

**Major interpellation for written answer G-001002/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 145

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on behalf of the ECR Group

Subject: EU funding of physical border protection structures such as walls, fences or other barriers at the external border

Despite the persistent use of weapons of mass migration by hostile powers to undermine the security of EU Member States, the Commission has refrained from funding physical barriers at the external border.

In February 2023, the European Council implored the Commission ‘to immediately mobilise substantial EU funds and means’ in order to help countries bolster their ‘border protection capabilities and infrastructure’.

A majority of Member States have urged Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to lift the Commission moratorium and provide EU funding for physical border protection structures such as walls, fences or other barriers. Several Members of the European Parliament reiterated this request in a letter following the EU elections. President von der Leyen has still not replied or made any public statement on whether the moratorium will remain in place.

Commission President von der Leyen has stated that the EU will ‘act to strengthen our external borders’, specifically by providing ‘an integrated package of mobile and stationary infrastructure –from cars to cameras, from watchtowers to electronic surveillance’.

In May 2023, the Commission stated that it ‘finances infrastructure, mobile and stationary units, border surveillance systems and equipment, refurbishment of border crossing points, new installations for IT systems, as well as the maintenance of equipment, using EU funds’.

Considering that a majority of Member States have called on the Commission to lift its moratorium on funding physical barriers at the EU’s external borders, the new Commission should immediately heed their call and start funding physical border barriers.

Many EU Member States are hindered in carrying out one of the fundamental preconditions for the rule of law – the ability to enforce laws controlling the entry to and exit from state territory of foreign nationals.

Despite decades of illegal mass migration and continuous crises that plague Member States, including multiple instances when authoritarian regimes have used foreigners as weapons of mass migration and endless cases of abuse of asylum and welfare-systems, the Commission still does not support the construction of barriers at the EU’s external borders.

To deter foreigners from entering the EU illegally, the creation of border protection structures such as walls, fences or other barriers is essential. The EU should immediately enable funding

to maintain and enhance existing external border barriers and to erect new external border barriers on land and at sea. EU funding should ensure that all sections of the EU external border are secure.

1. Why has the Commission not yet recognised the reality on the ground at the EU's external borders, and moved to lift its anachronistic moratorium on EU funding for physical border barriers?
2. Considering the ongoing hostile activities at the eastern border and that Member States have taken to constructing border barriers to counter the instrumentalisation of migrants, will the Commission change its approach and support Member States' external border barrier projects financially via the EU budget?

Submitted: 20.9.2024