Basic information

2018/2078(BUD) BUD - Budgetary procedure	Procedure completed
Mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund: assistance to Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland following natural disasters in 2017 See also 2018/2082(BUD) **Subject** 3.70.11 Natural disasters, Solidarity Fund 8.70.58 2018 budget **Geographical area** Bulgaria Greece Lithuania Poland	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	LEWANDOWSKI Janusz (PPE)	04/06/2018
	Shadow rapporteur GLOANEC MAURIN Karine (S&D) JÄÄTTEENMÄKI Anneli (ALDE) VANA Monika (Verts/ALE) ŻÓŁTEK Stanisław (ENF)	

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

Council of the European Union

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Budget	OETTINGER Günther

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
31/05/2018	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2018)0360	Summary
02/07/2018	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
03/07/2018	Draft budget approved by Council		
29/08/2018	Vote in committee		
04/09/2018	Budgetary report tabled for plenary	A8-0272/2018	Summary
11/09/2018	Decision by Parliament	T8-0321/2018	Summary
11/09/2018	Results of vote in Parliament		
15/10/2018	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/2078(BUD)
Procedure type	BUD - Budgetary procedure
Procedure subtype	Mobilisation of funds
Amendments and repeals	See also 2018/2082(BUD)
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	BUDG/8/13414

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE623.663	12/06/2018	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE625.421	12/07/2018	
Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading		A8-0272/2018	04/09/2018	Summary
Budgetary text adopted by Parliament		T8-0321/2018	11/09/2018	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2018)0360	31/05/2018	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 2018/1505 OJ L 258 15.10.2018, p. 0003	Summary

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

2018/2078(BUD) - 15/10/2018 - Final act

PURPOSE: the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund to assist Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision (EU) 2018/1505 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland.

CONTENT: The European Parliament and the Council have decided, within the framework of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018, to mobilise the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations from the European Union Solidarity Fund

- **EUR 2 258 225 for Bulgaria** in response to an application for assistance from the Fund following a flood caused by intense rainfall and severe storms on 25 and 26 October 2017;
- **EUR 2 535 796 for Greece** in response to an application for assistance from the Fund following an earthquake that struck the South Aegean region and the island of Kos on 20 July 2017;
- **EUR 16 918 941 for Lithuania** in response to an application for assistance from the Fund following a flood caused by continuous rainfall during summer and autumn 2017;
- **EUR 12 279 244 for Poland** in response to an application for assistance from the Fund following exceptionally violent storms and torrential rains between 9 and 12 August 2017.

The European Union Solidarity Fund aims to enable the EU to respond quickly, 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).

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 15.10.2018. The decision applies from 12.9.2018.

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.

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

2018/2078(BUD) - 31/05/2018 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund to assist Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland following a series of disasters in these countries in the course of 2017.

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

CONTENT: the Commission proposes to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) for an amount of **EUR 33 992 206** to assist Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Poland following a series of disasters in these countries during 2017.

(1) Bulgaria - flooding: on 25 and 26 October 2017 the south-eastern part of Bulgaria experienced unusual intense rainfall and violent storms causing damage to bridges, drainage channels and retaining walls and the basic infrastructure.

A state of emergency was declared and the regional plan for disaster protection was launched. The flood claimed 5 lives and affected about 6000 people. 142 residential properties and over 1 200 non-residential properties were flooded.

The Bulgarian authorities estimate the **total direct damage caused by the disaster at EUR 90.3 million**. The damage caused by the floods in Burgas represents **1.6 % of the GDP** of the NUTS level 2 region concerned, namely Yugoiztochen, and thus exceeds the threshold of 1.5 % of regional GDP laid down in the EUSF Regulation.

Bulgaria estimated the cost of emergency and recovery operations eligible under the EUSF Regulation at **EUR 90.1 million**.

(2) Greece - earthquake on the island of Kos in 2017: on 20 July 2017, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 on the Richter scale, followed by numerous aftershocks, struck the South Aegean region between Bodrum (Turkey) and the island of Kos (Greece), causing damage which mainly affected infrastructure and public property, as well as important cultural heritage sites. Greece reported 10 victims and over 100 injured. The port of Kos suffered extensive damage. 150 houses will have to be repaired and 10 rebuilt. 33 businesses need repairs and 5 need rebuilding. 3 public buildings were also affected.

The Greek authorities estimate the **total direct damage caused by the disaster at EUR 101.4 million**. The damage caused by the earthquake in Kos represents 1.8% of the GDP of the NUTS level 2 region concerned, namely the Southern Aegean, and thus exceeds the threshold of 1.5% of regional GDP provided for by the EUSF Regulation.

