

**Major interpellation for written answer with debate G-000009/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130b

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Subject: Fires in the European Union this summer

In early summer 2017 the EU suffered a spate of devastating fires, notably in Italy, Portugal, Croatia, France, Spain and Greece, resulting in deaths and large-scale material damage.

Member States, in particular the Cohesion Fund beneficiaries, often find it difficult to tackle fires on such a scale by themselves, and therefore require Community solidarity and assistance.

Moreover, as highlighted in a European Court of Auditors report of 24 February 2015¹, the EU funding for preventing forest fires and restoring forests damaged by natural disasters and fire is not sufficiently well managed.

There is no specific European legislation to tackle fires and drought.

Therefore, does the Commission intend to:

- mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) and apply it flexibly in order to tackle the serious damage caused by fires?
- launch European intervention mechanisms by creating the appropriate legal and budgetary instruments, in particular via a Community body for the protection of forests?
- submit specific proposals for directives to combat fires and drought in the EU, such as agricultural aids for the establishment and maintenance of firebreaks, in order to achieve better coordination of Member States' policies on the matter and to make the best use of the Community instruments available?

¹ Special report No 24/2014 entitled 'Is EU support for preventing and restoring damage to forests caused by fire and natural disasters well managed?'