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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu
on behalf of the European Commission
(14.8.2025)

The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) is implemented according to the shared management principle. The Member States implement programmes, providing these funds to beneficiaries and final recipients. The Member States have the primary responsibility for setting up a management and control system which comply with the requirements of the regulations, ensuring that this system functions thus preventing, detecting and correcting irregularities. The Commission is involved in programmes' monitoring, as well as committing and paying out approved expenditures and verifying the control systems.

Article 91(1) of the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)¹ indicates the responsibility to submit payment applications falls on the Member States. The Commission reimburses these payments ex post, according to the rules established by Article 93 CPR, once expenditures have been incurred by a beneficiary and paid by the Member States. It is the responsibility of the national managing authority to verify the eligibility. This verification is in turn subject to multilevel controls² that, at the moment, have not identified any irregularities, or such have not been communicated yet.

Article 74(1) of the CPR establishes a timeframe of 80 days for the payment to beneficiaries,³ but not for the payment to project participants. In the case at stake, according to the information available, the workers can be identified as project participants, thus they are not subject to the 80 days' timeframe indicated by the CPR but to national rules.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 – Common Provision Regulation - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj/eng>.

² Controls performed by the Audit Authority of the programme itself and by auditors of the Commission services.

³ 'The managing authority shall ensure, subject to the availability of funding, that a beneficiary receives the amount due in full and no later than 80 days from the date of submission of the payment claim by the beneficiary [...]'.