

**Question for written answer E-006605/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Maria Spyraki (PPE)

Subject: Air quality in the Thessaloniki area

Today, the Commission has decided to initiate proceedings against Greece before the Court of Justice of the European Union on grounds of poor air quality due to high levels of particulate matter (PM10).

According to the data submitted by Greece to the Commission, the situation in the Thessaloniki region is particularly serious, with statutory limits being consistently exceeded for fourteen consecutive years, from 2005 to 2019 inclusive, with the exception of 2013.

Air pollution

is currently the biggest environmental risk to human health in the EU, with 379 000 premature deaths being caused by exposure to particulate matter, 54 000 attributed to nitrogen dioxide and 19 000 to ground-level ozone.

The most common causes of premature death attributed to air pollution are heart diseases and strokes, followed by lung diseases and lung cancer.

In view of this:

1. What possibilities are open to local and regional authorities and to the Greek Government to secure funding for air quality improvement in the Thessaloniki region under the European Recovery and Resilience Facility?
2. Is European funding available to improve air quality in the current Multiannual Financial Framework and what EU funding is being earmarked for this purpose in the new programming period?