

Question for written answer E-002559/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Unequal access to medicinal products approved for use across the EU

In the period 2019 to 2023, the German Institute IQWiG evaluated 32 innovative medicinal products, which it found to have ‘significant’ or ‘considerable’ benefits over existing treatments. Those medicinal products, which can prolong and improve patients’ lives and which have fewer side effects, include treatments for breast cancer, leukaemia and cystic fibrosis.

However, investigations have shown that in six EU Member States one in four of those medicinal products cannot be found. For want of any purchase agreements between the countries and companies involved, many healthcare systems cannot ensure coverage of these treatments, and patients cannot access them. The situation is critical in Romania, Hungary, Malta and Cyprus, where a significant number of medicines are not available. In some cases, patients can apply to access those medicinal products on an individual basis, but this generates very high costs for the state.

Unequal access to medicinal products approved for use across the EU raises serious questions in respect of the principle of solidarity and fairness in EU health systems.

1. How does the Commission explain these major disparities in access to innovative medicinal products in the European Union, especially in countries such as Romania, Hungary, Cyprus and Malta?
2. What concrete measures can be taken and applied across Europe to guarantee fair access to life-saving treatments and put an end to these anomalies?

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