

Beat: Politics

Seven countries to receive nearly €720 million in EU aid after natural disasters

Support for Spain among others

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USPA NEWS - The European Parliament approved on Wednesday €718.5 million in EU Solidarity Fund aid following natural disasters in seven EU countries in 2021. This amount in aid from the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) will be distributed as follows. In relation to the catastrophic floods in July 2021: €612.6 million for Germany; €87.7 million for Belgium; €4.7 million for the Netherlands; €797.520 for Austria; €1.8 million for Luxembourg; for the volcanic eruption in La Palma, Spain, €9.5 million; and in relation to the earthquake in Crete, Greece: €1.4 million.

The aid package was approved by 555 votes in favour, 7 votes against and 4 abstentions. Rapporteur Henrike Hahn (Greens/EFA, DE) said: "As a sign of European solidarity, the money from the EU Solidarity Fund approved by MEPs today makes an important contribution to reconstruction efforts following these natural disasters. However, combating the causes of climate change should be the priority for the EU, to minimise the impact and occurrence of extreme weather events in the future."

The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) was set up to respond to major natural disasters and facilitate European solidarity with disaster-stricken regions within Europe. The Fund was created as a reaction to the severe floods in Central Europe in the summer of 2002. Since then, it has been used for 100 natural disasters covering a range of different events including floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and drought. The Fund also have been mobilised for 20 public health emergencies. 28 different European countries have been supported so far for an amount of over €7 billion.

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