Contribution ID: 35b59726-4731-48c6-94a5-cd52b2144b8e
Date: 20/12/2021 12:23:13

Open Public Consultation on the revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

On 25 November 2020, the Commission published a Communication on a Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe.

The Pharmaceutical Strategy identifies flagship initiatives and other actions to ensure the delivery of tangible results. As part of the implementation of the strategy, the Commission is evaluating the general pharmaceutical legislation[1] and assessing the impacts of possible changes in the legislation as described in the relevant inception impact assessment.

This public consultation aims to collect views of stakeholders and the general public in order to support the evaluation of the existing general pharmaceutical legislation and the impact assessment of its revision. It builds further on the public consultation[2] conducted for the preparation of the pharmaceutical strategy for Europe. The replies to that consultation will be taken into account for the revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation. The present questionnaire should be seen as a continuation of that process.

In parallel, the legislation for medicines for rare diseases and children is being revised as well. Separate consultation activities have been carried out for that revision.

This questionnaire is available in all EU languages and you can reply in any EU language. You can pause any time and continue later. You can download your contribution once you have submitted your answers.

A summary on the outcome of the public consultation will be published by the Commission services on the 'Have your say' portal.

We thank you for your participation.

*[1] **Directive 2001/83/EC** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use (OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 67)*
***Regulation (EC) No 726/2004** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency (OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 1)*
[2] A report analysing the results of the pharmaceutical strategy consultation was published in November 2020.

About you

* Language of my contribution

- ○ Bulgarian
- ○ Croatian
- ○ Czech
- ○ Danish
- ○ Dutch
- ◉ English
- ○ Estonian
- ○ Finnish
- ○ French
- ○ German
- ○ Greek
- ○ Hungarian
- ○ Irish
- ○ Italian
- ○ Latvian
- ○ Lithuanian
- ○ Maltese
- ○ Polish
- ○ Portuguese
- ○ Romanian
- ○ Slovak
- ○ Slovenian
- ○ Spanish
- ○ Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- ○ Academic/research institution
- ○ Business association
- ○ Company/business organisation
- ○ Consumer organisation
- ○ EU citizen
- ○ Environmental organisation
- ○ Non-EU citizen

- (●) Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- ( ) Public authority
- ( ) Trade union
- ( ) Other

* Which stakeholder group do you represent?

- ( ) Individual member of the public
- ( ) Patient or consumer organisation
- (●) Healthcare professional
- ( ) Healthcare provider organisation (incl. hospitals, pharmacies)
- ( ) Healthcare payer
- ( ) Centralised health goods procurement body
- ( ) Health technology assessment body
- ( ) Academic researcher
- ( ) Research funder
- ( ) Learned society
- ( ) European research infrastructure
- ( ) Other scientific organisation
- ( ) Environmental organisation
- ( ) Pharmaceuticals industry
- ( ) Chemicals industry
- ( ) Pharmaceuticals traders/wholesalers
- ( ) Medical devices industry
- ( ) Public authority (e.g. national ministries of health, medicines agencies, pricing and reimbursement authorities)
- ( ) EU regulatory partner / EU institution
- ( ) Non-EU regulator / non-EU body
- ( ) Other (Please specify)

* First name

Christina

* Surname

DIMOPOULOU

* Email (this won't be published)

cdimopoulou@escardio.org

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

European Society of Cardiology

* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

01150446981-34

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

- Afghanistan
- Åland Islands
- Albania
- Algeria
- American Samoa
- Andorra
- Angola
- Anguilla
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Djibouti
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Libya
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Macau
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Saint Martin
- Saint Pierre and Miquelon
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles

- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- (•) Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar/Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste

- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jersey
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Latvia
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Pitcairn Islands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna
- Western Sahara
- Yemen

- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Saint Helena Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **Fo r the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association, 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

* **Contribution publication privacy settings**

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

- **Anonymous**
  Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.
- **Public**
  Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

☑ I agree with the personal data protection provisions

Looking back

As mentioned in the Inception Impact assessment, the revision aims to tackle the following problems:

- Unmet medical needs and market failures for medicines other than medicines for rare diseases and children;
- Unequal access to available and affordable medicines for patients across the EU;
- The current legislative framework may not be fully equipped to respond quickly to innovation;
- Inefficiency and administrative burden of regulatory procedures;
- Vulnerability of supply of medicines, shortages of medicines;
- Environmental challenges and sustainability;
- Any other issues, which might emerge from the evaluation.

