

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003699/25
to the Commission
Jean-Paul Garraud (Pfe), Marie-Luce Brasier-Clain (Pfe)
(24 September 2025)**

Subject: Huge waste of medicines and failure of the EU strategy to prevent shortages

A study published by *Le Figaro* on 17 September 2025 ⁽¹⁾ reveals that almost EUR 500 million in medicines are wasted every year in French hospitals, while hundreds of essential medicines are in short supply.

At the same time, a special report issued by the European Court of Auditors ⁽²⁾ notes that the EU still lacks an effective framework to combat critical shortages, that the European Medicines Agency is still reliant on incomplete data, and that the Commission's legislative proposals are still non-binding and largely theoretical.

This shows the limits of EU intervention in a matter that should pertain exclusively to national sovereignty, especially as problems are often exacerbated by a fragmented single market and the Commission's contradictory requirements.

1. Can the Commission account for the continued failure of its strategy to combat medicine shortages, despite the accumulation of laws, agencies and costly measures?
2. Can it acknowledge that centralising health policies at EU level has harmed efficiency and responsiveness, to Member States' detriment?
3. Is it not time to give Member States full control of their pharmaceutical policies, including the management of stocks, distribution channels and industry relations?

Submitted: 24.9.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(11 November 2025)**

Medicine shortages is a growing issue that poses a serious threat to patients and public health. Strengthening the availability of medicines has been high on the EU's political agenda for years.

The Commission has undertaken a number of actions to better understand the reasons for medicines shortages to be able to propose solutions.

In April 2023, the Commission adopted the proposed reform of the pharmaceutical legislation ⁽¹⁾. This reform introduces several regulatory measures to prevent and mitigate critical shortages through EU coordinated actions, and to strengthen the security of supply of critical medicines in the EU.

The proposal for a Critical Medicines Act ⁽²⁾, adopted in March 2025, provides a complementary toolbox to address underlying supply chain vulnerabilities, reduce EU dependencies and support the diversification of supply chains. Both proposals aim to address many of the remaining challenges highlighted in the special report ⁽³⁾.

As these proposals are currently under consideration by the co-legislators, their potential impacts have not yet materialised and could thus not be assessed by the European Court of Auditors.

At the same time, Member States remain responsible for the supervision of the supply of medicines on their territory. To the extent that EU-level action is needed to ensure an effective response to cross-border challenges and to avoid uncoordinated Member States efforts that may undermine the functioning of the internal market, the EU has proposed the mentioned tools to bring more structural support to the security of supply of critical medicines at EU level.

¹ <https://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/medicaments-jetes-les-dessous-d-un-gachis-a-500-millions-d-euros-par-an-20250917>

² https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/SR-2025-19/SR-2025-19_EN.pdf

⁽¹⁾ COM/2023/193 final and COM/2023/192 final.

⁽²⁾ Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

laying a framework for strengthening the availability and security of supply of critical medicinal products as well as the availability of, and accessibility of, medicinal products of common interest and amending Regulation (EU) 2024/795.

⁽³⁾ https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/SR-2025-19/SR-2025-19_EN.pdf.