

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003011/25
to the Commission
Marc Botenga (The Left)
(18 July 2025)**

Subject: Ethical and legal safeguards for projects under Regulation (EU) 2021/697 establishing the European Defence Fund

An investigation by Investigate Europe and Reporters United has revealed that the European Defence Fund (EDF) is supporting Intracom Defense, a formally Greek company that is in practice controlled by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), which holds 94.5% of the business's shares and 100% of its voting rights ⁽¹⁾.

IAI is a major supplier of military systems to the Israeli army, which has been accused of genocide and the worst war crimes in Gaza. It is involved in the occupation of Palestinian territory, which the International Court of Justice has declared illegal. Intracom, meanwhile, is involved in the Actus project, which is financed by the EDF. Its purpose is to integrate weapons systems into remotely piloted aircraft systems.

At a press conference on 12 June 2025, the Commission Spokesperson for Technological Sovereignty, Defence, Space, Research and Innovation said that the Commission assesses ethical considerations for each project carried out within the framework of Regulation (EU) 2021/697 and that this assessment takes into account specific safeguards ⁽²⁾.

1. What safeguards are provided for within the framework of the EDF in general and what specific safeguards are provided for the Actus project?
2. Has Intracom Defense signed off on those safeguards and, if so, where were they recorded?

Submitted: 18.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kubilius on behalf of the European Commission
(9 September 2025)**

The European Defence Fund (EDF) ⁽¹⁾ supports the EU's strategic autonomy by funding only entities established in the EU and Norway. Israel-based entities are not eligible ⁽²⁾.

EU-based entities controlled by non-EU entities, such as INTRACOM DEFENSE, may participate only if robust safeguards are in place ⁽³⁾.

EDF rules require submitting guarantees, approved by the Member State of establishment, ensuring that the non-EU parent company cannot access sensitive information, and that results and intellectual property rights remain with the EU entity. The Commission assessed the submitted guarantees and concluded to compliance with the EDF Regulation.

Moreover, any transfer of ownership of results of EDF actions outside the EU or Norway requires prior notification to the Commission and may trigger recovery of funds if it conflicts with the security and defence interests of the EU, its Member States or the objectives of EDF ⁽⁴⁾.

Furthermore, ethical screening is conducted for all projects under the EDF Regulation ⁽⁵⁾. This process assesses ethical risks at project-level, focusing on its content, activities, and methodologies, not on participants' corporate structure. Compliance with international law is also evaluated at project-level.

The advanced capabilities and certification for tactical unmanned aerial vehicle systems (ACTUS) project underwent such screenings before grant agreement was signed.

The Commission also holds the right to audit projects, launch European Anti-Fraud Office investigations, terminate grants, and recover funds in case of non-compliance with applicable rules.

¹ <https://www.investigate-europe.eu/posts/european-defence-fund-millions-benefiting-israeli-state-owned-drone-manufacturer>

² <https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/video/1-273692>

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/697/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/697.

⁽³⁾ Article 9(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/697.

⁽⁴⁾ Article 23 of Regulation (EU) 2021/697.

⁽⁵⁾ Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2021/697.