

PGEU PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

PGEU calls on the European Commission to abandon plans to use the medical cross in proposed Common Logo

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the European association representing more than 400,000 community pharmacists.

PGEU's members are the national associations and professional bodies of pharmacists in 31 European countries, including EU Member States, EEA/EFTA members and EU applicant countries.

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In its [response to the Concept Paper on a Common Logo for websites of authorised online pharmacies and retailers](#), the body representing Europe's pharmacists has called on the European Commission to change plans to use the familiar pharmacy green cross or the medical cross in the Common Logo for legal online sellers of medicines.

The Commission is mandated under the Falsified Medicines Directive to design a Common Logo to be displayed on websites used by legally authorised sellers of medicines. In the two options put forward for consultation by the Commission, one option proposes the use of the green cross used in the majority of EU Member States to identify registered pharmacies. The alternative option incorporates the medical cross into the design.

In the majority of EU Member States only Non-Prescription Medicines may be sold through the internet. However, the rules require general retailers such as supermarkets, which in some EU Member States are permitted to sell Non-Prescription Medicines, to display the Logo for online sales.

The use of the green cross by such retailers may in some countries amount to a trademark infringement. However, the issue goes beyond trademarks. Some EU Member States such as Italy, Portugal and Ireland reserve the use of the green cross to registered pharmacies only.

The green cross and medical cross provide assurance to patients and consumers that the seller is subject to legal pharmacy requirements as well as professional and ethical rules. The use by general retailers of such medical symbols may lead to confusion, and would be illegal in some Member States.

Mr John Chave, PGEU Secretary General said: *"The Common Logo idea may cause difficulties because of the risk that the Logo itself can be falsified. But additionally, it is crucial that the integrity of medical and pharmacy symbols is protected. Consumers in some Member States are free to buy non-prescription medicines online if they wish, but they should be clear about the nature of the seller."*

The PGEU proposes therefore an alternative logo which replaces the cross with an image of a pill (displayed here).



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