

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001517/24
to the Commission
Fabrice Leggeri (Pfe)
(17 August 2024)**

Subject: Turkish NGO receiving EU funds pays tribute to former Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh

Although the Rassemblement National helped to suspend the Commission's payments to an Islamo-nationalist Turkish Brotherhood, which is misogynistic and hostile towards European civilisation ⁽¹⁾, the *Journal du Dimanche*, a French newspaper, has just revealed ⁽²⁾ that a controversial Turkish NGO receiving EU funds paid tribute in a tweet ⁽³⁾ to the 'martyr' Ismail Haniyeh, the former leader of Hamas. The EU classes Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

Between 2021 and 2023, through the Erasmus+ programme, the Commission did indeed finance no less than four projects led by the youth section of the Al Sharq Forum, an NGO founded by the former Director General of the Qatari channel Al Jazeera, which claims that its aim is to 'consolidate the values of pluralism and justice'. The total sum of these financial contributions amounts to 110 279 EUR ⁽⁴⁾.

European taxpayers have therefore financed Al-Sharq Forum's 'Impact Platform' social incubation programme, which — among other things — has strengthened the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations' (FEMYSO) training programme, 'FEMYSO Academy' ⁽⁵⁾. As a reminder, this Brotherhood organisation made headlines in 2021 with its 'Freedom is in the hijab' campaign, which was financed by the EU.

Now that a tribute of this kind has been paid to the leader of a terrorist organisation responsible for a pogrom during which 1 200 people were killed on 7 October 2023, will the Commission finally stop handing over EU funds to this Turkish NGO?

Submitted: 17.8.2024

**Answer given by Ms Johansson on behalf of the European Commission
(31 October 2024)**

In June 2024, the European Council reiterated its strongest condemnation of the brutal terrorist attacks conducted by Hamas and other terrorist groups on 7 October 2023 ⁽¹⁾. Hamas is listed under the EU terrorist list ⁽²⁾.

Additionally, the EU established restrictive measures against those who support, facilitate or enable violent actions by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in January 2024 ⁽³⁾.

Concerning projects funded under the EU budget, if a project is not implemented in line with the grant agreement, including non-respect of EU values, the Commission and (in case of indirect management such as for Erasmus+) the national agencies can take appropriate measures, including financial corrections as appropriate.

The Turkish organisation 'Şark Forum Derneği' ⁽⁴⁾ is currently not receiving funding from Erasmus+ anymore but has received funding in the past for youth projects now finalised.

As coordinator of four projects, this organisation received EUR 85 173 (shared with their partner organisations) under the current Erasmus+ programme and EUR 18 755 under the previous programme ⁽⁵⁾.

The regular monitoring activities carried out during the project implementation period did not result in any issues being detected. As these projects have all been completed and this organisation has no longer contractual relations within the programme, there is no legal ground to take action vis-à-vis the projects in the specific context described.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the Commission's reply to Written Question P-001524/2024, which addressed the same issue and complement this reply.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-9-2023-002384_EN.html

² <https://www.lejdd.fr/international/une-ong-financee-par-lunion-europeenne-rend-hommage-au-martyr-ismail-haniyeh-lex-chef-du-hamas-148568>.

³ <https://x.com/sharqyouth/status/1819454212763242596?s=12&t=BA8bZwb7Haunbvzca9wNhA>.

⁴ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/?page=1&sort=&domain=eplus2021&view=grid&map=false&searchType=projects&coordinatorOrgName=%25F0%259F%2587%25B9%25F0%259F%2587%25B7+%25C5%259Fark+forum+derne%25C4%259Fi&coordinatorPIC=E10243436>.

⁵ <https://x.com/sharqyouth/status/1516716909705760771?s=12&t=BA8bZwb7Haunbvzca9wNhA>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/qa31blga/euco-conclusions-27062024-en.pdf>

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02001E0931-20240221>

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02024D0385-20240119>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.sharqforum.org/>

⁽⁵⁾ These figures are those granted by the national agency to the entire consortium managing each project after finalisation.