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*Plenary sitting*

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**A7-0078/2014**

31.1.2014

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# **REPORT**

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council  
amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 establishing the European  
Union Solidarity Fund  
(COM(2013)0522 – C7-0231/2013 – 2013/0248(COD))

Committee on Regional Development

Rapporteur: Rosa Estaràs Ferragut

### ***Symbols for procedures***

*	Consultation procedure
***	Consent procedure
***I	Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
***II	Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
***III	Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

### ***Amendments to a draft act***

#### **Amendments by Parliament set out in two columns**

Deletions are indicated in ***bold italics*** in the left-hand column. Replacements are indicated in ***bold italics*** in both columns. New text is indicated in ***bold italics*** in the right-hand column.

The first and second lines of the header of each amendment identify the relevant part of the draft act under consideration. If an amendment pertains to an existing act that the draft act is seeking to amend, the amendment heading includes a third line identifying the existing act and a fourth line identifying the provision in that act that Parliament wishes to amend.

#### **Amendments by Parliament in the form of a consolidated text**

New text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Deletions are indicated using either the ■ symbol or strikeout. Replacements are indicated by highlighting the new text in ***bold italics*** and by deleting or striking out the text that has been replaced.

By way of exception, purely technical changes made by the drafting departments in preparing the final text are not highlighted.

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## **DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION**

**on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council  
amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 establishing the European Union  
Solidarity Fund**

**(COM(2013)0522 – C7-0231/2013 – 2013/0248(COD))**

**(Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading)**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission proposal to Parliament and the Council (COM(2013)0522),
  - having regard to Article 294(2) and the third subparagraph of Article 175 and Article 212(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Commission submitted the proposal to Parliament (C7-0231/2013),
  - having regard to Article 294(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
  - having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Regional Development and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (A7-0078/2014),
1. Adopts its position at first reading hereinafter set out;
  2. Calls on the Commission to refer the matter to Parliament again if it intends to amend its proposal substantially or replace it with another text;
  3. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.

## Amendment 1

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Recital 1 a (new)

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

***(1a) Although the Fund is mainly limited to natural disasters, it is necessary for the Union to have at its disposal a sound and flexible instrument to allow it to send a clear political signal to citizens affected by major emergency situations.***

## Amendment 2

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Recital 1 b (new)

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

***(1b) Natural disasters in the Union have increased significantly in number, severity and intensity, as a consequence of climate change, since the Fund was established. Therefore, and in view of the Union's objectives on environmental protection and climate change adaptation, the functioning of the Fund needs to be improved.***

## Amendment 3

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Recital 8

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

***(8) A 'major natural disaster' **within the meaning of Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002** should be defined as **having caused direct damage above a threshold expressed in financial terms and should*****

***(8) A 'major natural disaster' should be defined as **one that causes serious damage and/or involves severe disruption of normal living conditions in a given geographic area, whether caused by*****

*be expressed in prices of a reference year, or as a percentage of the gross national income (GNI) of the State concerned.*

*natural phenomena or the accidental catastrophic effects of human action, and which requires special attention from public authorities and other humanitarian or social service organisations.*

#### Amendment 4

##### Proposal for a regulation Recital 8 a (new)

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

*(8a) The Fund should be activated when a major natural disaster has caused direct damage above a threshold that is expressed in financial terms and in the prices of a reference year, or as a percentage of the gross national income (GNI) of the State concerned.*

#### Amendment 5

##### Proposal for a regulation Recital 9

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

(9) In order to better take into account the specific nature of those disasters which, although *important*, do not reach the minimum scale required to benefit from a contribution from the Fund, the criteria for regional disasters should be determined based on the damage calculable by reference to regional gross domestic product (GDP). Those criteria should be determined in a clear and simple manner in order to reduce the possibility of applications being submitted which do not meet the requirements set out in Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002.

(9) In order to better take into account the specific nature of those disasters which, although *having serious repercussions for the economic and social development of the regions concerned*, do not reach the minimum scale required to benefit from a contribution from the Fund, the criteria for regional disasters should be determined based on the damage calculable by reference to regional gross domestic product (GDP). Those criteria should be determined in a clear and simple manner in order to reduce the possibility of applications being submitted which do not meet the requirements set out in Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002.

## Amendment 6

### Proposal for a regulation Recital 11

*Text proposed by the Commission*

(11) The Fund should contribute to the restoration of infrastructure to working order, to the cleaning up of disaster-stricken zones and to the costs of the rescue services **and** for temporary accommodation for the population concerned during the whole implementation period. The time-span during which the accommodation of people made homeless by the disaster may be considered temporary should also be defined.

*Amendment*

(11) The Fund should contribute to the restoration of infrastructure to working order ***or to a condition such that it would be better able to withstand natural disasters, including relocation***, to the cleaning up of disaster stricken zones and to the costs of the rescue services, for temporary accommodation for the population concerned during the whole implementation period ***and where appropriate, to technical assistance***. The time-span during which the accommodation of people made homeless by the disaster may be considered temporary should also be defined, ***taking into account the nature and the extent of the disaster, and each Member State or region's capacity for recovery***.

## Amendment 7

### Proposal for a regulation Recital 13

*Text proposed by the Commission*

(13) It should also be specified that eligible operations ***should not*** include expenditure for technical assistance.

*Amendment*

(13) It should also be specified that ***it should be possible for*** eligible operations ***to also*** include expenditure for technical assistance.

