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Israeli settlement products must be labeled as coming from occupied lands, top EU court rules

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Any produce made in Israeli-occupied West Bank settlements must be labeled as such so that the European consumer isn't misled by the generic 'Made in Israel' tag, a top EU court said in a landmark ruling.

European Union member states must now mark products originating from Israeli settlements, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled on Tuesday. Such labels are to help consumers make informed choices relating to some *"ethical considerations,"* the [ruling](#) reads.

The reasoning is that simply indicating that product is 'Made in Israel' – as it is usually done – could be misleading because, in fact, it comes from an occupied territory. Labeling settlement products will now state explicitly that the Jewish state *"is present in the territories concerned as an occupying power and not as a sovereign entity."*

The case was pitched up to the court after an Israeli settlement-based winery challenged France's application of a previous 2018 ECJ ruling on the labeling. That decision also enforced the use of identifying labels but wasn't legally binding.

Israel began settling the West Bank and East Jerusalem shortly after it seized both areas during the 1967 Six-Day War in the Mideast. Today, almost 700,000 people live there, amounting to nearly 10 percent of the country's Jewish population. The illegal occupation of the West Bank is recognized internationally; the EU, for its part, does not accept it as part of Israel.

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Israel, in turn, doesn't consider those areas occupied, instead referring to them as "*disputed*." Back in 2012, a three-member committee headed by former Supreme Court justice Edmund Levy wrote in a comprehensive [report](#) that Israel's presence in the West Bank is not an occupation in the legal sense. The report was widely condemned outside Israel.

Israel is carrying on building Jewish settlements on occupied lands despite international condemnation. Earlier in June, Israeli officials published construction tenders to build more than 800 new units in the East Jerusalem neighborhoods of Ramot and Pisgat Zeev.

Brussels responded to the news with a strongly-worded statement, pointing out that settlement construction and expansion in the area "*continues to undermine the possibility of a viable two state solution with Jerusalem as the future capital of both*."

[Also on rt.com France orders clear labeling of goods from Israeli settlements](#)

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