



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

The Director-General

Brussels
ECHO.B.2/LI

Directors-General for Civil
Protection of the EU Member States

Dear Sir, / Dear Madam,

I am writing to inform you of the new funding opportunities for strengthening civil preparedness that have become available under the recently revised **cohesion policy** legal framework, adopted in September 2025.

In light of the unprecedented geopolitical instability and the need for the Union to ensure its own defence and civil preparedness, cohesion policy funding can now be swiftly mobilised to support investments in civil security.

Regulation (EU) 2025/1914¹ amends the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund Regulations, allowing Member States to *redirect existing* national allocations under these funds towards investments that enhance civil preparedness and dual-use capacities. This can be done under **two new specific objectives** introduced with the amendment:

3.3 Developing resilient defence infrastructure, prioritising that of dual-use nature, including to foster military mobility in the Union, as well as enhancing civil preparedness

5.4 Ensuring civil preparedness and resilience in all types of territories

Examples of investments that could be supported include:

- Development and testing of civil preparedness plans (including cross-border), evacuation plans, corridors;
- Equipping public transport terminals (e.g. subway stations) to double as emergency shelters;
- Logistical points for the distribution of emergency supplies (relief delivery facilities);
- Security measures for civil infrastructure, such as:
 - Backup power supplies for critical mobility infrastructure,

¹ Regulation (EU) 2025/1914 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2025 amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1058 and (EU) 2021/1056 as regards specific measures to address strategic challenges in the context of the mid-term review

- Civil communications systems: resilience of telecommunications and cyber networks (functions and withstand attacks or disruptions),
 - Traffic management systems (metros, rail, airports, traffic lights etc);
- (Field) hospital and medical emergency infrastructure and equipment;
- Civil protection equipment in peace time (e.g. firefighting equipment).

In parallel, **Regulation (EU) 2025/1913², amending European Social Fund+ legal framework**, introduced financial incentives for Member States to create new programme priorities dedicated to developing **skills** in civil preparedness, the defence industry (including dual-use capabilities), and cybersecurity.

While the revision of the legal framework is not accompanied by additional EU funding, it offers several **incentives for Member States to reorient existing allocations towards new civil preparedness priorities**, depending on the implementation status of ongoing programmes and the availability of uncommitted funds. These incentives and flexibilities include higher co-financing rates, specific pre-financing arrangements, and a longer implementation period (until end-2030), making such investments attractive to managing authorities of cohesion policy programmes.

To benefit from these new opportunities, **revised cohesion policy programmes must be submitted to the Commission before the end of 2025**, after which the Commission will have a maximum of four months to approve the amended programmes.

Reprogramming discussions are already ongoing, and we therefore encourage you to engage promptly with your national/regional counterparts managing cohesion policy funds, to explore how civil preparedness priorities can be integrated into the revised programmes. The list of managing authorities and programmes per Member State is available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/programmes_en.

The Commission stands ready to assist you with identifying the right counterparts to engage with nationally and to provide further guidance on this topic.

For related questions you can contact Hans-Ulrich Goessl, Head of Unit for Civil Protection Policy in DG ECHO B2.

Yours faithfully,

[e-signed]

Maciej Popowski

² Regulation (EU) 2025/1913 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2025 amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) as regards specific measures to address strategic challenges

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