

Question for written answer E-004636/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Notis Marias (ECR)

Subject: Infringement of public service obligation regarding flights to airports serving remote Aegean and Ionian islands

In accordance with Articles 16, 17 and 18 of Regulation (EC) 1008/2008, scheduled air services are currently being provided under a public service contract for the period 2012- 2016, with flights to airports serving Crete and remote Aegean and Ionian islands. These include return flights from Athens to Astypalaia, Ikaria, Leros, Milos, Kythira, Naxos, Paros, Karpathos, Sitia, Skiathos, Skyros, Zakynthos and Syros; from Thessaloniki to Samos, Chios, Corfu, Skyros, Limnos and Ikaria; from Alexandroupolis to Sitia; from Actium to Sitia; from Corfu to Actium, Kefalonia, Zakynthos and Kythira; from Limnos to Mytilene, Chios, Samos and Rhodes and from Rhodes to Karpathos, Kasos, Sitia, Kos, Leros, Astypalea and Kastellorizo.

However, in drawing up new invitations to tender for the operation of these scheduled air services, the Civil Aviation Authority is drastically reducing the annual number of flights.

In view of this and bearing in mind the remoteness and insularity of these regions:

- Can the Commission say whether such a drastic reduction in scheduled air services to and from the above airports is in line with Regulation (EC) 1008/2008 and Article 174 TFEU?

- What funding could be provided and what programmes implemented to maintain the current frequency of essential regular air services to and from the above airports?