

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000402/26
to the Commission**

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Subject: Mechanisms to address the impact of Storm Kristin in Portugal

In Portugal, Storm Kristin has already caused several fatalities, left people injured and homeless, and is causing incalculable property damage in several regions — especially the west and centre of the country and the Tagus valley.

Breakdowns in infrastructure are hampering the authorities' capacity to address the situation, which is far more serious on the ground than reports reaching the international community would suggest, owing to issues in telecommunications networks caused by the storm itself.

The Portuguese Government has declared a 'state of disaster' in the areas hardest hit by the storm. The prime minister has decided to cancel trips out of the country that had been planned for the coming days.

Therefore, we would like to ask:

1. How is the Commission tracking the impact of Storm Kristin in Portugal?
2. In light of the 'state of disaster' declared by the government, what present and future mechanisms is the Commission considering putting into action?

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Answer given by Ms Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission

(18 March 2026)

From the onset, the Commission, through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) ⁽¹⁾, was in contact with the Portuguese civil protection authorities. Portugal proactively activated the Copernicus Emergency Management Service Rapid Mapping, which provided satellite mapping, to support response efforts. The Commission used the European Flood Awareness System ⁽²⁾ and the scientific multi-hazard early warning and monitoring services ⁽³⁾.

Any country can request assistance through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, if a disaster exceeds its national capacities ⁽⁴⁾. Portugal did not request assistance for storm Kristin.

The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) ⁽⁵⁾ can be activated by Portugal, within a deadline of twelve weeks as from when the first damage occurred, demonstrating the direct damage exceeds the thresholds specified in Article 2 of the Council Regulation (EC) 2012/2002 ⁽⁶⁾. The EUSF may cover part of the costs for emergency and recovery operations incurred by public authorities. Private damage is not eligible.

The European Regional Development Fund could support the construction and upgrade of infrastructure to improve the resilience of the territory. In Portugal, EUR 574 million is already dedicated to measures related to climate change adaptation, prevention and management of climate related risks. The authorities can request an amendment of their cohesion policy programmes to increase the funds earmarked for reconstruction efforts.

Following a request from Portugal on agriculture, the Commission will examine the possibility to adopt exceptional measures under Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 ⁽⁷⁾.

As part of the Preparedness Union Strategy, the Commission will adopt in 2026 a European Integrated Framework for Climate Resilience.

⁽¹⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/emergency-response-coordination-centre-ercc_en.

⁽²⁾ It provides forecast and disseminates notifications for potential flooding.

⁽³⁾ Through the ARISTOTLE Scientific Partnership, a consortium of meteorological and geophysical institutes across Europe.

⁽⁴⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en.

⁽⁵⁾ Council Regulation (EC) 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 on establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3) as amended by Regulation (EU) 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>).

⁽⁶⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32002R2012>.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1308/oj/eng>.