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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.5.2025)

Cohesion Policy¹ investments in research and innovation under policy objective 1 –‘Smarter Europe’ may support development and testing of innovative technologies and solutions for green transitions and circular economy identified in smart specialisation strategies (S3) areas such as water management or agriculture. This may include developing technologies for smart irrigation systems that harness treated urban wastewater. The examples of such projects implemented under Cohesion Policy can be found on the Kohesio website ‘discover EU projects in your region’².

The proposed amendment to Regulations (EU) 2021/1058 and (EU) 2021/1056³, with respect to the specific objective related to promoting secure access to water, sustainable water management and water resilience under policy objective 2 –‘Greener Europe’ aims to contribute to build a water resilient society and protect water ecosystems and infrastructures. However, it is important to note that Cohesion Policy funding in general excludes support for the deployment of technologies and solutions for water irrigation intended for agricultural purposes, as this falls under the remit of other EU funds.

The Common Agricultural Policy⁴ provides support for investments in digital and water-smart agriculture, increasing water use efficiency. This includes investments in more efficient irrigation installations, such as decision support systems and remote sensors for irrigation planning.

Investment and infrastructure will feature prominently in the European Water Resilience Strategy that will be published in June 2025. The Commission recognises that pooling financial resources available from public sources but also attracting private capital is vital to ensure water resilience.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/priorities_en

² kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/search?keywords=irrigation

³ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/communication/mid-term-review-2025/regulation-proposal-mid-term-review-2025_en.pdf

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2115/oj/eng>