

EN

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Answer given by Ms Zaharieva
on behalf of the European Commission
(23.10.2025)

While research related to dual-use products or technologies is not prohibited, any research and innovation activities carried out under Horizon Europe (HE) must have an exclusive focus on civil applications. When implementing the projects, all beneficiaries must ensure that all activities under the project comply with this rule as well as with ethical principles and relevant national, EU and international legislation. HE projects' results¹ may be developed into technologies with a dual-use potential, even if they were originally intended and funded for purely civil applications. This transition could happen beyond the lifetime of the project itself.

At project level, several safeguards have been established under HE to ensure that EU funds are not used for activities that violate international law. In line with Article 19 of the HE Regulation, pertaining to ethics, the proposals to be funded are evaluated by external independent experts and are subject to a self-assessment and a systematic ethics screening, which may result in rejection or in specific additional ethics-related obligations in the HE grant agreement.

During the lifetime of a selected project, the continued compliance with the grant agreement is monitored by the Commission and its Agencies in charge of implementing HE. Ethics-related checks or reviews may be initiated at any time, if ethical concerns arise. Non-compliance may lead to any of the measures provided for in the grant agreement, including termination of the project. The Commission and its Agencies would review all reported cases which allegedly breach HE rules. So far it has not been established that any activities under current projects involving Israeli entities breached the principle of exclusive focus on civil applications.

Article 2(2) of the Agreement on the association of Israel to Horizon Europe² 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 HE, Israel needs to comply with Article 2 of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement³. 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 HE 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 HE European Innovation

¹ Once the project is over.

² Agreement between the EU, 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.

³ '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'.

Council Accelerator. Furthermore, in her State of the Union Speech on 10 September 2025, the Commission President announced a further package of measures, as the Commission considers that there is a case for the suspension of certain trade-related provisions of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. The Commission plans to implement additional measures such as putting on hold bilateral support to Israel.