## Amendment 8

### Proposal for a regulation Recital 15

*Text proposed by the Commission*

(15) Certain types of natural disaster, ***such***

*Amendment*

(15) Certain types of natural disaster, ***that***



*as droughts, are* developing over a longer period of time before their disastrous effects *are felt. Provision should be made to allow the use of the Fund also in such cases.*

develop over a longer period of time before their disastrous effects *become catastrophic, should be eligible for assistance from the Fund. Provisions should allow for enough flexibility in defining natural disasters.*

## **Amendment 9**

### **Proposal for a regulation**

#### **Recital 16**

##### *Text proposed by the Commission*

(16) It is important to ensure that the eligible States make the requisite efforts to prevent disasters from occurring and to mitigate their effects, including by full implementation of relevant Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management and the use of available Union funding for relevant investments. Provision should therefore be made that a failure of the Member State to comply with relevant Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management, after having received a contribution from the Fund for an earlier natural disaster, may result in the rejection of the application or a reduction of the amount of contribution in the event of a further application for a disaster of the same nature.

##### *Amendment*

(16) It is important to ensure that the eligible States make the requisite efforts to prevent disasters from occurring and to mitigate their effects, including by full implementation of relevant Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management and the use of available Union funding for relevant investments. Provision should therefore be made that a failure of the Member State to comply with relevant Union legislation on *sustainable* disaster risk prevention and management, after having received a contribution from the Fund for an earlier natural disaster, may result in the rejection of the application or a reduction of the amount of contribution in the event of a further application for a disaster of the same nature.

## **Amendment 10**

### **Proposal for a regulation**

#### **Recital 18**

##### *Text proposed by the Commission*

(18) Administrative procedures leading up to the payment of a contribution should be as simple and time-efficient as possible. For Member States, detailed provisions on the implementation of the contribution

##### *Amendment*

(18) Administrative procedures leading up to the payment of a contribution should be as simple and time-efficient as possible. For Member States, detailed provisions on the implementation of the contribution

from the Fund should therefore be contained in the *implementing* decisions awarding that contribution. However, for beneficiary States which are not yet Member States of the Union, separate implementation agreements should be maintained for legal reasons.

from the Fund should therefore be contained in the decisions awarding that contribution. However, for beneficiary States which are not yet Member States of the Union, separate implementation agreements should be maintained for legal reasons.

## **Amendment 11**

### **Proposal for a regulation**

#### **Article 1 – point 1**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 2

#### *Text proposed by the Commission*

1. At the request of a Member State or country involved in accession negotiations with the Union, assistance from the Fund may be mobilised when serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment or the economy occur in one or more regions of that State or country as a consequence of a major or regional natural disaster having taken place on the territory of the same State or country, a neighbouring Member State or a neighbouring country involved in accession negotiations with the Union (hereinafter referred to as ‘eligible State’). Direct damage caused by a man-made disaster that is the direct consequence of a natural disaster shall be regarded as part of the direct damage caused by that natural disaster.

2. For the purposes of this Regulation, a ‘major natural disaster’ shall mean any natural disaster resulting, in a Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union, in direct damage estimated either at over EUR 3 000 000 000 in 2011 prices, or more than 0,6 % of its gross national income (GNI).

3. For the purposes of this Regulation, a

#### *Amendment*

1. At the request of a Member State or country involved in accession negotiations with the Union, assistance from the Fund may be mobilised when serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment or the economy occur in one or more regions of that State or country as a consequence of a major or regional natural disaster having taken place on the territory of the same State or country, a neighbouring Member State or a neighbouring country involved in accession negotiations with the Union (hereinafter referred to as ‘eligible State’). Direct damage caused by a man-made disaster that is the direct consequence of a natural disaster shall be regarded as part of the direct damage caused by that natural disaster.

2. For the purposes of this Regulation, a ‘major natural disaster’ shall mean any natural disaster resulting, in a Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union, in direct damage estimated either at over EUR 3 000 000 000 in 2011 prices, or more than 0,6 % of its gross national income (GNI).

3. For the purposes of this Regulation, a

‘regional natural disaster’ ***shall mean any natural disaster resulting***, in a region of a Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union ***at NUTS 2 level, in direct damage in excess of 1,5 % of the region's gross domestic product (GDP). Where the disaster concerns several regions at NUTS 2 level***, the threshold shall be applied to the weighted average GDP of those regions.

regional natural disaster ***resulting in direct damage in excess of 1 % of the region's gross domestic product (GDP) in a region at NUTS 2 level, or in several neighbouring NUTS 3 level regions that together constitute a territory corresponding to the minimum criteria for NUTS 2 level***, of a Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union; ***Where the disaster concerns several regions that may request assistance from the Fund at NUTS 2 level, or at NUTS 3 level when they constitute a territory equivalent to a NUTS 2 unit***, the threshold shall be applied to the weighted average GDP of those regions.

***The particular situation of remote isolated regions, such as the insular and outermost regions, where there is a direct impact on a whole sector of activity or category of infrastructure shall also be considered when assessing the damage under this paragraph.***

4. Assistance from the Fund may also be mobilised for any natural disaster in an eligible State which is a major natural disaster in a neighbouring Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union.

4. Assistance from the Fund may also be mobilised for any natural disaster in an eligible State which is a major natural disaster ***or a regional natural disaster*** in a neighbouring Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union.

5. For the purpose of this Article harmonised statistical data provided by EUROSTAT shall be used.’

5. For the purpose of this Article harmonised ***last available*** statistical data provided by EUROSTAT shall be used.’

## Amendment 12

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Article 1 – point 2

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 3

*Text proposed by the Commission*

1. The assistance shall take the form of a

*Amendment*

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contribution from the Fund. For each natural disaster a single contribution shall be awarded to an eligible State.

2. The aim of the Fund is to complement the efforts of the States concerned and to cover part of their public expenditure in order to help the eligible State to carry out the following essential emergency and recovery operations, depending on the type of disaster:

(a) restoring the working order of infrastructure and **plant** in the fields of energy, water and waste water, telecommunications, transport, health and education;

(b) providing temporary accommodation and funding rescue services to meet the needs of the population concerned;

(c) securing of preventive infrastructures and measures of protection of the cultural heritage;

(d) cleaning up of disaster-stricken areas, including natural zones.

For the purposes of point (b), 'temporary accommodation' shall mean accommodation lasting until the population concerned is able to return to their original homes following their repair or reconstruction.

