

**Question for written answer E-002148/2024/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Mariusz Kamiński (ECR)

Subject: Inadequate EU action in response to the opioid crisis

According to the European Drug Report 2024¹, in 2022 some 6 400 people died in the EU from a drug overdose. Heroin alone was responsible for the deaths of 1 800 people. However, the biggest concerns relate to fentanyl, which, together with other synthetic opioids, could dominate these tragic statistics. In 2022, fentanyl overdose caused 163 deaths in the EU. The biggest toll was in Germany (73), followed by the Baltic and Nordic countries². These concerns are confirmed by preliminary data for 2023, including for my country.

The surge in deaths and their geographical concentration, as well as conclusions from the United States, indicate that international criminal gangs are engaged in drug distribution in Europe. This is confirmed by the fact that 14 EU countries reported seizing in 2022 more than 3 kg of nitazene, produced almost exclusively in China.

In 2023, in relation to the situation in Syria, the EU imposed sanctions on individuals and entities responsible for the production and sale of Captagon³. The US has taken a range of decisive action in recent years, imposing sanctions on Mexican smuggling cartels and Chinese fentanyl producers⁴ and raising the issue at the highest level in bilateral relations with Beijing⁵. The EU meanwhile has remained passive.

1. Why has the Commission not taken measures similar to those concerning the smuggling of Captagon from Syria?
2. Following the US example, is the Commission planning to impose sanctions on entities responsible for producing and smuggling fentanyl and its derivatives and money laundering?

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¹ https://www.euda.europa.eu/publications/european-drug-report/2024/heroin-and-other-opioids_en

² Lithuania (33 deaths), Denmark (20), Sweden (17), Estonia (8).

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02013D0255-20230223&qid=1681998233973>

⁴ <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2478>

⁵ <https://apnews.com/article/biden-xi-china-yellen-ai-taiwan-fentanyl-c3317fae3e45b04cfffda5bb63adee56>