

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002455/26
to the Commission
Christine Singer (Renew)
(15 June 2026)**

Subject: Proportionality of the plant passport regime for local exchange systems in horticulture

The plant passport under Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 is a vital tool for plant health and traceability, and is subject to the control and enforcement provisions in Regulation (EU) 2017/625. In practice, however, difficulties are arising with small-scale local exchange arrangements between horticultural businesses, which often help each other out short term with small quantities of plants — for example, within local delivery networks. These transactions are currently subject to the same bureaucratic requirements as cross-border trade.

1. Has the Commission looked into whether the current requirements for local and small-scale transfers of ornamental plants are proportionate, and what does it have to say about businesses with distinct production and sales arms which effectively have to issue themselves plant passports?
2. Does it see any scope for a simplified regime for short-term regional exchange arrangements between horticultural businesses, without compromising the goals of plant health?
3. Does it intend to review the plant passport regime for small and medium-sized horticultural businesses as part of ongoing simplification initiatives?

Submitted: 15.6.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(24 August 2026)**

According to Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 ⁽¹⁾, plant passports are not required for the supply of plants, plant products and other objects to final users, except in the case of sales via distance contracts.

For the movement of plants from business to business, the regulation does not provide for exemptions for local or small-scale businesses.

Nevertheless, that regulation includes the possibility of the plant passport to be issued by the competent authorities, as a derogation from the general rule of being issued by the authorised professional operator.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/66 ⁽²⁾ already provides for the possibility to reduce the frequency of controls when risk management plans have been implemented by the operators.

The Commission is currently discussing with Member States how to better implement these provisions, in order to reduce controls for operators that pose a lower risk.

Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 was amended in 2024 ⁽³⁾ and two simplification provisions were introduced, in relation to plant passports: 1) for derogations for the attachment of the plant passport to the trade unit; and 2) for the use of plant passport for final users on sales via distance contracts.

At this stage, no other revision has been foreseen.

⁽¹⁾ <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/2031/oj>.

⁽²⁾ Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/66, http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/66/oj.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/3115, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3115/oj>.