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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(5.12.2025)

With an allocated amount of EUR 5.5 billion for material support, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) is the main instrument to target the most disadvantaged in the EU under the current Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027.

As material support measures corresponding to the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) have been integrated into the ESF+ in 2021-2027, Member States were granted more flexibility to adapt their national or regional programmes in response to emerging needs. Member States are required to allocate at least 3% of their ESF+ resources under shared management to support the most deprived, ensuring that material assistance and accompanying measures remain a central component of EU social support. In reality, Member States have exceeded the minimum target and programmed on average 4.1% of their ESF+ resources to this core policy area.

The Commission supports Member States in ensuring that these resources are used efficiently and remain adequate and adapted to the current economic conditions. However, under shared management, the Member States are responsible for the implementation of ESF+ programmes, including their potential adjustment to the cost of living if necessary.

Under the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034, as part of the National and Regional Partnership Plans, the ESF will continue to contribute to addressing material deprivation, as well as fighting poverty and homelessness, promoting social inclusion and equality. At least 14% of the financial envelope of the National and Regional Partnership Plans must be dedicated to social objectives. Member States are also obliged to programme support to food and/or basic material assistance.