Basic information

2018/2029(BUD) BUD - Budgetary procedure	Procedure completed
Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal See also 2018/2030(BUD) **Subject** 3.70.11 Natural disasters, Solidarity Fund 8.70.58 2018 budget **Geographical area** France Greece Portugal Spain	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	FERNANDES José Manuel (PPE)	02/03/2018
	Shadow rapporteur JÄÄTTEENMÄKI Anneli (ALDE)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
REGI Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	3615	2018-05-14

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	-- --
Regional and Urban Policy	-- --

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
22/02/2018	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2018)0150	Summary
15/03/2018	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
14/05/2018	Draft budget approved by Council		
16/05/2018	Vote in committee		
17/05/2018	Budgetary report tabled for plenary	A8-0175/2018	Summary
30/05/2018	Decision by Parliament	T8-0217/2018	Summary
30/05/2018	Results of vote in Parliament		
08/06/2018	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/2029(BUD)
Procedure type	BUD - Budgetary procedure
Procedure subtype	Mobilisation of funds
Amendments and repeals	See also 2018/2030(BUD)
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	BUDG/8/12323

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE618.319	02/03/2018	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE619.427	28/03/2018	
Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading		A8-0175/2018	17/05/2018	Summary
Budgetary text adopted by Parliament		T8-0217/2018	30/05/2018	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2018)0150	22/02/2018	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date

European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act
Decision 2018/0846 OJ L 144 08.06.2018, p. 0003 Summary

Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal

2018/2029(BUD) - 30/05/2018 - Final act

PURPOSE: to mobilise the Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal following the natural disasters which affected these countries during 2017.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2018/846 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal.

CONTENT: with this Decision, the European Parliament and the Council decide, within the Union budget for 2018, to mobilise the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations under the European Union Solidarity Fund:

- **EUR 1 359 119 for Greece,**
- **EUR 3 228 675 for Spain,**
- **EUR 48 906 025 for France**
- **EUR 50 673 132 for Portugal.**

These amounts are granted in response to applications for assistance from the Fund by:

- **Greece** following an earthquake that struck the island of Lesbos in the Northern Aegean on 12 June 2017;
- **Spain** following forest fires in north-west Spain, in the region of Galicia, between 10 and 17 October 2017;
- **France** following the passage of Hurricane Irma on the island of Saint-Martin on 5 and 6 September 2017 and Hurricane Maria in Guadeloupe on 18 and 19 September 2017;
- **Portugal** following serious fires which broke out on 17 June 2017.

As a reminder, the European Solidarity Fund aims to enable the Union to respond in a rapid, efficient and flexible manner to emergency situations in order to show solidarity with the population of regions struck by natural disasters.

The maximum annual amount allocated to the Fund may not exceed EUR 500 million (at 2011 prices).

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 8.6.2018. This Decision shall apply from the date of its adoption, 30.5.2018.

Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal

2018/2029(BUD) - 30/05/2018 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted by 629 votes to 21, with 9 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 Greece, Spain, France and Portugal.

As a reminder, the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) aims to enable the Union to respond in a rapid, efficient and flexible manner to emergency situations in order to show solidarity with the population of regions struck by natural disasters.

Parliament seeks to mobilise the EUSF to grant financial assistance to Greece for the earthquakes in Lesbos, to France for the hurricanes in Saint Martin and Guadeloupe, as well as to Portugal and Spain for the forest fires that occurred in Centro and in Galicia in the course of 2017.

Given that the applications by Greece, Spain, France and Portugal meet the conditions for providing a financial contribution from the Fund, Parliament approved the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations:

- **Greece**: EUR 1 359 119;
- **Spain**: EUR 3 228 675;

- **France**: EUR 48 906 025;
- **Portugal**: EUR 50 673 132.

Member States should utilise the financial contribution from the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) in a transparent way, guaranteeing a fair distribution throughout the affected regions.

Parliament supported Member States using European structural and investment funds for the reconstruction of the affected regions and invited the Commission to support and rapidly approve the financial reallocation of the partnership agreements requested by Member States to this end.

It should be noted that the proposed mobilisation requires an amendment to the 2018 budget and a draft amending budget (N°1/2018), aiming at increasing budget line 13 06 01 'Assistance to Member States in the event of a major natural disaster with serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment or the economy' by **EUR 97 646 105** both in commitment and payment appropriations.

Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal

2018/2029(BUD) - 14/05/2018

On 22 February 2018, the Commission submitted to the Council draft amending budget (DAB) No 1 to the general budget for 2018 regarding the mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund for a total amount of EUR 97 646 105 in commitment and payment appropriations.

The proposal seeks to finance the mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund to provide financial assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal in response to natural disasters that hit those countries in 2017.

The corresponding appropriations are to be recorded under Article 13 06 01 (EU Solidarity Fund - Assistance to Member States in the event of a major natural disaster with serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment or the economy).

On 14 May 2018, the Council adopted its position on DAB No 1 to the general budget for 2018 as set out in the technical annex to the Council draft amending budget No 1/2018.

Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal

2018/2029(BUD) - 17/05/2018 - Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by José Manuel FERNANDES (EPP, PT) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) to provide assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal.

It proposes to mobilise the EUSF to grant financial assistance relating to forest fires in Portugal and Spain, hurricanes in France and earthquakes in Greece in 2017.

Given that the applications by Greece, Spain, France and Portugal meet the conditions for providing a financial contribution from the Fund, Members approved the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations:

- **Greece**: EUR 1 359 119;
- **Spain**: EUR 3 228 675;
- **France**: EUR 48 906 025;
- **Portugal**: EUR 50 673 132.

