviting them to transfer to the plant in Ascoli Piceno, almost 1 000 km away.

The pharmaceutical company plans to relocate the production of Tazocin – a medication still of great use in Europe – to somewhere outside of Europe with cheaper production costs, such as India, as the patent has expired.

The Commission's position on the right of establishment, a pillar of the internal market, is clear: it cannot intervene in a company's decision to restructure or close a plant.

However, it should be noted that the layoffs planned are not in response to a drop in sales volumes in the pharmaceutical sector but rather are in violation of corporate social responsibility. Given the current employment and social situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, this move comes as a slap in the face.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. What it makes of this situation, given that the EU and its Member States are Pfizer customers?
2. Whether Pfizer has ever received subsidies from the EU for its operations in Italy?
3. What action it could take to support workers and the area affected by the relocation?