Q1 In your opinion, are there any other issues that should be addressed in this revision?

800 character(s) maximum

- Reflection on the incentives of regulatory processes for clinically meaningful innovations as opposed to medicines offering limited additional benefit (for example, me-too drugs). This would contribute to enhance research and innovation in the field of cardiovascular diseases (CVD), which are worryingly lagging behind despite the high burden of disease.
- The use of digital tools in the field of CVD (prevention and treatment) should be promoted using fast regulatory procedures.
- The development and adoption of new technologies and devices should not be delayed due to tedious and regulatory procedures. A fast, safe, and reliable procedure is needed to improve the quality of life of our patients.

Q2 How has the legislation performed in terms of the following elements?

	Very well	Well	Moderately	Poorly	Very poorly	Don't know
1. Fulfilling its public health protection mission for patients and society.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
2. Promoting the development of new medicines, especially for unmet medical needs.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
3. Enabling timely development of medicines at all times, including during crises.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
4. Enabling timely authorisation, including scientific evaluation, of medicines in normal times.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
5. Enabling timely authorisation, including scientific evaluation during crises.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
6. Adapting efficiently and effectively to technological and scientific advancements and innovation.	○	◉	○	○	○	○

7. Ensuring medicines are of high quality, safe and effective.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
8. Addressing the competitive functioning of the market to support affordability.	○	○	○	◉	○	○
9. Ensuring the availability of generic[3] and biosimilar[4] medicines. *[3] "Generic" is a copy of a medicine based on simple or chemical molecules.* *[4] "Biosimilar" is a copy of a medicine based on biological molecules.*	○	○	○	○	◉	○
10. Ensuring that new medicines are timely available to patients in all EU countries.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
11. Ensuring that medicines stay on the market at all times and that there are no shortages.	○	○	○	○	◉	○
12. Ensuring that authorised medicines are manufactured, used and disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner.	○	○	○	○	◉	○
13. Ensuring that the EU system for development, authorisation and monitoring of medicines, including its rules and procedures, is understandable and easy to navigate.	○	○	○	◉	○	○
14. Attracting global investment for medicine innovation in the EU.	○	○	◉	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, including positive or unintended effects of the legislation, or would you like to justify your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Looking forward

This section reflects on possible solutions to address the problems identified in the inception impact assessment mentioned in the previous section.

Your contribution will help us in defining the way forward.

UNMET MEDICAL NEEDS

One of the aims of the strategy is to stimulate innovation and breakthrough therapies, especially in areas of 'unmet medical need'.

Regulators, health technology assessment experts and representatives of bodies responsible for reimbursing or paying for medicines ('payers') are discussing a definition or a set of principles for 'unmet medical needs'[5] in order to achieve the objectives of the general pharmaceutical legislation. The discussions reveal different perceptions of what is an 'unmet medical need'. Convergence on this key concept should facilitate the design of clinical trials, generation of evidence and its assessment, and the quick availability on the market of these products and ensuring that innovation matches the needs of patients and of the national health systems.

The purpose of this question is to identify elements that are important in defining what is unmet medical need and in which areas of unmet medical need innovation should be stimulated.

[5] Please note that a similar discussion is taking place in the context of medicines for rare diseases and for children. The concept of 'unmet needs' in the context of rare diseases and children might be slightly differentiated compared to 'unmet needs' in the context of the general pharmaceutical legislation.

Q3 How important are the following elements for defining 'unmet medical needs'?

