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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(26.9.2025)

The Commission recognises the urgency of the water crisis and the need for sustainable, equitable water management across Member States. The 2025 Water Resilience Strategy¹ addresses water loss, reserve management, and crisis preparedness by promoting infrastructure modernisation and digital solutions. While not imposing binding standards, it encourages water-smart practices and offers guidance on drought and scarcity. It links water crisis response to the Critical Entities Resilience Directive², enhancing risk assessments and contingency planning. The EU Preparedness Union³ and Stockpiling Strategy⁴ also prioritise water resilience, with initiatives on international cooperation and securing water treatment chemicals.

Implementation is supported by EU funding, notably through the current and upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework⁵, including the Cohesion Fund⁶, European Regional Development Fund⁷, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development⁸, Horizon Europe⁹, and a new EUR 15 billion European Investment Bank¹⁰ Water Programme. Cohesion policy has already allocated EUR 13 billion (2021–2027 period) for water infrastructure and €10 billion for climate adaptation related to water challenges. A recent Commission proposal to amend the cohesion policy related regulations introduces measures to accelerate investment in secure access to water, sustainable water management and resilience¹¹. These measures aim to contribute to securing a resilient and sustainable water supply across the EU, though the implementation relies on Member States' authorities managing the funds to present proposals for increasing investments in water.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/environment/water-resilience-strategy_en.

² Directive (EU) 2022/2557 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the resilience of critical entities and repealing Council Directive 2008/114/EC, OJ L 333, 27.12.2022, pp. 164–198.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_856.

⁴ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/stockpiling_en.

⁵ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/eu-budget-2028-2034_en.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/cohesion-fund_en.

⁷ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-regional-development-fund-erdf_en.

⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-fund-rural-development-eafrd_en.

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

¹⁰ <https://www.eib.org/en/index>.

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/communication/mid-term-review-2025/regulation-proposal-mid-term-review-2025_en.pdf.