

**Priority question for written answer P-003094/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Need for transparency in unjust COVID-19 vaccines prices

Following a court case in South Africa, recently released COVID-19 vaccine contracts¹ have revealed that the country paid pharmaceutical companies much higher prices for vaccines than the EU, in some cases more than double the EU price. These multinationals also imposed discriminatory trade measures on the country, such as export restrictions.

Therefore, various civil society organisations have accused them of ‘pharmaceutical bullying’² against countries in the Global South, which were exactly those that lacked access to COVID-19 vaccines³ in the first place.

Earlier this year, research showed that these companies, including Pfizer, BioNTech and Moderna, made over USD 90 billion in profits⁴ from the pandemic. With these tactics, they exacerbated and perpetuated global inequality during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. How is this significant price difference possible and what role has the Commission played in it?
2. What will the Commission do to address the unequal prices of and access to COVID-19 vaccines and medication worldwide?
3. Does the Commission agree that more democratic control needs to be exerted over multinational pharmaceutical companies that provide basic human rights such as access to healthcare?

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¹ <https://healthjusticeinitiative.org.za/pandemic-transparency/#contracts>

² <https://www.politico.eu/article/south-africa-paid-double-eu-price-for-covid-vaccines-unredacted-contracts-reveal/>

³ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/world-leaders-unga-pledge-vaccinate-world-falls-woefully-short-only-third-countries>

⁴ <https://www.somo.nl/big-pharma-raked-in-usd-90-billion-in-profits-with-covid-19-vaccines/>