

# Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Latvia

2018/2230(BUD) - 06/11/2018 - Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by Inese VAIDERE (EPP, LV) 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 Latvia.

The committee approved the proposal to **mobilise EUR 17 730 519 in commitment appropriations for Latvia** from the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) under the general budget of the Union for the financial year 2018.

As a reminder, on 14 November 2017, Latvia submitted an application for a contribution following a long-lasting period of intense rainfalls leading to the saturation of soils and subsequent flooding throughout the country. The natural disaster that struck the Union in 2017 caused widespread destruction in the regions concerned, which are described as 'less developed regions'.

In their application, received by the Commission on 14 November 2017 and completed on 27 April 2018, the Latvian authorities estimated total direct damage caused by the disaster at **EUR 380.5 million**. As this amount exceeds the '**major disaster threshold**' for mobilising the EUSF applicable to Latvia in 2017 of EUR 145 740 000 (i.e. 0.6% of Latvia's Gross National Income based on 2015 data), the disaster qualifies as a 'major natural disaster' as defined by the EUSF Regulation.

The cost of eligible essential emergency operations has been estimated by the Latvian authorities at EUR 36.2 million.

The proposed mobilisation will be financed in full through the partial use of the remaining EUR 47 479 154 in commitment and payment appropriations already entered into the 2018 budget for covering advances. An amending budget is therefore not required.

Members recommended the rapid approval of the Commission's proposal for a decision as a sign of solidarity with the affected regions. They invited Member States to use the financial assistance provided by the Fund in a transparent manner, guaranteeing a fair distribution throughout the affected regions.