

Special Report 1/2025

Are the monitoring mechanisms for granting simple seashore and beaches use permits effective?

Challenges concerning the protection of the seashore and the beach, as a public good, have intensified in recent years, in view of the tourist traffic, which is constantly increasing.

The Hellenic Court of Audit examined the effectiveness of the control mechanisms that Land Services and Local Government implement, in order to ascertain that private individuals comply with their obligations, after they have been granted a simple use permit for seashore and beach. Examination was carried out in 19 municipalities and 14 corresponding Property Services.

The audit work focused on identifying issues that have arisen following the recent change in the regulatory framework introduced by Law 5092/2024.

The audit led to the following findings:

I. The Concession Contract Registry, which is currently prepared, is not fully updated with contracts procured by entities other than the Land Services, such as municipalities and the Public Real Estate Company, nor with on-the-spot inspections findings. It is not accessible to all entities involved in the auditing process.

II. Inspections rationally distributed over the summer period and based on risk assessment regarding the beaches and the concessionaires are not regularly carried out. They focus solely on investigating complaints, the number of which has skyrocketed since the *MyCoast* application was launched.

III. Land Services lack personnel and contemporary technological tools, which would enable them to investigate complaints timely and identify violations, thus limiting the effectiveness of their inspections.

IV. Local Government have limited audit activity and do not cooperate effectively with Land Services.

V. The audit identified a defective and delayed imposition of fines and/or administrative measures. On-the-spot inspection reports are not immediately drawn up, although law provides otherwise. In addition, follow-up inspections are not carried out, thus allowing businesses – especially those sanctioned with administrative measures – to carry on their activity throughout the summer period.