

**Question for oral answer O-000120/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

Subject: Cumulative effects of damages caused by 'regional natural disasters' as defined in Regulation (EU) No 661/2014

Having regard to Written Question No E-004961/16 related to the fires in Sicily and to the Commission's answer to this of 8 August 2016, and to Council Regulation No 2012/2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund, as modified by Regulation (EU) No 661/2014 of the Parliament and the Council, and considering that repeated natural disasters, various in their nature, hit Europe every year, with a frequency that may also be less than one year from one to another, and considering in particular the natural disaster that have recently taken place in Italy and in other Member States such as Portugal, Greece and Cyprus, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

- Assuming that the aforementioned regulation establishes, with regard to 'regional natural disasters, that the Solidarity Fund may only be disposed of if the direct damages caused by each event are higher than 1.5% of the GDP of the affected region, can the Commission confirm that the GDP referred to is calculated on an annual basis?
- If the Commission bases its calculations on Eurostat data provided by the Member States, and by the affected regions, on an annual basis, would the Commission consider a cumulative calculation of the damages caused in the same region by different events affecting the aforementioned GDP threshold, taking into account the high frequency registered of those catastrophes in some regions?
- Could the Commission foresee a waiver to the existing regulation, at present based on the effects of damages caused by single catastrophic events, and consider extending this calculation to a cumulative computation of the damages caused by several natural catastrophes occurring in the same region within the same year?
- Could the Commission clarify on what grounds it consider the effectiveness of implementing the Solidarity Fund to the affected Member States, contemplating as well a specific assessment for those cases in which natural disasters occur frequently?

Tabled: 6.10.2016

Forwarded: 10.10.2016

Deadline for reply: 17.10.2016