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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(2.9.2021)

The independent study on Palestinian textbooks carried out by the Georg Eckert Institute and funded by the Commission was published on 18 June 2021<sup>1</sup> and a copy of the study transmitted to the chairs of the European Parliament Committees on Foreign Affairs and on Budgetary Control as well as to the secretariat of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The study provides an objective basis for the EU's engagement with the Palestinian Authority to promote full adherence to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence, and non-violence in all Palestinian educational materials. The analysis revealed a complex picture, including compliance with UNESCO standards in some, and deeply problematic contents in other parts.

The EU has no tolerance for incitement to hatred, violence as a means to achieve political goals, and antisemitism in all its forms. These principles are non-negotiable for this Commission. Any material that goes against them risks undermining peace and co-existence and has no place in textbooks or classrooms.

The EU will step up its engagement with the Palestinian Authority, on the basis of the study and a comprehensive system of policy dialogue, engagement and incentives, with the aim to ensure that further curriculum reform addresses problematic issues identified in the shortest possible timeframe, and that the Palestinian Authority takes responsibility to screen textbooks not analysed in the study. The Commission takes this study seriously and will act on its findings as appropriate, with a view to bring about full compliance of all Palestinian education material with the UNESCO standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence, and non-violence. The Commission reserves the right to take appropriate measures as necessary in this regard.

The Commission recalls that it does not fund Palestinian textbooks, and that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency does not produce textbooks but relies on host country textbooks, as other United Nations agencies and in line with refugee education best practices.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gei.de/en/departments/knowledge-in-transition/analysis-of-palestinian-textbooks-paltex.html>