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E-004636/2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(20.2.2026)

All contracts involving EU funding must ensure full respect of applicable EU legislation, including on accountability, transparency and sound financial management, and aim at protecting the financial interests of the EU.

In accordance with the Financial Regulation¹, the Commission applies established selection procedures and carries out both *ex ante* and *ex post* checks in relation to entities receiving EU funding. During the selection process and before the grant is awarded, the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) database is consulted to verify that an entity is not in an exclusion situation – for example, due to grave professional misconduct, fraud or bankruptcy. In addition, the Commission conducts legal entity validation and operational and financial capacity checks. The Commission carries out *ex post* audits as part of its standard control strategy. If there is clear evidence that any entity receiving EU funds, is in violation of these provisions, the Commission may take appropriate measures, including the suspension, termination, reduction and/or recovery of EU funding.

The Court of Justice of the European Union confirmed that the mere fact that a national measure has been taken for the purpose of protecting national security cannot render EU law inapplicable and exempt the Member States from their obligation to comply with that law² – including the European Media Freedom Act ('EMFA')³ which provides strong safeguards against the use of spyware against media, journalists and their families, including for purposes of national security.

The Commission is currently monitoring the full implementation of EMFA and continues to engage with Member States to ensure compliance with the related requirements.

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast), OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

² Joined Cases C-511/18, C-512/18 and C-520/18, La Quadrature du Net, Judgment of 6 October 2020 (Grand Chamber): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62018CJ0511>

³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1083>.