

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002095/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(26 May 2025)**

Subject: Lack of housing on the Greek islands and the impact on the provision of essential public services — need for EU support and coordinated action

During the tourist season, many Greek islands face a serious housing problem, as increased demand for tourist accommodation leads to a lack of available housing for long-term rental. This makes finding accommodation extremely difficult for public servants, such as doctors, teachers, teachers and seasonal firefighters, who are called upon to serve in these areas.

In particular, on the islands of the Northern Sporades, firefighters have resigned as they were unable to find accommodation or reasonable rents.

The housing problem affects critical sectors such as health and education, as workers find it difficult to find adequate and affordable housing. This situation undermines the ability of local authorities to provide essential services and respond to emergencies, especially in the current context of the climate crisis and increased tourist pressure.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following:

1. How does it intend to support, through existing funding tools, Member States with meeting critical housing needs for public servants in island and remote areas?
2. Does it intend to reinforce the eligible actions under the regional programmes to include accommodation and temporary accommodation infrastructure for staff of key public services, such as healthcare, teachers and firefighters, in frontline areas?
3. Will it consider setting up a European preparedness mechanism in island and tourist areas to systematically record housing shortages, allow a rapid response and substantiate the need for additional funding?

Submitted: 26.5.2025

**Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(14 August 2025)**

The Commission will put forward a European Affordable Housing Plan and propose an EU strategy for sustainable tourism early 2026 with an extensive stakeholder consultation in 2025.

In respect of funding and financing, various EU funds are already available to support social and affordable housing ⁽¹⁾ and student housing.

These funds and programmes include the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the InvestEU, the Horizon Europe, the Technical Support Instrument, the Single Market Programme, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, and the Social Climate Fund.

In addition, the Cohesion Fund and the Just Transition Fund also support the investments in the energy efficiency of housing stock. To assist Member States, the Commission has published a toolkit that provides an overview of available EU funding opportunities in housing, too ⁽²⁾.

On 1 April 2025, the Commission proposed a mid-term review to modernise Cohesion policy — including flexibilities and incentives to encourage Member States and regions to double their investments in affordable housing under Cohesion policy — and adopted a new financial instrument model for affordable housing (for combining Cohesion policy funding with resources from the European Investment Bank and other financial institutions) ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ For example new social and affordable housing, and refurbishment of old housing stock, blocks of flats, etc.

⁽²⁾ Social Housing and beyond, <https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-launches-toolkit-support-social-housing-member-states>.

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_929/ — Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1058 and (EU) 2021/1056 as regards specific measures to address strategic challenges in the context of the mid-term review (COM(2025) 123).

Currently, Greece has allocated some EUR 751 million for energy efficiency interventions in residences under the national Programmes 'Environment and Climate Change 2021-2027' and Just Transition Programme as well as under some regional programmes.

Actions under regional programmes are decided and managed by the respective managing authorities of Member States. In line of the principle of subsidiarity, whether a preparedness mechanism the Honourable Member refers to is to be set up is subject to the decision and organisation of national, regional and local authorities.
