

**Question for written answer E-003258/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Costas Mavrides (S&D)

Subject: Infringement of the regulation on halloumi involving illegal movements of sheep and goats from Türkiye to the Occupied Territories

It was recently announced that Türkiye is supplying sheep and goats to the occupied part of Cyprus to be distributed for halloumi production. According to the announcement, sheep and goats will be distributed to stockbreeders in the Occupied Territories as part of what is known as the 'sheep- and goat-breeding extension programme' for rural development that is being run with assistance from the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) in collaboration with the occupying regime to increase the number of sheep and goats and the number of holdings with a view to supplying the sheep and goat milk which is a requirement for the certification of halloumi.

As there is a ban on importing these animals into the European Union from Türkiye, their direct importation into the occupied area is illegal and the use of such animals and/or their crossbreeds for PDO halloumi production in the Occupied Territories is in breach of the associated EU regulation. In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation? If not, given that weeks have passed since the above situation was announced, is it concerned that it has not been aware of it?
2. What steps will it take to prevent the import of animals from Türkiye and the use of such sheep and goats and/or their crossbreeds for the production of PDO halloumi, thereby ensuring that the regulation is applied in practice?

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