

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004011/25
to the Commission
Marc Botenga (The Left)
(13 October 2025)**

Subject: Follow-up to the question on the impact of EU sanctions on public health, especially in low- and middle-income countries

In response ⁽¹⁾ to our Question E-003081/2025 ⁽²⁾ on the impact of EU sanctions on public health, the Commission states that: 'EU sanctions never target the civilian population, nor food, medicine, emergency supplies, or humanitarian aid.' However, the issue here is not about the intent, but about the outcome.

An article in The Lancet Global Health ⁽³⁾ notes that all economic sanctions ultimately have an adverse effect on health, both indirectly, through determinants of health such as food security, and directly, by limiting access to medicines and healthcare. Financial sanctions limit, in particular, the possibility to purchase medicines on the international market.

1. Do the Commission's assessments confirm that EU sanctions have an adverse impact on access to healthcare and medicines in the countries concerned?
2. How and how often does the Commission assess the impact of sanctions on socioeconomic determinants of health in general and on access to healthcare and medicines in particular?
3. How successful does the Commission rate EU sanctions as being in relation to their stated policy objectives?

Submitted: 13.10.2025

**Answer given by Ms Albuquerque on behalf of the European Commission
(3 December 2025)**

The Commission reiterates that EU sanctions are always targeted and carefully calibrated and are designed to avoid unintended consequences for those not responsible for the actions leading to the adoption of sanctions. EU sanctions do not target food, medicine, emergency supplies or humanitarian aid.

Furthermore, EU sanctions provide for humanitarian exceptions under which humanitarian operators can continue to deliver necessary humanitarian aid to those in need.

EU sanctions operate often in complex landscapes. There are many reasons outside sanctions leading private sector operators, including suppliers and banks, to be hesitant to involve themselves with countries subject to sanctions e.g. reputational risks, counter terrorism financing efforts or anti-money laundering considerations.

The Commission engages in frequent dialogues with the European businesses and the financial sector in particular to address overcompliance practices and to provide guidance on the content of EU sanctions.

The adoption of EU sanctions is the sole responsibility of the Member States in the Council acting unanimously. All EU sanctions undergo review by the Council at least every 12 months. During this review, the appropriateness of the sanctions in place, as well as the appropriateness of maintaining sanctions, is assessed.

EU sanctions are flexible and react to developments on the ground. The regular review of EU sanctions ensures that they remain relevant and proportionate.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-003081-ASW_EN.html
² https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-003081_EN.html
³ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(25\)00189-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(25)00189-5/fulltext)