3. Payments from the Fund are limited to financing measures alleviating non-insurable damage and shall be

contribution from the Fund. For each natural disaster a single contribution shall be awarded to an eligible State.

2. The aim of the Fund is to complement the efforts of the States concerned and to cover part of their public expenditure in order to help the eligible State to carry out the following essential emergency and recovery operations, depending on the type of disaster:

(a) restoring the working order of infrastructure and **plants** in the fields of energy, water and waste water, telecommunications, transport **and transport facilities as well as**, health and education;

(b) providing temporary accommodation and funding rescue services to meet the needs of the population concerned;

(c) securing of preventive infrastructures and measures of protection of the cultural heritage;

(d) cleaning up of disaster-stricken areas, including natural zones, **following eco-system based approaches**.

***For the purposes of point (a), 'restoring the working order of' shall mean returning to the original condition, where appropriate, or restoration in a form which can improve the capacity to withstand future natural disasters, including the relocation of infrastructure projects which are clearly situated in a place that could be threatened again by a natural disaster.***

For the purposes of point (b), 'temporary accommodation' shall mean accommodation lasting until the population concerned is able to return to their original homes following their repair or reconstruction.

3. Payments from the Fund are limited to financing measures alleviating non-insurable damage and shall be recovered if

recovered if the cost of repairing the damage is subsequently met by a third party in accordance with Article 8(3).

4. Value added tax (VAT) shall not constitute eligible expenditure of an operation, except in the case of VAT which is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation.

5. Technical assistance, including management, monitoring, information and communication, complaint resolution, and control and audit, *is not* eligible for a contribution from the Fund.

6. The total contribution from the Fund shall not lead to the generation of revenue exceeding the total cost of emergency and recovery operations borne by a State. The beneficiary State shall include a statement to that effect in the report on the implementation of the contribution from the Fund pursuant to Article 8(3).

7. On 1 October each year, at least one-quarter of the annual amount should remain available in order to cover needs arising until the end of the year.

the cost of repairing the damage is subsequently met by a third party in accordance with Article 8(3).

4. Value added tax (VAT) shall not constitute eligible expenditure of an operation, except in the case of VAT which is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation.

5. Technical assistance, including management, monitoring, information and communication, complaint resolution, and control and audit, *may be* eligible for a contribution from the Fund, ***provided it is essential for carrying out rehabilitation work and does not exceed 2 % of the total amount of the contribution.***

6. The total contribution from the Fund shall not lead to the generation of revenue exceeding the total cost of emergency and recovery operations borne by a State. The beneficiary State shall include a statement to that effect in the report on the implementation of the contribution from the Fund pursuant to Article 8(3).

7. On 1 October each year, at least one-quarter of the annual amount should remain available in order to cover needs arising until the end of the year.

## **Amendment 13**

### **Proposal for a regulation**

#### **Article 1 – point 2 – point a**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 3 – paragraph 2 – point c a (new)

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

***ca) restoring safe conditions for airport and port facilities, safe havens and marinas, and measures to protect coastal heritage, as well as creating safe conditions in coastal areas;***

## Amendment 14

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Article 1 – point 3 – points a, b and c

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 4 – paragraphs 1, 1a and 2

#### *Text proposed by the Commission*

1. As soon as possible and no later than **ten** weeks after the first occurrence of damage as a consequence of a natural disaster, a State may submit an application for a contribution from the Fund to the Commission providing all available information on, at least:

(a) the total direct damage caused by the disaster and its impact on the population, the economy and the environment concerned;

(b) the estimated cost of the operations referred to in Article 3(2);

(c) any other sources of Union funding;

(d) any other sources of national or international funding, including public and private insurance coverage which might contribute to the costs of repairing the damage;

(e) the implementation of Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management related to the nature of the disaster;

(f) any other relevant information on prevention and mitigation measures taken related to the nature of the disaster.

1a. In the event of a progressively unfolding natural disaster, the **ten-week** application deadline referred to in paragraph 1 shall run from the date at which the public authorities of the eligible State take official action for the first time against the effects of the disaster.

2. On the basis of the information referred to in paragraph 1, and any clarifications to be provided by the eligible State, the

#### *Amendment*

1. As soon as possible and no later than **15** weeks after the first occurrence of damage as a consequence of a natural disaster, a State may submit an application for a contribution from the Fund to the Commission providing all available information on, at least:

(a) the total direct damage caused by the disaster and its impact on the population, the economy and the environment concerned;

(b) the estimated cost of the operations referred to in Article 3(2);

(c) any other sources of Union funding;

(d) any other sources of national or international funding, including public and private insurance coverage which might contribute to the costs of repairing the damage;

(e) **a short assessment of** the implementation of Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management related to the nature of the disaster;

(f) any other relevant information on prevention and mitigation measures taken related to the nature of the disaster.

1a. In the event of a progressively unfolding natural disaster, the **15 week** application deadline referred to in paragraph 1 shall run from the date at which the public authorities of the eligible State take official action for the first time against the effects of the disaster.

2. On the basis of the information referred to in paragraph 1, and any clarifications to be provided by the eligible State, the

Commission shall assess whether the conditions for mobilising the Fund are met and shall determine the amount of any possible contribution from the Fund as quickly as possible within the limits of the financial resources available.

If the Commission has awarded a contribution from the Fund based on an application received after [dd/mm/yyyy] for a disaster of a given nature, it may reject a further application for a contribution relating to a disaster of the same nature or reduce the amount to be awarded where the eligible Member State is the subject of infringement proceedings and has been issued with a reasoned opinion for having failed to implement Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management the subject matter of which corresponds to the nature of the disaster suffered.

The Commission shall treat all applications for a contribution from the Fund in an equitable manner.

Commission shall assess whether the conditions for mobilising the Fund are met and shall determine the amount of any possible contribution from the Fund as quickly as possible ***and no later than 6 weeks after receipt of the application, counting from the date of receipt of the complete application and not counting the time needed for translation,*** within the limits of the financial resources available.