	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important	Don't know
1. Seriousness of a disease.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
2. Absence of satisfactory treatment authorised in the EU.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
3. A new medicine has major therapeutic advantage over existing treatment(s).	◉	○	○	○	○	○
4. Lack of access for patients across the EU to an authorised treatment.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
5. Other (please specify).	◉	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined elements, or would you like to justify your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Other = size of population in need of treatment

CVD is a high prevalence disease with still significant unmet medical needs requiring adequate attention and

incentives. Unmet medical need should be identified by independent clinical experts and patients and the definition should be diversified based on the individual, epidemiologic and social impact of the condition. Unmet needs should be defined based both on hard end points as well as patient reported outcomes and epidemiologic indices. Relative utility/value of hard end-points vs patient reported outcomes/quality of life should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Lack of appropriate access to effective technologies due to economic, political and regulatory barriers should be included in the definition of unmet medical need.

INCENTIVES FOR INNOVATION

The general pharmaceutical legislation guarantees the pharmaceutical innovator, typically a company, regulatory data and market protection for its new medicinal product. This data protection makes sure that another pharmaceutical company cannot re-use the proprietary data of the innovator for 8 years. Market protection makes sure that a generic or biosimilar medicine cannot be marketed until 10 years after authorisation. This dual protection shields a pharmaceutical innovator from generics or biosimilars on the market for 10 years. This protection is part of the EU system of incentives for innovation. The EU regime of intellectual property protection provides an additional protection coverage but is beyond the scope of this questionnaire and the revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation.

Q4 What do you think of the following measures to support innovation, including for ‘unmet medical needs’?

	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important	Don’t know
1. The current data and market protection periods for innovative medicines: 10 years of market protection, and 8 years of data protection.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
2. Provide different data and market protection periods depending on the purpose of the medicine (i.e. longer period of protection in areas of unmet medical need).	○	○	◉	○	○	○
3. Reduce the data and market protection periods to allow earlier access for generic and biosimilar medicines to the market.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
4. Introduce new types of incentives[6] on top of the existing data and market protection for medicines addressing an ‘unmet medical need’. *[6] Examples of new incentives are a transferable exclusivity voucher or a priority review voucher. A transferable exclusivity voucher would give the legal right to extend the protection time period of any other patented medicinal product, in exchange for the successful regulatory approval of a specified medicine for unmet medical need (e.g. an antibiotic). The voucher would be transferable or saleable, and may impact the turnover and profitability levels of other products in a developer’s portfolio. A priority review voucher gives priority to the assessment of the application of the medicine in question or another medicine in the applicant’s portfolio.*	○	◉	○	○	○	○
5. Early scientific support and faster review/authorisation of a new promising medicine for an unmet medical need.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
6. Public listing of priority therapeutic areas of high unmet medical need to support product development by providing incentives.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
7. Require transparent reporting from companies about their research and development costs and public funding as a condition to obtain certain incentives.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
8. Other (please specify)	○	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Although CVD remain the leading cause of death in Europe, data show that the industry has deprioritized investment in this area [EFPIA pipeline review 2021]. We urge the European Commission to counteract this development and we reiterate that adequate funding and support to research, innovation and implementation of available evidence is strongly needed in CVD. In addition, market protection rules should become more flexible, depending on benefit-risk management procedures such as conditional marketing authorization, to supplement risk-sharing mechanisms. Another consideration is thataccelerated market access should be linked to conditions for surveillance and post-market studies,with a secure and predictable system for taking drugs off the market if those conditions are not fullfilled

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE[7]

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the ability of microorganisms (such as bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites) to survive and grow over time and no longer respond to medicines making infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of infections, severe illness and death. Antimicrobials include antibiotics, which are substances that fight bacterial infections. Overprescribing, overuse and inappropriate use of antibiotics are key drivers of AMR, leading to harmful health outcomes. The question below is intended to collect opinions on both the incentives for the development of new antimicrobials as well as possible option on their prudent use.