The proposed mobilisation requires an amendment to the 2018 budget and a draft amending budget (N°1/2018), aiming at increasing budget line 13 06 01 'Assistance to Member States in the event of a major natural disaster with serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment or the economy' by **EUR 97 646 105** both in commitment and payment appropriations.

Member States should apply the financial aid rapidly and in a transparent way, guaranteeing a fair distribution throughout the affected regions.

Lastly, Members expressed support for the Member States using Structural and Investment Funds for the reconstruction of the affected regions, and invited the Commission to support and rapidly approve the reallocation of the partnership agreements requested by Member States for the reconstruction of these regions.

Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal

2018/2029(BUD) - 22/02/2018 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to mobilise the Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Greece, Spain, France and Portugal.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: the European Union Solidarity Fund aims to enable the Union to respond in a rapid, efficient and flexible manner to emergency situations in order to show solidarity with the population of regions struck by natural disasters. The Fund is **not to exceed a maximum annual amount of EUR 500 million** (2011 prices), as laid down in Article 10 of Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework (MFF).

This decision covers the **mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) for an amount of EUR 104 166 951** to provide assistance to Greece in the aftermath of the earthquakes in Lesbos, France for hurricanes in Saint-Martin and Guadeloupe, as well as in Portugal and Spain following forest fires in the Centro region and Galicia in the course of 2017.

This mobilisation is accompanied by Draft Amending Budget (DAB) No 1/2018 that proposes to enter the necessary appropriations in the general budget 2018, both in commitments and payments, after having deducted the advance already paid (EUR 6 520 846).

Greece – Earthquakes in Lesbos: on 12 June 2017, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.3 on the Richter scale affected the island of Lesbos in the Northern Aegean. A multitude of aftershocks followed causing damage to private homes, businesses and local infrastructure.

The Greek authorities estimate the total direct damage at **EUR 54.4 million**. The damage caused on Lesbos represents 2.14 % of the GDP of the concerned Northern Aegean NUTS 2 level region and thus exceeds the threshold of 1.5 % of regional GDP laid down in the Regulation.

In its application Greece requested the **payment of an advance**. The Commission awarded **a 10 % advance of EUR 135 912** on the anticipated financial contribution from the EUSF.

France – Hurricanes Irma and Maria in Saint Martin and Guadeloupe: on 5 and 6 September 2017, a category 5 hurricane named Irma of unprecedented violence, travelled north-west through the Caribbean, killing and injuring a great number of people and leaving a trail of destruction behind. The eye of hurricane Irma crossed the island of Saint Martin/Sint Maarteen with an average speed of 290-295 km/h destroying over 90 % of the island. Only two weeks later on 18 and 19 September hurricane Maria, another category 5 hurricane resulting from the same meteorological and climatic conditions as Irma, crossed the Caribbean and again caused significant damage on Saint Martin/Sint Maarten, Guadeloupe and parts of Martinique.

The French authorities estimate the total direct damage caused by the disaster at **EUR 1 956.2 million**. The reported direct damage represents 21.9 % of the region's GDP and exceeds by far the applicable 1 %-threshold for outermost regions laid down in the Regulation.

In its application France requested the payment of an advance. The Commission awarded a **10 % advance of EUR 4 890 603** on the anticipated financial contribution from the EUSF.

Portugal – Forest fires in Centro: between June and October 2017, Portugal suffered several waves of large forest fires triggered by high temperatures, strong winds and extreme low humidity. These fires affected mainly Portugal's Central and Northern regions and had a devastating effect causing the destruction of essential public infrastructure, public buildings, private homes, businesses and destroying agricultural and forest land.

In their final application the Portuguese authorities estimate the total direct damage caused by the fires from June to October at **EUR 1 458.0 million**. This amount represents 0.832 % of Portugal's GNI, and exceeds the major disaster threshold for mobilising the Solidarity Fund of EUR 1 051.6 million in 2017 (i.e. 0.6 % of Portugal's GNI).

In its application Portugal requested the payment of an advance. The Commission awarded **an advance of EUR 1 494 331,** representing 10 % of the financial contribution from the EUSF anticipated at that moment.

Spain – Forest fires in Galicia: large wildfires broke out in north-western Spain in the region of Galicia during the period between 10 and 17 October 2017. The fires caused considerable destruction of essential public infrastructure, private homes, businesses and forest land.

The Spanish authorities estimate the total direct damage caused by the disaster at **EUR 129.1 million**. This amount is considerably below the major disaster threshold applicable to Spain in 2017 of EUR 3 378.5 million (i.e. EUR 3 billion in 2011 prices). Therefore, the Spanish authorities presented their application under the so called **'neighbouring country provision'**, whereby an eligible country affected by the same disaster qualifying as a major disaster in a neighbouring eligible country may also benefit from EUSF aid.

Given the low level of the damage and of the anticipated amount of aid the **payment of an advance was not justified**.

Conclusion: the Commission considers that the disasters referred to in the applications submitted by Greece, France, Portugal and Spain **meet the conditions** set out in the Regulation for mobilising the EUSF.

Financing: the amount that may be mobilised at this stage of the year 2018 is **EUR 277 556 348**. This corresponds to the total amount available for the mobilisation of the EUSF at the beginning of 2018 (EUR 421 142 057), minus the retained amount of EUR 143 585 709 in order to respect the obligation of keeping aside 25 % of the 2018 annual allocation until 1 October 2018.

In the framework of the general budget of the Union established for the financial year 2018, the Commission proposes to mobilise the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations under the European Union Solidarity Fund:

- EUR 1 359 119 for Greece,
- EUR 3 228 675 for Spain,
- EUR 48 906 025 for France,
- EUR 50 673 132 for Portugal.

In order to minimise the time taken to mobilise the Fund, this Decision should apply from the date of its adoption.