

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001012/25
to the Commission**

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(7 March 2025)

Subject: Systemic safety deficit of the Greek railway network and massive violation of European railway safety legislation

Two years after the tragic train accident in Tempi, the Greek railway network continues to face systemic deficiencies and serious safety gaps. Furthermore, incidents that indicate an increased risk of new accidents continue to be recorded, intensifying citizens' concerns about the safety of the Greek railway network.

Taking into account that: a) in October 2023, the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) delivered a report to the Commission on the safety of Greek railways, in which it identifies serious deficiencies and gaps in the Greek railway system, b) on 16 December 2024, the Commission initiated infringement proceedings against Greece, because five European regulations and two European directives that set out the requirements of EU legislation on railway safety and interoperability are being violated ⁽¹⁾, c) according to a Greek National Organisation for the Investigation of Air and Rail Accidents and Transport Safety (EODASAAM) report, it appears on the one hand that the Greek Railway Regulatory Authority (RAS) is unable to guarantee railway safety, as it systematically failed to identify critical weaknesses in the Safety Management System ⁽²⁾, and on the other hand that the ERA is unable to ensure compliance of national rules with fundamental safety requirements or the effective performance of RAS's supervisory work:

1. Does the Commission believe that the Greek railway today is safe for European citizens?
2. Does the Commission intend to ask the ERA to revoke the single safety certificates it has issued until the full compliance of railway operations and of Greece with European railway safety legislation is ensured?

Submitted: 7.3.2025

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(3 July 2025)**

The Commission underlines that the responsibility for rail safety lies with the Member States and relevant actors, as set out in Article 4 of Directive 2016/798 ⁽¹⁾. Neither the Commission nor the European Union Agency for Railways can replace these actors in their roles.

Both before and after the tragic accident at Tempi on 28 February 2023, the Commission has drawn the attention of the Greek authorities to the long-standing systemic safety weaknesses of the Greek rail system.

These weaknesses were confirmed in the Tempi accident investigation report prepared by the Hellenic Air and Rail Safety Investigation Authority ⁽²⁾, with the Agency's support.

On 16 December 2024 the Commission has opened an infringement proceeding INFR(2023)2036 ⁽³⁾ against Greece, which developed an action plan to address these shortcomings.

As stipulated by Article 17(1) of Directive 2016/798, the responsibility for supervising the compliance of railway undertakings and infrastructure managers with applicable requirements lies with the national safety authority, which in the case of Greece is the Regulatory Authority for Railways (RAS).

According to Article 17(5) and (6) of Directive 2016/798, the Agency may revoke or restrict a single safety certificate for an individual railway undertaking only following a prior notification from the national safety authority indicating the existence of a serious safety risk or confirming lack of compliance with the conditions for certification attributable to a specific railway undertaking.

To date, the Agency has not received such notification from RAS.

¹ Infringements of Directive (EU) 2016/798, Article 4(1), Article 9(1), Article 9(3)(c), (e) and (f), Article 9(4), Article 13(4), Article 16(1), Article 20(1), Article 22(1) and (2) and Article 24(2) and (3); Commission Regulation (EU) No 1078/2012, Article 3(1) and Annex I; Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 402/2013, Article 2(1), Articles 4 and 5 and Annex I; Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/761, Article 6; Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/762, Annex I, point 1.1(d) and (e) and points 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 6.1 and Annex II, point 1.1(d) and (e) and points 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.2.1 and 6.1; Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/779, Article 6(3); and Directive (EU) 2016/797, Article 27(5) and Articles 28 and 39.

² The ERA, in both 2019 and 2022, found that supervision activities by RAS are insufficiently developed and that 'RAS has not developed a view on the level of safety performance of the Greek railway system.'

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016L0798>.

⁽²⁾ Report is published here: <https://www.harsia.gr/index.php/2025/02/25/prosechos-to-porisma-gia-ta-tempi-stis-27-2-2025/>.

⁽³⁾ Associated press release: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_6006.