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Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.8.2025)

The primary responsibility for disaster preparedness and response lies with the individual Member States. The European Union has a supporting competence in the area of civil protection. When a disaster overwhelms national response capacities, the country can request assistance through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)¹.

The support through the UCPM can take the form of spontaneous, direct offers of national capacities by Member States or UCPM participating states, offering of national assets pre-committed to the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP)² or use of the extra layer of protection financed by the Commission, the rescEU reserve³.

The relevant national German authorities did not formally request assistance through the UCPM in the context of the floods in 2021. Germany requested the activation of the Copernicus Emergency Management Service⁴ on 13 July 2021 and mapping for the affected areas in Germany was provided.

¹ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en.

² https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/european-civil-protection-pool_en.

³ Please note that the Member States have an exact overview of their national capacities. Overviews of ECPP and rescEU capacities are available through ECHO Daily Maps from that time:

<https://erccportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/API/ERCC/Maps/DownloadPublicMap?contentItemID=3751&fileN=MainFile&forceDownload=False&ext=.pdf>.

<https://erccportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/API/ERCC/Maps/DownloadPublicMap?contentItemID=3847&fileN=MainFile&forceDownload=False&ext=.pdf>.

⁴ <https://emergency.copernicus.eu/>.