

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001320/25  
to the Commission**

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(31 March 2025)

*Subject:* Phlegraean Fields: Europe cannot just wait around for the next disaster

Over the last few days, the Phlegraean Fields area in Campania has been hit by strong seismic activity related to bradyseism. Reaching a magnitude of up to 4.4, the tremors have caused damage and great public concern. One of the world's most dangerous volcanic zones, this area poses a major threat, which calls for a structured response — rather than just emergency measures — from Europe.

Seismic and volcanic risk management in the EU still appears to be far too emergency-focused. Coordinated long-term policies are needed to boost communities' resilience and secure the building stock. There is an urgent need for greater European support for prevention, planning and urban regeneration in these areas.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it intend to allocate resources from the European Union Solidarity Fund or other instruments to seismic prevention measures and structural adjustments in the Phlegraean Fields and other high-risk areas?
2. Are there plans to adopt European guidelines on urban regeneration in seismic areas, which would recommend resilient buildings and a lower housing density?
3. Has the Italian Government asked to activate the EU civil protection mechanism? Does the Commission think it would be a good idea to encourage the use of this mechanism to support the authorities in emergency management and prevention?

Submitted: 31.3.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission**  
(15 May 2025)

1. The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) <sup>(1)</sup> can only be activated at the request of Italy which has a deadline of 12 weeks as from when the first damage occurred, demonstrating that the total direct damage exceeds the thresholds specified in Article 2 Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002. The EUSF may cover a part of the costs for emergency and recovery operations incurred by public authorities <sup>(2)</sup>. Private damage is not eligible.

Additionally, cohesion policy funds <sup>(3)</sup> can foster investments that promote climate change adaptation, disaster risk prevention and resilience <sup>(4)</sup>, and reconstruction projects following natural disasters <sup>(5)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> 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>.

<sup>(2)</sup> This means, for example, the recovery of essential infrastructure, provision of temporary accommodation to the population, cleaning-up operations, and protection of the cultural heritage.

<sup>(3)</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/policy/what/investment-policy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/what/investment-policy_en).

<sup>(4)</sup> Ecosystem based approaches should be taken into consideration with specific interventions aimed at improving the safety levels of the public building stock and to monitor and control the territory.

<sup>(5)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2024/3236 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 December 2024 amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1057 and (EU) 2021/1058 as regards Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction (RESTORE) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3236>.

2. While urban planning and building codes fall within the competence of Member States, the Commission recognises the importance of promoting good practices in seismic risk management, particularly in urban areas. A technical paper will be published in 2025, outlining good practices and key areas for improvement in earthquake risk management across the EU.

3. For the moment, Italy has not requested the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) <sup>(6)</sup> intervention for the recent seismic activity in the Phlegraean Fields. The Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre is monitoring the situation and stands ready to support.

Under the UCPM, a number of tools may be used to enhance prevention and preparedness for major risks. For instance, several projects that contribute to strengthening seismic resilience in the Mediterranean region <sup>(7)</sup> have been financially supported under the Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness call for proposals <sup>(8)</sup>. National authorities may also apply for Track 1 grants <sup>(9)</sup> or for technical assistance <sup>(10)</sup> to prepare investment strategies or reforms.

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<sup>(6)</sup> [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism\\_en#:~:text=In%20October%202001%2C%20the%20European%20Commission%20established%20the,to%20improve%20prevention%2C%20preparedness%2C%20and%20response%20to%20disasters;https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism\\_en#:~:text=In%20October%202001%2C%20the%20European%20Commission%20established%20the,to%20improve%20prevention%2C%20preparedness%2C%20and%20response%20to%20disasters.](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en#:~:text=In%20October%202001%2C%20the%20European%20Commission%20established%20the,to%20improve%20prevention%2C%20preparedness%2C%20and%20response%20to%20disasters;https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en#:~:text=In%20October%202001%2C%20the%20European%20Commission%20established%20the,to%20improve%20prevention%2C%20preparedness%2C%20and%20response%20to%20disasters.)

<sup>(7)</sup> <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/projects/eres> and <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/projects/medea>.

<sup>(8)</sup> <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/knowledge-action-prevention-preparedness-call-proposals-kapp>.

<sup>(9)</sup> <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/UCPM-Track-1-call2025>.

<sup>(10)</sup> <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/technical-assistance-financing-facility-taff>.