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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(18.2.2025)

1. The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) can only be activated at the request of eligible Member States and accession countries hit by natural disasters within 12 weeks as from when the first damage occurred, demonstrating that the total direct damage exceeds the thresholds specified in Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002¹. The EUSF is not a rapid response instrument but a post-disaster relief instrument. Its activation can take several months to complete. To shorten delays, the Commission provides significant upstream support to affected countries and there is a possibility to award advance payments to applicant Member States. The EUSF may cover part of the costs for emergency and recovery operations incurred by public authorities. This includes, for example, the recovery of essential infrastructure, provision of temporary accommodation to the population, cleaning-up operations and protection of cultural heritage.

2. On 20 January 2025, the Spanish authorities submitted an application for financial assistance from the EUSF following the floods in the Autonomous Community of Valencia in October 2024. The application was submitted within the 12-week regulatory deadline. The Commission is carefully assessing the submitted documents. If it is assessed that the conditions for mobilising the EUSF are met, the Commission will determine the amount of financial assistance, within the limits of the available financial resources, and will submit its proposal to the European Parliament and the Council for approval.

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) as amended by Regulation (EU) No 661/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 May 2014 (OJ L 189, 27.6.2014, p. 143) and by Regulation (EU) 2020/461 of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 March 2020 (OJ L 99, 31.3.2020, p. 9). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32002R2012>