

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000636/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(11 February 2025)**

Subject: EU support in response to the seismic activity in the Cyclades — activating the Copernicus Emergency Management Service

The island of Santorini and the wider Cyclades region are being struck by continuous seismic activity, with more than 7 700 earthquakes recorded in recent weeks. The strongest tremor was recorded on 10 February 2025, measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale. The intense seismic activity has prompted fear among residents, caused damage to infrastructure and resulted in the temporary closure of schools. Local authorities are on standby, but there is a critical need for accurate data and satellite mapping. Activating the Copernicus Emergency Management Service (CEMS) will provide valuable support to the Greek authorities with regard to monitoring the impact and coordinating necessary actions. We call on the European Commission to act swiftly, ensuring a timely response and the protection of citizens.

In view of the above:

1. Will the Commission take action to enable the activation of the CEMS service for Santorini and the Cyclades?
2. How can the Commission support the Greek authorities in managing the consequences of this ongoing seismic activity?
3. Are there any additional European mechanisms that can be activated to protect citizens and infrastructure on the islands?

Submitted: 11.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kubilius on behalf of the European Commission
(19 May 2025)**

Greece is an active user of the EU' satellite mapping Copernicus Emergency Management Service (CEMS)⁽¹⁾, that is coordinated via the Emergency Response Coordination Centre⁽²⁾, working on a 24 hours/7 days basis. The Commission stands ready to activate CEMS anytime for the Cyclades area upon Greece's request.

In addition to the rapid mapping service of damage, the risk and recovery service could support other cartographic products, such as monitoring ground deformation or preparing evacuation plans for a future episode. Furthermore, the Commission supports Member States in managing the consequences of seismic activities and to mitigate the impact of future earthquakes, like common Eurocode standards for seismic design, or funding for collaborative projects, including for seismic retrofitting of buildings. For the current programming period, cohesion policy supports Greece with approximately EUR 130 million for the prevention and management of risks related to natural hazards not linked to climate change, including earthquakes. The Greek recovery and resilience plan⁽³⁾ includes an investment comprising the evaluation of seismic risk of various critical buildings.

Greece can activate the EU Civil Protection Mechanism⁽⁴⁾ under the conditions laid down in the EU legislation. Furthermore, the Commission supports disaster prevention and preparedness through disaster resilience grants and the Technical Assistance Financing Facility. Greek entities have participated in projects on seismic resilience under the Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness call for proposals.

The EU Solidarity Fund⁽⁵⁾ can be activated at the request of Greece demonstrating that the total direct damage exceeds the applicable thresholds⁽⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://mapping.emergency.copernicus.eu/>.

⁽²⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/emergency-response-coordination-centre-ercc_en.

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en.

⁽⁵⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3) as amended by Regulation (EU) No 661/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 May 2014 (OJ L 189, 27.6.2014, p. 143) and by Regulation (EU) 2020/461 of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 March 2020 (OJ L 99, 31.3.2020, p. 9); <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32002R2012>.

⁽⁶⁾ Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002.