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

2018/2078(BUD) - 11/09/2018 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted by 652 votes to 26, with 4 abstentions, a resolution 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.

As a reminder, the **European Union Solidarity Fund** (EUSF) aims to enable the Union to respond rapidly, effectively and flexibly to emergency situations in order to express its solidarity with the population of regions affected by natural disasters. The maximum annual amount allocated to the Fund may not exceed EUR 500 million (at 2011 prices).

Parliament approved the decision to mobilise the EUSF to provide financial assistance for **floods in Bulgaria and Lithuania, earthquakes in Greece and storms in Poland**.

Since the requests submitted by Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland fulfil the conditions for providing a financial contribution from the Fund, Parliament approved the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations within the general budget of the 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.**

Parliament welcomed the decision, which is a sign of solidarity in the Union to the countries and people that suffered throughout the tragic events. It stressed the urgent need to release financial assistance and called for further optimisation of the mobilisation procedure leading to a shorter application-to-payment time.

Member States are urged to: (i) use the financial assistance provided by the Fund in a **transparent** way; (ii) 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.