If the Commission has awarded a contribution from the Fund based on an application received after [dd/mm/yyyy] for a disaster of a given nature, it may reject a further application for a contribution relating to a disaster of the same nature or reduce the amount to be awarded where the eligible Member State is the subject of infringement proceedings and has been issued with a reasoned opinion for having failed to implement Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management the subject matter of which corresponds to the nature of the disaster suffered.

The Commission shall treat all applications for a contribution from the Fund in an equitable manner.

## **Amendment 15**

### **Proposal for a regulation**

#### **Article 1 – point 4**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 4 a

#### *Text proposed by the Commission*

1. When submitting an application for a contribution from the Fund to the Commission, a Member State may request the payment of an advance.

The Commission shall make a preliminary assessment of whether the application fulfils the conditions laid down in Article

#### *Amendment*

1. When submitting an application for a contribution from the Fund to the Commission, a Member State may request the payment of an advance.

The Commission shall make a preliminary assessment of whether the application fulfils the conditions laid down in Article

4(1) and verify the availability of budgetary resources. Where those conditions are fulfilled and sufficient resources are available, the Commission may adopt a decision awarding the advance and pay it out without delay before the decision referred to in Article 4(4) has been taken. The payment of an advance shall be made without prejudice to the final decision on the mobilisation of the Fund.

2. The amount of the advance shall not exceed **10** % of the amount of the contribution anticipated and shall in no case exceed EUR **30 000 000**. Once the definitive amount of the contribution has been determined, the Commission shall take into account the sum of the advance prior to the balance of the contribution being paid. The Commission shall recover unduly paid advances.

3. In order to ensure the timely availability of budgetary resources, the amounts from the Fund, *from the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund* recovered from the Member States shall, up to a maximum of EUR 50 000 000, be made available to the Fund as internal assigned revenue. Amounts spent for advance payments or having been decommitted in the budget shall be replaced as soon as new amounts are recovered from the Member States.

4(1) and verify the availability of budgetary resources. Where those conditions are fulfilled and sufficient resources are available, the Commission may adopt a decision awarding the advance and pay it out without delay before the decision referred to in Article 4(4) has been taken. The payment of an advance shall be made without prejudice to the final decision on the mobilisation of the Fund.

2. The amount of the advance shall not exceed **15** % of the amount of the contribution anticipated and shall in no case exceed EUR **40 000 000**. Once the definitive amount of the contribution has been determined, the Commission shall take into account the sum of the advance prior to the balance of the contribution being paid. The Commission shall recover unduly paid advances.

3. In order to ensure the timely availability of budgetary resources, the amounts from the Fund, recovered from the Member States shall, up to a maximum of EUR 50 000 000, be made available to the Fund as internal assigned revenue. *Amounts from the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund recovered from the Member States in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 1083/2006 may also be made available as internal assigned revenue if EUSF recoveries are insufficient.* Amounts spent for advance payments or having been decommitted in the budget shall be replaced as soon as new amounts are recovered from the Member States.

## **Amendment 16**

### **Proposal for a regulation**

#### **Article 1 – point 7**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 7



*Text proposed by the Commission*

Operations financed by the Fund shall be compatible with the provisions of the Treaty and instruments adopted under it, with Union policies and measures, in particular in the fields of financial management and public procurement, and with pre-accession assistance instruments. Those operations shall contribute, where ***possible***, to the objectives of Union policies on environmental protection, disaster risk prevention and management and climate change adaptation.

*Amendment*

Operations financed by the Fund shall be compatible with the provisions of the Treaty and instruments adopted under it, with Union policies and measures, in particular in the fields of financial management and public procurement, and with pre-accession assistance instruments. Those operations shall contribute, where ***applicable***, to the objectives of Union policies on environmental protection, disaster risk prevention and management and climate change adaptation ***including eco-system based approaches***.

**Amendment 17**

**Proposal for a regulation**

**Article 1 – point 8**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 8

*Text proposed by the Commission*

1. The contribution from the Fund shall be used within ***one year*** from the date on which the Commission has disbursed the full amount of the assistance. Any part of the contribution remaining unused by that deadline or found to be used for ineligible operations shall be recovered by the Commission from the beneficiary State.
2. Beneficiary States shall seek all ***possible*** compensation from third parties.
3. No later than six months after the expiry of the ***one-year*** period referred to in paragraph 1, the beneficiary State shall present a report on the implementation of the contribution from the Fund with a statement justifying the expenditure, indicating any other source of funding received for the operations concerned, including insurance settlements and compensation from third parties.

*Amendment*

1. The contribution from the Fund shall be used within ***18 months*** from the date on which the Commission has disbursed the full amount of the assistance. Any part of the contribution remaining unused by that deadline or found to be used for ineligible operations shall be recovered by the Commission from the beneficiary State
2. Beneficiary States shall seek all ***legally permitted*** compensation from third parties.
3. No later than six months after the expiry of the ***18 months*** period referred to in paragraph 1, the beneficiary State shall present a report on the implementation of the contribution from the Fund with a statement justifying the expenditure, indicating any other source of funding received for the operations concerned, including insurance settlements and compensation from third parties.

The implementation report shall detail the preventive measures *introduced* or proposed by the beneficiary State to limit future damage and to avoid, to the extent possible, a recurrence of similar disasters, including the use of Union structural and investment funds for this purpose, and the state of implementation of relevant Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management. It shall also report on experience gained from the disaster and the measures taken or proposed to ensure resilience in relation to climate change and disasters.

The implementation report shall be accompanied by an opinion of an independent audit body, drawn up in accordance with internationally accepted audit standards, establishing that the statement justifying the expenditure gives a true and fair view and that the contribution from the Fund is legal and regular, in line with Article 59(5) and Article 60(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

At the end of the procedure referred to in the first subparagraph, the Commission shall wind up the assistance from the Fund.

