(English version)

Question for written answer E-000954/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(6 March 2025)

Subject: Delay in the absorption of CAP funds by Greece

In the first pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, significant delays seem to be appearing in the disbursement of direct payments to farmers due to bureaucratic obstacles, negatively affecting the primary sector. Also, in the second pillar of the CAP, the low absorption rate of funds is limiting investment in the modernisation and sustainable development of rural areas.

In view of the above:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the absorption rates of CAP funds (first and second pillars) by Greece?

2. Will the Commission consider putting in place special measures or providing technical assistance to speed up payments and remove bureaucratic obstacles?

3. How does the Commission assess the effectiveness of the Greek administration in implementing CAP programmes and what actions does it intend to take to strengthen transparency and resource management?

Submitted: 6.3.2025

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(22 April 2025)

On 27 February 2025 ([1]) Greece submitted the Annual Performance Report ([2]) covering the expenditure for claim year 2023. The Commission has reviewed the data provided and has communicated its assessment to the Greek authorities on 8 April 2025.

Overall, the absorption of second pillar funds under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in all member states is just picking up the speed, after the reformed CAP was launched in 2023. For Direct Payment though, the absorption of funds for claim year 2023, paid in 2024, is of 95%.

Funds for technical assistance are available within the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) and may be used to finance a broad range of activities.

Since the start of 2024, the Commission, together with the Member State experts and sector stakeholders, has been analysing the possibilities to further simplify and streamline implementation of the reformed CAP.

The first round of simplifications was done in early 2024 and the second one is expected in the second quarter of 2025. However, it is also a responsibility of a Member State to remove bureaucratic obstacles when it comes to interaction with the final beneficiaries.

The CAP is implemented under shared management. Member States have an obligation to protect Union funds from irregularities and fraud.

The Commission conducts risk-based audits to check if the CAP governance systems put in place by the Member State function properly to ensure the legality and regularity of the CAP expenditure.

If deficiencies are established, the Commission imposes net financial corrections (recovered to the EU budget) ([3]). Moreover, in the case of Greece, the Minister for rural development and food placed the paying agency under probation on 12 September 2024 upon request from the Commission.

([1]) https://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/9i-grapti-diadikasia-epitropis-parakolouthisis-ss-kap/
([2]) As required by Article 134 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, pp. 1-186).
([3]) https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-10/agri_sp_2020_2024_en.pdf — Strategic Plan 2020-2024 Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, page 30-32.