European Commission

A NEW CHAPTER FOR GREECE

A NEW START FOR JOBS AND GROWTH

FULL MOBILISATION OF EU FUNDS

The Commission set out an action plan in 2015 to help Greece maximise its use of EU funds, with the aim of mobilising up to €35 billion under various funding programmes for the period up to 2020.

Exceptional measures to help Greece maximise its use of EU funds included:

- For the 2007-2013 period: increase of the co-financing rate to 100% with retroactive effect and the removal of the 95% cap on payments before Operational Programme closure in 2017.
- For the 2014-2020 period: annual payment of additional pre-financing of 3.5% of total European funds for 2015 and for 2016.

The European Structural and Investment Funds and other European funds are by far the main source of public investment in Greece. Overall, and also as a result of the exceptional measures provided for in the plan, Greece has received almost €16 billion so far. This is equivalent to 9% of the 2017 annual gross domestic product of Greece.

- Greece was the first Member State to have fully absorbed all the European funds available for the period 2007-2013 from the European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund.
- Greece is among the top absorbers of funds available from the European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund for the period 2014-2020.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As part of the plan, Greece also benefits from technical support for building administrative capacity for the design and implementation of structural reforms. Technical support has been closely aligned with the provisions of the ESM stability support programme.

The Commission's Structural Reform Support Service coordinates all technical support provided to Greece in that context, it identifies the the appropriate technical support provider, defines the support and ensures its delivery, supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

Reform projects so far supported include:

- Establishing and getting up and running the new Independent Authority for Public Revenue.
- More efficient human-resource management in the public sector.
- The consolidation of a large number of Greek pension funds into a Single Social Security Fund (EFKA).
- Setting up and beginning to implement a new framework for enforced collection of assets for private debts (e-auctions).

THE JUNCKER PLAN – SUPPORTING INVESTMENTS

The European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core of the Juncker Plan, was established to make smarter use of new and existing financial resources in order to boost investment, create jobs and spur growth in Europe.

Also, thanks to the technical assistance provided, Greece is the top under the Juncker Plan in terms of EFSI-triggered investment relative to GDP.

As of July 2018, total financing under the EFSI in Greece via both the European Investment Fund and the European Investment Bank amounts to €2.7 billion and is set to trigger €10.6 billion in investments.

Over 20,000 small and medium sized companies in Greece are set to benefit from improved access to finance thanks to these agreements.

Some examples of projects the Juncker Plan has helped to finance include:

- €150 million loan to telecoms operator Cosmote to roll out high-speed broadband across Greece.
- €24 million loan to Terna Energy Group to build three new wind farms in Viotia.
- Mani Foods, a Greek SME, secured a loan from the National Bank of Greece to invest in new machinery and staff for its Kalamata olive production company.

EXTRA SUPPORT FOR MANAGING MIGRATION

Since 2015, as the refugee crisis began to unfold, the European Commission has supported Greece with more than €1.6 billion to manage migration, humanitarian situation and the external borders. This funding includes over €456 million in emergency support which comes on top of the €561 million already allocated to Greece under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund. With a cumulated allocated funding of over €1 billion, Greece is the top beneficiary amongst all Member States under these funds, which support national efforts to for example improve reception capacities and asylum procedures, increase the effectiveness of return programmes and better control the external borders.