

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001664/26
to the Commission
Tomáš Zdechovský (PPE)
(22 April 2026)

Subject: Conflict of interest of the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Andrej Babiš in connection with ownership of SynBiol

According to publicly available media information, in February 2026 a document was confirmed on the basis of which the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Andrej Babiš, once again became the direct owner of the company SynBiol, and changes were simultaneously made to the management of this company. SynBiol had previously, similarly to the Agrofert holding, been placed in trust funds created in response to EU rules concerning conflicts of interest. In the past, the Commission concluded that there is a conflict of interest between Andrej Babiš's public office and his business activities, particularly in relation to the drawing of European funds.

In light of the new developments, questions arise regarding compliance with EU rules on conflicts of interest and the protection of the Union's financial interests.

1. Is the Commission aware of these recent changes in the ownership structure of SynBiol, and if so, what is its preliminary assessment in terms of a possible conflict of interest under Article 61 of the EU Financial Regulation?
2. Does the Commission plan to launch a new investigation or update its previous conclusions regarding the conflict of interest of the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Andrej Babiš, in connection with the potential drawing of EU funds by companies that he directly or indirectly controls?
3. What specific measures can the Commission take to ensure that, in the event a conflict of interest is confirmed, there is no undue use of European funds and that any breaches of the rules are consistently sanctioned?

Submitted: 22.4.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(23 June 2026)

The Commission is closely monitoring all developments to ensure strict compliance with EU rules on conflicts of interest taking into account *inter alia* the recommendations issued by the previous Commission audit.

A letter requesting information on the measures taken by the Member State has been issued on 19 February 2026. A follow up letter to the Czech authorities has been issued on 20 May 2025.

Pending a legal assessment of the conflict of interest by the Commission services, and to safeguard the EU's financial interests, the Commission has requested EU programmes' managing authorities to ensure that any payment application submitted⁽¹⁾ to the Commission does not include expenditure linked to operations involving the AGROFERT Group companies or any other entities belonging to or under the control of the Czech Prime Minister, or associated to him, outside of the AGROFERT Group, including Synbiol and Hartenberg Holding, and selected as beneficiaries of EU funding as of 9 December 2025.

If a conflict of interest is confirmed, the Commission may interrupt payment deadlines⁽²⁾, suspend payments⁽³⁾ and apply financial corrections⁽⁴⁾ if any expenditure deemed to be related with such a conflict of interest has been declared to the Commission. Such measures were applied in the past in relation to the previously detected conflict of interest.

A conflict of interest can also be symptomatic of a wider rule of law issue which could be addressed via the mechanisms under the General Conditionality Regulation⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Article 91 of the Common Provisions Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj>.

⁽²⁾ Article 96 of the Common Provisions Regulation: please see link under footnote 1.

⁽³⁾ Article 97 of the Common Provisions Regulation: please see link under footnote 1.

⁽⁴⁾ Article 104 of the Common Provisions Regulation: please see link under footnote 1.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2092/oj/eng>.