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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(14.5.2025)

The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF)¹ can only be activated at the request of Greece 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 authorities². Private damage is not eligible.

Member States hit by natural disasters may also benefit from the flexibilities provided by the Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction (RESTORE) Regulation which entered into force on 24 December 2024³. RESTORE primarily focuses on reconstruction, but it can also support disaster resilience. In the 2021-27 programming period, all EU-funded infrastructure with a lifespan of more than 5 years must undergo a climate proofing assessment.

Although defence was identified as one of the priorities of the mid-term review, climate adaptation and disaster risk management continue to be key priorities for Cohesion Policy. For instance, interventions addressing flood, drought or desertification risks are part of the actions envisaged under the water priority⁴. Moreover, dedicating funding to defence remains voluntary.

Directive 2007/60/EC⁵ establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of adverse consequences associated with floods. It stipulates that the Flood Risk Management Plans, drawn up by Member States, shall take into account inter alia costs and benefits, and shall in particular address all aspects of flood risk management focusing on prevention, protection, and preparedness. The design and implementation of concrete measures lies with the competent authorities.

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>

² 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.

³ 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>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/communication/mid-term-review-2025/communication-mid-term-review-2025_en.pdf

⁵ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007, p. 27–34. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2007/60/oj/eng>