

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002761/25
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (PfE)
(8 July 2025)**

Subject: Unilateral termination of cooperation with Israeli universities

Recently, reports surfaced in the media that Dutch universities are terminating cooperation with universities in Israel, often on the grounds of ‘defence aspects’. Much of this cooperation takes place under the umbrella of Horizon Europe and is partly funded by this EU programme. Israel has a legitimate association agreement with the EU. That being so, I should like to ask:

1. The decision to end participation in a consortium funded by Horizon Europe can be taken only on the basis of Article 32(2) of the model grant agreement, and the partner(s) should be heard. A decision is then taken on the basis of the consortium agreement. Can the Commission confirm that unilateral termination of a consortium by Dutch universities is not in line with Horizon Europe requirements?
2. Can the Commission confirm that university research in the field of defence is allowed within the context of Horizon Europe, in accordance with Article 22(1) of the relevant regulation: ‘Any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment and including legal entities from non-associated third countries or international organisations, may participate in actions under the Programme, provided that the conditions laid down in this regulation have been met together with any conditions laid down in the work programme or call for proposals’?

Submitted: 8.7.2025

**Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission
(26 September 2025)**

Both the voluntary and involuntary termination of the participation of a beneficiary in an action is legally possible under Article 32(2) of the Model Grant Agreement.

The beneficiaries may request such termination, and the coordinator must submit a request for an amendment. The granting authority will assess the propriety of the termination based on the reasons provided.

Each termination will be assessed on its own merits and on the reasons provided, including the beneficiary’s opinion. Termination of participation based solely on the nationality of the beneficiary would amount to discrimination, which is prohibited under the Association Agreement.

Horizon Europe rules entail that funding of research and innovation activities must have an exclusive focus on civil applications. However, it cannot be *a priori* guaranteed that such research could not eventually be exploited for dual-use products or technologies (usually used for civilian purposes but with possible defence applications) ⁽¹⁾.

This is because project results may be developed outside the scope of the funded project, or after the project, into technologies with a dual-use potential, either immediately or with some adaptation, even if they were originally intended for purely civil applications.

⁽¹⁾ During project implementation, beneficiaries must ensure compliance with applicable Horizon Europe horizontal rules, as well as with ethical principles and other relevant national, EU and international legislation.