

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004060/25
to the Commission
Kostas Papadakis (NI)
(15 October 2025)**

Subject: Protection of archaeological finds on Papoura Hill in Heraklion, Crete

The anger and mobilisation of the residents of Crete have been caused by the plans of the New Democracy Government to install a radar for a private airport at the archaeological site on Papoura Hill on Pediada Plain in Kastelli, Crete.

The unacceptable decision constitutes a cultural and archaeological crime. The installation threatens the integrity of the monument and its accessibility, as well as the health and quality of life of residents, due to electromagnetic radiation.

Furthermore, concern is created by the possible connection of the structures with the existing military airport and the geostrategic role of Crete in the EU's war plans in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Residents, archaeologists, labour unions and mass organisations have been mobilising to condemn the crime and demand that the decision is revoked.

The devaluation of cultural heritage and the steadily decreasing state funding for its protection and promotion are in line with the guidelines of the EU, which considers culture a commodity that acquires significance only when it contributes to enhancing the competitiveness, profitability and external face of the capitalist economy, and to ensuring 'social cohesion', i.e. the alignment of workers with the interests of capital.

In view of the above, what is the Commission's position:

1. on the request for the immediate cancellation of plans to install the private airport radar in Kastelli and any modern construction in the vicinity of the unique monument on Papoura Hill?
2. on the request for excavations to continue without hindrance as well as the in-depth study of the findings, under the responsibility and funding of the state?

Submitted: 15.10.2025

**Answer given by Mr Micallef on behalf of the European Commission
(1 December 2025)**

The Commission considers cultural heritage a cornerstone of European identity and social cohesion, a driver of the creative economy and sustainable development, and a catalyst for societal resilience. It promotes its safeguarding, accessibility and mainstreaming across multi-level EU policies and programmes.

Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ⁽¹⁾ stipulates that EU's role is limited to encouraging cooperation between Member States and supporting and supplementing their actions, with a view to conserving and safeguarding cultural heritage of European significance. The management of archaeological sites remains the sole responsibility of the Member States.

Over the years, the Commission has increased the budget of the Creative Europe programme from EUR 1.47 billion (2014-2020) to EUR 2.44 billion (2021-2027). One third of the current programme (EUR 0.8 billion) is dedicated to the Culture Strand. In the next Multiannual Financial Framework, the Commission proposes to double the budget in the Creative Europe — Culture strand of the new Agora EU programme, from EUR 0.8 billion to EUR 1.8 billion.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 202 7.6.2016, p. 121-122.