

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002316/24
to the Commission
Leire Pajín (S&D)
(30 October 2024)**

Subject: Marburg virus outbreak in Rwanda

Rwanda is currently facing its first outbreak of Marburg virus disease — identified by the WHO as having epidemic or pandemic potential — with a total of 56 cases and 12 deaths reported to date (8 October 2024).

The WHO has stated that there is an urgent need to provide all necessary support to Rwanda and neighbouring countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Uganda) to control the Marburg virus outbreak.

With a view to enhancing the prevention, preparedness and response capacity of low-income countries to ensure a global and coordinated response to health threats:

1. What measures will the Commission take to provide tangible tools — vaccines, secondary prevention measures, antiviral treatments, monoclonal antibodies — to Rwanda and neighbouring countries to control the Marburg virus?
2. What measures does the Commission intend to take to strengthen the capacity of low-income countries to carry out research projects and implement epidemiological studies, clinical trials and actions to control endemic diseases?
3. What measures does the Commission intend to take to strengthen the health systems themselves in low-income countries, including the construction of hospitals or the training of local health workers?

Submitted: 30.10.2024

**Answer given by Ms Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission
(18 December 2024)**

The EU works at bilateral, regional and global levels. Since 2023, the Commission ⁽¹⁾ supports the World Health Organisation (WHO) with EUR 7.42 million in developing clinical trial protocols to advance candidate vaccines, monoclonals and antiviral treatments specifically targeting these viruses, with a strong focus on the African context.

In the case of the current Marburg virus outbreak in Rwanda, these protocols have been used for therapeutics. Since October 2024, the Commission further supports the WHO and the non-governmental organisation ALIMA in Rwanda with EUR 850 000 to address immediate and critical needs related to coordination, surveillance, advanced case management, training of healthcare workers and provision of supplies.

The Commission is also supporting the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP). Since 2003, it has provided EUR 1.3 billion for clinical research on poverty-related and emerging infectious diseases with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2024, EDCTP set up mpox trials through an emergency call in 2024.

The Commission engages with partner countries, which have chosen to prioritise health in their bilateral cooperation agreements with the EU, to expand access to key health services covering prevention and care with particular focus on poor and marginalised populations, and to strengthen health systems.

⁽¹⁾ with funding from the https://health.ec.europa.eu/funding/eu4health-programme-2021-2027-vision-healthier-european-union_en