Question for written answer E-001529/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)

Subject: Addressing the problem of integrated waste management on the Greek islands

Article 174 TFEU provides for 'actions leading to the strengthening of territorial cohesion in geographically disadvantaged areas'.

Waste management forms part of the extremely complex set of challenges faced by islands.

In 2021, the Commission reported that insufficient progress had been made with regard to waste management infrastructure (recycling, circular economy). More than 90 % of the waste generated on the Greek islands – around 285 000 tonnes/year – is simply buried or 'baled'.

During the 2014-2020 period, almost EUR 1 billion was made available from the European Structural and Investment Funds[1] to improve waste management activities, but to little avail... Until 2022, the total fines for the ineffective management of hazardous waste exceeded EUR 180 000 000, with further fines expected.

Notably, the South Aegean Region took the decision to transfer waste from Kalymnos to the landfill site in Kos. The move was met with opposition by the municipal authorities of Kos, prompting a devious 'offer of help' from expansionist Türkiye.

1. The Greek Government has made promises to invest in measures to address the problem[2] in the 2021-2027 period. Provided that the Commission is aware of these promises, does it believe that they will lead to modern/integrated waste management on the Greek islands or not?

2. In the Commission's view, what other initiatives do the Greek authorities need to take in order to achieve a comprehensive and viable solution?

3. To what extent have the Greek authorities benefited from the TAIEX Environmental Implementation Review PEER 2 PEER programme[3]?

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[1] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes/overview-funding-programmes/european-structural-and-investment-funds_en
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/2021_2027/
[3] The Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) tool supporting Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) between peers (Peer 2 Peer) https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/p2p/index_en.htm