

**Question for written answer E-002528/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Delayed launch of public service obligations for the Azores

The public service obligations (PSOs) imposed on airlines with a view to providing connectivity in isolated and remote regions, such as the outermost regions (Article 349 TFEU), play an essential role: they safeguard continuity, regularity and price stability, which, collectively, very actively help to move those regions forward on the development path that the other regions in the EU are on.

The Autonomous Region of the Azores, an outermost region (OR), has been waiting for many months for the launch of the call for tender for PSOs on air routes between the archipelago and mainland Portugal, a task that the national government is responsible for and has publicly committed to. The national government is also primarily responsible for safeguarding territorial continuity and achieving economic and social cohesion.

Following successive demands from the Azores Government, the socialist Portuguese Government clarified that the launch of the call for tender was dependent on 'the analysis of the European Commission, which must draw up a communication, in line with EU law'.

1. Can the Commission confirm that its authorisation is required in a case of this kind involving a previously set PSO, taking into account that Regulation 1008/2008 does not provide for that need?
2. Can it confirm that this case is being analysed and if so, when did it receive the request from the socialist Portuguese Government and what was its thrust?
3. When does it expect the process to be completed?

Supporter¹

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