4. Where the cost of repairing the damage is subsequently met by a third party, the Commission shall require the beneficiary State to reimburse a corresponding amount of the contribution from the Fund.

The implementation report shall detail the preventive measures *taken* or proposed by the beneficiary State to limit future damage and to avoid, to the extent possible, a recurrence of similar disasters, including the use of Union structural and investment funds for this purpose, and the state of implementation of relevant Union legislation on disaster risk prevention and management. It shall also report on experience gained from the disaster and the measures taken or proposed to ensure *environmental protection and* resilience in relation to climate change and disasters.

The implementation report shall be accompanied by an opinion of an independent audit body, drawn up in accordance with internationally accepted audit standards, establishing that the statement justifying the expenditure gives a true and fair view and that the contribution from the Fund is legal and regular, in line with Article 59(5) and Article 60(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

At the end of the procedure referred to in the first subparagraph, the Commission shall wind up the assistance from the Fund.

4. Where the cost of repairing the damage is subsequently met by a third party, the Commission shall require the beneficiary State to reimburse a corresponding amount of the contribution from the Fund.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### BACKGROUND

The Solidarity Fund was created to respond to natural disaster situations and express European solidarity towards the regions affected in Europe. The Fund was established following the various floods that occurred in central Europe in the summer of 2002. It subsidises the Member States and candidate countries affected by a natural disaster.

To date, the main features of this instrument have been:

- in the case of a ‘natural disaster’, there is one sole eligibility criterion: damage that exceeds the threshold specified for each country;
- the Fund may also be used in smaller scale incidents, so-called ‘regional disasters’ in which most of the population of a region is affected and where it is considered that the disaster will have serious and lasting effects on economic stability and living conditions;
- funding is provided in a single payment. There is no programming or need for co-financing;
- as it comes from additional resources outside the EU budget, the Commission cannot decide alone on the financial assistance. If it considers that an application meets the requirements, it makes a proposal to the budgetary authority (Council and Parliament) to mobilise the Fund.

The Solidarity Fund supplements public spending by the Member States to finance the essential emergency operations carried out by public authorities, such as:

- restoration of essential infrastructure such as energy, water, transport, telecommunications, health and education;
- temporary housing and the cost of emergency services to meet the immediate needs of the population;
- securing preventive infrastructures such as dams and levees;
- measures to protect the cultural heritage;
- clean-up operations.

Private damage, such as damage to private property or loss of income, including agriculture, is considered insurable damage so this is not covered.

The national authorities of the countries concerned may submit an application to the Commission within 10 weeks of the onset of the first damage. The Commission then assesses the application and decides whether to activate the Fund and on the amount of aid deemed appropriate, and proposes mobilisation of the Fund to the budgetary authority. The assistance will be provided in one payment after an implementation agreement has been signed with the beneficiary State.

Since 2002, the Fund has been mobilised for 52 disasters, covering a series of different catastrophic events such as floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and droughts. 23 European countries have received support so far, with assistance amounting to € 3.2 billion.

## **REASON FOR CHANGING THE CURRENT LEGISLATION**

Ever since it was set up, it has been clear that changes were required in order to meet the expectations of countries and regions affected by disasters and seeking EU assistance. While the instrument generally meets its objectives, it is felt that it does not respond as effectively as it should; a fact that is reflected, for example, in certain criteria for its activation being too complicated or not sufficiently clear.

The procedure for granting the assistance is very long, as the subsidy is generally paid around one year after the disaster.

While the instrument has been working well for major natural disasters, two-thirds of the applications received were for so-called regional disasters where damage was below the threshold. A large majority of these applications do not meet the criteria and have to be rejected, wasting time and resources and failing to meet expectations.

Therefore, in order to make the Solidarity Fund more sensitive and visible, efforts should be made to improve and simplify the procedural steps, advance payments should be introduced and certain provisions should be clarified so that assistance can be paid out more quickly than at present.

## **NEW LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

The key amendments proposed by the European Commission can be summarised as:

- Clarification of the scope of the Solidarity Fund, limiting it to natural disasters and extending it to droughts.
- The adoption of clearer rules on the eligibility of regional disasters, with the introduction of a single damage threshold for assistance, equivalent to 1.5% of regional GDP.
- The possibility, for the first time, of making advance payments: 10% of the planned contribution, capped at 30 million euros.
- A shorter administrative procedure for disbursement of aid which merges the two stages of approval and implementation in a single agreement.
- The introduction of measures to promote disaster risk prevention strategies: reporting requirements and possible conditions for assistance.

The scope remains limited to natural disasters in Member States and countries in the process of negotiating accession to the Union. Countries have ten weeks from the first day of the disaster in which to submit their applications. The damage threshold for activation of the Fund remains the same (0.6% of GNI or EUR 3 billion), as does the type of operation that can qualify for assistance. The implementation of assistance, including the projects selected, audit and control are the responsibility of the recipient. The amendments do not alter the expected level of spending.

Funding for the Solidarity Fund comes from outside the EU budget through an amending budget. This is laid down in the agreement between the institutions. Each grant is agreed separately via a proposal from the Commission and approval by the Member States and the European Parliament. There is a legal minimum period required which must be respected (at least 8 to 10 weeks) for the adoption of any amending budget.

## RAPPORTEUR'S CONCLUSIONS

The Solidarity Fund is a clear expression of solidarity to give help to European regions or countries that need it most. The European Commission's proposal incorporates many of the proposals contained in the European Parliament report of December 2012 and will make the Solidarity Fund faster, clearer and easier to use. It will also encourage countries to step up their efforts in the field of disaster prevention and management.

The new legislative proposal simplifies the existing rules to make the payment of aid faster. For the first time, the plans also introduce the possibility of making advance payments. These plans set out with greater clarity who and what will be eligible, particularly with regard to regional disasters. In addition, the reform encourages Member States to include the development of risk management and disaster prevention strategies in their agendas. The principles of the Fund remain unchanged, as does the fact that its form of financing is outside the EU budget.