[7] amr_2017_action-plan.pdf (europa.eu).

Q5 Should there be specific regulatory incentives for the development of new antimicrobials while taking into account the need for more prudent use and if so what should they be?

1000 character(s) maximum

Antimicrobial resistance is a great concern in cardiovascular (CV) acute and intensive care medicine. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the close link between infectious and CVD. Moving towards a more prudent use of antimicrobials, the dialogue about the chain of production and use of antimicrobials outside the EU appear to become increasingly important. In the interest of patients, we urge the EC to take an active role in this dialogue. In addition, varying/extended periods of marketing protection may be applied provided that appropriate mechanisms will protect against indication creep/inappropriate use of antimicrobials.

FUTURE PROOFING: ADAPTED, AGILE AND PREDICTABLE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR NOVEL PRODUCTS

Novel products and innovative solutions continue to challenge the understanding of a “medicinal product” with low volume, and cutting-edge products (e.g. medicines combined with self-learning artificial intelligence) becoming a new reality. ‘Bedside’ manufacture of more individualised medicines changes the

way medicines are produced. There are classification and interplay challenges with other medical products, such as medical devices and substances of human origin, or related to the combination of clinical trials with in vitro diagnostics/medical devices and medicines. In addition, certain cell-based advanced therapy medicines[8] are offered in hospital settings and are exempted from aspects of the pharmaceutical legislation. These developments offer possibilities for novel promising treatments and new ways of authorising and monitoring medicines but they are also testing the limits of the current regulatory system. They need to be addressed to unfold their potential while safeguarding the principles of high quality, safety and efficacy of medicines.

Digital transformation is affecting the discovery, development, manufacture, evidence generation, assessment, supply and use of medicines. Medicines, medical technologies and digital health are becoming increasingly integral to overarching therapeutic options. These include systems based on artificial intelligence for prevention, diagnosis, better treatment, therapeutic monitoring and data for personalised medicines and other healthcare applications.

[8] Advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs) are medicines for human use that are based on genes, tissues or cells. They offer ground-breaking new opportunities for the treatment of disease and injury.

Q6 How would you assess the following measures to create an adapted, agile and predictable regulatory framework for novel products?

	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important	Don't know
1. Maintain the current rules.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
2. Create a central mechanism in close coordination with other concerned authorities (e.g. those responsible for medical devices, substances of human origins) to provide non-binding scientific advice on whether a treatment/product should be classified as a medicine or not.	○	○	○	◉	○	○
3. Make use of the possibility for 'regulatory sandboxes'[9] in legislation to pilot certain categories of novel products/technologies. *[9] Some very innovative solutions fail to see the light of day because of regulations which might be outdated or poorly adapted for fast evolving technologies. One way to address this is through regulatory sandboxes. This enables innovative solutions not already foreseen in regulations or guidelines to be live-tested with supervisors and regulators, provided that the appropriate conditions are in place, for example to ensure equal treatment. Regulatory sandboxes provide up-to-date information to regulators and supervisors on, and experience with, new technology, while enabling policy experimentation. See COM(2020) 103 final.*	○	◉	○	○	○	○
4. Create adaptive regulatory frameworks (e.g. adapted requirements for authorisation and monitoring with possibility to adjust easily to scientific progress) for certain novel types of medicines or low volume products (hospital preparations) in coherence with other legal frameworks (e.g. medical devices and substances of human origin[10]) and respecting the principles of quality, safety and efficacy. *[10] Substances that are donated by humans such as blood, plasma, cells, gametes, tissues and organs and are applied as therapy. Some substances of human origin can also become starting materials to manufacture medicines.*	◉	○	○	○	○	○

5. Introduce an EU-wide centrally coordinated process for early dialogue and more coordination among clinical trial, marketing authorisation, health technology assessment bodies, pricing and reimbursement authorities and payers for integrated medicines development and post-authorisation monitoring.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
6. Other (please specify)	○	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

