

**Priority question for written answer P-000201/2024/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Stelios Kouloglou (The Left)

Subject: Ongoing threats to press freedom in Greece and erosion of the rule of law

The ongoing threats to press freedom and the erosion of the rule of law in Greece go hand in hand with the excessive recourse to proceedings against public participation (strategic lawsuits against public participation, commonly known as SLAPPs). Greece is already high on the list of countries where the problem is most acute.¹

A noteworthy case is that of Mr Grigoris Dimitriadis (former Secretary-General to the Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis), who resigned over the wiretapping scandal. He filed SLAPPs against the daily newspaper EFSYN, the Reporters United group, the TVXS news agency website and the journalist Thanasis Koukakis, claiming predatory sums² in damages for their reporting of the scandal.³⁴ Mr Koukakis and Mr Malichoudis of Reporters United were victims of surveillance. Mr Dimitriadis, who appears at dinners with Mr Mitsotakis, is being transformed, with the indulgence of the Greek authorities, from an alleged persecutor to a victim. Dozens of actions have also been brought against the newspaper *Documento*.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission concerned at the continual violation of the rule of law and the growing number of SLAPP cases in Greece?

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¹ 'The highest number of cases was recorded in Italy, with 25.5% of total cases. Spain (17%) and Greece (12.8%) had the second and third highest number of cases respectively.'

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU\(2023\)756468](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU(2023)756468), p. 8.

² A first round of actions for damages of EUR 250 000 from EFSYN, EUR 150 000 in the case of Reporters United and EUR 150 000 in the case of Mr Koukakis, followed by a second round of actions for damages of EUR 550 000 from TVXS and a total of EUR 3.3 million against three members of EFSYN, three journalists from Reporters United and Mr Thanasis Koukakis.

³ https://www.efsyn.gr/politiki/i-apopsi-tis-efsyn/419485_j-dimosieysi-i-dikaiosyni-kai-o-k-dimitriadis

⁴ <https://tvxs.gr/news/ellada/eyropaiko-koinovoylio-exontotiki-agogi-toy-grigori-dimitriadi-sto-tvxs-apokalypse-o-stelios-koylogloy/>