

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001861/26
to the Commission
Vicent Marzà Ibáñez (Verts/ALE)
(6 May 2026)**

Subject: Dana in Valencia: ‘build back better’ principle and gaps in RESTORE cohesion mechanisms

The ‘isolated high-altitude depression’ (*depresión aislada en niveles altos* or *dana*) in October 2024 caused devastating damage in Valencia. The RESTORE mechanism has made the use of cohesion funds more flexible. However, a recent European Parliament study (PE 776.001) has found that the ‘build back better’ principle has still only been integrated to a limited extent. Some critical gaps remain: a lack of risk-based selection criteria, outdated territorial assessment tools, insufficient monitoring and low community involvement. European funds therefore risk being used to simply restore pre-existing infrastructure without incorporating resilience standards or reducing exposure to extreme events, which will become more common and more intense.

In view of the above:

1. What specific climate resilience and risk reduction indicators does the Commission plan to require from beneficiary states and territories in their monitoring systems to check whether funds produce long-term benefits that go beyond mere restoration?
2. How will the Commission incorporate the ‘build back better’ principle in its 2028-2034 cohesion regulations in operational terms?
3. What measures will the Commission take to improve local and territorial institutions’ capacity — particularly in the Valencian Community — and ensure affected communities are truly involved in decisions regarding resilient reconstruction?

Submitted: 6.5.2026

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

1. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), in the framework of the RESTORE legislation, supports reconstruction of the areas hit by the DANA through the ERDF national programme of Spain and the ERDF regional programme of the Valencia Region ⁽¹⁾. In accordance with RESTORE, national authorities should prioritise operations based on the ‘build back better’ principle. In addition, support to investment in infrastructure is subject to rigorous climate proofing assessment, to guarantee long-term resilience of the infrastructure.
2. Under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034, support to greener and more resilient communities, infrastructure, economies and natural disaster response will be operationalised via National and Regional Partnership Plans and the EU Facility ⁽²⁾. The Plans should be based on integrated territorial planning and include the obligation to align investments with sustainable development, climate adaptation and disaster resilience. In the event of a natural disaster or another emergency situation, Member States and regions will be able to use different sources of support including under their Plans and the EU Facility.
3. In accordance with Article 8 of Regulation 2021/1060 ⁽³⁾, Member States ensure that key partners, including local authorities, are involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of cohesion policy programmes, with support from ERDF technical assistance. This is carried out, among others, through programme monitoring committees involving the Commission. Furthermore, under the ERDF national programme, local authorities, assisted by the Managing Authority, design and implement integrated urban development strategies, including project selection.

⁽¹⁾ <https://fondoseuropeos.gob.es/es-es/fondosprogramas/feder/progfeder/Paginas/programasfeder.aspx>.

⁽²⁾ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 (COM(2025) 565 final): https://commission.europa.eu/publications/european-fund-economic-social-and-territorial-cohesion-agriculture-and-rural-fisheries-and-maritime_en.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1060>.