

## **The European Commission supports EU SMEs that want to trade with Iran through the Due Diligence Helpdesk on EU Sanctions**

The European Union has lifted most of its economic and financial restrictive measures (sanctions) against Iran since the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2016. Therefore, currently, almost all trade activities are permitted between the European Union and Iran, with a few exceptions. The sanctions that are still in place refer to non-proliferation (restrictions on the export of weapons, missile technology, nuclear transfers and activities, graphite, certain raw metals, and specific types of software) and to serious human rights violations (restrictions on dealing with certain individuals, in addition to export bans on equipment which may be used for internal repression or monitoring and intercepting communications).



The EU calls for restrictions to be smart and targeted, thus minimising the unintended consequences for legitimate economic activities. Therefore, the European Commission is making efforts to encourage legitimate trade with Iran by supporting companies to conduct business activities compliant with EU sanctions.

[The Due Diligence Helpdesk on EU Sanctions for EU SMEs dealing with Iran](https://www.sanctions-helpdesk.eu) is an important support tool provided by the Commission to encourage SMEs that are willing to engage with Iran, to do so in full compliance with EU legislation and within the framework of the JCPOA, by providing them with free-of-charge due diligence checks on specific business projects in Iran. The resulting due diligence reports enable EU SMEs to significantly lower their transaction costs by eliminating risks and, at the same time, they act as reassurance for financial institutions by providing strong reasons to facilitate transactions.

**The Helpdesk provides the following free-of-charge services**

1. Personalised consulting

EU businesses can submit requests via the [electronic form](#) on the Helpdesk website, thus accessing first-hand advice from lawyers and top experts in the field of economic and financial sanctions. In full confidentiality, the Helpdesk informs EU SMEs regarding the compliance of their proposed business activity and provides tailored solutions.

If the Helpdesk concludes that the proposed business is not subject to EU sanctions, this will be reflected in a detailed risk report provided to the applicant SME. This is an important argument not only for the SME concerned but also for the banking institution that facilitates the transaction.

2. Information materials

European SMEs can consult comprehensive information materials on specific requirements in the field of EU sanctions on the official Helpdesk [website](#). The Helpdesk also publishes a regular newsletter on recent developments in emerging business sectors in Iran that have a high potential for EU SMEs.

3. Online seminars

The Helpdesk organises regular seminars for EU SMEs operating in Iran. Presented by renowned experts, they cover EU sanctions and other due diligence compliance requirements for conducting business in Iran.

**Partners**

The Helpdesk cooperates closely with the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX), a special purpose vehicle designed to facilitate payments for legitimate trade between Europe and Iran, which further promotes openness and increases the resilience of the EU's economic and financial system, including against extraterritorial sanctions imposed by third countries.

Moreover, the Helpdesk partners with diplomatic missions, chambers of commerce and export promotion agencies that can further support SMEs in areas outside our core services.

**For more information, visit our website [www.sanctions-helpdesk.eu](http://www.sanctions-helpdesk.eu)**

**or reach out by e-mail at [info@sanctions-helpdesk.eu](mailto:info@sanctions-helpdesk.eu)**

