Question for written answer E-004585/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Distortions of competition and possible circumvention of EU sanctions regimes against Belarus and Russia

Under various EU sanctions regulations, including Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024, exporting particular industrial products (e.g. components for rail transport) from the EU to Russia and Belarus was prohibited. Similar provisions can be found in other legal acts.

According to a European manufacturer, this leads to distortions of competition: companies based in Belarus or in which Belarus has a stake can continue to export and market comparable products to the EU single market, even if they at the same time are exporting identical or similar products to Russia through EU subsidiaries or joint ventures. While EU manufacturers have lost their market outlets entirely, such third country companies remain present in the single market. This raises questions as to the coherence and fairness of the sanctions regime.

1. Does the Commission consider single market principles and fair competition to be compatible with the fact that companies in Belarus can access the single market via EU branches, while EU companies may not export to Russia or Belarus?

2. What measures is the Commission considering to ensure that the sanctions do not put European manufacturers at a structural disadvantage in comparison to third country manufacturers, which operate via EU sites and at the same time supply sanctioned markets?

3. Is the Commission prepared to review relevant sanctions regulations, such as Regulation (EU) 2024/1745, to determine whether loopholes exploited by EU subsidiaries or joint ventures need to be closed to guarantee fair competition and effective sanctions?

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