

# Amazon to Create First Smart Island Hub on Naxos, Greece

By **Giovanni Prete** - October 5, 2022



*Amazon to Create Smart Island Hub on Naxos, [Greece](#). Credit: Manfred Werner/ [wikimedia commons](#) cc-by-sa4.0*

Amazon aspires to create the first “smart” island hub on Naxos, Greece as part of the “Naxos, Smart Island” project, a bundle of seventeen different actions all related to modern digital technology.

On Tuesday afternoon, the company, in the presence of the country's political actors, landed on Naxos in order to present the implementation of an idea proposed by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis to Amazon's main shareholder, Jeff Bezos, during their meeting in Antiparos in the summer of 2021. This idea is none other than Amazon turning one of the Greek Aegean islands into a "smart" island.

### **Amazon will use drones of Greek design and manufacture**

During the presentation, Amazon will present solutions for "smart" management of the island's marinas, applications for the distribution of goods via drones on the Aegean islands, telemedicine applications, and high connectivity applications.

Trial flights of drones have been underway for months. These are expected to transport biological material and medicines not only between different locations on Naxos but to and from the nearby islands, as well.



*Drone Delivering Package. Credit: Public Domain CC0 1.0*

In addition, of particular interest is the use of drones by the Coast Guard of Naxos which will be able to monitor, through cameras and transmitters, marine incidents at a distance of up to twelve kilometers away the coasts. Finally, drones will complement the already established telemedicine system, even saving lives in case of an emergency.

The drones that will be used by Amazon in the project are of Greek design and manufacture and are of the heavy military type with enhanced capabilities.

### **Naxos: Amazon's new smart island**

Furthermore, an Internet of Things (IoT)-type circuit is being created on the island by placing, for example, electronic sensors in the parking spaces reserved exclusively for PWDs or Coast Guard vehicles.

The waste bins will also be equipped with similar sensors so that the collection and recycling process can be completely streamlined. The plan even includes the training of the island's residents in the use of today's digital tools to simplify their relationship with the Greek state.

The entire project "Naxos, Smart Island" is based on technical infrastructure provided by Amazon Web Services, which has undertaken the coordination of numerous other companies, including both Greek and multinational startups. Public bodies will also be involved as partners in project implementation. This will include the Ministry of Digital Governance, the Ministry of Development and Investment, and the Ministry of Shipping and Island Policy as well as the local governments of the South Aegean Region and the Municipality of Naxos.

### **The philosophy behind" Naxos, Smart Island"**

[The original idea to turn Naxos into a smart island was discussed during the informal meeting between Greek PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Amazon Founder Jeff Bezos on Antiparos in 2021.](#) The Greek department of [Amazon Web Services \(AWS\)](#) took over the investigation of the implementation prospects, and its staff has now already completed the design of the architecture for the entire project. The process is extremely sensitive but also fundamental in terms of the further implementation of the project.



*Temple of goddess Demeter, Sangri, Naxos Island. Credit: Gabi Ancarola*

Moreover, the operation of most of the planned smart actions on Naxos is based on the services and know-how of AWS, especially in cloud computing technology.

The philosophy of the “Naxos, Smart Island” plan is broken down into three pillars. The first of these is sustainability, which involves the reduction of energy and environmental burden of the island from the daily activity of locals and tourists.

The second pillar is related to the upgrading of the quality of life on the island, especially for permanent residents, through the effective improvement of health and emergency services, communication, transactions, and transport among other things.

Finally, increasing tourist traffic to Naxos and the Small Cyclades is the third pillar. This includes attracting visitors as well as [digital nomads](#) for long-term or permanent settlement.

The flagship project of this pillar is the creation of the smart marina. With a digital application for mobile devices (an app), for example, the skipper of a boat will quickly be informed of everything pertaining to the port of Naxos, including whether or not there is space and the potential for berthing. There will also be information about the types of facilities available—service, water, electricity, internet connection, etc.



The smart marina is considered the first and crucial step for marketing Naxos—and, more broadly, Greece—as a modern destination and a place where visitors can stay as long as they wish without feeling cut off from their personal, social, and professional obligations.

### **Greece as Mediterranean's center for smart island hubs**

Greece will soon be the center for smart islands hubs in the Mediterranean. In addition to Amazon's "Naxos, Smart Island" plan, in 2021, [Astypalaia](#) was announced as the up-and-coming first "smart" island in the Mediterranean which runs almost entirely on green energy. This is part of a major investment by Volkswagen.

The Greek PM and officials from the German automaker signed a memorandum in November 2020 for the plan to bring electric cars and green energy to the island's 1,300 residents as part of their environmentally-friendly project.

"Astypalaia can and will become a model of sustainable development not just at a national but at a European and a global level," Greek PM Mitsotakis said last November during the virtual launching ceremony. The German automaker said it would turn Astypalaia into an energy-independent, "green" island.

"Working with local stakeholders, the leading partners in this project will transform the traditional vehicle rental business into a vehicle-sharing service offering e-scooters, e-bikes and electric cars," Kostas Fragogiannis, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, reported.

Conventionally fueled commercial and utility vehicles on the island will be replaced as part of the grand plan. "In total, roughly 1,000 electric vehicles will take the place of about 1,500 vehicles with internal combustion engines," stated Fragogiannis. "At the same time, the infrastructure for more than [two hundred] charging points will be put in place."

Astypalaia received the first shipment of electric cars in April. Thanos Papagiannis received the first of the deliveries in the form of a Volkswagen ID.3, which replaced Papagiannis's previous Volkswagen vehicle, a gas-powered Golf 3.

Currently, Astypalaia gets its electricity almost entirely from diesel generators. Alongside the Volkswagen initiative, a large part of the electricity demand for households, companies, and traffic will be covered by green renewable energy.

Wind and solar power systems will be installed on the island. The electric fleet will be powered entirely by green, renewable energy. Renewable sources alone will cover the additional electrical demand arising from the introduction of e-mobility.