

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000179/26
to the Commission
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(16 January 2026)**

Subject: Timeliness of the technical problem in the Athens FIR — Assessment of the Commission's action and compliance with EU rules

On 4 January 2026, the operation of the Athens Flight Information Region (FIR) was subject to extensive technical disruption to communications systems. As a result, all flights within and outside Greek airspace were grounded for several hours, with interruptions to radio communications, as well as serious delays and problems with arrivals and departures, revealing vulnerabilities in the country's air traffic systems and the need to modernise infrastructure ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾ ⁽⁴⁾.

This incident took place following my previous parliamentary written question on the matter (E-001606/2025 ⁽⁵⁾), to which the Commission replied with general references to inspections and infringement procedures, without addressing specific shortcomings, despite calls for review.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. How does it assess the impact of this recent incident on the guarantees for the implementation of the air safety rules and communication standards provided for in Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 and related rules?
2. Does it consider that the previous answer to Question E-001606/2025 responded to the real challenges of the system, or is there a need for updated and targeted action by the Commission?
3. What measures does it propose to urgently upgrade and ensure the resilience of air traffic control communications and systems in Member States with critical infrastructure, such as Greece, to avoid similar incidents in the future?

Submitted: 16.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(30 March 2026)**

1. Civil aviation flights operate under EU aviation safety rules implemented by the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority (HCAA) which oversees HASP (Greek Air Navigation Service Provider). The incident on 4 January 2026 underlines the need for Greece to continue implementing safety rules under Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 ⁽¹⁾, and the urgency to modernise its air traffic management (ATM) system. The HCAA should determine whether additional measures are needed to ensure safety, based on the outcome of the investigations and the likelihood of future outages.
2. The Commission is addressing the ATM situation in Greece and engaging closely with the Greek authorities and HASP. The Commission has opened three infringement procedures for the deployment of datalink capabilities ⁽²⁾, of modern radars ⁽³⁾, and for the publication of performance-based navigation procedures ⁽⁴⁾. The Commission, supported by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL) and the SESAR Joint Undertaking Deployment Manager, are reviewing Greece's regular progress reports on the actions to achieve compliance with EU law.
3. The Commission expects the new Greek Law n 5240/2025 will provide to HASP the autonomy and resources necessary to recruit sufficient staff and modernise the Greek ATM infrastructure, including air traffic control communications systems. The Commission will closely follow up on the independent safety investigation findings and the implementation of recommendations to avoid similar incidents in the future.

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/greek-airports-halt-flights-due-radio-frequency-issues-2026-01-04>

² <https://greekreporter.com/2026/01/04/greece-ground-all-flights-fir-technical-failure>

³ <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1291523/domestic-flight-service-slowly-resumes-authorities-investigating-fir-technical-failure>

⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/world/blackout-greek-airspace-mystery-outage-reignites-debate-over-ageing-systems-2026-01-05/>

⁵ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-001606_EN.html

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1139/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ INFR(2020)2050, Letter of formal notice sent on 03/10/2024, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_4561.

⁽³⁾ INFR(2024)2237, Reasoned Opinion adopted on 11.12.2025, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_25_2745.

⁽⁴⁾ INFR(2024)2014, Referral decision adopted on 11.12.2025, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_2864.