Greece estimated the cost of emergency and recovery operations eligible under the EUSF Regulation at **EUR 93.9 million**.

(3) Lithuania - flooding: during the summer and autumn, Lithuania was affected by continuous rainfall which saturated the soil, unable to absorb the excess water. This situation led to flooding, mainly causing damage to infrastructure and the agricultural sector. A period of excessive rainfall over several months, with precipitation rates reaching up to 280% of the normal led to waterlogged soil, excessive inland water levels and critical overloading of drainage systems. On 4 October 2017, Lithuania declared a nationwide emergency. Torrential rains also damaged more than 100 km of local roads.

The Lithuanian authorities estimate the **total direct damage caused by the flood at EUR 407.4 million**. This amount exceeds the EUSF intervention threshold for a so-called 'major disaster threshold' applicable to this country in 2017, which amounts to EUR 214.9 million (0.6 % of gross national income based on 2015 data).

Lithuania estimated the cost of emergency and recovery operations eligible under the EUSF Regulation at **EUR 240.2 million**.

(4) Poland - storm: between 9 and 12 August 2017 parts of Poland were affected by exceptionally violent storms and heavy rainfall causing widespread damage to private and public forests, public infrastructure and other assets. The storm came with intense rain and local hail causing 6 fatalities and 39 people injured. The districts of Toruń and Gdańsk were hardest hit. The disaster caused significant losses of natural resources and affected for example 22 forest reserves, 15 bird species and 134 habitats (Natura 2000). In addition, more than 13 600 farms and almost 99 000 ha of crops were affected.

The Polish authorities estimate the total direct damage caused by the disaster at **EUR 491.2 million**. The storm damage represents **2.0%** of the weighted average regional GDP of the three regions concerned, namely the voivodships of Kujawsko-Pomerania, Pomerania and Wielkopolska, and thus exceeds the threshold of 1.5% set in the EUSF Regulation.

Poland estimated the cost of emergency and recovery operations eligible under the EUSF Regulation at **EUR 324.5 million**.

Financing: Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the period 2014-2020, and in particular Article 10 thereof, allows the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund up to an annual ceiling of EUR 500 million (2011 prices), above the ceilings of the relevant headings of the financial framework.

In the context of the general budget of the Union for the financial year 2018, the Commission proposes to mobilise the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations under the EUSF:

- **EUR 2 258 225 for Bulgaria,**
- **EUR 2 535 796 for Greece,**
- **EUR 16 918 941 for Lithuania,**
- **EUR 12 279 244 for Poland.**

The total amount available for the mobilisation of the EUSF at the beginning of 2018 was **EUR 421 142 057**, being the sum of the remaining 2018 allocation of EUR 280 371 754, plus the remaining 2017 allocation of EUR 140 770 303 that remained unspent and was carried over to 2018.

The amount that may be mobilised at this stage of the year 2018 is **EUR 173 389 397**. 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 as stipulated by Article 10(1) of the MFF regulation and minus EUR 104 166 951 mobilised for Greece, Spain, France and Portugal earlier this year.

This mobilisation is accompanied by draft amending budget (DAB) No 4/2018 that proposes to enter the necessary appropriations in the general budget 2018.

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

2018/2078(BUD) - 04/09/2018 - Budgetary report tabled for plenary, 1st reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by Janusz LEWANDOWSKI (EPP, PL) 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.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament approve the decision annexed to the motion for a resolution to mobilise the following amounts in commitment and payment appropriations from the European Union Solidarity Fund within the general budget of the European 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.**

As a reminder, the Commission proposes to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) to grant financial assistance relating to flooding in Bulgaria and Lithuania, earthquakes in Greece and storms in Poland. The natural disasters that occurred during 2017 in the EU caused the loss of human lives and a great deal of destruction in the regions affected, most of them qualified as ‘less developed regions’.

Members welcomed the decision, which is a sign of solidarity in the Union to the countries and people that suffered throughout the tragic events. They stressed the urgent need to release financial assistance and called for further **improvements in the mobilisation procedure**. They urged Member States to use the financial assistance provided by the Fund in a transparent way and to 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.

The total annual amount available for the mobilisation of the Fund may not exceed EUR 500 000 000 (at 2011 prices). **The amount that can be mobilised at this stage of 2018 is EUR 173 389 397**. It corresponds to the total amount available at the beginning of 2018 for the intervention of the Fund (EUR 421 142 057), minus (i) the retained amount of EUR 143 585 709 in order to respect the obligation of keeping aside 25% of the annual budget for 2018 until 1 October 2018 and (ii) the amount of EUR 104 166 951 previously mobilised this year for Greece, Spain, France and Portugal (see 2018/2029(BUD)).