



Point of view

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Why the drug policy is wrong

The continuous deterioration of economic facts, the imminent total collapse of our national health system and as a consequence, of the population's health indexes, the pharmaceutical market's breakdown, as well as the exhaustion of drug pricing, all reveal the imperative need for an immediate change of priorities within the drug sector.

Unilaterally persisting on the pharmaceutical expenditure's financial dimension –perhaps with a provocatively erroneous focus on drug nominal values– covered up the essential question: the protection of public interest and public health.

The use of nominal values, especially through the selective targeting of specific drug categories, and the inconsiderate shifting of a large part of the expenditure on the citizens, has not only failed to rationalize the pharmaceutical healthcare system but, on the contrary, it has augmented the problems, jeopardizing its sustainability and ignoring the aspect of public health protection. Unfortunately, instead of dealing with these issues which are at the core of every country's pharmaceutical policy, the discussion has become disoriented. In fact, it is being deliberately disoriented, in the context of both pricing and generics' prescribing, in a way that leads to their considerable devaluation, to the eradication of their beneficial contribution to public finances, as well as the elimination of any possibility they might have to dynamically penetrate the market.

Highlighting the issue of prescribing generics based on their active ingredient, as the major topic of structural changes while aiding in the fight against corruption in the country's health sector, covers with particular care, the need to evaluate both prescribing and regulation of drug distribution/consumption. The unjustified substitution of cheaper/older "tested" drugs with new and more expensive ones –drugs which in fact, often do not show any substantial, additional, therapeutic advantage– is an inconceivable fact for the insurance systems of other European countries. This self-evident, obvious matter is of no concern to either our loaners' representatives, or the "incorruptible transparency officials" who have taken it upon themselves to support...the measures and reforming of the drug market. The fact that these new drugs have much higher consumption in Greece, compared to the rest of the European countries, does not seem to be bothersome. Furthermore, another issue that doesn't seem to be of concern to the "reforming forces" is the fact that the prescribing of these drugs, based on either their active ingredient or their commercial name, identifies them with their one and only manufacturer, and of course, as a whole, the fact that these drugs are imported and much more expensive is simply random and of no importance.