

**Question for oral answer O-000043/2026
to the Council**

Rule 142

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on behalf of the Committee on Public Health

Subject: European response to US pharmaceutical policies: safeguarding patients' access to essential, innovative and life-saving medicines

Recent US pharmaceutical policies threaten both the immediate availability of medicines in Europe and their medium- to long-term affordability. Measures ranging from the most favoured nation (MFN) pricing policy and new US pharmaceutical tariffs and incentives aimed at attracting manufacturing and investment to the United States to the Section 301 investigation into Germany's pharmaceutical pricing policies¹, have created deep uncertainty, leading companies to delay investment and launch decisions.

The MFN policy may discourage or delay the launch of new medicines in certain European markets, particularly where lower national prices could affect US reference prices. This concern is already visible in recent market data: new medicine launches across Europe fell by 35 % in the 10 months following the introduction of MFN pricing². Patients in Member States with lower prices and smaller markets risk being hit hardest, deepening existing inequalities in access.

Instead of remaining fragmented, the EU should use the collective weight of its market of 450 million people as leverage to secure access and attract investment and manufacturing to its territory. Options include streamlining joint clinical assessments under the Health Technology Assessment Regulation³, simplifying and accelerating regulatory procedures, and supporting voluntary cooperation between Member States, including, where appropriate, joint procurement and cooperation on pricing negotiations. To safeguard patients' timely access to medicines, it is essential to strengthen the competitiveness of the European pharmaceutical sector, improve conditions for innovation and investment, reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens and reinforce resilient European manufacturing capacities.

1. To what extent are Member States prepared to strengthen voluntary cooperation and use their combined purchasing power to improve the collective leverage of the EU market in order to ensure access to medicines and secure more sustainable prices?
2. Which joint initiatives among Member States, such as BeNeLuxA⁴ or Nordic cooperation⁵, have proven effective in improving patients' access to innovative medicines, and could their successful components be replicated or further developed at European level?

¹ Office of the US Trade Representative, 18 June 2026, <https://ustr.gov/about/policy-offices/press-office/press-releases/2026/june/ustr-announces-initiation-section-301-investigation-germanys-persistent-underpayment-innovative> (accessed 16 September 2026).

² Pharmaceutical Technology, 25 March 2026, <https://www.pharmaceutical-technology.com/analyst-comment/most-favored-nation-policy-early-insights-into-europe-response/> (accessed 16 September 2026).

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/2282 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on health technology assessment and amending Directive 2011/24/EU (OJ L 458, 22.12.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2282/oj>).

⁴ <https://beneluxa.org/>.

⁵ For example, The Nordic Pharmaceutical Forum (NLF), <https://nordicpharmaceuticalforum.com/index.php/about-nordic-pharmaceutical-forum-nlf/>.

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