

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004125/25
to the Commission**

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(20 October 2025)

Subject: Horizon Europe and the Turkish car industry: risk of distortion of competition in breach of Article 173 TFEU

Under the Horizon Europe programme, almost EUR 1 billion were allocated to the Turkish automotive industry between 2025 and 2027 ⁽¹⁾, according to reports in the *Daily Sabah* newspaper. A number of Chinese firms (BYD, Chery and SWM) have investments in Türkiye ⁽²⁾, and they will benefit from both that funding and the customs exemptions in place as part of the customs union between the EU and Türkiye under Decision No 1/95 of the EC-Türkiye Association Council.

Instead of helping to ‘ensure that the conditions necessary for the competitiveness of the Union’s industry exist’ as stipulated in Article 173 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the funds concerned will make the Chinese firms that are already dominant in the European market even more competitive, bringing about a distortion of competition to the detriment of European manufacturers.

1. Can the Commission provide clear details on the funds allocated to Türkiye?
2. How does it justify the allocation of Horizon Europe funds to a third country that is helping to flood the European market with Chinese cars?
3. When is it intending to redirect the funding concerned to European projects, so as to ‘unleash the innovative power of our companies and ensure a robust [...] automotive sector’, as Ms von der Leyen quite rightly stated ⁽³⁾?

Supporter ⁽⁴⁾

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Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission

(22 December 2025)

Funding under Horizon Europe (HE) is allocated on a competitive basis to consortia of entities from at least three different countries, of which at least one entity from an EU Member State, and two entities from EU Member States or countries associated to HE. The openness of HE to international cooperation provides mutual benefit for EU and the third countries participating in it.

The figure referenced in the *Daily Sabah* most likely refers to the overall funds available under HE under 2025-2027 to topics relevant to the automotive industry.

Turkish entities have so far in the programme received approximately EUR 320 million EU contributions under HE (around EUR 90 million under Cluster 5 ‘Climate, Energy and Mobility’, and EUR 67.68 million under Cluster 4, ‘Digital, Industry and Space’). Most importantly Türkiye, like all other countries associated to HE, pay for the participation of their entities in the programme.

HE contains safeguards to protect the EU’s interests. The Commission may take actions to protect the EU’s strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security, including limiting cooperation with non-EU countries ⁽¹⁾.

In addition, where justified and provided for in the grant agreement, the Commission or the relevant funding body may object to the transfer of ownership if the transfer or licensing of these results is not in line with the EU’s interests ⁽²⁾.

The Commission’s proposal for the framework Programme 10, complemented by the proposal for the European Competitiveness Fund ⁽³⁾, provides the legal means to ensure that appropriate measures can be taken to safeguard economic and research security considerations.

¹ <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/automotive/turkish-auto-industry-advances-green-transformation-amid-eu-push?>

² <https://www.netcost-security.fr/automobile/260116/la-mefiance-entre-la-chine-et-leurope-cree-un-nouveau-geant-dans-les-vehicules-electriques/>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_378

⁴ This question is supported by a Member other than the authors: Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695>.

⁽²⁾ Ibid.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0555>.

This will offer support for the entire investment journey of European projects, from conception to scale-up and market uptake.
