

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001424/25
to the Commission
Elena Kountoura (The Left)
(8 April 2025)

Subject: Inadequate checks on road transport in Greece owing to the abandonment of the Joint Inspection Teams

By means of Law 3446/2006, Greece designated the Joint Inspection Teams (Μικτά Κλιμάκια Ελέγχου), which are made up of representatives from various control bodies and operate under the responsibility of the Regions, as the competent body for carrying out checks on road transport. However, in practice, these teams have essentially ceased to function effectively since 2017, due to the inability of the Regions to cover operational and staffing costs ⁽¹⁾. Therefore, checks are limited to the fragmented actions of the Greek police, customs authorities and the coast guard, with there being insufficient checks to meet the needs in all areas of the country ⁽²⁾.

This situation has serious consequences, such as tax evasion, unfair competition, illegal transport ⁽³⁾, undeclared goods, illegal cabotage, posted work, uncontrolled fuel movements and risks to public health. In view of the fact that the Commission has in the past initiated infringement proceedings against Greece in relation to this matter:

1. Is it aware of the inadequate functioning of the Joint Inspection Teams in Greece and of the impact thereof on the implementation of EU road transport law?
2. Does it intend to intervene, either authoritatively or by offering support, to restore the functioning of a full and effective control mechanism?
3. What measures does it intend to take to ensure that Greece complies with European legislation and that adequate checks are carried out on road transport?

Submitted: 8.4.2025

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

1. The Commission is not aware of an inadequate functioning of the checks in road transport in Greece. In line with Article 2(3) of Directive 2006/22/EC ⁽¹⁾, Member States are required to carry out a minimum number of checks at the roadside and at the premises of road transport undertakings to verify compliance of drivers and operators with the EU social rules in the road transport sector. The 32nd report from the Commission on the implementation of the social legislation relating to road transport ⁽²⁾ based, as regards Greece, on the Greek national report, shows that Greece complied with the minimum level of checks in the period 2021-2022. Member States must submit to the Commission, by 30 September 2025, their national report covering the period 2023-2024.

2. The Commission may decide to take any appropriate action, including infringement proceedings, against Greece in case of failure to comply with the minimum control requirements set out in Article 2(3) of Directive 2006/22/EC.

3. The European Labour Authority can help the Greek authorities by further promoting the exchange of experience, best practices and information, and by involving them in concerted checks and joint training initiatives.

¹ They do not have sufficient staff and are unable to cover the necessary costs relating to travel, overtime and field operations.

² At the border, as well as in the inner parts of the country, there is no competent control mechanism to conduct checks effectively to ensure that freight consignments are transported legally and that the employment and work postings of drivers meet legal requirements.

³ The issue of illegal transport, mainly carried out by foreign trucks, is one of the most critical issues in road transport, as, according to industry professionals, the poor functioning of control mechanisms has led to a dramatic increase in this phenomenon in the last 10 years at least. Illegal transport by lorries registered outside Greece results in unfair competition and distortion of the domestic market. At the same time, there are multiple financial infringements and a loss of public revenue resulting from the lack of effective control mechanisms for transported goods.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2006/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 on minimum conditions for the implementation of Council Regulations (EEC) No 3820/85 and (EEC) No 3821/85 concerning social legislation relating to road transport activities and repealing Council Directive 88/599/EEC (OJ L 102 of 11.4.2006, p. 35).

⁽²⁾ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation in 2021-2022 of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport and of Directive 2002/15/EC on the organisation of the working time of persons performing mobile road transport activities (32nd report from the Commission on the implementation of the social legislation relating to road transport) COM/2024/405 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2024:405:FIN>.