Question for written answer E-009158/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Massimo Paolucci (S&D)

Subject: Parallel market in medicines - monitoring and penalties

The ‘grey market’ in the sale of medicinal products, due to the confusion of roles between pharmacists and wholesale medicine retailers, is leading to the continuous establishment of quota restrictions and a consequent shortage of many medicines; this is posing very serious risks to the health of citizens who are even being forced to discontinue treatment.

While taking note of the responsibilities the Member States have in determining their health policies and organising and delivering health services and medical care, it is worth pointing out that in order to sell even everyday medicines online, Member States have to comply with some very burdensome administrative requirements, without which no business can be set up.

These requirements have the effect of discouraging many individuals who are already ready and willing to set up such a business, when there is insufficient monitoring of the parallel market.

It would therefore be advisable to establish a EU-wide authorisation and quality control supervisor for the sale of medicinal products which move freely around the EU. The introduction of effective monitoring to ensure the safety and suitability of storage areas for these goods, in addition to a severe penalty system involving the detention and return of the goods, might already act as a key deterrent in helping to resolve the problem.

Does the Commission intend to take any action in this regard?