



Plenary sitting

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REPORT

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 and Italy relating to floods occurred in 2024 (COM(2024)0480 – C10-0162/2024 – 2024/0284(BUD))

Committee on Budgets

Rapporteur: Giuseppe Lupo

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 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 and Italy relating to floods occurred in 2024
(COM (2024)0480 – C10-0162/2024 – 2024/0284(BUD))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM (2024)0480 – C10-0162/2024),
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund¹,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2020/2093 of 17 December 2020 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027², and in particular Article 9 thereof,
- having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources³, and in particular point 10 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund⁴,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 27 February 2024 on the draft Council regulation amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027⁶,

¹ OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2002/2012/oj>.

² OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 11, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2093/oj>.

³ OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2020/1222/oj.

⁴ OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, pp. 60, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1058/oj>.

⁵ OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 1–186, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2115/oj>

⁶ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2024)0082.

- having regard to its resolution of 20 October 2021 on the effectiveness of Member States’ use of EU Solidarity Fund money in cases of natural disasters⁷,
 - having regard to its resolution of 18 May 2021 on the review of the European Union Solidarity Fund⁸,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A10-0162/2024),
- A. whereas on 30 May 2024, Germany was hit by torrential rain causing extreme flooding in Southern Germany at the beginning of June resulting in **six fatalities and** total direct damages of EUR 4 131.6 million according to the Commission;
- B. whereas on 29 June 2024, Italy suffered violent storms leading to the overflow of rivers and streams in the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta resulting in total direct damages estimated by the Italian authorities at EUR 158.39 million;
1. Expresses its deepest solidarity with all the victims, their families and all the individuals affected by the destructive floods in Germany and Italy as well as with the national, regional and local authorities involved in the relief efforts;
 2. Welcomes the decision as a tangible and visible form of the Union’s solidarity with its citizens and the regions in the affected areas in Germany and Italy;
 3. Reiterates the importance of communicating to the public the tangible benefits brought about by the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF), also to further increase citizens’ awareness of Union tools and programmes;
 4. Highlights the increasing number of severe, destructive **and deadly** natural disasters in Europe and **calls on Member States and Commission to invest in climate mitigation and adaptation measures to avoid human and economic losses**; considers that the budget of the EUSF or its equivalent should be **significantly** expanded in view of the upcoming Commission proposal on the new Multiannual Financial Framework and subsequent inter-institutional negotiations **and that the EUSF or its equivalent must provide assistance commensurate to the magnitude of such disasters to citizens; notes that substantially increasing the EUSF would allow Member States to respond more effectively and quickly to disasters while other instruments, particularly cohesion funds whose primary purpose is not disaster response, could be preserved**;
- 4a ***Stresses the significant damage caused by floods to agricultural land and farms, transportation infrastructure and particularly small villages and towns outside of urban regions; stresses that, due to climate change, islands and coastal regions are particularly vulnerable to natural calamities; acknowledges that phenomena such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, and droughts - which also affect lakes and rivers - represent an increasing threat to many European regions, particularly those in the Mediterranean; questions whether the EUSF is adequately aligned with the emergency needs related to climate adaptation in these particularly fragile territories;***

⁷ OJ C 184, 05.05.2022, p. 82.

⁸ OJ C 15, 12.1.2022, p. 2.

therefore, believes that islands and coastal regions should receive adequate funding within the framework of the EUSF to address their specific vulnerabilities; calls on Member States to take into consideration that vulnerable populations are particularly affected by natural disasters due to socio-economic factors further hampering their ability to recover;

5. Stresses that the EUSF is only a curative instrument and that the Union should also continue to address climate change adaptation and mitigation by supporting European and national policies to prevent natural disasters; underlines that the EEA Report No 1/2024 ‘European Climate Risk Assessment’ warned that the Union is unprepared for the effects of climate change and stresses the need for action to avoid that the climate risks identified reach critical levels; ***calls on Member States and the Commission to take the necessary measures to bring the Union to achieve the commitments made in the Paris agreement;*** recalls the need for effective synergies with other Union policies and programmes and underlines that Member States should make best use of funding opportunities in particular, of the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund + and the Rural development programmes; ***calls on the Commission to assess with due urgency any reasoned requests by Member States to reallocate funds within the National Recovery and Resilience plans to natural disaster assistance, in accordance with the rules laid down in the RRF Regulation; stresses also the need for preventive measures, not only to mitigate future damage but also to prevent the exacerbation of risk conditions following catastrophic events, such as floods, wildfires, landslides or the drying up of lakes and rivers; underlines the importance of adequate flexibility between the different programmes;*** underscores that assistance provided under the EUSF should not be to the detriment of European funding received by Member States under other Union programmes or policies; ***recalls that Member States can grant state aid, in accordance with applicable Union rules, notably for agricultural businesses that have suffered damages due to natural disasters;***
6. Notes that the Commission has submitted on 21 October 2024 a legislative proposal for regional emergency support to reconstruction following a natural disaster⁹ and for specific measures under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to provide additional assistance to Member States affected by natural disasters¹⁰ with the aim to provide further flexibilities in the use of the funds;
7. Recalls the importance of rapid and solid damage assessment that takes due account of the economic repercussions and calls for increased operational efforts to be made in order to reduce the average time for the release of advanced payments, while ensuring the Union budget is protected;
8. Stresses the urgent need to release immediate financial assistance through the EUSF to ensure that support can reach the affected regions in a timely manner;

⁹ Proposal by the European Commission of 21 October 2024 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council RESTORE – Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 and Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 (COM(2024)0496).

