

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000848/26
to the Commission**

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(2 March 2026)

Subject: Breach of EU-Israel Association Agreement

The European Commission is not only providing grants to but, through Horizon Europe and the European Innovation Council (EIC), is also investing in, holding shares of, and profiting from the activities of Israeli companies.

Companies that have benefited from Horizon Europe and the EIC participated in Israel's attack on Gaza and support the Israel Defence Forces in potential genocide, as determined by the International Court of Justice.

Sightec, a manufacturer of AI navigation technology for drones, received almost EUR 2.5 million from the EU. Its CEO, Roy Shmuel, stated on LinkedIn that Sightec technology was 'combat-proven and deployed on over 3 000 drones in critical missions' ⁽¹⁾, publicly admitting that this technology is also used for military purposes.

1. To what extent did the Commission follow due process with respect to due diligence and the ongoing monitoring of human rights violations and the ethics of companies in which the Commission invested through Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe?
2. To what extent do the background checks on company leadership assess the risks of human rights violations by individuals who are potentially implicated in violence?
3. To what extent is the Commission in line with Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights?

Submitted: 2.3.2026

Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission
(1 June 2026)

Under the Horizon Europe (HE) ⁽¹⁾ legal framework, all funded actions must comply with ethical principles and applicable national, EU and international legislation ⁽²⁾.

At the level of HE implementation, several mechanisms are in place to prevent that EU funds are used for activities that could be unethical, or contrary to international or EU law.

Applicants must complete an ethics self-assessment and all proposals considered for funding undergo an ethics review carried out by independent ethics experts ⁽³⁾. Furthermore, for Israeli entities, specific eligibility criteria related to the place of establishment or activities apply ⁽⁴⁾.

Article 2(2) of the Agreement associating Israel to HE ⁽⁵⁾ sets out the principle that Israeli entities participate in the HE programme under terms and conditions equivalent to those applicable to legal entities established in the EU.

Any actions of the State of Israel cannot be considered automatically attributable to Israeli entities participating in HE.

The HE Agreement is based on the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement ⁽⁶⁾. In the context of the events in Gaza, the Commission concluded that there are indications that Israel would be in breach of Article 2 of the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement.

¹ https://www.linkedin.com/posts/roy-shmuel-78324b6_gpsfree-visualnavigation-electronicwarfare-activity-7362144414355374082-huua.

⁽¹⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

⁽²⁾ Article 19(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 (HE Regulation) explicitly requires that: 'Actions carried out under the Programme shall comply with ethical principles and relevant Union, national and international law, including the Charter and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols'. These obligations are also embedded in the HE Model Grant Agreement, Article 14, and are applicable to all beneficiaries of EU funding under HE, see https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf.

⁽³⁾ The HE ethics appraisal scheme ensures a rigorous ethical evaluation. Proposals with serious or complex ethics issues must undergo an ethics assessment and may be made subject to specific ethics requirements which become obligations in the grant agreement as 'ethics deliverables'. Furthermore, Article 19(3) of the HE Regulation in its first sentence sets out the systematic screening of the ongoing actions regarding the observance of the ethical standards under paragraph 1. Any ethical concerns arising during implementation of a project are taken very seriously and may lead to ethics-related checks or reviews when appropriate. A non-compliance may trigger contractual measures such as reduction of the EU funding or termination of the grant or termination of the participation of the respective beneficiary.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/044b0978-9f3f-4cdc-b0df-827d94af5c6c/language-en>.

⁽⁵⁾ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22022A0323\(10\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22022A0323(10)).

⁽⁶⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2000:147:FULL>.

The Commission therefore proposed to the Council a suspension of trade-related provisions of the Association Agreement as well as a partial suspension of the application of the HE 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 Council Accelerator. The Council has not taken a decision yet. The Commission continues to closely monitor the situation.
