

Question for written answer E-004086/2019
to the Commission
Rule 138
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)

Subject: Catastrophic flooding in many areas of Greece

Heavy rainfall and a lack of flood prevention schemes have resulted in widespread destruction in Rhodes, Kineta, Halkidiki, Thassos, the Ionian islands (especially Corfu, Kefalonia and Zakynthos) and Western Greece, leaving one person dead in Rhodes and several injured. Working-class homes have been buried in mud, rural roads have been destroyed and other roads flooded and problems have been reported with water, electricity and telephone networks.

Once again it has been shown that property belonging to ordinary working class people is vulnerable to such events, because civil protection has been systematically undermined by the hunt for profit; those who blame 'extreme phenomena' and 'climate change' are simply seeking a pretext to deflect attention from the underlying cause. The recent civil protection framework established by the ND government adopts the same strategy based on the relevant European directives. The limited flood protection schemes that exist do not form part of an integrated flood prevention plan, but are designed to boost the profits of the construction groups. The result is always the same: huge cost overruns, a peacemeal approach and shoddy work. The long-term responsibility for this lies with the EU, successive Greek governments and the regions.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Will it activate the 'Solidarity Fund' for the affected areas mentioned above, in order not only to restore infrastructure but also to fully compensate ordinary working class households who are excluded under the existing regulation?
2. How does it view the fact that the EU's long-standing guidelines and the policies of EU governments have brought about the current unacceptable state of affairs?