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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(6.8.2025)

EU pharmaceutical legislation<sup>1</sup> protects the *legal* supply chain from falsified medicines and regulates the sale at a distance of prescription medicinal products to the public. Its enforcement in relation to falsified medicines is a national competence and jointly addressed by customs authorities, police and medicines authorities. The Commission recently issued a communication on e-commerce, which includes its enforcement priorities, calling for strengthened cooperation and coordination among all relevant authorities<sup>2</sup>.

The Commission is aware that certain online seller and other vendors sell potentially harmful medicines without proper medical supervision and, together with national authorities, regularly warn consumers against purchasing medicines from unauthorised sellers. The import and purchase of medicines from outside the EU by individuals is regulated at national level. At EU level, the European Anti-Fraud Office investigates and coordinates operations targeting counterfeit pharmaceuticals.

The priority to fight drug trafficking including ‘the production, trafficking and distribution of synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances’ has been proposed among the EU crime priorities for 2026-2029, as well as the counterfeiting of goods including medicines<sup>3</sup>.

Regarding cooperation with China, several initiatives and dialogues are taking place to limit the illicit supply of precursors and synthetic drugs from China. The fourth dedicated EU-China Drugs Dialogue is planned to take place in Beijing in autumn 2025. The EU-China customs cooperation agreement was expanded last year to include drug precursors and the strengthened collaboration with Chinese customs aims to stop consignments of precursors in China.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2001/83/EC.

<sup>2</sup> E-commerce communication: A comprehensive EU toolbox for safe and sustainable e-commerce: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/e-commerce-communication-comprehensive-eu-toolbox-safe-and-sustainable-e-commerce>.

<sup>3</sup> Council conclusions on the enhancement of EMPACT and on EU crime priorities for the next EMPACT cycle 2026-2029, 13 June 2025: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9397-2025-INIT/en/pdf>.