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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(22.10.2026)

The effective supervision of cross-border supplies of medicines to the public is of particular importance and is governed by the relevant pharmaceutical legislation and the Internal Market framework. The online sale of medicines is restricted to persons authorised or entitled to do so in accordance with the national law of the Member State concerned. The supply of medicinal products to the public remains within the competence of the Member States, while taking into account the provisions of the Treaty especially in relation to the free movement of services.

The Commission agrees that close cooperation between the competent authorities of the concerned Member States is necessary. In practice, such cooperation may include the exchange of information, coordinated supervisory action and appropriate follow-up. Even if this matter falls within the competence of the Member States and the Commission cannot propose measures at EU level, the Commission remains available to support discussions among the Member States.

The Commission considers that any situation in which online cross-border suppliers of medicinal products are subject to less effective supervision than locally established pharmacies and wholesale distributors could raise concerns regarding the protection of patient safety. The Commission therefore underlines that priority should be given to robust enforcement of the existing rules, including appropriate oversight of logistics arrangements for the supply of medicines. This will also ensure a level playing field between online and locally established pharmacies, thereby helping to avoid distortions of competition.