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E-001449/2025

Answer given by Ms Lahbib

on behalf of the European Commission

(18.6.2025)

The Commission's advice that citizens be able to sustain themselves for at least 72 hours is grounded in existing emergency preparedness guidelines and international best practice, which suggest that individuals should be self-sufficient for a short period during potential disruptions in services or supply chains. This duration is recognised as critical for initial emergency response, allowing time for authorities to restore essential services and reach affected populations in a range of crisis scenarios.

The Commission has identified several potential risks and threats, including in the Preparedness Union Strategy¹ and the Niinistö Report on Military Preparedness and Readiness of the European Union². The specific threats identified include the consequences of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, rising geopolitical tensions, hybrid and cyberattacks, sabotage of critical infrastructure, foreign information manipulation, pandemics, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters.

The Commission acknowledges the need for transparency and detailed information on the risks and threats identified. The Eurobarometer surveys published in 2024 show that 65% of EU citizens feel they need more information to prepare for disasters and emergencies³. In response, the Strategy foresees to support to Member States to increase awareness about risks and threats, with measures such as annual EU Preparedness Day and targeted communication campaigns to ensure citizens are well informed about potential threats and the rationale behind preparedness measures. The Commission will continue to provide regular updates and practical guidance to Member States.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness_en.

² https://commission.europa.eu/document/5bb2881f-9e29-42f2-8b77-8739b19d047c_en.

³ <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/news/new-eu-eurobarometer-disaster-awareness-and-preparedness-eu-citizens#:~:text=A%20new%20Eurobarometer%20survey%20which%20looked%20into%20the,more%20information%20to%20prepare%20for%20disasters%20and%20emergencies>.