

## European security research – it is time for change

**Martina Weitsch shows how arms companies – including those from Israel – have obtained public EU research funds, despite military research being specifically excluded from the formal R&D framework.**

The European Security Research Programme (ESRP) is part of the European Research Framework Programme Seven (FP7). FP7 amounts to €53 billion over seven years (2007 to 2013), with the ESRP having a €1.4 billion share (2.6%). While this may appear to be only a very small part of the overall funding for research, it nonetheless constitutes a significant amount of public money.

The objectives of the ESRP are specified as: “to develop the technologies and knowledge for building capabilities needed to ensure the security of citizens from threats such as terrorism, natural disasters and crime, while respecting fundamental human rights including privacy; to ensure optimal and concerted use of available and evolving technologies to the benefit of civil European security, to stimulate the cooperation of providers and users for civil security solutions, improving the competitiveness of the European security industry and delivering mission-oriented research results to reduce security gaps.”<sup>1</sup>

The programme was a new addition to the Research Framework Programme in 2007. Prior to this, security had not been an explicit part of these programmes. However, during the period 2004 to 2006 a so-called ‘Preparatory Action for Security Research’ had already allocated €65 million to some 39 projects under the general theme of security.<sup>2</sup>

The Preparatory Action and the ESRP stem from discussions that took place in 2003 in a so-called ‘Group of Personalities’ led by two European Commissioners.<sup>3</sup> This group had 21 members, of whom eight were representatives of major defence contractors and two were from ministries of defence (listed as research institutions). Yet both the discussion and the subsequent programmes were said to be only about security for citizens and not about national defence or military research, which is specifically excluded. We at the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) are concerned about dual-use technologies and whether such technology could fall into ‘the wrong hands’.

QCEA’s analysis<sup>4</sup> of the 114 projects so far financed under ESRP (excluding the Preparatory Action from 2004 to 2006) shows that organisations (and their subsidiaries and associated companies) who were

originally in the Group of Personalities are participating in 47 projects: 41% of the total. In terms of EU funding, they represent 53%. A breakdown by organisation is given in Figure 1. (Only organisations with the largest involvement are shown.)

But that is not where our concern ends.

Unlike the Preparatory Action, the ESRP – as part of FP7 – includes associated and other non-EU countries. In other words, research on security technology undertaken by consortia including and sometimes led by participants from non-EU countries is funded from EU public funds. Our analysis of the participation by non-EU countries shows that by far the most significant level of participation comes from companies and organisations in Israel.

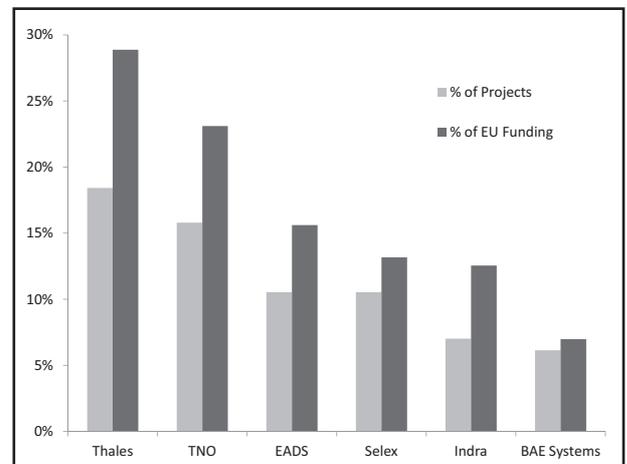
A total of 30 Israeli organisations are involved in the European Security Research Programme, participating in a total of 24 projects. That represents 21% of all the projects so far funded. No other associated country is involved in so many of the projects. Indeed, seven projects out of the total 114 so far funded are led by Israeli companies. Again, no other associated country leads more projects.

Two Israeli military contractors – Elbit Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries, both of whom produce unmanned aerial vehicles or ‘drones’ among other military hardware – participate in the programme. Both are involved in different ways in the occupation of Palestinian Territories, notably by supplying technology for the Separation Wall that Israel is constructing in part at least on Palestinian land. Their inclusion in any European programme and their benefiting from any European public funding raises serious legal and ethical questions.

Now is a moment when the scientific research community – along with civil society and political actors – can do something to bring about change. FP7 comes to an end in 2013, and discussions are underway on the preparation of the next Framework Programme.

Now is the moment to raise the key concerns:

- the significant level of involvement of defence contractors in setting the agenda and benefiting from funding for security research and the



**Figure 1 - Participation in the European Security Research Programme by organisations – such as arms companies – represented in Group of Personalities**

implication this has for the focus of the programme;

- the high level of access to funding on the part of industries whose representatives were involved in developing the programme and the lack of citizen and civil society participation; and
- the benefit that Israeli actors who are involved in the occupation of Palestinian Territories derive from the programme.

Given that this is public money being spent, there should at least be an open and public debate about these concerns.

### Action:

Write to your MEP raising the above concerns.

**Martina Weitsch is a representative of the Quaker Council for European Affairs.**

### References

(web links correct as of 15 September 2011)

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3. For more information and the report published by this group, see: European Commission (2010). Security research and development. [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/security/industrial-policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/security/industrial-policy/index_en.htm)
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