

**Question for written answer E-000380/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Stefania Zambelli (PPE)

Subject: The growing exodus of Italian and European doctors to the Middle East

In recent years we have been witnessing a growing number of Italian and European doctors and healthcare workers leaving for the Middle East and the Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. These countries invest around 10% of their GDP in healthcare. Estimates show that, since May 2022, 800 doctors, 600 nurses and 250 physiotherapists and osteopaths left Italy for Saudi Arabia.

One of the reasons healthcare professionals are moving to these countries is that they offer much higher salaries than European countries do, as well as numerous benefits. In addition, the rising population in Middle Eastern and Gulf countries is creating a growing demand for well-trained specialists.

In light of this exodus of highly qualified professionals, a veritable brain drain, can the Commission say whether it is concerned about this trend and, if so, what steps does it intend to take to curb it, bearing in mind that, in the long term, this situation could put national healthcare systems in European countries under serious strain?

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