Addressing impunity through EU sanctions, including the EU Global Human Rights sanctions regime (so called “EU Magnitsky Act”)

2025/2049(INI) - 21/01/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 440 votes to 127, with 59 abstentions, a resolution on addressing impunity through EU sanctions, including the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (so-called ‘EU Magnitsky Act’).

Parliament reiterated its **support for the EU Magnitsky Act** as an indispensable foreign policy tool for enhancing human rights worldwide and for strengthening the EU’s human rights toolbox. It reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to combating impunity for serious human rights violations and abuses worldwide through the effective use of existing EU sanctions instruments and tools, including the EU Magnitsky Act.

Policy coherence and strategic effectiveness

Parliament called for a **comprehensive impact assessment** of the EU Magnitsky Act and its interactions with the EU country-specific sanctions and the other EU horizontal restrictive measures to evaluate its coherence, proportionality and effectiveness.

They called for the EU Magnitsky Act to be reviewed in accordance with the findings of this impact assessment and suggested that the listings drawn up under the EU’s Magnitsky Act to be reviewed continuously and systematically, at least once every 12 months, so as to ensure their consistency, proportionality and conformity with the latest information and judicial decisions.

Parliament encouraged the Council to seek to align the EU Magnitsky Act listings with the sanctions lists of like-minded partners, in particular those in the G7, and the UN Security Council. It also suggested enhancing synergies between the EU Magnitsky Act and international accountability mechanisms, such as the UN, the International Criminal Court and regional human rights courts, to improve the effectiveness of EU actions against serious human rights violations.

Parliament recommended extending the regime’s scope to cover large-scale corruption cases and abuse of state procurement contracts that directly sustain authoritarian regimes. The Magnitsky Act should also address human rights violations enabled through digital surveillance, spyware exports and other technologies used for repression, and deliberate acts of environmental destruction with a clear intent to harm the civilian population.

The resolution urged the Member States to refrain from bilateral political or diplomatic actions that undermine their commitment to international criminal justice mechanisms, including the Rome Statute, and the defence of human rights, or that contradict the EU’s unified stance on sanctions.

Parliament called for necessary measures to be taken to ensure a more harmonised and coordinated application and asked the EEAS to define legal avenues to mobilise the interest generated by the frozen assets of persons sanctioned under the Magnitsky Act so that it can be used for the benefit of victims of serious human rights violations for which the sanctioned persons are responsible.

Strengthening the fight against impunity

Parliament called for the EU sanctions regime to be **consistent with and complement international criminal law**, international humanitarian law, and EU policies related to the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, with the aim of strengthening the fight against impunity worldwide. It suggested correcting the current geographical and thematic imbalances in the list established under the EU's Magnitsky Act by expanding it to include all individuals and entities responsible for serious human rights violations, regardless of their country of origin.

Members encouraged the Council to pay particular attention to violations such as **sexual and gender-based violence**, discriminatory policies, and the persecution of women leaders, journalists and activists, so that these categories are adequately reflected in future listings. They also called on the Council to extend designations beyond low-level designations to include political and military leaders.

The resolution condemned any countersanctions imposed on the EU for promoting and upholding human rights, democracy and the rule of law through the EU Magnitsky Act.

Transparency, accountability and the role of civil society

Parliament proposed the establishment of a **structured and transparent consultation mechanism** for civil society reporting and engagement in the sanctions process, including whistleblower protection measures such as the creation of a dedicated contact point within the EEAS. It also advocated for a complementary role for Parliament in collecting and proposing cases of serious human rights violations to be considered under the sanctions regime.

Preventing circumvention and strengthening enforcement tools

Members called the EU Magnitsky Act to be reviewed to prevent sanction circumvention by issuing explicit and updated guidance on the prohibition on providing economic resources and technical and material support to listed individuals and entities. They stressed the need to **strengthen the EU's sanctions regime** by broadening and diversifying the use of secondary sanctions with a view to targeting government officials, entities, businesses and individuals involved in facilitating breaches or the circumvention of sanctions.