

**Question for written answer E-003457/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Maria Spyraiki (PPE)

Subject: Reopening the Anthropological Museum of Petralona, Chalkidiki

For three years, since 1 January 2019, the Petralona Cave and Anthropological Museum in Chalkidiki has been closed to the public while the 'Promotion of the Petralona Cave and upgrade of its infrastructure' project, co-funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds in the framework of the 'Central Macedonia 2014-2020' operational programme, is under way.

Petralona Cave is both a magnificent monument of nature and an ancient monument of exceptional importance, containing fossilised human skulls, remains of human activity and paleontological remains dating from around 300 000 to 600 000 years ago. It is one of the few archaeological sites of this period in Europe. Of particular note is the human skull found perfectly preserved inside the cave. Known as the 'Petralona man', it is the oldest human remains found to date in Greece and one of the most important paleontological finds in Europe.

Given the site's major archaeological importance:

1. What information does the Commission have on how this co-funded project is progressing?
2. Are there any plans to extend the programme and allocate additional funds or possibly funding from new programmes during the current programming period in order to speed up the work so that the cave and museum can once again be visited?