

**Question for written answer E-000359/2023**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Rosanna Conte (ID)**

**Subject:** Medicine shortage in the EU as a result of dependence on China for active ingredients

Over the past few days, many EU countries, including Italy, have been facing a medicine shortage. Pharmacies in Italy currently often have to turn down patients' requests, as around 900 medicines are deemed difficult to source, out of a total of 3 000 that are currently considered in short supply.

Aside from an increase in demand, the main reason for this shortage is the major slowdown in China's production of active ingredients. The Chinese Government has entirely blocked the export of a number of drugs, including ibuprofen, creating difficulties for Italian companies now forced to resort to other markets, such as India or Singapore.

Although necessary in the short term, the quest for active ingredients in other markets will only serve to further increase the EU's dependence on third countries, which has already grown exponentially since the 1970s.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission agree with the need to reverse this trend and to halt or curb the EU's dependence on external markets for the supply of active ingredients?
2. In the upcoming pharmaceutical strategy, will it propose to the Member States strategies for diversification and for supporting a new industrial policy to reshore the manufacturing of most active ingredients?

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