Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland following natural disasters in 2017

2018/2078(BUD) - 04/09/2018 - Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by Janusz LEWANDOWSKI (EPP, PL) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund to assist Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament approve the decision annexed to the motion for a resolution to mobilise the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations from the European Union Solidarity Fund within the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018:

- **EUR 2 258 225 for Bulgaria,**
- **EUR 2 535 796 for Greece,**
- **EUR 16 918 941 for Lithuania and**
- **EUR 12 279 244 for Poland.**

As a reminder, the Commission proposes to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) to grant financial assistance relating to flooding in Bulgaria and Lithuania, earthquakes in Greece and storms in Poland. The natural disasters that occurred during 2017 in the EU caused the loss of human lives and a great deal of destruction in the regions affected, most of them qualified as ‘less developed regions’.

Members welcomed the decision, which is a sign of solidarity in the Union to the countries and people that suffered throughout the tragic events. They stressed the urgent need to release financial assistance and called for further **improvements in the mobilisation procedure**. They urged Member States to use the financial assistance provided by the Fund in a transparent way and to use the European structural and investment funds for the reconstruction of the affected regions.

The proposed mobilisation requires an **amendment to the 2018 budget** and a draft amending budget (No 4/2018) to strengthen budget line 13 06 01 ‘Assistance to Member States in the event of major natural disasters with serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment and the economy’ by **EUR 33 992 206**, both in commitment and payment appropriations.

The total annual amount available for the mobilisation of the Fund may not exceed EUR 500 000 000 (at 2011 prices). **The amount that can be mobilised at this stage of 2018 is EUR 173 389 397**. It corresponds to the total amount available at the beginning of 2018 for the intervention of the Fund (EUR 421 142 057), minus (i) the retained amount of EUR 143 585 709 in order to respect the obligation of keeping aside 25% of the annual budget for 2018 until 1 October 2018 and (ii) the amount of EUR 104 166 951 previously mobilised this year for Greece, Spain, France and Portugal (see 2018/2029(BUD)).