

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001602/26
to the Commission
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)
(20 April 2026)**

Subject: Growing medicines shortages and price increases: an acute problem

The imperialist war in the Middle East — a critical transit hub connecting Asia and Europe — is just the ‘tip of the iceberg’ when it comes to persistent medicine shortages. Even before the outbreak of the war, the policies of the EU, national governments and the pharmaceutical industry had brought about tragic consequences, through the increased commercialisation of medicine and health.

The EU’s pharmaceutical strategy is based on maximising the profits of European pharmaceutical companies rather than meeting people’s pharmaceutical needs with adequate research, planning, production and stockpiling.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What is its position on the dangerous situation faced by millions of patients who are suffering on account of the tragic shortages and high cost of medicine resulting from the US and Israel’s criminal attack on Iran, with the support of the EU, thanks to the Commission’s policies aimed at lining the pockets of European pharmaceutical monopolies at the expense of those suffering, with the risk of the further deterioration of their health?
2. What is its position on the urgent need to control all medicine stocks and prices for the duration of the US-Israeli war in the Middle East, in response to the profiteering games of pharmaceutical companies marked by shortages and high prices?
3. What is its position on the immediate need to produce the necessary quantities of medicines in short supply, at the pharmaceutical companies’ expense, at regulated prices and without further subsidies and concessions from the EU and national governments to the pharmaceuticals industry, which has amassed vast profits — not only during the pandemic but also more generally — by turning medicine into a commodity?

Submitted: 20.4.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(3 July 2026)**

The Commission, in collaboration with the European Medicines Agency and its Medicines Shortages Steering Group, is closely monitoring the situation and potential impact of the conflict in the Middle East on the supply of medicinal products.

As of today, the Commission has not received any signals of critical shortages of medicines resulting from the conflict. The situation appears to be stable, with minimal disruption to transport of medicines and no impact on manufacturing capacity at present.

Improving the availability, accessibility and affordability of medicines for EU citizens is an important objective for the Commission.

The measures in the recently agreed revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation and the proposal for a Critical Medicines Act both aim to strengthen the supply chain resilience and prevent and mitigate medicines shortages in the EU. The Critical Medicines Act will for example support manufacturing of medicines within the Union.

In accordance with Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, decisions on pricing and reimbursement of medicines remain the responsibility of Member States, which need to respect Council Directive 89/105/EEC ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 40, 11.2.1989, p. 8; ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/1989/105/oj>.