

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001724/25
to the Commission
Afroditi Latinopoulou (Pfe)
(30 April 2025)

Subject: Cultural and gastronomic identity of the Greek islands

The Greek islands' traditional gastronomy and local products form an invaluable part of Europe's cultural and dietary heritage. However, for the most part, they are not covered by European protection and promotion mechanisms, such as PDO/PGI indications. As a result, they are threatened by commercial homogenisation and cultural invisibility.

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

1. Does it intend to strengthen, through specific programmes or technical support, the recognition of traditional products from the Greek islands (such as cheeses, wines, sweets, herbs) as PDO or PGI products, thereby helping to preserve and strengthen local identity and the economy?
2. Does it intend to finance cultural measures to promote the gastronomy of the islands within the framework of European cultural policy, making use of gastronomy as a tool for sustainable tourism and regional development?
3. Is there a plan to create a single European platform for the promotion of traditional island products and recipes to strengthen the link between cultural heritage and the agri-food chain?

Submitted: 30.4.2025

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

1. The Commission values Geographical Indications (GIs) as a tool preserving the rich and diverse culinary heritage of the Union and contributing to sustainable agriculture, landscape and biodiversity preservation, job creation and economic viability in production regions. More than 280 Greek GIs are already registered in the Union. The latest review of the Union GI rules ⁽¹⁾ enhances the protection of GIs and the position of GI producers in the markets. Also, a toolkit to guide interested producers on how to apply is being prepared.
2. The Culture strand of the Creative Europe program ⁽²⁾ focuses on initiatives promoting artistic and cultural cooperation. This can include projects related to gastronomy and culinary practices, recognised as part of Europe's intangible cultural heritage ⁽³⁾. Projects aimed at preserving, promoting, or innovating within the gastronomic culture can be aligned with the goals of the Creative Europe program. The gastronomic heritage of the Greek islands could also potentially be showcased through a transnational European Heritage Label application, in collaboration with islands that share similar culinary traditions. Relevant Greek authorities may be contacted for guidance on initiating such a proposal.
3. The Commission supports the promotion of agricultural products ⁽⁴⁾, including those not protected under a quality scheme such as GIs. Promotion measures aim to highlight the specific characteristics of EU agricultural and food products, including authenticity, diversity or traditions. Many Greek programmes are funded under this policy ⁽⁵⁾. The programme for the smaller Aegean islands ⁽⁶⁾ supports the production of several PDO and PGI products, such as wines, cheeses, mastic and 'Tomataki Santorinis'.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

⁽²⁾ <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/creative-europe-culture-strand>.

⁽³⁾ https://multimediark.slowfood.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/1_Policy_Brief.pdf.

⁽⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

⁽⁵⁾ For info on programmes and funding: <https://enjoy-its-from-europe.campaign.europa.eu/en>.

⁽⁶⁾ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/outermost-regions-and-small-aegean-islands/smaller-aegean-islands_en.