

**Question for written answer E-004672/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Manon Aubry (The Left)

Subject: Exclusion of crisis-related expenditure from public debt and deficit calculations

On 6 September 2021, repeating the advice it gave during the pandemic, the Commission encouraged Member States to 'commit funds' to dealing with the fallout from the summer's extreme weather events. It stated that it may decide to exclude short-term crisis expenditure from public debt and deficit calculations¹, and that there were precedents in Italy for excluding natural disaster-related (i.e. crisis) expenditure.

1. Could the Commission shed light on the nature of this exclusion – whether it will be temporary or not, and the criteria to be met for public expenditure to be excluded from calculations?
2. Under these criteria, could the COVID-19 pandemic be classified a natural disaster and, if so, could the funds committed by Member States (having been encouraged by the Commission to commit them) be excluded from the calculation of public debt and deficits?
3. By the same token, could the biodiversity crisis and climate change be regarded as meeting these criteria?

¹ “Under EU fiscal rules, short-term emergency costs in response to exceptional major natural catastrophes may be classified as one-offs and thus excluded from the calculation of a Member State’s structural fiscal effort when assessing compliance with the Stability and Growth Pact,” a European Commission spokesperson said. Euractiv, 6 September 2021, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/climate-environment/news/eu-considers-debt-relief-for-countries-hit-by-floods-wildfires/>