

**Question for written answer E-008010/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Flavio Zanonato (S&D)

Subject: Meteorological disasters and the EU Solidarity Fund

In recent days, northern Italy has suffered extreme weather conditions which have caused huge damage to the local economy, public infrastructure and private property. The storms have created such major disruption for the region's population that the Civil Protection department has been required to step in, and weather forecasts predict that the adverse weather will recur in the weeks to come, affecting other areas.

1. In light of this, what forms of financial, technical and humanitarian aid can the EU provide to support those affected?
2. What mechanisms or strategies are currently in place to prevent and tackle the consequences of natural disasters? Will the Commission undertake to develop these strategies further?
3. Does the Commission believe that a disaster such as this is likely to be eligible for support from the EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF)? Does it intend to apply a flexible interpretation of the damage threshold under the EUSF's regional disasters category, to ensure that affected Member States are not denied assistance due to a restrictive interpretation of damage threshold requirements?