

**Question for written answer E-001992/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Tackling the shortage of medical specialists

According to research by the European Junior Doctors Association, as many as 13 countries that took part in their research are short on doctors, particularly specialists.

The research showed that the shortage is closely linked to growth in demand for health care and to an ageing population, which is changing countries' demographics.

In some European countries, retired doctors have even been brought back into service to tackle shortages. Even then, some rural or inner parts of the continent have become 'medical wastelands', where doctors are like gold dust.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed that a far-reaching 'health care network' is needed to protect Europeans' health. However, given the time needed to train the health care workforce, a 10-year planning period would be required to build a network of that kind and to make the health system efficient.

In the light of the above and taking account of its remit, can the Commission say whether:

1. It intends to engage with the Member States to improve access to medical training by reducing and streamlining the *numerus clausus* system for medicine faculties?
2. It will take action to ensure that people who live in rural areas or inner regions are not treated like second-class citizens, but rather are provided with full access to medical care?

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