¹⁰ Proposal by the European Commission of 21 October 2024 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 as regards specific measures under the EAFRD to provide additional assistance to Member States affected by natural disasters (COM(2024)0495).

9. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;
10. Instructs its President to sign the decision with the President of the Council and arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution, including its annex, to the Council and the Commission.

ANNEX: DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Germany and Italy relating to floods occurred in 2024

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund¹, and in particular Article 4(3) thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation 2020/2093 of 17 December 2020 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027², and in particular Article 9 thereof,

Having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation on budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources (IIA)³, and in particular point 10 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) The European Union Solidarity Fund ('the 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 major or regional natural disasters or major public health emergency.
- (2) The Fund is not to exceed the ceilings as laid down in Article 9 of Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093, as amended by Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/765⁴.
- (3) On 20 August 2024, Germany submitted an application to mobilise the Fund following the floods in Southern Germany in May 2024.
- (4) On 20 September 2024, Italy submitted an application to mobilise the Fund following the floods in the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta of Italy on 29 June 2024.
- (5) The above mentioned applications meet the conditions for providing a financial contribution from the Fund, as laid down in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002.
- (6) The Fund should therefore be mobilised in order to provide a financial contribution to Germany and Italy.

¹ OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2002/2012/oj>.

² OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 11, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2093/oj>.

³ OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2020/1222/oj.

⁴ Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/765 of 29 February 2024 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027 (OJ L, 2024/765, 29.2.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/765/oj>).

- (7) In order to minimise the time taken to mobilise the Fund, this Decision should apply from the date of its adoption,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

For the general budget of the Union for the financial year 2024, the European Union Solidarity Fund shall be mobilised as follows in commitment and payment appropriations in relation to natural disasters:

- (a) the amount of EUR 112 071 681 shall be provided to Germany in relation to floods in May and June 2024;
- (b) the amount of EUR 3 959 872 shall be provided to Italy in relation to floods of 29 June 2024 in the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from [*the date of its adoption*]*.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

* Date to be inserted by the Parliament before the publication in OJ.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The Commission proposes to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 (EUSF regulation) for an amount of EUR 116 031 553 to provide assistance to Germany and Italy relating to floods occurred in 2024.

Germany – major disaster: floods in Southern Germany in May 2024

On 30 May 2024, torrential rain hit the states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg causing extreme flooding in Southern Germany at the beginning of June. The water levels in many places exceeded historic highs and a state of emergency was declared in 18 Bavarian districts. The flood disaster led to 6 fatalities and the failure of several dams in the region, requiring the evacuation of several municipalities and rescue missions. Floodwaters and debris flow damaged bridges, rail networks and roads, impacting overland travel in the affected areas. Train services were severely affected and in one instance an express train carrying 185 passengers was derailed after a landslide.

The Commission estimates the total direct damage caused by the disaster at EUR 4 131.6 million. This amount exceeds the ‘major natural disaster’ threshold for Germany of EUR 3 billion in 2011 prices, which is EUR 3.8 billion in 2024 prices. Therefore, the disaster qualifies as a ‘major natural disaster’ according to Article 2(2) of the EUSF Regulation.

Italy – regional disaster: floods in Valle d’Aosta region

On 29 June 2024, violent storms brought significant rainfall resulting in the overflow of rivers and streams. The torrential flooding caused extensive damage to the infrastructure, disruption of services and isolation of communities in the autonomous region of Valle d’Aosta. 58% of the municipalities in Valle d’Aosta were affected by the flooding. The land area affected is about 66% of the total land area of the region. The most affected municipalities included Aymavilles, Cogne and Valtournenche. More than 52 000 inhabitants and 4 800 businesses were directly affected by the disaster.

The application presented the event as a “regional natural disaster” as laid down in Article 2(3) of the EUSF Regulation, which is any natural disaster in a region at NUTS level 2 of an eligible State resulting in direct damage exceeding 1.5% of that region's gross domestic product (GDP). The Italian authorities estimate the total direct damage caused by the disaster at EUR 158.39 million. This amount exceeds the indicated applicable threshold for “regional disaster”, which is EUR 71.05 million for the Valle d’Aosta region in 2024.