It should be remembered that this European instrument is one of those that gives greatest satisfaction to European citizens and that its existence has never been called into question: it is only its lack of flexibility and the slowness of its procedures that need to be corrected.

It also has to be recognised and accepted that, as already evident during the 2014-2020 multiannual budget negotiations, the crisis has made it very difficult for both Member States and the Union to increase their spending levels, both at European and national levels. It is therefore understandable that, given the general trend governing budget expenditure, it was unthinkable to increase resources for this solidarity fund and thus expand its scope. However, it is difficult to accept the 50% reduction (it fell from 1 billion a year during the current 2007-2013 period to 500 million a year from 2014) when, unfortunately, there has been a notable increase in the number and severity of natural disasters in recent years and, as a result of climate change, it is unlikely that these will diminish despite prevention exercises and requirements.

The new Treaty on the Functioning of the EU highlights the responsibility of the Union and its Member States to deal with the consequences of natural disasters or terrorist acts on the territory of the EU and points out that the EU must have sufficient means to help its citizens in the event that these occur.

The EU should, and would like to, be more than just a common market; it is a community with a common destiny, and must be able to prove this when times are most difficult. The Solidarity Fund should not be reduced to the application of a series of administrative and bureaucratic rules, but must be adaptable and flexible. Action by the Union on behalf of its citizens should be made more visible, by improving its responsiveness, especially when a disaster occurs that has direct consequences on people. The Union is paradoxically more visible and has greater financial resources at its disposal to deal with disasters or humanitarian crises abroad than at home; it is the world's largest donor of humanitarian and development aid. It is thus sometimes very difficult for EU citizens to understand why it should be unable to respond to tragic events which, although much smaller in comparison to those that occur in a third country, nonetheless directly affect people living on its own territory.

Despite this, and although some people may be a bit disappointed by the limited reforms proposed, we cannot minimise the importance of the changes suggested because they are designed to improve and streamline the current operation of this instrument, which in future will certainly operate with greater effectiveness and efficiency.

The recently approved EU budget for the next seven years has, in real terms, experienced a cutback in total resources, and I do not think anyone expected the Solidarity Fund to be reformed in the manner announced by the Commission in its Communication of last year, but it should be noted that a great opportunity was lost in 2005 to turn this European instrument into what it aspires to be: the most visible, decisive and important expression of European solidarity towards its citizens when they find themselves in a difficult situation.

All the criteria addressed by the Commission in its proposal for reform will simplify and facilitate the work of Member States when analysing and drawing up applications for assistance from the Fund and will undoubtedly simplify the follow-up of applications by the Commission by clearly reducing the number of applications it receives. I find it harder to share the Commission's conviction that, along with the reduction in the number of applications for assistance, there will also be less disappointment because applications are not rejected. This is simply because there will be no opportunity to submit one. Fewer applications will be received and therefore fewer will be rejected, but nor will any more assistance be given.

The new regulatory proposal will still not be able to respond to all citizens facing a difficult and tragic situation and who expect, as members of the Union, some gesture of solidarity when they are victims of a disaster. However, given that it is impossible to adopt an instrument with economic improvements, we should give our approval to the proposed amendments since these streamline the functioning of this important instrument of solidarity, thereby improving its effectiveness and efficiency.

22.1.2014

## OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

for the Committee on Regional Development

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (COM(2013)0522 – C7-0231/2013 – 2013/0248(COD))

Rapporteur: Georgios Stavrakakis

### SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The aim of the Commission's proposal is to amend the current Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002<sup>1</sup> establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) in order to simplify its functioning and make it more visible to citizens through a limited number of technical adjustments to the Regulation. The principles of the instrument remain unchanged, as does its financing method outside the multiannual financial framework (MFF) and the likely level of spending.

The **main features** of the proposal include a clear definition of the scope of the EUSF limited to natural disasters; a new and simple single criterion for the exceptional mobilisation of the EUSF for so-called 'extraordinary regional disasters', based on a GDP-related threshold; the introduction of the possibility to make rapid advance payments upon request of the affected Member State; the insertion of a specific provision for slowly unfolding disasters, such as drought; the introduction of certain provisions encouraging more effective disaster prevention; the merger of the decision awarding the aid and the implementation agreements into a single act.

From a **budgetary perspective**, the EUSF will remain outside the MFF 2014 – 2020, whereby the necessary budgetary resources for awarding financial aid are raised over and above the MFF ceilings by a decision of the budgetary authority within a maximum annual allocation of EUR 500 million (2011 prices). Actual spending will depend on applications for aid submitted by eligible States following the occurrence of natural disasters and the maximum amount of annual allocation available to the Fund, as decided in the IIA.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3).

The decision to express the maximum annual allocation of the Fund in 2011 prices (instead of current prices) is mirrored in the proposal by applying the same basis to the amount of EUR 3 billion, which is one of the two damage threshold for defining 'major disasters'. The other threshold defined as 0.6% of gross national income is not affected.

**The rapporteur** favours keeping the general principles and financing of the EUSF unchanged but he believes that the current EUSF rules are not adequately responsive and visible and as far as certain criteria for its activation are concerned are too complicated and not sufficiently clear. He therefore strongly supports the objective of the proposal to improve the functioning of the instrument by making it quicker to respond and more visible to citizens, simpler to use and its provisions clearer. Hence, the rapporteur suggests a few amendments aiming at speeding up the assessment process within the Commission services.

He also supports clarifying the definition of 'natural disasters', including a specific provision for slowly unfolding disasters such as drought, which will help eliminating existing legal uncertainties about the scope, thus avoiding the submission of applications that do not meet the conditions.

The rapporteur agrees with the introduction of the new and simple single criterion for the exceptional mobilisation of the EUSF for so-called 'extraordinary regional disasters' based on a GDP-related threshold, which should lead to simplification and considerably help speeding up decision-making and paying out grants. He does however suggests lowering the 1,5 % threshold of the region's GDP to 1,0 % and thereby potentially allowing for more cases to qualify for assistance to reach more European citizens in cases of extraordinary regional disasters.

He also favours the introduction of the possibility to make rapid advance payments upon request of the affected Member State but considers the limit to 10 % of the expected amount of the financial aid capped at EUR 30 million not sufficient to take into account the needs of the affected countries at the early stages after the disaster occurs. He therefore considers the limits of 15 % and EUR 40 million as more reasonable.

The rapporteur also suggests making technical assistance eligible for contribution from the Fund as long as it does not exceed 2 % of the total amount of the contribution.

The rapporteur welcomes that the Commission has taken the recommendations of the performance audit report of the European Court of Auditors on the financial aid to Italy for the L'Aquila earthquake <sup>1</sup> into account by including a clearer definition of the terms "temporary accommodation" and "immediate emergency operations" as well as a provision on revenue generation.

He is convinced that a certain degree of flexibility necessary to make financial assistance available as quickly as possible after the occurrence of a major disaster, including the derogation from certain provisions of the Financial Regulation, in particular as concerns the normally time-consuming process of designating the implementing authorities, including

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<sup>1</sup> European Court of Auditors, Special Report No 24 2012. The European Union Solidarity Fund's response to the 2009 Abruzzi Earthquake: The relevance and cost of operations.



those for audit and control, as well as regarding the timing of annual reporting. Nevertheless, this flexibility should not jeopardise the sound financial management of the contribution of the Fund.

The rapporteur is of the opinion that disaster prevention and preparedness is important, as in the medium-to long term- it is more cost-effective to prepare for and prevent a disaster than respond to it. In this respect, he highlights the need for EUSF to complement other funding instruments, such as the structural funds, when preparing and responding to natural disasters, taking advantage of the creation of synergies with these mechanisms and associated programmes.

## **AMENDMENTS**

The Committee on Budgets calls on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to take into account the following amendments:

### **Amendment 1**

#### **Proposal for a regulation**

##### **Recital 13**

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

*(13) It should also be specified that eligible operations should not include expenditure for technical assistance.*

*deleted*

### **Amendment 2**

#### **Proposal for a regulation**

##### **Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 1**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 2 – paragraph 3

*Text proposed by the Commission*

3. For the purposes of this Regulation, a 'regional natural disaster' shall mean any natural disaster resulting, in a region of a Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union at NUTS 2 level, in direct damage in excess of **1,5** % of the region's gross domestic product (GDP). Where the disaster concerns several regions at NUTS 2 level, the threshold shall be applied to the weighted average GDP of those regions.

*Amendment*

3. For the purposes of this Regulation, a 'regional natural disaster' shall mean any natural disaster resulting, in a region of a Member State or a country involved in accession negotiations with the Union at NUTS 2 level, in direct damage in excess of **1** % of the region's gross domestic product (GDP). Where the disaster concerns several regions at NUTS 2 level, the threshold shall be applied to the weighted average GDP of those regions.

*However, under exceptional circumstances, even when the quantitative criteria laid down in the first subparagraph are not met, a region may also benefit from assistance from the Fund where that region has been affected by an extraordinary disaster, particularly a natural disaster, affecting the major part of its population, with serious and lasting repercussions on living conditions and the economic stability of the region. Total annual assistance under this subparagraph shall be limited to no more than 7,5 % of the annual amount available to the Fund. Particular focus will be on remote or isolated regions, such as the islands and outermost regions as defined in Article 349 of the Treaty. The Commission shall examine with the utmost rigour any requests which are submitted to it under this subparagraph.*

**Amendment 3**

**Proposal for a regulation**

**Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 1**

Regulation 2012/2002

Article 2 – paragraph 3 a (new)

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

***3a. Particular attention shall be paid to the outermost regions as defined in Article 349 of the Treaty, which are more vulnerable to extreme weather events.***

#### **Amendment 4**

##### **Proposal for a regulation**

##### **Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 1**

Regulation 2012/2002

Article 2 – paragraph 5

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

5. For the purpose of this Article harmonised statistical data provided by EUROSTAT shall be used.

5. For the purpose of this Article harmonised ***last available*** statistical data provided by EUROSTAT shall be used.

#### **Amendment 5**

##### **Proposal for a regulation**

##### **Article 1- paragraph 1 – point 2 – subpoint b**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 3 – paragraph 5

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

5. Technical assistance, including management, monitoring, information and communication, complaint resolution, and control and audit, is ***not*** eligible for a contribution from the Fund.

5. Technical assistance, including management, monitoring, information and communication, complaint resolution, and control and audit, is eligible for a contribution from the Fund, ***but cannot exceed 2 % of the total amount of the contribution.***

#### **Amendment 6**

##### **Proposal for a regulation**

##### **Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 2 – subpoint c**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 4 – paragraph 2

*Text proposed by the Commission*

2. On the basis of the information referred to in paragraph 1, and any clarifications to be provided by the eligible State, the Commission shall assess whether the conditions for mobilising the Fund are met and shall determine the amount of any possible contribution from the Fund as quickly as possible within the limits of the financial resources available.

*Amendment*

2. On the basis of the information referred to in paragraph 1, and any clarifications to be provided by the eligible State, the Commission shall assess whether the conditions for mobilising the Fund are met and shall determine the amount of any possible contribution from the Fund as quickly as possible, **and no later than five weeks after receiving the application**, within the limits of the financial resources available.

**Amendment 7**

**Proposal for a regulation**

**Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 4**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 4a – paragraph 1 – subparagraph 2

*Text proposed by the Commission*

The Commission shall make a preliminary assessment of whether the application fulfils the conditions laid down in Article 4(1) and verify the availability of budgetary resources. Where those conditions are fulfilled and sufficient resources are available, the Commission may adopt a decision awarding the advance and pay it out without delay before the decision referred to in Article 4(4) has been taken. The payment of an advance shall be made without prejudice to the final decision on the mobilisation of the Fund.

*Amendment*

The Commission shall **without delay** make a preliminary assessment of whether the application fulfils the conditions laid down in Article 4(1) and verify the availability of budgetary resources. Where those conditions are fulfilled and sufficient resources are available, the Commission may adopt a decision awarding the advance and pay it out without delay before the decision referred to in Article 4(4) has been taken. The payment of an advance shall be made without prejudice to the final decision on the mobilisation of the Fund.

**Amendment 8**

**Proposal for a regulation**

**Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 4**

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

Article 4a – paragraph 2

*Text proposed by the Commission*

2. The amount of the advance shall not exceed **10 %** of the amount of the contribution anticipated and shall in no case exceed **EUR 30 000 000**. Once the definitive amount of the contribution has been determined, the Commission shall take into account the sum of the advance prior to the balance of the contribution being paid. The Commission shall recover unduly paid advances.

*Amendment*

2. The amount of the advance shall not exceed **15 %** of the amount of the contribution anticipated and shall in no case exceed **EUR 40 000 000**. Once the definitive amount of the contribution has been determined, the Commission shall take into account the sum of the advance prior to the balance of the contribution being paid. The Commission shall recover unduly paid advances

**Amendment 9**

**Proposal for a regulation**

**Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 4**

Regulation 2012/2002

Article 4 a – paragraph 3

*Text proposed by the Commission*

3. In order to ensure the timely availability of budgetary resources, the amounts from the Fund, ***from the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund*** recovered from the Member States shall, up to a maximum of EUR 50 000 000, be made available to the Fund as internal assigned revenue. Amounts spent for advance payments or having been decommitted in the budget shall be replaced as soon as new amounts are recovered from the Member States.

*Amendment*

3. In order to ensure the timely availability of budgetary resources, the amounts from the Fund, recovered from the Member States shall, up to a maximum of EUR 50 000 000, be made available to the Fund as internal assigned revenue. ***Amounts from the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund recovered from the Member States in accordance with Regulation 1303/2013 and Regulation 1083/2006 may also be made available as internal assigned revenue if EUSF recoveries are insufficient.***  
Amounts spent for advance payments or having been decommitted in the budget shall be replaced as soon as new amounts are recovered from the Member States.

## Amendment 10

### Proposal for a regulation

#### Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 8

Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002

#### Article 8 – paragraph 1

##### *Text proposed by the Commission*

1. The contribution from the Fund shall be used within ***one year*** from the date on which the Commission has disbursed the full amount of the assistance. Any part of the contribution remaining unused by that deadline or found to be used for ineligible operations shall be recovered by the Commission from the beneficiary State.

##### *Amendment*

1. The contribution from the Fund shall be used within ***18 months*** from the date on which the Commission has disbursed the full amount of the assistance. Any part of the contribution remaining unused by that deadline or found to be used for ineligible operations shall be recovered by the Commission from the beneficiary State.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	European Union Solidarity Fund						
<b>References</b>	COM(2013)0522 – C7-0231/2013 – 2013/0248(COD)						
<b>Committee responsible</b> Date announced in plenary	REGI 10.9.2013						
<b>Opinion by</b> Date announced in plenary	BUDG 10.9.2013						
<b>Rapporteur</b> Date appointed	Georgios Stavrakakis 5.9.2013						
<b>Date adopted</b>	22.1.2014						
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<table> <tr> <td>+:                   </td><td>27</td></tr> <tr> <td>–:                   </td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>0:                   </td><td>0</td></tr> </table>	+:	27	–:	1	0:	0
+:	27						
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<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Richard Ashworth, Zuzana Brzobohatá, Jean-Luc Dehaene, Isabelle Durant, José Manuel Fernandes, Věra Flasarová, Eider Gardiazábal Rubial, Salvador Garriga Polledo, Ivars Godmanis, Lucas Hartong, Monika Hohlmeier, Sidonia Elżbieta Jędrzejewska, Ivailo Kalfin, Jan Kozłowski, Alain Lamassoure, George Lyon, Jan Mulder, Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar, Andrej Plenković, Dominique Riquet, László Surján, Helga Trüpel, Oleg Valjalo, Derek Vaughan, Angelika Werthmann						
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Maria Da Graça Carvalho, Peter Šťastný, Georgios Stavrakakis						

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	European Union Solidarity Fund
<b>References</b>	COM(2013)0522 – C7-0231/2013 – 2013/0248(COD)
<b>Date submitted to Parliament</b>	24.7.2013
<b>Committee responsible</b> Date announced in plenary	REGI 10.9.2013
<b>Committee(s) asked for opinion(s)</b> Date announced in plenary	BUDG 10.9.2013
<b>Rapporteur(s)</b> Date appointed	Rosa Estaràs Ferragut 24.9.2013
<b>Date adopted</b>	22.1.2014
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 36 –: 0 0: 3
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	François Alfonsi, Luís Paulo Alves, Charalampos Angourakis, Francesca Barracciu, Catherine Bearder, Victor Boştinaru, Nikos Chrysogelos, Tamás Deutsch, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Danuta Maria Hübner, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández, María Irigoyen Pérez, Seán Kelly, Constanze Angela Krehl, Vladimír Maňka, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Miroslav Mikolášik, Jens Nilsson, Jan Olbrycht, Younous Omarjee, Markus Pieper, Ovidiu Ioan Silaghi, Monika Smolková, Georgios Stavrakakis, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Justina Vitkauskaitė Bernard, Oldřich Vlasák, Kerstin Westphal, Hermann Winkler, Joachim Zeller, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Maurice Ponga, Vilja Savisaar-Toomast, Elisabeth Schroedter, Richard Seeber, Evžen Tošenovský, Derek Vaughan
<b>Date tabled</b>	31.1.2014