

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004362/25
to the Commission
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)
(5 November 2025)**

Subject: Italy's nitazene overdose case, Europe's early warning system and the EU's internal security

It has been established that the death of a 30-year-old man from Brunico was the first nitazene-related death to occur in Italy. Though the victim died around a year ago, it took a long forensic investigation and the suspected dealer's arrest to establish the cause of his death. It appears that he acquired the nitazenes that killed him on the dark web ⁽¹⁾.

The EUDA website's FAQ mentions the existence of a number of nitazene overdose hotbeds in Europe.

The situation is escalating rapidly in the Baltic states: in Estonia and Latvia, nitazenes have been responsible for a raft of deaths since 2022. There have also been reports of nitazene-related fatalities and acute toxicity cases in France, Germany, Sweden and Norway.

The EUDA has highlighted that these opioids are a growing cause for concern because of the number of overdoses they are causing, while its 2025 reports stress the need to strengthen the EU's monitoring and early warning systems and improve the operational readiness of its services.

Having regard for its proposal for a regulation on Union support for internal security for 2028-2034, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Are there measures in place to help the competent authorities speed up the process of determining whether a drug-related death was caused by nitazenes?
2. How will the aforementioned proposal (COM (2025) 542) address the threat posed by online marketplaces and the dark web, strengthen forensic capabilities and improve checks on small packages delivered by postal and courier services?

Submitted: 5.11.2025

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(23 January 2026)**

In its replies to written questions E-001957/2025, E-002570/2025 and E-004345/2025, the Commission described the EU level measures to address the threat of synthetic opioids, notably to help the competent authorities in detecting these substances in drug-related deaths.

The Commission proposal for a regulation establishing the Union support for internal security ⁽¹⁾ provides an indicative financial envelope of EUR 6.8 billion for the period 2028-2034.

According to the proposal, the EU support should contribute to strengthen the EU and Member States' capabilities to prevent and combat serious and organised crime, online and offline, and to improve operational law enforcement cooperation.

The EU Drugs Strategy ⁽²⁾ and EU Action Plan against drug trafficking ⁽³⁾ adopted on 4 December 2025 contain measures addressing challenges posed by synthetic opioids, including nitazenes.

The EU Drugs Agency and its network of laboratories will notably establish a comprehensive, EU-wide substance database for reference materials to help law enforcement perform on-the-spot identification of drugs ⁽⁴⁾.

The action plan addresses online drug trafficking, notably by proposing to step up the role of the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation on the systematic monitoring of drug markets and of the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training to deliver training to identify and combat drug-related activities across digital platforms.

¹ <https://www.rainews.it/articoli/2025/10/nitazeni-la-nuova-droga-sintetica-e-arrivata-in-italia-primi-morti-di-overdose-3b0b0d9f-3f14-491f-ac25-387291744abf.html>.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2025) 542 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0542>.

⁽²⁾ COM(2025) 743 final, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/44305b12-34e4-4a4e-b1b5-812453ae069d_en?filename=EU%20Drugs%20Strategy.pdf.

⁽³⁾ COM(2025) 744 final, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/6cd0d358-45f6-44db-8ba6-77adb900b6c0_en?filename=EU%20Action%20Plan%20against%20drug%20trafficking.pdf.

⁽⁴⁾ Action 14 of the action plan against drug trafficking.

In addition, the EU will strengthen cooperation with technology companies within the EU Internet Forum ⁽⁵⁾ and ensure that online intermediaries enforce their due diligence obligations under the Digital Services Act ⁽⁶⁾.

Moreover, the Commission will create a dedicated EU-level forum to strengthen public-private cooperation to improve the detection and disruption of drug trafficking via post and parcel services sectors ⁽⁷⁾.

⁽⁵⁾ Action 10 of the action plan against drug trafficking.

⁽⁶⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act), OJ L 277, 27.10.2022, pp. 1-102.

⁽⁷⁾ Action 6 of the action plan against drug trafficking.