

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002154/25
to the Commission
Konstantinos Arvanitis (The Left)
(28 May 2025)

Subject: Cooperation between the Greek Government and the European institutions on transparency in the allocation of European agricultural subsidies

Since 2024, Greece's Payment and Control Agency for Guidance and Guarantee Community Aid (OPEKEPE) has been under the supervision of the European Commission ⁽¹⁾ due to detected irregularities and illegal payments of CAP aid ⁽²⁾ between 2019 and 2022. The agency is also the subject of an ongoing investigation by the European Public Prosecutor's Office ⁽³⁾. What is more, an action plan ⁽⁴⁾ has been under implementation since 2024, with a view to addressing the problems identified and preventing OPEKEPE from losing its accreditation as a paying agency.

Recently, the Greek Government took the decision to abolish OPEKEPE and transfer its powers to the Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR), which is not part of the competent Ministry of Rural Development and Food and whose expertise in this domain is objectively uncertain.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following:

1. How does it assess the cooperation with the Greek authorities in the context of the supervision of OPEKEPE and the implementation of the action plan? In particular, is there sufficient compliance and progress in the implementation of the commitments, and what are the findings of the Commission's audits?
2. Was it aware of the Greek Government's intention to abolish OPEKEPE while the implementation of the action plan and the European Public Prosecutor's Office's investigation were still ongoing?

Submitted: 28.5.2025

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(15 July 2025)

1. Due to deficiencies identified in the compliance of the paying agency OPEKEPE with the accreditation criteria ⁽¹⁾, the competent authority put the paying agency's accreditation under probation for a period of 12 months starting from 10 September 2024 and prepared an action plan aiming to remedy those deficiencies. The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of this action plan through the analysis of the periodical reports sent by the Greek authorities, and visits to said authorities, when necessary. According to the timeline, all remedial actions should be completed by the 12 September 2025. The Commission cannot comment further on ongoing audits.

2. The Commission is working closely with the Greek authorities to ensure full and timely implementation of the action plan, also considering the possible impact of the announced modification of OPEKEPE's competences. The action plan covered the organisational structure of the OPEKEPE and the Commission expected remedial actions in this regard. To date, the Commission has not received official notifications of the decisions regarding the paying agency or the role of the Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR) in this context, as the legal framework for the modification is still in preparation.

¹ For example, <https://www.politico.eu/article/greece-farmers-european-union-opekepe-pastureland-cap-common-agricultural-policy-2/>, <https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/563215252/opekepe-se-epitirisi-gia-efarmogi-diorthotikon-metron/>

² Ref. Ares (2024) 3169116 — 30/04/2024, VLS/gd — agri.h.4(2024)294739, CEB/2024/050/GR/L304LT, CEB/2024/050/GR/LFLT.

³ <https://www.eppo.europa.eu/en/media/news/greece-eppo-probes-opekepe-officials-over-alleged-organised-agricultural-subsidy-fraud>

⁴ <https://www.minagric.gr/2013-04-05-10-13-09/ministry-example-ypaat-grafeio-typou/deltiatypou/16861-dt110924>

⁽¹⁾ Listed in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2022/127.