

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001610/26
to the Commission
Gerald Hauser (PFE)
(20 April 2026)**

Subject: Imminent shortage of nitrile products and helium

The Tyrol Medical Chamber is warning all doctors that, owing to current geopolitical tensions, a potential supply issue is looming. The message sent to all doctors on 31 March 2026 is as follows:

‘Dear Colleagues, owing to current geopolitical tensions, a potential supply issue is emerging in the manufacture and delivery of nitrile products such as single-use gloves. This could result in supply shortages and price fluctuations in the near future. It may therefore be advisable to order these products in good time. Naturally, we will keep you informed of any further developments in this matter.’

1. How can such shortages occur when the European Parliament and the Commission are constantly discussing the supply of medical products?
2. What does the Commission intend to do to ensure the supply of nitrile products?
3. What does the Commission intend to do to ensure the supply of helium?

Submitted: 20.4.2026

**Answer given by Mrs Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission
(23 June 2026)**

Medicine shortages are a key priority for the Commission. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the Medicines Shortages Steering Group monitor and address EU-level shortages.

The new Pharmaceutical Regulation ⁽¹⁾ obliges mandatory early notification of potential shortages and introduced shortage prevention plans.

The framework will be further strengthened by the Critical Medicines Act ⁽²⁾ on which co-legislators reached a political agreement on 12 May 2026, aiming to address supply chain vulnerabilities.

Regarding nitrile medical countermeasures, the Commission has engaged with industry and has not received notifications of materialised shortages in the EU.

Monitoring is ongoing. To strengthen supply security during a crisis, the Commission plans to launch a tender to reserve manufacturing capacity for nitrile examination gloves ⁽³⁾.

The Medical Countermeasures (MCM) Strategy outlines measures to boost innovation and supply of MCMs, such as the creation of RAMP UP ⁽⁴⁾ to establish manufacturing through partnerships with industry.

The Commission, alongside the EMA, is monitoring helium supply risks. Helium is essential for magnetic resonance imaging systems, pharmaceutical manufacturing and quality control, and is designated a critical raw material under the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) ⁽⁵⁾.

According to the Commission’s analysis, the EU does not source the majority of helium from Gulf States, and a supply disruption is not imminent.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52023PC0193>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0102>.

⁽³⁾ https://hadea.ec.europa.eu/news/prior-information-notice-eu-fab-capacity-reservation-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-2026-04-21_en.

⁽⁴⁾ RAMP UP — Rapid Agile Manufacturing Partnerships for Union Protection.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1252/oj/eng>.