

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001178/25
to the Commission**

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(19 March 2025)

Subject: Legal basis for suspension under Horizon Europe

In Written Question E-001930/2024, we asked the Commission if it would consider excluding Israeli participants from the Horizon Europe programme in the light of the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court decisions highlighting Israeli violations of international law and international humanitarian law in Palestine.

The Commission replied that excluding participants from Horizon Europe projects on the sole grounds of their nationality would amount to discrimination ⁽¹⁾.

However, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Commission decided to suspend cooperation with Russian entities in research, science and innovation, as well as all payments to Russian entities under existing contracts because the Russian invasion constituted a violation of international law ⁽²⁾.

1. On what legal basis were Russian entities suspended from receiving EU funding?
2. In the light of the violations of international law by Israel, as confirmed by the International Court of Justice, why does the Commission not use the same legal basis to exclude Israeli entities?

Submitted: 19.3.2025

Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission
(22 October 2025)

1. Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the measures taken regarding the participation of Russian entities in Horizon Europe ⁽¹⁾ were based on:
 - a. EU restrictive measures adopted under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union as well as Articles 75 and 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, notably Article 1i of Council Decision 2014/512/CFSP and Article 5l of Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 ⁽²⁾, and
 - b. eligibility restrictions set out in the Horizon Europe work programmes in application of Article 22(6) of the Horizon Europe Regulation ⁽³⁾.
2. Article 2(2) of the Agreement on the association of Israel to Horizon Europe ⁽⁴⁾ sets out the principle that Israeli entities participate in the Horizon Europe programme under terms and conditions equivalent to those applicable to legal entities established in the EU.

While any actions of the State of Israel cannot be considered automatically attributable to Israeli entities participating in Horizon Europe, Israel needs to comply with Article 2 of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement ⁽⁵⁾.

In the context of Israel's intervention in the Gaza Strip and the ensuing humanitarian catastrophe, the Commission has come to the conclusion that Israel is violating human rights and humanitarian law thus breaching Article 2 of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement.

Therefore, it has proposed to the Council to partially suspend the Horizon Europe Association Agreement with Israel so that legal entities established in Israel would not be eligible to participate in calls for grant and investment support under the Horizon Europe European Innovation Council Accelerator.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-001930-ASW_EN.html.

² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_1544.

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

⁽²⁾ OJ L 229, 31/07/2014, p 1.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe — the framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1-68.

⁽⁴⁾ Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and Israel, of the other part, on the participation of Israel in the Union programme Horizon Europe — the framework Programme for Research and Innovation, OJ L 95, 23/03/2022.

⁽⁵⁾ 'Relations between the Parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement'.

Furthermore, in her State of the Union Speech on 10 September 2025, the Commission President announced a further package of measures.