CVD remain the leading cause of death in Europe. To foster innovation in cardiovascular medicine, standing out for highly complex and costly clinical trials, we call for the revision of ICH-E6 GCP guideline, better-quality patient registries allowing use of real world-data, registry-based randomised controlled trials. More coordination among HTA bodies, pricing and reimbursement authorities and payers should help avoiding misguided financial incentives regarding orphan drug legislation, as showed by the Mexiletine case, where the disproportionate and unjustified price increase damaged access for cardiovascular patients. We suggest investigating the introduction of a form of pricing approval process when a single company has a monopoly on an established drug, in case of drug repurposing.

Q7. Do you think that certain definitions and the scope of the legislation need to be updated to reflect scientific and technological developments in the sector (e.g. personalised medicines, bedside manufacturing, artificial intelligence) and if so what would you propose to change?

1000 character(s) maximum

If indications for prescription of a particular drug to an individual patient are proposed by the manufacturer, based on the output from an AI algorithm, then its development and processes must be transparent and interpretable.

REWARDS AND OBLIGATIONS RELATED TO IMPROVED ACCESS TO MEDICINES

Some medicines and therapies do not always reach patients in all EU countries, so patients in the EU still have different levels of access to medicines, depending on where they live. Even if a medicine received an EU-wide authorisation, companies are currently not obliged to market it in all EU countries. A company may decide not to market its medicines in, or decide to withdraw them from, one or more countries. This can be due to various factors, such as national pricing and reimbursement policies, size of the population and level of wealth, the organisation of health systems and national administrative procedures. Smaller markets in particular face challenges for availability and supplies of medicines.

Q8 How would you assess the following measures to improve patient access to medicines across the EU?

	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important	Don't know
1. Maintain the current rules which provide no obligation to market medicines in all EU countries.	○	○	○	○	◉	○

2. Require companies to notify their market launch intentions to regulators at the time of the authorisation of the medicine.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
3. Introduce incentives for swift market launch across the EU.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
4. Allow early introduction of generics in case of delayed market launch of medicines across the EU, while respecting intellectual property rights.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
5. Require companies to place – within a certain period after authorisation – a medicine on the market of the majority of Member States, that includes small markets.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
6. Require companies withdrawing a medicine from the market to offer another company to taker over the medicine.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
7. Introduce rules on electronic product information to replace the paper package leaflet.	○	○	○	○	○	◉
8. Introduce harmonised rules for multi-country packages of medicines.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
9. Other (please specify).	○	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Following irregularities in the purity, safety, and effectiveness in some GMPs (see below), we do not consider the early introduction of generics the key solution for improving patient access to medicines across the EU. Rather, we advocate for EU-wide market launches as far as possible. To facilitate health care mobility within the EU, we are in favor of a harmonization of rules for packages of medicines. Regarding electronic product information, we point out that a replacement of paper package leaflet could disadvantage

the elderly and people with limited access to electronic devices and the Internet. Thus, electronic product information could be an additional option instead of replacing entirely the traditional paper package leaflet.

ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVE FUNCTIONING OF THE MARKET TO ENSURE AFFORDABLE MEDICINES

The affordability of medicines has implications for both public and household finances. It poses a growing challenge to pay for medicines in the majority of Member States. Often, innovative medicines have higher prices, while there are growing concerns among stakeholders about the real-life effectiveness of some medicines and related overall costs. This puts the budgetary sustainability of health systems at risk, and reduces the possibilities for patients to have access to these medicines. Generics and biosimilars[11] of medicines which no longer benefit from intellectual property protection (off-patent medicines) may provide accessible and affordable treatments. They also increase the availability of alternative treatment options for patients. They may also increase competition between available medicines. However, experience shows that there are still barriers for medicines entering the EU market, including for generics or biosimilars.

[11] "Generics" are copies of medicines based on simple or chemical molecules; "biosimilars" are copies of medicines based on biological molecules.

Q9 In your view, to what extent would the following measures support access to affordable medicines?

