

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000629/26
to the Commission**

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(12 February 2026)

Subject: EU intervention following the severe environmental disaster caused by Cyclone Harry in southern Italy

Following the extreme natural disaster that struck southern Italy, with a particularly severe impact on Sicily, Sardinia and Calabria, as well as Malta, extensive damage has been recorded to infrastructure, buildings, economic activities and the environment. The situation of the citizens of Niscemi is emblematic of the serious social and material emergency affecting local communities.

The increasing frequency of extreme events linked to climate change makes such phenomena more recurrent and requires rapid and coordinated responses at EU level, both in emergency management and in reconstruction and territorial safety.

In this context:

1. Does the Commission intend to urgently activate the European Union Solidarity Fund and can it share what additional extraordinary resources could be mobilised?
2. Can the Commission share whether rapid reprogramming of cohesion policy funds can be allowed for reconstruction measures and hydrogeological risk prevention?
3. Can the Commission share what initiatives it intends to promote to strengthen the resilience of the affected territories, protect local communities and ensure environmental safety, with a particular focus on rehabilitation and hydrogeological defence works, and how it will ensure, in the context of the emergency, that resources are not used for projects lacking real environmental value or those of a purely speculative nature?

Submitted: 12.2.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(4 May 2026)

1. On 10 April 2026, both Italy and Malta requested assistance from the EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) ⁽¹⁾ regarding the damages caused by storm Harry in January 2026. The Commission is carrying out a thorough assessment.
2. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes for Calabria, Sardinia and Sicily currently include EUR 352 million to prevent and manage the risks caused by natural disasters. As of 31 December 2025, EUR 196 million have been allocated to selected operations, while EUR 156 million are still available to support new interventions. The Commission is available to discuss with regional authorities how this financial envelop could be used to address the consequences of these events.

The Maltese programme does not include specific allocations to climate adaptation, disaster risk prevention and resilience. Nevertheless, the ERDF could be used for the creation and the upgrade of infrastructure to improve resilience.

3. In the 2021-27 programming period, through cohesion policy funds ⁽²⁾, the EU is contributing to prevention and preparedness measures with over EUR 14 billion across EU regions, focusing on the most vulnerable and exposed territories with a focus on nature-based solutions.

In line with the Preparedness Union Strategy ⁽³⁾, preparedness is set to be integrated into all relevant EU legislation, policies and programmes. For instance, civil preparedness was strengthened under the defence and the water priorities of the mid-term review of the cohesion policy ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32002R2012>.

⁽²⁾ European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund, Just Transition Fund and Interreg programmes.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025JC0130>.

⁽⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) 2025/1914 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2025 amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1058 and (EU) 2021/1056 as regards specific measures to address strategic challenges in the context of the mid-term review. <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/1914/oj>. The mid-term review of cohesion policy mobilised a total of EUR 11.9 billion for the defence priority, which includes interventions to strengthen civil preparedness. This will support Member States to develop disaster risk management centres, integrated multi-hazard monitoring, or warning and prevention systems, among others. Additionally, the water priority resulted in additional EUR 3.1 billion, under which Member States will address flood and drought risk management, and ecosystem restoration.

In this context, both Calabria and Sicily allocated funds for civil preparedness ⁽⁵⁾, investing EUR 14.7 million and EUR 167.3 million, respectively.

The Commission proposal for the next multiannual financial framework suggests integrating preparedness across the proposed funding instruments ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽⁵⁾ Specific Objective 3.3: 'Developing resilient defence infrastructure, prioritising that of a dual-use nature, including to foster military mobility in the Union, as well as enhancing civil preparedness'.

⁽⁶⁾ The funding instruments include competitiveness and research funds, and also the National and Regional Partnership Plans.