

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001538/25
to the Commission
Gerald Hauser (PfE)
(15 April 2025)**

Subject: Legal conformity of late amendments to the IHR — Interpretation of Article 55(2)

In its answer to parliamentary Question P-000805/2025 ⁽¹⁾ the Commission writes that all proposals submitted in September 2022 for amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) were circulated to the States Parties on 16 November 2022, i.e. 17 months prior to the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA) on 27 May 2024, meaning that the four-month deadline stipulated by Article 55(2) IHR was met.

Article 55(2) IHR reads as follows:

‘The text of any proposed amendment shall be communicated to all States Parties by the Director-General at least four months before the Health Assembly at which it is proposed for consideration.’

The World Health Organisation (WHO) did in fact submit a comprehensively revised amendment text on 17 April 2024, which was further modified until it was adopted on 1 June 2024.

1. Is a fully revised draft tabled shortly before the WHA still regarded as the ‘same’ amendment?
2. If so, where in the WHO statutes is that determined?
3. What is the legal basis for the Commission’s statement that the four-month deadline was met?

Submitted: 15.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(16 July 2025)**

As the Commission pointed out in its reply to Written Question E-002978/2024 ⁽¹⁾, Article 55(2) of the International Health Regulations (2005) (hereafter the ‘IHR’) provides that the Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) shall communicate the text of any proposed amendment to all State Parties at least 4 months before the World Health Assembly at which it is proposed for consideration.

In fulfilment of this requirement, the WHO Secretariat circulated all proposals for amendments to the IHR, submitted by the IHR State Parties in September 2022, on 16 November 2022, that is 17 months before the 77th World Health Assembly, which began on 27 May 2024, and during which the amendments were adopted.

As also pointed out by the Commission in its reply to the same written question, the WHO Secretariat has complied with the technical requirements set out under Article 55(2) of the IHR by communicating not only the original proposals for amendments to the IHR on 16 November 2022, but also by communicating to all IHR States Parties all draft changes to these original proposals, as developed by the Working Group on IHR amendments (hereafter the ‘WGIHR’) ⁽²⁾.

These communications, which occurred at the conclusion of each WGIHR meeting, have ensured that all IHR State Parties had adequate time to fully consider the amendments to the IHR under negotiations, in view of their adoption at the 77th World Health Assembly.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-10-2025-000805-ASW_EN.html

⁽¹⁾ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-002978-ASW_EN.html.

⁽²⁾ The WGIHR was established by the World Health Assembly in May 2022 for the negotiations on the IHR amendments and operated as a subdivision of the Assembly. It was composed of all 196 States Parties to the IHR, and of the EU as a regional economic integration organisation.