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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(25.6.2025)

With an allocated amount of EUR 5.3 billion for material support, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) is, in continuation to the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), the only instrument to target exclusively the most disadvantaged in the EU.

According to Article 21 of the ESF+ Regulation<sup>1</sup>, the food and/or basic material assistance shall be distributed free of charge to the most deprived persons. In case that paid-for products are distributed in the same place as the ESF+ support, those will have to be financed through different resources.

In practice, the organisations delivering food support combine ESF+ support with national and private financing, including food donations, in order to ensure a wider coverage for the most deprived.

The ESF+ Community of Practice for Material Support<sup>2</sup> explores and promotes innovative practices in delivering material support, in line with the regulatory framework for addressing material deprivation with ESF+ programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013 - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1057/oj/eng>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.socialinnovationplus.eu/cop/material-support/>.