(English version)

Question for written answer E-001525/26
to the Commission
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(15 April 2026)

Subject: EU support to secure access to drinking water in Mayotte, Guadeloupe and Martinique

With water in short supply in Mayotte, an agreement has recently been signed between the French Geological Survey (BRGM) and the Mayotte water authority to secure access to drinking water on the island. The programme, which has a budget of EUR 1.9 million, is part of the 2024-2027 Mayotte water plan, the aim of which is to provide a sustainable response to the water shortages that are hitting the people of Mayotte very hard.

The people of Mayotte are still facing major restrictions, and the water supply is often cut off completely. This raises legitimate questions about how effective the publicly funded announcements and schemes actually are. The water shortages are, after all, well on their way to turning into a humanitarian and health crisis.

What is more, Mayotte is not the only outermost region of France affected by water shortages: Guadeloupe and Martinique are also having serious problems, particularly where their water supply networks are concerned.

In the light of the foregoing:

1. Can the Commission state whether direct or indirect EU funding is being deployed for the water sector in Mayotte, Guadeloupe and Martinique?

2. If not, what specific measures does the Commission intend to support to make sure that these outermost regions can rely on their own supplies of drinking water in the long term?

Submitted: 15.4.2026

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

The 2022 Communication setting out the strategy for the outermost regions ([1]) recognised the need to prioritise basic needs, including access to water and sanitation.

In that Communication, the Commission committed to help create synergies between national budgets and the different funds and programs in order to improve the quality of life of citizens, and it will reaffirm this commitment in the new strategy for the outermost regions, due to be adopted in summer 2026.

An independent study on living conditions and access to basic needs in outermost regions published by the Commission in 2024 ([2]) recommended devoting additional resources to improving access to drinking water.

For the European Regional Development Fund water is a key priority in French outermost regions with substantial financial support that has further increased following last year's mid-term review of regional programmes.

In Guadeloupe, Martinique and Mayotte, the EU is investing EUR 183 million in water and sanitation over the 2021-2027 period, for example to strengthen the resilience of water catchments, develop drinking water production facilities and improve the efficiency of distribution networks.

In Mayotte, the construction of a new seawater desalination plant is an operation of strategic importance. Furthermore, to enhance water management, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development supports reservoir projects for agricultural use in Réunion and Guadeloupe.

The directive on the quality of water intended for human consumption ([3]) includes provisions to protect human health by ensuring access to safe drinking water. Member States, including France, had to transpose this directive into national law and comply with its provisions by January 2023.

([1]) COM(2022) 198 final.
([2]) ISBN 978-92-68-11899-3.
([3]) Directive (EU) 2020/2184 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on the quality of water intended for human consumption, OJ L 435, 23.12.2020, p. 1-62.