

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000826/26  
to the Commission  
Vicent Marzà Ibáñez (Verts/ALE)  
(27 February 2026)**

*Subject:* Unfair competition resulting from unequal access to water in Israel and the occupied territories

EU trade policy is governed by the objective of stimulating competition and good business practices. In this regard, reports from the UN, the European Union and European embassies to Israel and the State of Palestine report of the asymmetric control and distribution of Palestinian water and Syrian Golan Heights water by Israel with regard to surface water, groundwater, rainwater, wastewater and treated wastewater.

There is a system of exploitation that favours Israeli agriculture over agriculture in the occupied territories in terms of quantity and price, meaning that the former is propped up at the expense of the latter.

The EU has instruments to prevent this unfair competition from Israeli agriculture and the illegal settlements, which also harms the competitiveness of European agriculture.

In the light of this state of affairs:

Will the Commission temporarily suspend imports of agricultural and livestock products from Israel and the settlements until there is an equitable distribution of water between Palestinians and Israelis, at the same price for both, and European agriculture and livestock farming is not harmed by Israel's unfair use of water?

Submitted: 27.2.2026

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission  
(29 April 2026)**

EU trade policy towards Israel and Palestine <sup>(1)</sup> may help address some of the issues raised in the Honourable Member's question as far as goods exported to the EU are concerned.

Trade preferences granted to Israel under the EU-Israel Association Agreement <sup>(2)</sup> do not apply to goods originating in Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) or the Golan Heights.

Conversely, the EU grants trade preferences to goods which are originating in Palestine in accordance with the EU-Palestine Interim Association Agreement <sup>(3)</sup>.

The case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union has confirmed that goods originating in Israeli settlements in the OPT do not qualify for preferential treatment under the EU-Palestine Interim Association Agreement.

As regards a temporary suspension of imports, Article 23 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement allows either party to adopt safeguard measures if a product is imported in such increased quantities and under such conditions as to cause serious disturbance to a sector of the economy, or serious difficulties in a region or market of the importing side.

From the information provided it is however not possible to ascertain whether imports from Israel are causing such serious sectoral disturbances or regional difficulties.

On 17 September 2025, following the military intervention of Israel in the Gaza Strip, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Decision regarding the suspension of certain trade-related provisions of the Association Agreement <sup>(4)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

<sup>(2)</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/israel/documents/eu\\_israel/asso\\_agree\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/israel/documents/eu_israel/asso_agree_en.pdf).

<sup>(3)</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents/treaties-agreements/agreement/?id=1997014>.

<sup>(4)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0890>.