

**Question for written answer E-000171/2025  
to the Commission**  
Rule 144  
**Sérgio Gonçalves (S&D)**

Subject: Banana producers' access to EU funds in Madeira

The Regional Government of Madeira manages the funds to support banana production from the programme of options specifically relating to remoteness and insularity (POSEI) through the public company GESBA (Empresa de Gestão do Sector da Banana). GESBA also buys bananas from producers, then grades and distributes them. This means that if producers want to receive POSEI funds for their bananas, they have to sell them to GESBA.

Moreover, GESBA has a practice of advancing funds to producers before they have delivered their banana production. This benefits producers as they can use this money in their production efforts. However, GESBA has recently required producers to sign a commitment to deliver bananas exclusively to it in order to access funds in advance. All of the above effectively prevents other cooperatives and associations from purchasing bananas competitively from producers and, therefore, from participating in the banana market in Madeira.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission consider these practices to be consistent with EU competition rules and with the need to ensure fair access to EU funds?
2. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that producers can freely choose who they sell their bananas to without jeopardising their access to POSEI funds?

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