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) - 14/12/2022 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted by 555 votes to 7, 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 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.

Parliament approved the decision to mobilise the following amounts (in commitment and payment appropriations) within the general budget of the Union established for the financial year 2022 for the European Union Solidarity Fund in respect of natural disasters:

a) an amount of EUR 612 611 256 provided to Germany in relation to the floods in 2021;

b) an amount of EUR 87 737 427 provided to Belgium in relation to floods in 2021;

c) an amount of EUR 4 713 027 provided to the Netherlands in relation to floods in 2021;

d) an amount of EUR 797 520 provided to Austria in relation to floods in 2021;

e) an amount of EUR 1 822 056 provided to Luxembourg in relation to floods in 2021;

f) an amount of EUR 9 449 589 to Spain in connection with the volcanic eruption in La Palma;

g) an amount of EUR 1 351 886 to Greece in connection with the earthquake in Crete.

In its resolution, Parliament stressed the **urgency need to release financial assistance** through the EUSF to ensure that support can reach the affected regions in a timely manner. It regrets 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. It called therefore on the Commission to explore further possibilities for additional funding.

The resolution stressed that the effects of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, coupled with the consequences of severe natural disasters in 2022, have placed the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve under extreme pressure. Given that the number and severity of emergencies are unpredictable,

Parliament reiterated its position that the **annual ceiling of the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve for the period 2021-2027 is not adequate to respond to emergency situations**.

Parliament expressed its concern about the decision to merge the emergency aid reserve and the EUSF in the current multi-annual financial framework, which has led to serious shortcomings and considerably

reduced the overall funding available. It invited the Commission to present a model for a more rapid and timely mobilisation of the EUSF. The resources available for the EUSF should be substantially increased and made available more time manner as part of the ambitious revision of the multiannual financial framework.

Members stressed that an ambitious revision of the multiannual financial framework should include splitting the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve into two strands - the Emergency Aid Reserve and the EUSF - and increasing the annual appropriations from the current EUR 1.2 billion for the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve as a whole to EUR 1 billion for each strand, at 2018 prices.

Parliament stressed the need to reconsider the architecture of the EUSF mechanism in order to make it faster, more flexible and more responsive and therefore called for a **revision of the EUSF regulation**.