Question for written answer E-000951/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Sofia Sakorafa (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Whose interests are served by the contraction of the primary sector in Greece by the Quartet and government?

According to the Quartet, the structural reforms and fiscal consolidation pursued through the fiscal consolidation programmes (‘Memoranda’) in Greece are intended to boost the competitiveness of the Greek economy.

The primary sector in Greece enjoys natural advantages and could contribute to this goal. The Quartet, however, imposes and approves policies and measures that are having precisely the opposite effect, making Greek agriculture uncompetitive compared with other Member States and leading to a contraction.

Greek farmers will be the only ones in EU-28 without access to cheap agricultural oil and electricity and will face a 20% tax on subsidies in 2016 which will rise to 23% in 2017 and will pay 100% of tax in advance. Conversely, in France, indirect national aid in the form of export subsidies exceeds 50% of agricultural income, in Germany 60% and in the Scandinavian countries 80%.

Furthermore, the exclusion of Greek farmers from bank credit, the increase in pension contributions, the reduction of subsidies with the new CAP and inadequate financial support of agribusinesses all bode very badly for farmers.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it believe that these measures will boost the competitiveness of the Greek rural economy?

2. As a member of the Quartet, in whose interests does it allow the implementation of measures that undermine Community solidarity and distort healthy competition?