

Generic medicine pricing reforms needed in Slovakia to ensure supply for patients

Bratislava, 23 June 2023

The EU pharmaceutical strategy aims to improve accessibility, affordability and sustainability of medicines for European patients and healthcare systems with a focus on the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. Generic, Biosimilar and Value-Added Medicines play an essential role in the sustainability of healthcare systems by bringing competition to the market, providing healthcare systems budget relief and enabling the reinvestments of savings into greater access to medicines. Today, patients in countries like Slovakia do not have sustainable access to safe, effective and affordable medicines. This needs to change.

Medicines for Europe calls the Slovakian government to:

- Reform pricing policies to adjust generic medicine prices to inflation and to stop using External Reference Pricing (ERP) which is known to be detrimental to the availability of medicines.
- Introduce procurement reforms with multi award tenders and MEAT criteria covering critical issues such as security of supply.
- Expand demand side policy incentives that have proven to encourage competition and greater use of generic and biosimilar medicines.

Commenting ahead of an event organized by GENAS, the Slovakian Association of Generic and Biosimilar Medicines in Bratislava, **Alejandro Pacheco, Medicines for Europe Market Access Officer** said *“Different factors are surrounding the availability of medicines in the EU and especially in the CEE region. Macroeconomic challenges such as inflation, the war in Ukraine or public health crisis like COVID-19 create extremely difficult conditions for the pharmaceutical supply chain. On top of this, unsustainable low-price policies for generic and biosimilar medicines such as External Reference Pricing, artificially drive prices down to a level where medicines will not be available in the market. Recent findings of a study on market consolidation showed that 7 out of 10 generic medicines have less than 3 suppliers available in the market and it is even worse in oncology medicines where it is 8.5 out of 10. This market consolidation reduces the availability of medicines and harms patients’ access to affordable, high quality and essential medicines. We call on the Slovakian government to align with the EU Pharma Strategy and focus on policy interventions that enhance the use of generic and biosimilar medicines for healthcare sustainability and ensure the security of supply of medicines for patient”.*

Medicines for Europe

Medicines for Europe represents the generic, biosimilar, and value-added medicines industries across Europe. Its vision is to provide sustainable access to high quality medicines, based on 5 important pillars: patients, quality, value, sustainability and partnership. Its members directly employ 190,000 people at over 400 manufacturing and 126 R&D sites in Europe and invest up to 17% of their turnover in R&D investment. Medicines for Europe member companies across Europe are both increasing access to medicines and driving improved health outcomes. They play a key role in creating sustainable European healthcare systems by continuing to provide high quality, effective generic medicines, whilst also innovating to create new biosimilar medicines and bringing to market value added medicines, which deliver better health outcomes, greater efficiency and/or improved safety in the hospital setting for patients. For more information, please follow us at www.medicinesforeurope.com and on Twitter @medicinesforEU.