Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Luxembourg, Spain and Greece further to natural disasters that took place in these countries in the course of 2021

2022/0337(BUD) - 22/11/2022 - Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by Henrike HAHN (Greens/EFA, DE) on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Luxembourg, Spain and Greece further to natural disasters that took place in these countries in the course of 2021.

Members called on the Parliament to approve the decision annexed to the draft resolution.

The Commission proposal seeks to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) to grant financial assistance for a global amount of EUR 718 482 761 relating to natural disasters that took place in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Luxembourg, Spain and Greece in the course of 2021.

The report proposed that for the general budget of the Union for the financial year 2021, the European Union Solidarity Fund should be mobilised as follows in commitment and payment appropriations in relation to natural disasters:

For the flooding:

- EUR 612 611 256 to Germany;

- EUR 87 737 427 to Belgium;

- EUR 4 713 027 to the Netherlands;

- EUR 797 520 to Austria;

- EUR 1 822 056 to Luxembourg.

For the volcano:

- EUR 9 449 589 to Spain (La Palma).

For the earthquake:

- EUR 1 351 886 to Greece (Crete).

Members stressed the urgent need to release financial assistance through the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) to ensure that support can reach the affected regions in a timely manner. They regretted at the same time that the maximum amount available for this EUSF mobilisation is much lower than the potential aid amount that could be needed and comes more than a year after the events took place due to

the inflexible mobilisation rules of the EUSF. They called on the Commission to explore further possibilities for additional funding.

The committee reiterated its concern about the decision to merge the Emergency Aid Reserve (EAR) and the EUSF in the current MFF, which has led to serious shortcomings, and significantly reduced the overall funding available. It considers that the available resources for EUSF should be substantially increased and made available in a more timely manner as part of the ambitious multiannual financial framework revision.