

EN

E-003221/2025

Answer given by Ms. Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.1.2026)

As highlighted in the Water Resilience Strategy¹, water scarcity and droughts are rising concerns in the EU². The Strategy lays down 50 actions to better protect and restore the water cycle, improve water efficiency, and adapt to climate change to reduce drought impacts. This includes, for instance, actions to detect and reduce leaks in municipal water networks.

Since 2007³, the Commission has supported Member States by promoting drought management plans, developing drought and scarcity indicators, and encouraging transboundary cooperation and best-practice exchange. Copernicus data powers the European Drought Observatory (EDO)⁴, which provides EU-wide drought information, alerts, predictions, and supports risk assessment and impact monitoring⁵. The Water Efficiency First Recommendation⁶ offers practical guidance for more efficient water use. A dedicated working group on water scarcity and drought helps coordinate knowledge and action.

Through the Cohesion Policy⁷, the Common Agricultural Policy⁸ and Horizon Europe⁹, the Commission funds measures to reduce drought risks¹⁰, improve water infrastructure and storage, restore ecosystems, enhance soils, increase irrigation efficiency, promote water reuse, and support research on water resilience. The mid-term review of Cohesion Policy¹¹ prioritises water-resilience investments, giving Member States added flexibility and incentives to deploy measures quickly.

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

² The 2022 drought alone is estimated to have costed Europe around EUR 40 billion, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/indicators/economic-losses-from-climate-related?activeAccordion=ecdb3bcf-bbe9-4978-b5cf-0b136399d9f8>.

³ Commission Communication ‘Addressing the challenge of water scarcity and droughts in the European Union’, SEC(2007) 993- 996, COM/2007/0414 final.

⁴ <https://www.copernicus.eu/en/european-drought-observatory>.

⁵ <https://drought.emergency.copernicus.eu/tumbo/edid/regional?code=RO&fromTable>.

⁶ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/commission-recommendation-water-efficiency-first-guiding-principles_en.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/2021-2027_en.

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy_en.

⁹ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/horizon-europe_en.

¹⁰ E.g., https://rea.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-grants/eu-mission-soil-deal-europe_en, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters_en, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/adaptation-climate-change_en, <https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/>, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/environment/prima_en.

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/communications/2025/a-modernised-cohesion-policy-the-mid-term-review_en.