

Question for written answer E-005249/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Notis Marias (ECR)

Subject: Taking immediate measures to drastically reduce the high cost of food in Greece, including imposing zero VAT on dietary staples.

Food in Greece in 2015 cost more than the European average for most categories of basic food, in spite of the fact that, according to Eurostat figures, Greece is an important rural economy within the EU and it has experienced six consecutive years of memorandum-induced recession, legions of unemployed and poor and the loss of 25% of its GDP.

While the average per capita income in the country is less than 60% of that of the EU, dairy products and eggs are 31% more expensive than the Community average, making Greece the second most expensive Member State when it comes to buying from this product category. Prices for bread and cereals, which are basics, remain high: they are 14% more expensive than the Community average.

This high cost is down to high taxation, as VAT has skyrocketed for most of the aforementioned products, which has given rise to a food security problem for a large proportion of the population and encouraged tax evasion.

What measures will the Commission take to contribute, in collaboration with the Greek authorities, to the drastic cutting of food prices in Greece, including the imposition of zero VAT on dietary staples?