

**About this dossier**

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Directorate F. -Health and Food Safety Audits and Analysis

Annual Report on Official Controls

Country Name: Greece

Concerns activity during year: 2024

Country	Greece	Year	2024
1. Introduction			
<p><b>1. Food and Food Safety:</b> In the year 2024, the number of controls in the food sector has been reduced compared to those performed in 2023, due to lower response rate of the competent authorities. Strategic planning and priorities of the official controls were based in a risk analysis methodology and, care was taken to prevent fraudulent practices and fraud. It is pointed out, however, the significant reduction of human resources of the Competent Authorities at regional-local level over time and the difficulty of their response to the multiple responsibilities with which they are responsible. Nevertheless, the effort has been intensified for their more rational management with proportional coverage of companies in all stages of production, processing and distribution of food. The compliance rate of food businesses remained stable compared to previous years, with a total compliance of <b>95,2%</b>. The infringements mainly concern general hygiene issues related to deviations in the operating procedures, labelling issues of application of self-control systems and others (traceability issues, approval procedure etc). Laboratory testing of biological and chemical risk factors as well as quality parameters showed increased non-compliance rates compared to previous year, with a total non-compliance rate of 6,2%.</p> <p><b>2. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs):</b> Greece is still exempted from GMO cultivation and official controls are carried out on the seed lots for the adventitious presence of GM seed admixtures. These controls are carried out on seed lots of the following species: Maize (<i>Zea mays</i>), Cotton (<i>Gossypium spp</i>), Swede rape (<i>Brassica napus</i>), Soya bean (<i>Glycine max</i>), Tomato(<i>Solanum lycopersicum</i>) (varieties for processing) and beet (<i>Beta vulgaris</i>). There are no reports for the year 2024 of deliberate release into the environment of GM propagating material for the purpose of food and feed production. The level of compliance remains extremely high. More specifically, out of the 697 official controls carried out, 4 seed lots were found positive (0.57%) on adventitious admixtures and none of those had been released on the environment. In conclusion, this high level of compliance contributes to the achievement of strategic objectives 2 and 4 of Greek multi-annual national control plan.</p> <p><b>3. Feed and Feed Safety:</b> Concerning feed establishments, the level of compliance is satisfactory for the registered establishments and less satisfactory for the approved ones. As regards the level of compliance of the products, it is satisfactory for labelling, undesirable substances, pesticides, GMO's and feed additives.</p> <p><b>4. Animal Health:</b> In 2024, the main priorities of the official control plan regarding the animal health requirements were fulfilled and corrective actions were taken upon non compliances detected therein. Overall, official control actions and activities, in conjunction with the issuance of Ministerial Decisions, updated manuals and related recommendations at the level of the Central Competent Authority have contributed to the effective function of the official control system in the field of animal health and in the activation of action plans for the correction of non-compliances. Further, targeted national and union programmes on training and collaboration with competent authorities and bodies, as well as on programme management, were implemented. The number of official controls was determined by the concurrent conditions and mainly by a) the lack of staff and resources, situation to be resolved with the recruitment of new staff (ongoing procedure) and b) the increased workload imposed on the competent authorities in the veterinary authorities of the Regions/ Regional Units, due to the outbreaks of Peste de Petit Ruminants, Sheep Pox and Goat Pox, Bluetongue and African Swine Fever.</p> <p><b>5. Animal by-products:</b> The level of compliance achieved by ABP operators was acceptable.</p> <p><b>6. Animal Welfare:</b> In 2024, the Veterinary Authorities of the Country were faced with the management of serious epizootics. In addition to African Swine Fever (which had been occurring since 2023), Sheep and Goat Pox and Peste des Petits Ruminants were added. The latter made its first appearance in the veterinary annals of the country. Consequently, based on the above, there have been a reduced number of inspections in the field of animal welfare on farms. This is due not only to the reduced availability of Official Inspectors, but also to the prohibition and restriction of visits to farms for epidemiological reasons. On the contrary, impartial inspections in the field of animal welfare during transport increased, reaching the numbers of the pre-COVID-19 pandemic years (2019-2020). Regarding the field of animal welfare control during slaughter, it has been found that from 2022 onwards, due to the consolidation and updating of the checklists for the protection of animals during slaughter and for the hygiene of slaughterhouse facilities, more non-compliances are identified and more recommendations for corrective actions are imposed on slaughterhouses. Finally, in the year 2024, Official Inspectors were present and ensured the welfare of animals during their killing and farm depopulation when dealing with the above epizootics.</p> <p><b>7. Protective measures against pests of plants:</b> A good level of compliance is achieved. No operators for issuing of plant passports are authorized in Greece. The Competent authorities of the MRDF are responsible for issuing plant passports.</p> <p><b>8. Requirements for the placing on the market and use of plant protection products:</b> In the context of the official controls carried out in 2024 and referred in the tables (8.2 και 8.4) of Section 8 of Part II, certain non- compliances were detected and actions / measures were taken (<i>Administrative and Judicial based on the type of non- compliance</i>)</p> <p><b>9. Organic production and labeling of organic products:</b> An integrated control system covering all stages of production, processing and distribution of organic products is applied in accordance with the provisions set out under Reg. (EU) 2018/848. ELGO-DIMITRA, as the Competent Supervisory Authority of the control system of organic products, carried out both administrative and on-site inspections for the official control and certification in Organizations, bodies and other companies. All the aggregated results of official controls and non-compliances at a low rate are recorded in the attached excel file in section 9 of Part II.</p> <p><b>10. Use and labeling of protected designations of origin, protected geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed:</b> In 2024, 493 inspections were carried out and non-compliances were found in 68 enterprises (28 pre-market and 40 in the conventional market). According to the above, it is concluded: a) the effectiveness of the control and certification system in place in terms of identifying cases of non-compliance and b) that the percentage of non-compliance of enterprises is low.</p>			
2. Measures taken to ensure the effective operation of the Multi-Annual National Control Plan, including enforcement action and the results of such measures			
<p>In 2024, the strategic approach and the overall inspection policy based on risk analysis methodology for the frequency of official controls and other official activities especially in the food / food safety sector, continue to apply. This approach considers the overall compliance of the establishment / company over the previous four years. Revised checklists have been implemented to determine the risk category of the establishment and the consistent frequency of regular official inspections. Targeted training seminars for the local competent authorities and stakeholders were held on the changes of the official control process and the implementation of the new EU legislation (Regulations 2017/625, 2019/624, 2019/625, 2019/627). In addition, training programs were planned and carried out by the Central Competent Authorities in collaboration with public authorities, the training state institute of the National Center of the Public-School Administration and other bodies. In conclusion, it is noted that the non-compliances identified at all stages of the food chain ranged at low acceptable levels, while where required, administrative and judicial measures were taken at the national level.</p>			
3. Amendments to the Multi-Annual National Control Plan			

During the year 2024 there was no additional amendments to the revised Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP) of official controls of the Hellenic Ministry of Rural Development and Food for the five-year period 2021-2025 which was submitted to the competent body of the European Commission following a ministerial approval. The revised MANCP incorporates all the legal requirements of Official Controls as set out in the Relevant European Regulation of Official Controls. In addition, the revised MANCP is based on a Commission Guidance Document regarding the implementation of the requirements for the Multiannual National Control Plans in accordance with the provisions of the Articles 109-111 of Regulation 2017/625.

4. Fees or charges

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Attachments	Yes
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