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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(11.3.2025)

The Commission recognises the significance of this issue and the hardship endured by the victims and their families. The Commission is also aware that the situation of the victims of Thalidomide as regards access to compensation and social support varies across Member States.

According to Article 168(7) of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union¹, Union action shall respect the responsibilities of the Member States for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. The responsibilities of the Member States shall include the management of health services and medical care and the allocation of the resources assigned to them. The introduction of injury compensation schemes and social support programmes falls within the scope of those responsibilities.

Issues related to the organisation of social security systems and decisions concerning social benefits, including in relation to disability, are primarily under the competence of Member States. In the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030², the Commission calls on Member States to define measures to further tackle gaps in social protection for persons with disabilities to reduce inequalities, including by compensating extra costs related to disability and eligibility for disability benefits.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:FULL>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52021DC0101>