



Syros, with an area of 84 sq. km. and a coastline of 87 km., lies in the middle of the Cycladic islands complex. It is the administrative center of the Cyclades, and its permanent population is about 20,000 inhabitants. Ermoupolis, the capital of Syros, is home to about 65% of the island's population, as well as all of the administrative structures for the Cycladic prefecture. The island presents a rugged terrain with sloped grounds and ravines; the northern part is mountainous and barren, with altitudes of 300-400 m above sea level, as opposed to the low-altitude south.

Description in brief

Syros is a very popular tourist destination, particularly during the summer months where the average monthly population often exceeds 40,000 inhabitants. The local economy relies on commerce, services, tourism, local agricultural activities and shipping activities; the tertiary sector activities concentrate 55.7% of employment, secondary sector activities 38.2% and primary sector activities 6.1%. Agricultural activities supplying the domestic market and other regional markets center mainly on greenhouse vegetable cultivations (tomatoes, zucchini, and cucumbers).

The island enjoys warm summers (average July-August temperature is 26.5°C) and cool

winters (average January temperature is 12.1 °C). About 90% of rainfall is concentrated between the months of October to March, and the total yearly precipitation is estimated at the range of 390-400 mm on average. The majority of this precipitation is lost as runoff to the sea (an estimated 8 million m³ yearly); water abstractions from the island's underground aquifers greatly surpass the aquifer recharge rates, leading to overexploitation of the available resources.

Sea water intrusion is a serious problem for the water quality of the island, particularly as a result of the over-exploitation of the groundwater due to the increasing population and tourist and agricultural developments.

The existing water infrastructures of the island include several small water reservoirs, water and sewerage networks, two sewage treatment facilities, boreholes, and four seawater desalination plants; the infrastructures of each of the island's three municipalities are managed separately by the Water and Sewerage Company of Ermoupolis and the water councils appointed by the authorities of the two smaller municipalities of the island. Domestic water supply for the city of Ermoupolis is provided by one desalination plant, and for the rest of the island by the other 3 desalination plants and municipal boreholes; irrigation water is supplied by private boreholes and surface water reservoirs.

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