

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001879/26
to the Commission
Maria Zacharia (NI)
(6 May 2026)**

Subject: Mining activity in a residential area in Achlada, Florina, and implementation of the EU environmental *acquis*

In Achlada, Florina, lignite mining activities are continuing in an active residential area — in the immediate vicinity of homes and a school — without residents having been relocated as required. These conditions give rise to serious concerns regarding the exposure of residents — particularly minors — to particulate matter, noise, vibrations and other nuisances, and calls into question the adequacy of environmental licensing practices, the protection of human health and the management of extractive waste.

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

1. Does it consider that the continuation of this kind of mining activity in the immediate vicinity of a residential area and school calls for a specific check on compliance with Directive 2011/92/EU on environmental impact assessments, EU air quality legislation and Directive 2006/21/EC on extractive waste?
2. Has it requested or does it intend to request from the Greek authorities the relevant data on air quality, noise, vibrations, school protection measures and conditions for the safe continuation of the activity?
3. If shortcomings are identified in the implementation of EU environmental law, does the Commission intend to consider initiating a procedure under Article 258 TFEU?

Submitted: 6.5.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(10 July 2026)**

Open-cast mining where the surface of the site exceeds 25 hectares are listed in Annex I of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive ⁽¹⁾ and according to Article 4(1) of the same Directive, an environmental impact assessment must be carried out.

Other open-cast mining and underground mining are listed in Annex II (points 2.a and 2.b). According to Article 4 (2) of the EIA Directive, prior to granting a consent for such projects, it is up to Member States to determine whether an environmental impact assessment is necessary, based on a case-by-case analysis or by setting specific criteria (such as the location, size or type of project).

Such an assessment, if required, should identify and address any significant impacts of such projects on the environment (including, where relevant, impacts related to noise, air pollution) and human health.

However, and without prejudice to the Commission's role as guardian of the Treaties, it is primarily the responsibility of the Greek authorities to ensure that projects are developed and authorised in full compliance with EU environmental legislation.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1-21, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014, OJ L 124, 25.4.2014, p. 1-18.