

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000805/25
to the Commission
Gerald Hauser (P/E)
(21 February 2025)**

Subject: Objection period for amendments to International Health Regulations (IHR)

The objection period has been shortened from 18 to 10 months, from the date of notification by the WHO Director-General. According to the answer to Question E-001627/2024 ⁽¹⁾, the notification was given on 19 September 2024.

However, it is important to note that WHO has often applied deadlines incorrectly and in its favour in the past. The organisation has violated Article 55 of the IHR by not submitting the proposed amendments to the Member States in due time.

The 2022 World Health Assembly (WHA) amendments to shorten the deadline from 24/18 to 12/10 months entered into force on 31 May 2024, although the exact date of the notification is not known. Three days does not seem realistic, however. Against this background, we believe that the deadline for objections should be checked.

1. When were the 2022 WHA amendments to reduce the deadline from 24/18 to 12/10 months notified to the EU/Member States?
2. Has the Commission checked the deadline for submitting objections to the IHR amendments?
3. Do amendments become invalid if deadlines such as the four-month deadline for submitting documents before the vote are not met?

Submitted: 21.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(6 April 2025)**

1. The amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) adopted by the World Health Assembly (WHA) on 28 May 2022 were notified by the Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) to all IHR State Parties on 31 May 2022, through circular letter C.L.26.2022. These amendments, which relate to Articles 55, 59, 61, 62 and 63 of the IHR, aim to shorten the period for rejection of, or reservation to new amendments from 18 to 10 months from the date of the Director-General's notification of adoption of the amendments, and to reduce the period for their entry into force from 24 to 12 months from the same date.
2. For IHR State Parties to which the 2022 amendments apply, the period for rejection of, or reservation to the IHR amendments adopted by the WHA on 1 June 2024 will expire on 19 July 2025. For IHR State Parties to which the 2022 amendments do not apply, the period for rejection of, or reservation to the IHR amendments adopted by the WHA on 1 June 2024 will expire on 19 March 2026.
3. As the Commission pointed out in its reply to Written Question E-002978/2024 ⁽¹⁾, all proposals for amendments to the IHR submitted by the IHR State Parties in September 2022, were circulated by the WHO Secretariat on 16 November 2022. This is 17 months before the 77th WHA, which began on 27 May 2024. The amendments (as finalised in the Working Group on the IHR amendments open to all IHR State Parties) were finally adopted on 1 June 2024. The requirement to communicate the text of any proposed amendment to all State Parties at least 4 months before the WHA at which it will be proposed for consideration has therefore been fulfilled.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-001627-ASW_EN.html
(¹) https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-002978-ASW_EN.html