Conclusion

The methodology for calculating the aid was set out in the 2002-2003 Annual Report on the EUSF and accepted by the Council and the European Parliament. The Commission therefore proposes to the budget authority to mobilise the following amounts for Germany’s and Italy’s applications:

Disaster	Total direct damage (EUR)	Applied disaster threshold (EUR)	2.5% of total direct damage up to the major disaster threshold (EUR)	6% of direct damage above the major disaster threshold (EUR)	2.5% of total direct damage (EUR)	Total amount of aid proposed (EUR)	Advance (EUR)	Balance to be paid (EUR)
Germany – flood (major disaster)	4 131 673 024	3 880 820 000	97 020 500	15 051 181	NA	112 071 681	NA	112 071 681
Italy (Valle d’Aosta)– flood (regional disaster)	158 394 907	71 054 400	NA	NA	3 959 872	3 959 872	NA	3 959 872
TOTAL						116 031 553	NA	116 031 553

Council Regulation 2024/765⁵ of 29 February 2024 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021-2027 split the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR) in two separate instruments: the European Solidarity Reserve and the Emergency Aid Reserve. The European Solidarity Reserve with an annual amount of EUR 1 016 million (in 2018 prices, corresponding to EUR 1 144.2 million in 2024 prices) will be used for assistance to respond to emergency situations covered by the EUSF.

In order to avoid an early depletion of the annual allocation, Article 3(7) of the EUSF Regulation and Article 9(2), second subparagraph, of the amended MFF Regulation stipulate that 25% of the annual EUSF allocation (i.e. EUR 286 million for 2024) shall remain available on 1 October of each year.

Finally, according to the Article 4a(4) of the EUSF Regulation, the amount of EUR 50 000 000 has been already inscribed in the EU general budget 2024 (in commitments and payments appropriations) for the payment of possible advances.

Therefore, the maximum amount that can be used by the EUSF from the 2024 European Solidarity Reserve allocation at this stage is EUR 297 420 718 which allows covering the payment needs of this mobilisation.

Amount available under the EUSF in 2024:	
Total annual 2024 EUSF allocation (incl. 1 October tranche)	1 144 181 018
Credits reserved for advance payments (-)	50 000 000
Amount mobilised under 1st Mobilisation Decision (-)	796 760 300
Amount available for Mobilisation (excl. advances)	297 420 718
Amount proposed for mobilisation under 2nd Mobilisation Decision	116 031 553
Amount still available for advance payments	12 926 996
Remaining amount for future applications (incl. for advances)	194 316 161

The Rapporteur recommends the swift approval of the Commission proposal for a decision annexed to this report, leading to the rapid mobilisation of the aforementioned amounts, as a sign of European solidarity with Germany and Italy. The rapporteur calls on the Commission that this financial contribution should be delivered with particular urgency.

⁵ Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2024/765 of 29 February 2024 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027 (OJ L, 2024/765, 29.2.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/765/oj>).

ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT

Pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure, the rapporteur declares that he has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the report, prior to the adoption thereof in committee:

Entity and/or person
none

The list above is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur.

Where natural persons are identified in the list by their name, by their function or by both, the rapporteur declares that he has submitted to the concerned natural persons the European Parliament's Data Protection Notice No 484 (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/data-protect/index.do>), which sets out the conditions applicable to the processing of their personal data and the rights linked to that processing.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	21.11.2024
Result of final vote	+: 29 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Georgios Aftias, Isabel Benjumea Benjumea, Tomasz Buczek, Tamás Deutsch, Angéline Furet, Jean-Marc Germain, Sandra Gómez López, Fabienne Keller, Janusz Lewandowski, Giuseppe Lupo, Ignazio Roberto Marino, Fernando Navarrete Rojas, Matjaž Nemeč, Danuše Nerudová, Ruggero Razza, Bogdan Rzońca, Hélder Sousa Silva, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Joachim Streit, Carla Tavares, Nils Ušakovs, Auke Zijlstra
Substitutes present for the final vote	Moritz Körner, Tiago Moreira de Sá
Members under Rule 216(7) present for the final vote	Christophe Bay, Udo Bullmann, Andrzej Buła, Gheorghe Falcă, Ștefan Mușoiu, Jan-Christoph Oetjen

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL BY THE COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

29	+
ECR	Ruggero Razza, Bogdan Rzońca
PPE	Georgios Aftias, Isabel Benjumea Benjumea, Andrzej Buła, Gheorghe Falcă, Janusz Lewandowski, Fernando Navarrete Rojas, Danuše Nerudová, Hélder Sousa Silva
PfE	Christophe Bay, Tomasz Buczek, Tamás Deutsch, Angéline Furet, Tiago Moreira de Sá
Renew	Fabienne Keller, Moritz Körner, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Joachim Streit
S&D	Udo Bullmann, Jean-Marc Germain, Sandra Gómez López, Giuseppe Lupo, Ștefan Mușoiu, Matjaž Nemeč, Carla Tavares, Nils Ušakovs
Verts/ALE	Ignazio Roberto Marino, Nicolae Ștefănuță

1	-
PfE	Auke Zijlstra

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention