

**Question for written answer E-003545/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dimitrios Papadimoulis (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Grants to Greek media outlets for an information campaign about the Coronavirus pandemic

Despite demands by the opposition and many media outlets in Greece, the Greek government is refusing to release any information about the public communication and information campaign which it decided to launch about the Coronavirus pandemic. The total campaign has so far cost the State EUR 20 million in grants distributed to a long list of media outlets. This list, which was published after a long delay, includes non-existent or inactive websites which do not feature in the relevant Register of Electronic Media Enterprises.

The government stubbornly refuses to disclose the criteria for selecting recipients and the amounts allocated to them; this was done through a company that was directly awarded the contract for distributing the total campaign spending for a fee, thereby circumventing the provisions about public procurement.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of any similar campaigns by the competent authorities of the Member States, and does it have information about the criteria and the amount of grants distributed to the media, and about whether - and how - the principles of transparency and public accountability have been respected so as to prevent public money being squandered?
2. Does it know whether EU funds are available for this purpose? If so, have they been used for such campaigns in the Member States and in particular in Greece?