

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-002152/25
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(28 May 2025)**

Subject: OPEKEPE (Greek Payment and Control Agency for Guidance and Guarantee Community Aid) scandal

Widespread irregularities and fraudulent government practices have been noted since 2005 in the management of direct payments through OPEKEPE. The practices are now being formally investigated by the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), under threat of loss of accreditation.

Following the revelations, the Government decided to abolish the Agency and transfer the critical payment and audit functions to the Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR). This choice raises serious questions regarding the management accreditation of the new body, the transparency of CAP payments and compliance with Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy, and in particular Articles 7 and 8 which set out the conditions for accreditation of paying agencies, the obligation of independence and sufficient operational and administrative capacity and the possible withdrawal of accreditation if the criteria are not met.

Unfortunately, the withdrawal of accreditation will clearly mean the cessation of agricultural payments and the loss of European fund management for our farmers. At the same time, concerns about a cover up of political responsibilities and, ultimately, a lack of accountability are growing.

In view of the above:

1. Has the Commission assessed the legality of the transfer of OPEKEPE's responsibilities to the IAPR?
2. Has the Commission asked itself/established whether the conditions for management accreditation to disburse European aid are met by the IAPR?
3. What measures does it intend to put in place from now on to ensure the independence, transparency and sound management of aid to Greek farmers?

Submitted: 28.5.2025

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

1. It is the Commission's understanding that the legal framework for the modification concerning the paying agency OPEKEPE is in preparation. The Commission has not yet received the necessary documentation to assess the legality of any decision concerning the OPEKEPE's responsibilities.
2. Member States shall accredit paying agencies which comply with minimum conditions for the accreditation to ensure that funds are managed properly ⁽¹⁾. The issuing, reviewing and withdrawing the accreditation of a paying agency are the responsibility of the Member State's competent authority ⁽²⁾. 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.
3. In September 2024, upon request of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, the Greek competent authority has put the paying agency OPEKEPE's accreditation on probation, and an action plan was designed to address the deficiencies identified. The Commission is working closely with the Greek authorities in this context to ensure full and timely implementation of this plan, also considering the possible impact of the modification of competences ongoing in Greece.

⁽¹⁾ Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013, OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 187-261.

⁽²⁾ Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116.