

EN

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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(23.4.2026)

‘Do no significant harm’ (DNSH) is a horizontal principle as set out in Article 9(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060¹ that shall be taken into account in pursuing the policy objectives of any of the EU-funded programmes referred to in the Regulation, which contribute to the EU cohesion policy. Likewise, Regulation (EU) 2021/241² establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) stipulates that the Facility shall only support measures respecting the principle of ‘do no significant harm’.

Before submitting the programmes for adoption by the Commission, the Member States have to ascertain that programmes comply with the DNSH principle. This shall be achieved by assessing the types of actions defined in the programme with respect to their potential to do significant harm to the environmental objectives. Member States must therefore: (i) put in place selection procedures that are sufficiently detailed to ensure compatibility of operations or large-scale investments with DNSH compliant types of actions set out in approved programmes and (ii) are compatible with applicable EU environmental law. Under the RRF, the Member States include a detailed DNSH self-assessment of each measure in their Recovery and Resilience Plans.

The selection of projects is the responsibility of the Member States, which establish the relevant selection criteria and procedures through the programme authorities in accordance with the applicable EU rules. The Commission approves the programmes but does not select individual projects. It is therefore for the Member States to ensure that territorial specificities, including those related to insularity where relevant, are duly taken into account.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj/eng>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R0241&qid=1667997764795>.