

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003207/25
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(7 August 2025)**

Subject: Need for control of Turkish Airlines by the DG for Competition

With a 49.12% State stake from the Türkiye Wealth Fund, Turkish Airlines has rapidly strengthened its presence in the European market, utilising Istanbul Airport (IST), the busiest on the European continent in terms of flights and second in terms of passengers (2024). Türkiye's geographical location, combined with the cessation of flights through Russian/Ukrainian airspace, offers it an excessive advantage on routes between Europe and Asia. At the same time, Türkiye prohibits flights to and from the Republic of Cyprus, as well as flights within the EU, through its FIR.

Turkish Airlines benefits from tax breaks of 50-90% through 'Investment Incentive Certificates' (Decree 2012/3305), fuel tax exemptions and ticket subsidies within general and sectoral tax exemptions in Türkiye, State loan guarantees and infrastructure investments. In addition, its CEO is personally associated with Turkish President Erdoğan.

On some routes, it charges significantly below average prices, which may constitute 'dumping' or predatory pricing, to the detriment of European competitor airlines.

In view of the above:

1. Has the Commission assessed the support provided by the Turkish State to Turkish Airlines in the light of state aid rules?
2. Has the Commission examined whether its pricing policy constitutes 'dumping' or any other abusive practice?
3. Does the Commission intend to launch a pan-European investigation, taking into account the geopolitical advantages and restrictions imposed by Türkiye on flights to/from EU Member States?

Submitted: 7.8.2025

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(9 October 2025)**

1. EU State aid rules do not apply to subsidies granted by third countries. In accordance with Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, State aid rules apply only to aid granted by a Member State or through Member State resources.

2. The Commission has several legal means at its disposal allowing the investigation of foreign subsidies or to tackle potential anti-competitive behaviour involving undertakings established in third countries and affecting competition in the EU.

EU antitrust rules prohibit agreements between market operators of any nationality that would restrict competition in the EU and the abuse of dominance by market players affecting the EU market.

Regulation (EU) 2019/712 ⁽¹⁾ tackles practices distorting competition between Union air carriers and third-country air carriers and causing, or threatening to cause, injury to Union air carriers.

Those instruments can be activated following a thorough investigation by the Commission, based on a substantiated complaint or otherwise compelling factual, verifiable and thorough evidence of unfair competition practice. Regarding foreign subsidies, the Commission powers are prescribed in Regulation (EU) 2022/2560 ⁽²⁾.

The Commission has so far not received any such complaint regarding the issue at stake and is not in possession of compelling evidence that would warrant an investigation under the aforementioned legal instruments.

3. Should the Commission come into possession of any such evidence, by way of a complaint or otherwise, then it would evaluate whether to open an investigation and under which instrument, in accordance with the applicable procedures.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 123, 10.5.2019, p. 4, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/712/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 330, 23.12.2022, p. 1, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2560/oj/eng>.