

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002841/24
to the Commission
Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)
(10 December 2024)**

Subject: WHO international health regulations and pandemic treaty

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the international health regulations of the World Health Organisation (WHO) are being revised and a new pandemic treaty is being introduced. As the Commission is a partner of and prominent financial contributor to the WHO, I would like to ask the following questions regarding these developments:

1. What are the implications of the One Health approach for the healthcare sovereignty of EU Member States and for existing European policies on public health?
2. The projected budget for the pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPPR) mechanism will surpass 25-40% of the global official development assistance for health. What funding mechanisms will be created by the Commission to implement the PPPR mechanism?
3. The projected budget for the PPPR is 10 times higher than the amount allocated for high-priority health risks in low-income countries, accounting for between 25-40% of the global official development assistance for health. What steps will the Commission take to make sure sufficient funds remain available for high-priority health risks in low-income countries?

Submitted: 10.12.2024

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(25 February 2025)**

The Commission sees the negotiations of the Pandemic Agreement (PA) and the amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) as important opportunities to address gaps exposed by COVID-19.

In line with the negotiating directives (addendum to Council Decision (EU) 2022/451 ⁽¹⁾), the Commission, negotiating on behalf of the Union, prioritises prevention, including the One Health approach.

The aim is to strengthen prevention, preparedness and response (PPPR) to pandemics and other public health emergencies. No PA proposal or agreed amendments to the IHR affect the Member States' responsibilities for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care as enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU ⁽²⁾. Sovereignty stands as a guiding principle in the PA proposal and remains unchanged in the amended IHR.

No new specific 'PPPR mechanism' is foreseen under either instrument. The amended IHR created the Coordinating Financial Mechanism which will support the identification of, and access to financing. Many Commission initiatives support and contribute ⁽³⁾ to PPPR, including participation in the Pandemic Fund.

The Commission committed EUR 427 million to the Pandemic Fund ⁽⁴⁾, and the Fund aims at increasing health system resilience and adapting to local contexts, with a One Health approach.

The Commission has three priorities in the 2022 Global Health Strategy ⁽⁵⁾: deliver better health and well-being; strengthen health systems and advance universal health coverage; and prevent and combat health threats, including pandemics, applying a One Health approach.

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision (EU) 2022/451 of 3 March 2022 authorising the opening of negotiations on behalf of the European Union for an international agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, as well as complementary amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005)., OJ L 92, 21.3.2022, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

⁽³⁾ Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, GPEI-Global Polio Eradication Initiative, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, programmes for health with partner countries and regions.

⁽⁴⁾ This represents 7.9% of EU commitments to global health development assistance (2021-2027).

⁽⁵⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/internationalcooperation/global-health_en