

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Greece takes over Presidency of the Council of the EU

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

On January 1, 2014, Greece took over the rotating six-month Presidency of the Council of the European Union. In terms of priorities, the elections for a new European Parliament in May 2014 are significantly shortening the calendar of activities for the Greek Presidency. This report provides an overview of the Agriculture and Environment Council agendas.

Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union

On January 1, 2014, Greece took over the rotating six-month Presidency of the Council of the European Union from Lithuania. Greece is holding the Presidency for the fifth time since its accession to the EU in 1981. The rotating Presidency represents the interests of the 28 EU Member States and is responsible for organizing formal and informal Council meetings and represents the Council in relations with other EU institutions.

The national rotating presidencies of the EU are divided into “Trios”, i.e. groups of three Member States. The objective is to ensure continuity and consistency in the work of the Council over an 18-month period. Each Presidency Trio prepares a “Trio Program” which is an 18-month work plan setting out the Council’s key objectives. Together with Ireland (January 1-June 30, 2013) and Lithuania (July 1-December 31, 2013), Greece (January 1-June 30, 2014) constitutes the current Presidency Trio. The full text of the Trio Program can be downloaded from the Greek Presidency’s website at <http://gr2014.eu/eu-presidency/the-eu-presidency/trio-presidency>. On July 1, 2014, Italy will take over the Presidency from Greece.

In terms of priorities, the elections for a new European Parliament in May 2014 are considerably shortening the calendar of activities for the Greek Presidency. Unlike the Lithuanian Presidency’s ambitious work plan (see [GAIN report “Lithuanian Presidency Priorities for the Agriculture Sector”](#)), the Greek Presidency will have a lighter legislative agenda. As the European Parliament goes into recess on April 17, 2014, legislative negotiations between the three main EU institutions will have to be held in the first trimester of 2014. Italy will be the first Presidency to work with the new members of the European Parliament.

Greek Presidency Calendar

Issues of interest to FAS/USEU and FAS in the EU Member States are discussed in the meetings of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council and the Environment Council.

Agriculture and Fisheries:

- **February 17-18, 2014 (Brussels)**
 - o Commission Report on island farming
 - o Commission Report on minor uses
 - o School Fruit Scheme
- **March 24-25, 2014 (Brussels)**
 - o Proposal for a regulation on organic farming
 - o Commission Report on the fruit and vegetables sector since the 2007 reform

- Commission Report concerning results of September 2013 Dairy Conference
- Proposal for a directive relating to honey
- **April 14-15, 2014 (Luxembourg)**
 - International Agreement on olive oil and table olives
 - Fisheries
- **May 19-20, 2014 (Brussels)**
 - Promotion measures for agricultural products in the EU and third countries
 - The role of the EU in the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) after the Lisbon Treaty
 - Legally binding agreement on forests in Europe
- **June 16-17, 2014 (Luxembourg)**
 - Animal, Plant and Control Package (first reading)
 - Proposal for a regulation on organic farming
 - Commission Report on the implementation of the milk package
 - Fishing opportunities for 2015

Environment:

- **March 3, 2014 (Brussels)**
 - Commission Communication Climate and Energy 2030 Framework
- **June 12, 2014 (Luxembourg)**
 - Biodiversity: draft Council conclusions on the 12th Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention on biological diversity

Links

- [Greek Presidency website](#)
- [Key achievements of the Lithuanian Presidency](#)