	To a great extent	To a certain extent	No change	Very little	Not at all	Don't know
1. Maintain the current rules.	○	○	○	○	◉	○
2. Stimulate earlier market entry through a broader possibility to authorise generics /biosimilars despite ongoing patent protection ('Bolar exemption')[12]. *[12] The Bolar exemption allows companies to conduct research on patent protected medicines under the condition that it is with a view to apply for a marketing authorisation for a generic.*	○	◉	○	○	○	○
3. Create a specific (regulatory) incentive for a limited number of biosimilars that come to the market first.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
4. Introduce an EU-wide scientific recommendation on interchangeability for specific biosimilars.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
5. Introduce other, non-legislative measures, such as joint procurement to reinforce competition while addressing security of supply and environmental challenges.	◉	○	○	○	○	○

6. Other (please specify).	○	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Generic medicinal products (GMPs) and biosimilars are an element of cost containment strategies in healthcare systems across the EU, with GMPs making up most daily medicine doses prescribed in some EU countries (for example, nearly 80% in Germany). We are worried about irregularities in the purity, safety, and effectiveness in some generics/biosimilars, representing an increasing threat to cardiovascular therapy. For this reason, we support a revision of legislation with an improvement of quality control, not to jeopardise the economic advantage of cheaper generics/biosimilars.

REPURPOSING OF MEDICINES

Repurposing is the process of identifying a new use for an established medicine in a disease or condition other than that it is currently authorised for. Repurposing of older (off-patent) medicines constitutes an emerging and dynamic field of medicines development, often led by academic units and medical research charities, with the potential for faster development times and reduced costs as well as lower risks for companies. This is because repurposing commonly starts with substances that have already been tested and many have demonstrated an acceptable level of safety and tolerability. The objective is to identify the opportunities and address any regulatory burdens to facilitate repurposing of off-patent, affordable medicines.

Q10 What measures could stimulate the repurposing of off-patent medicines and provide additional uses of the medicine against new diseases and medical conditions? Please justify your answers.

1000 character(s) maximum

While not considering it a substitute for the development of novel medicinal products, repurposing of off-patent drugs has some potential. To harness this potential, off-label use of medicines (either caused by indication creep or repurposing) should be supported with the appropriate evidence coming from clinical trials. Adequate not-for-profit research funding is required to validate current non-evidence-based clinical practice, to either confirm or refute it. Repurposing of off-patent medicines should be a not-for-profit endeavor /should not lead to increased drug prices.

SECURITY OF SUPPLY OF MEDICINES

Shortages of medicines and the vulnerabilities in the pharmaceutical supply chain continue to be concerns in the EU. Shortages of medicines can have serious impacts on patient care. Under the current pharmaceutical legislation, pharmaceutical companies and wholesalers must, within the limits of their responsibilities, ensure a continued supply of medicines once they are placed on the market in the EU. Companies must also notify national authorities at least two months before an expected shortage or planned market withdrawal.

Q11 What is your view on the following measures to ensure security of supply of medicines in the EU?

	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important	Don't know
1. Maintain the current rules.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
2. Earlier reporting of shortages and market withdrawals to national authorities in a common format.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
3. Companies to have shortage prevention plans.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
4. Companies to have safety stocks.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
5. Monitoring of supply and demand at national level.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
6. Introduce a shortage monitoring system at EU level.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
7. Require companies to diversify their supply chains, in particular the number of key suppliers of medicines and components.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
8. Companies to provide more information to regulators on their supply chain.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
9. Introduce penalties for non-compliance by companies with proposed new obligations.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
10. EU coordination to help identify areas where consolidation in the supply chain has reduced the number of suppliers.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
11. Other (please specify)	◉	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the vulnerability of the supply chains of medicines.
The ESC is extremely concerned with medicine shortages in the EU, which have been reported for crucial medication. While we understand that shortages of medicine have multiple roots, we urge the European Commission to prioritize the prevention of drug shortages through agreement on a list of essential medicines, enhanced transparency on stocks and improved communication and coordination in Europe. It is also crucial to reflect on the medicines that should be considered essential to meet the most important needs in a healthcare system. This includes medicines used in acute cardiovascular care and essential medicines for chronic cardiovascular conditions.

