

# Patients suffer chronic lack of vital medicines... But this isn't Brexit, this is the EU

*This report has been co-published with our affiliated organisation, [Brexit Facts4EU.Org](https://BrexitFacts4EU.org). We are most grateful for their original research into the raw data which backs what follows.*

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**If this were happening in the UK we all know the reason the BBC would give**

**Don't get sick in Germany or get breast cancer or have a child with a fever**

The problems facing the EU's largest economy continue to mount for Germany's post-Merkel government. The latest difficulties are now affecting the health of the nation.

The Germans are not only running out of energy supplies and essential electronic components used in manufacturing, they are now also seeing **chronic shortages of vital medicines in the country's pharmacies.**

**From paracetamol to essential cancer drugs, chemists' shelves are emptying**

In Berlin and across Germany pharmacists are struggling to maintain supplies of some essential medicines.

As we all know, children normally build up their immune systems through exposure to viruses and infections in their

peer group and through the population at large. As a result of strict Covid measures, however, this hasn't happened in the last two years due to compulsory face masks and social distancing.

Now that these restrictions have been relaxed, parents are seeing an upsurge in colds, fevers, and respiratory diseases in their children. This is therefore a particularly bad time for these parents to find the shelves at pharmacies empty of basic medicines such as paracetamol for young children.

### **And it shows no sign of improving any time soon**

One pharmacist in Berlin told Deutsche Welle :

*"What we're seeing is that all contracts for anti-pain and anti-fever medications for kids have been cancelled."*

### **This is not only affecting children's health but also adults with life-threatening illnesses**

This problem is not only confined to common drugs such as paracetamol and ibuprofen – and it's not confined to the very young.



For example, one essential drug in the treatment of both early-stage and advanced breast cancer became increasingly scarce in Germany since January this year. Unfortunately there is no substitute so this was a very serious problem indeed. The German agency responsible has now had to authorise the importation of this drug.

## **Why is all this happening in the EU's largest economy and most populous member country?**

It seems that the German pharmaceutical industry has three main problems. Firstly there is a shortage of skilled workers, secondly there are fast-rising production costs, and thirdly there are supply chain problems.

Apparently the cost of active ingredients essential in the manufacture of many medicines, as well as rapidly rising production costs overall, are making it unprofitable to make some drugs. This – together with supply chain problems and the shortage of skilled workers – has caused the lack of availability of many medicines.

In the early hours of Monday 25 July 2022 Facts4EU.Org accessed the database of Germany's 'Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices' (BfArM) for ***“Published delivery bottleneck notifications”*** and there were 281 listings.

All the information is in German so we won't cite them all here. They include **common antibiotics, thyroid medicines, blood pressure reducers, and also other medicines that are urgently required in hospitals.**

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