

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001667/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(24 April 2025)**

Subject: The Greek islands' lack of resilience to natural disasters and the need for sustainable spatial planning

The recent devastating floods on Aegean islands such as Paros, Mykonos and Rhodes have shown the lack of infrastructure and planning for tackling the climate crisis. In Paros, one month's rainfall fell in two hours, flooding built-up areas and turning the bay of Naousa into a lake of mud. Urban sprawl, the destruction of traditional water retention structures (such as dry-stone terraces) and their replacement with impermeable materials such as cement have dramatically worsened the situation.

At the same time, a large number of building permits have been issued on islands such as Paros — even more than in 'saturated' tourist destinations such as Mykonos and Santorini. Meanwhile, residents and businesses are struggling to repair damages before the start of the tourist season, while local frustration with the abandonment of public services is coming to a head.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Are there financial tools available for sustainable spatial restructuring and flood protection projects in areas under intense tourist pressure?
2. Does it intend to ask the Greek Government to review the construction policy on the islands in order to ensure the protection of the natural and cultural landscape and the safety of residents and tourists?

Submitted: 24.4.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(8 July 2025)**

1. In 2021-2027, at least EUR 14.8 billion from Cohesion Policy funds is allocated to support islands, targeting competitiveness, green transition, better connectivity, housing, sustainable tourism and inclusive growth. Member States may also use these funds for disaster risk management, including flood prevention, response and resilience measures in islands, based on the national or subnational climate risk assessments. Greece, in particular, allocates EUR 726 million in public funding for flood risk prevention and management, including in insular areas, under the Cohesion Policy programmes. As per the shared management principle, national authorities are responsible for selecting and implementing projects. Furthermore, under the Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan ⁽¹⁾, the reform for the preparation of urban plans addresses gaps in spatial planning and land use to promote sustainable economic activity and environmental protection.

2. The Commission acknowledges the pressure from excessive tourism and construction in islands. However, the EU has no competence on construction policy.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en.