

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001631/25
to the Commission
Galato Alexandraki (ECR)
(23 April 2025)**

Subject: Reference price in the cotton aid scheme

Greece's cultivation of cotton, a strategically important agricultural product for many regions, is under pressure due to uncertainty in international markets and severe weather events that have caused delays in spring sowing. Producers are calling for the reference price on the basis of which crop-specific aid is calculated to be immediately adjusted to reflect real market conditions. The current reference price of EUR 59.40 per acre is considered outdated, given that average trading prices remain well below production costs. Farmers and their organisations are calling for the reference price to be increased to EUR 85 per acre in order to ensure the viability of the crop and to cover losses from changes in international prices.

In view of the above:

1. Given the reduction in eligible areas and the financial pressures faced by cotton producers, is the Commission considering adjusting the reference price for cotton aid to reflect current conditions and ensure full use of the funds available?
2. What additional measures does the Commission intend to propose to support cotton producers, with a view to ensuring the sustainability of the crop and strengthening their competitiveness within the European Union?

Submitted: 23.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(13 June 2025)**

In claim year 2023, Greek cotton producers received EUR 734 per hectare (plus top up when the producers are members of an inter-branch organisation, where applicable) based upon the reference values fixed in the Strategic Plan Regulation ⁽¹⁾.

The Commission is closely monitoring the current situation, but a legal change to increase the reference amount and the earmarked budget is not planned.

Member States can also use other instruments including state aid, to design their sectoral support strategy. The available tools range from Basic Income Support for Sustainability (e.g. regionally differentiated for agronomic reasons to further improve all farmers' viability in the region concerned) to improve the farmers' viability, to investments to improve their competitiveness and resilience to eco-schemes to support sustainability of cotton production. Some of these investments could also be supported by Greece's financial instrument.

Additional relevant tools can be risk management (e.g. insurances), sectoral interventions that also can support producer groups or agri-environment-climate measures.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 1.).