

**Question for written answer E-005203/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Georgios Epiteideios (NI)

Subject: Contraband alcohol and tobacco

According to the Greek press, high taxes on alcohol and tobacco are causing a massive increase in the trafficking of these items and a corresponding reduction in state revenue, which fell by a further 3.5% in 2015 compared with 2014 as a result of a switch towards bulk purchasing of these items by consumers.

Trafficking and bulk sales of spirits (especially ouzo, tsipouro and tsikoudia) are now extending to wine, which is subject to a special excise duty. One in five cigarette packs in Greece is being sold illegally, with millions being lost in unpaid duties. According to the Greek Federation of Spirits Producers, (SEAOP), state revenues have been steadily declining.

Given that the increase in excise duty on tobacco, cigarettes and alcohol was imposed on the recommendation of the Commission:

Can it say when action will be taken to remedy this obviously mistaken policy, which is resulting in the erosion of state revenue and an increase alcohol and tobacco trafficking?