QUALITY AND MANUFACTURING

Medicines manufactured for the EU market must comply with the principles and guidelines of good manufacturing practice (GMP). GMP describes the minimum standard that a medicines manufacturer must meet in their production processes. GMP requires that medicines are of consistent high quality, are appropriate for their intended use and meet the requirements of the marketing authorisation or clinical trial authorisation.

Q12 What is your opinion of the following measures to ensure manufacturing and distribution of high quality products?

	Very adequate	Adequate	Neutral	Less adequate	Not adequate	Don't know
1. Maintain the current rules.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
2. Strengthen manufacturing and oversight rules.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
3. Adapt manufacturing rules to reflect new manufacturing methods.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
4. Include selected environmental requirements for manufacturing of medicines in line with the one health approach on antimicrobial resistance[13]. *[13] The one-health approach is a holistic and multi-sectorial approach to addressing antimicrobial resistance since antimicrobials used to treat infectious diseases in*	◉	○	○	○	○	○

animals may be the same or be similar to those used in humans.						
5. Increase Member State cooperation and surveillance of the supply chain in the EU and third countries.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
6. Strengthen and clarify responsibilities of business operators over the entire supply chain on sharing information on quality, safety and efficacy.	◉	○	○	○	○	○
7. Other (please specify).	○	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Many medicines are produced outside the EU. Following irregularities in the purity, safety, and effectiveness in some generics, affecting cardiovascular therapy, we urge the European Commission to reinforce quality control and guarantee safe medicines.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

While access to pharmaceuticals is a priority, it is also important that the environmental impacts of those pharmaceuticals are as low as possible. The environmental risk assessments (ERAs) is currently not taken into account in the overall benefit/risk analysis which influences the delivery of a marketing authorisation (MA) of a medicine. ERA can influence risk management measures. Yet, ERA results are not decisive in the MA process.

Q13 How would you assess the following measures to ensure that the environmental challenges emerging from human medicines are addressed?

	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important	Don't know
1. Maintain the current rules.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
2. Strengthen the environmental risk assessment during authorisation of a medicine, including risk mitigation measures, where appropriate.	○	○	○	○	○	◉
3. Harmonize environmental risk assessment by national regulators, including risk mitigation measures.	○	○	◉	○	○	○
4. Increase information to the health care professionals and the general public about the assessment of environmental risks of medicines.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
5. Allow companies to use existing data about environmental risks for authorisations of a new medicine to avoid duplicating tests.	○	◉	○	○	○	○
6. Other (please specify).	○	○	○	○	○	○

Is there any other aspect you would like to mention, for example on the potential economic, social, environmental or other impacts of the outlined measures, or would you like to justify/elaborate your replies?

800 character(s) maximum

Q14 Is there anything else you would like to add that has not been covered in this consultation?

900 character(s) maximum

Pharmaceutical innovation has been described to be compromised by insufficient incentives for clinically meaningful improvement compared to medicines with little additional benefit. In 2018 and 2019 EMA approved only two new CV medicines and the industry has deprioritized investment in CVD despite remaining the leading cause of death in Europe. Clinical trials in CVD, usually based on large study populations, are more complex and costly compared to cancer and other diseases. The regulatory body and HTA have a key role in channeling innovation incentives, by defining evidence requirements for market entry of new pharmaceuticals. A joint EU HTA would help harmonise and pursue a European innovation strategy, reducing duplication of efforts at national level. Unmet need in CVD should be redefined and followed by appropriate changes in the approach to clinical trials and public health policy.

Q15 In case you would like to share a document that substantiates your replies, please upload it below (optional).

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

Contact

EU-PHARMACEUTICAL-STRATEGY@EC.EUROPA.EU