

**Question for written answer E-004175/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Asger Christensen (Renew)

Subject: Linking islands to the mainland

The Commission's strategy for islands highlights the importance of territorial cohesion and reliable year-round ferry connections between islands and the mainland.

With that in mind:

1. Can a Member State waive its overall responsibility for pursuing the objectives of economic, social and territorial cohesion set out in Articles 174 and 175 TFEU and the EU strategy for islands by making local authorities responsible for the provision of ferry services to islands to which there is no bridge, or do the national authorities remain responsible for ensuring that national arrangements and funding do not significantly impair the islands' links to the mainland?
2. When a local authority significantly reduces an island's only physical link to the mainland where there is no bridge to the island concerned, should the Member State ensure that an assessment is carried out of the implications for residents, businesses, public services and the viability of the island in the light of Articles 174 and 175 TFEU and the principle of the 'island-proofing mechanism' before the reduction is implemented?
3. Is it compatible with the EU strategy for islands for a national funding and responsibility model to allow for such a link to be significantly reduced for reasons relating to local authority finances, without an independent national assessment being made of the territorial consequences and the need for national support and compensation instruments?

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