

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001585/25
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(21 April 2025)**

Subject: EU support for investigations of the crime at Tempi

With regard to the crime that took place at Tempi (on 28 February 2023), the government's narrative refers to the fatalities as a result of the crash. Investigations have shown that the hydrocarbons benzene, toluene and xylene, weighing 3.8-5.4 tonnes, were to blame for the fatal fireball. It was found that passengers who survived the crash were burnt to death, with the fire starting 1.5-3 minutes after the crash. It is estimated that 8.9-12.6 tonnes of aromatic hydrocarbons spilled onto the soil, with their evaporation creating dangerous conditions for those who later ventured onto the site. The fact that the smuggled cargo is to blame for the fireball, and thus for most of the deaths, is being covered up by the government — presumably at the request of the smugglers.

The government's manipulation of justice clearly results in the failure to investigate the identity of the smuggler and his connection to the government. Since 2014, the EU has provided almost EUR 700 million in funding towards 16 transport projects in Greece, and the crime at Tempi presents an — indirect — insult to it.

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

1. Could it request that a European agency, such as the European Railway Agency (ERA), carry out an independent investigation of the accident?
2. Is there a possibility for EU action to ensure that the Greek Government takes all the necessary measures to hold those responsible to account?
3. Has the decision been taken to monitor Greece more closely with regard to the investigation of the case and the implementation of security measures following the crime at Tempi?

Submitted: 21.4.2025

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

According to Article 20(1) of Directive (EU) 2016/798 ⁽¹⁾, it is the Member State's obligation to ensure that an independent investigation is carried out after any serious rail accident on the Union rail system.

The European Union Agency for Railways can only assist in an investigation at the request of a national investigation body, which was the case for the Tempi accident. The Agency however cannot replace the national investigation body in its role.

On 16 December 2024, the Commission has opened infringement proceedings against Greece for failure to align with the requirements of Directive (EU) 2016/798 (INFR(2023)2036 ⁽²⁾).

The infringement addresses several long-standing systemic shortcomings in the functioning of the Greek rail system, identified during an audit by the European Union Agency for Railways.

Most of these shortcomings were recently also confirmed in the Tempi accident investigation report prepared by the Hellenic Air and Rail Safety Investigation Authority (HARSIA).

The Greek authorities have already on 3 April 2024 prepared an Action Plan to address the identified shortcomings, which is now being implemented.

The Commission monitors progress of this implementation on the basis of regular reports received from Greece. In case the progress is deemed unsatisfactorily, the Commission will take all the necessary measures.

⁽¹⁾ Directive (EU) 2016/798 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on railway safety, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/798>.

⁽²⁾ See associated press release https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_6006.