

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000777/25
to the Commission
Afroditi Latinopoulou (Pfe)
(20 February 2025)**

Subject: Europe's energy independence strategy and making use of Greek deposits

Greece has unexploited gas and oil deposits that can contribute to its energy independence and to the phasing out of the European Union's dependence on third-party energy sources/supplies. However, the Greek Government is hampering investment, mainly through lengthy procedures, bureaucratic stumbling blocks/obstacles and delays in judicial proceedings, leading to partial withdrawals by large companies and seriously harming European energy interests in the long run.

Europe cannot ignore the chaotic changes in the global energy system. It must help create a resilient institutional and legal framework for rapidly exploiting and shaping the energy mix, under which states and their industrial infrastructure operate.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What initiatives can it take to accelerate the path towards making use of Greek hydrocarbons in the interests of European and Greek energy security?
2. How does it intend to prompt the Greek Government to adopt speedier and more effective licensing and judicial reforms to make it easier to invest in the energy sector?
3. Given the progress made by neighbouring countries such as Cyprus, Israel and Egypt, how could the Commission support Greece so that it is not left off the Eastern Mediterranean energy map?

Submitted: 20.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(2 June 2025)**

The Commission supports Member States to ensure security of energy supply in the Union. According to Article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States have the full right to determine the conditions for exploiting their energy resources, their choice between different energy sources and the general structure of their energy supply, while adopting measures in view of the commitment for the EU to become climate-neutral by 2050 ⁽¹⁾.

Regarding the exploitation of hydrocarbons, the EU legal framework is based on Directive 94/22/EC (Hydrocarbons Directive) ⁽²⁾ which lays down common rules for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons resources located on its territory. It applies to both onshore and offshore fields.

The directive underlines the sovereign rights of the Member States over hydrocarbon resources within their territories, e.g. determine the geographical areas and authorise entities to exercise those rights. The Commission can intervene only in cases where the directive is not correctly implemented.

⁽¹⁾ As laid out in the European Climate Law.

⁽²⁾ On conditions for granting and using authorisations for prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons. Directive 94/22/EC: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1994/22/oj/eng>.