

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002001/24
to the Commission**

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(9 October 2024)

Subject: Horizon Europe programme in Türkiye and its respect for EU values

Hamas, which the EU has blacklisted as a terrorist organisation since 2003, carried out a deadly attack in Israel on 7 October 2023, killing more than 1 500 people, including 68 Europeans. Despite this, it operates freely in Türkiye. Although an active member of the Horizon Europe programme and an EU candidate country, Türkiye is home to Hamas-affiliated individuals and organisations; it denies their terrorist nature and provides medical care to its members. This stands in stark contrast to the EU's stance.

What is more, Turkish institutions, which are in receipt of Horizon Europe funds, appear to indirectly facilitate Hamas' activities. This raises questions about the use of EU funds in Türkiye and the risk that they could be used to support activities that undermine EU values.

In the light of the above:

1. In view of Türkiye's public support for Hamas, how does the Commission justify the country's continued involvement in the Horizon Europe programme?
2. What specific measures have been taken to ensure that the Horizon Europe funds allocated to Türkiye are not used — not even indirectly — to support activities that go against the EU's core values, political decisions and goals?

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Answer given by Ms Ivanova on behalf of the European Commission
(29 November 2024)

1. Türkiye's participation in Horizon Europe ⁽¹⁾, ⁽²⁾ is based on the Agreement associating Türkiye to Horizon Europe ⁽³⁾. The adherence to common goals and values in the field of research and innovation is explicitly specified in the agreement, which was signed by both parties in October 2021. These key elements can be addressed at the regular dialogue in the form of a Joint Committee between the EU and Türkiye.

In the context of Türkiye's participation in Horizon Europe, no violation of the common goals and values has been identified.

2. Horizon Europe is legally restricted to research and innovation activities with an exclusive focus on civil applications during the execution of a project ⁽⁴⁾.

In addition, several mechanisms are set out in Article 19 of the basic act and the model grant agreement ⁽⁵⁾ to prevent that EU funds are misused for activities in breach of international law and the applicable EU legal framework.

Applicants must comply with the ethics appraisal scheme, including an ethics self-assessment, two-stage ethics reviews and ethics screening.

Each beneficiary moreover needs to submit a declaration of honour confirming compliance with the requirements set out in the grant agreement, which must be fulfilled throughout the duration of the project.

Any non-compliance with the above-mentioned rules may trigger corrective or contractual measures, as provided for in the grant agreement, such as the recovery of EU funding and/or termination of participation.

The Commission services remain vigilant to ensure that the legal framework and applicable rules are respected by all participants.

⁽¹⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/695, OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1-68, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/695/oj>

⁽³⁾ OJ L 95, 23.3.2022, p. 33-47, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2022.095.01.0033.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2022%3A095%3ATOC

⁽⁴⁾ Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2021/695.

⁽⁵⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/agr-contr/unit-mga_he_v1.1_en.pdf