

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003231/25
to the Commission
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(13 August 2025)

Subject: Insufficient use of European funds for water management in Greece

Despite significant European funding for Greece through the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund, ⁽¹⁾ amounting to EUR 541 million for water infrastructure and EUR 85 million for water resources management, ⁽²⁾ the country continues to face serious water scarcity problems, especially in high-risk areas such as Crete, Thessaly and the islands.

The insufficient absorption of the funds is questionable; it is undermined by factors such as disorganised management and lack of integrated planning, as well as ageing infrastructure, while non-compliance with the Water Framework Directive ⁽³⁾ is hindering progress.

In light of the above:

1. How does the Commission assess Greece's efficiency ⁽⁴⁾ in using these funds?
2. What actions could the Commission take to help ensure the creation of a reliable and transparent water management body and technically adequate regulatory oversight in Greece, with the aim of the efficient use of Union funds?
3. How will the Commission ensure that the improved use of Union funds will not result in additional burdens (see water costs) for citizens?

Submitted: 13.8.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(15 October 2025)

Greece is among the front runners in absorption of Cohesion policy funds, with a payment rate of 18.4% against an EU average of 12.1% ⁽¹⁾.

In water management, project selection stands at 77%, with a payment rate of 19% (EUR 105 million) for water infrastructure and 21% (EUR 18 million) for water resource management¹.

Under Greece's Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) ⁽²⁾, the Regulatory Authority for Waste, Energy and Water ⁽³⁾ (R.A.A.E.Y) has been set up to supervise *inter alia* the water sector, implement rational water management policy, strengthen the institutional framework, and ensure sustainable services, including tariff rationalisation in line with the 'polluter pays' principle.

The Greek cohesion policy programmes include dedicated allocations for strengthening the capacity of water providers. Member States can also request targeted technical support through instruments such as the Technical Support Instrument ⁽⁴⁾ (TSI) or the Cohesion for Transitions ⁽⁵⁾ (C4T) platform to implement reforms and improve governance in the sector.

Water management is primarily a Member State competence ⁽⁶⁾ including the responsibility for organising water services and choosing ownership models. However, water management must always comply with EU law and EU environmental objectives.

Water pricing policies should respect the Water Framework Directive ⁽⁷⁾, and be based on socioeconomic and environmental analysis to ensure adequate cost recovery. Member States may apply different mechanisms to preserve affordability, including social tariffs or progressive block tariffs.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/erdf_en.

² <https://www.real.gr/politiki/arthro/komision-se-g-aftia-dinoume-541-ekat-evro-gia-ydrefsi-stin-ellada-625065/>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32000L0060>.

⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/parched-southern-greece-reveals-eus-giant-challenge- conserve-water-2025-02-20>.

⁽¹⁾ https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/2021-2027/2021-2027-Finances-Detailed-Planned-vs-Implemented/3git-md5z/data_preview.

⁽²⁾ <https://greece20.gov.gr/en/the-complete-plan/>.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.raaey.gr/>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/technical-support-instrument/technical-support-instrument-tsi_en.

⁽⁵⁾ Managing Authorities and beneficiaries planning to implement water-related projects under Cohesion Policy Objective 2 (Greener Europe) can apply for technical assistance under Cohesion For Transitions (C4T) Community of Practice, with a new call for support to be opened in Q4 2025. https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/communities-and-networks/cohesion-4-transition_en#inline-nav-3.

⁽⁶⁾ Based on TFEU art.345 http://data.europa.eu/eli/treaty/tfeu_2008/art_345/oj.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 9 of the directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1-73, as amended by Commission Directive 2014/101/EU of 30 October 2014, OJ L 311, 31.10.2014, p. 32-35.

Investments should rely on a sound demand forecast quantifying water demand, including future trends and tariff elasticity, and an analysis of technical options where relevant.
