

**Priority question for written answer P-001520/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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

Despite the use of weapons of mass migration by hostile powers to undermine Member States' security, the Commission has refrained from funding physical barriers at the EU's external borders¹².

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'³. Commission President Ursula von der Leyen reacted by stating 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'⁴.

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, will the new Commission heed their call and fund physical barriers, and if not, why not?

Supporter⁵

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¹ In August 2021, in its answer to Written Question E-003322/2021, the Commission stated that it 'considers that fences are not the most efficient tool to improve border management and, therefore, does not support the use of EU funds for this purpose' (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003322-ASW_EN.html).

² In January 2023, the Commission reiterated its refusal, stating that 'there's no money in the EU budget for this. So if we spend money on walls and fences, there will be no money for other things' (<https://www.politico.eu/article/increasing-number-of-migrant-returns-is-top-priority-eu-commissioner-ylva-johansson-says/>).

³ European Council conclusions of 9 February 2023.

⁴ Answer to Written Question E-000613/2023, given by Ylva Johansson on behalf of the Commission (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2023-000613-ASW_EN.html).

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