

Coronavirus: EU countries to get help from Solidarity Fund



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The European Parliament is mobilising additional funds to help the EU countries hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

In an extraordinary plenary session on 26 March, MEPs [approved](#) the [European Commission proposal](#) to allow member states to request financial assistance from the [EU Solidarity Fund](#) in their fight against Covid-19. The proposal is part of a set of EU measures to mobilise all existing budget resources to help EU countries tackle the pandemic.

The Commission proposed to broaden the Solidarity Fund's scope to add major public health crises to the natural emergencies initially covered.

The hardest hit member states will get access to financial support of up to €800 million in 2020. Support will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

EU solidarity

Created as a reaction to the severe floods in Central Europe in 2002, the EU Solidarity Fund's main objective is to provide financial assistance to EU member states dealing with natural disasters. Under the current rules, the fund could only support the recovery from disasters such as floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and droughts. Public health emergencies such as Covid-19 did not fall within its remit.

Under the new rules, public emergency and recovery operations, such as restoring the working order of infrastructures, cleaning up of areas and providing temporary accommodation for people, remain eligible for financing. The rules will be extended to cover assistance to the population in case of health crises and to cover measures to contain infectious diseases.

"Allowing the EU Solidarity Fund to be used to deal with Covid1-9 makes sense, given its extreme impact on people, health and the economy in all parts of Europe," said French GUE/NGL member [Younous Omarjee](#) , who is the chair of Parliament's regional development committee.

"These regulations were always intended to be adapted to emergencies and new challenges. This will allow the EU to act in solidarity."

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Between 2002 and 2018, the EU Solidarity Fund was mobilised 87 times to support the recovery and rapid return to normal conditions.

Find out more

[Legislative procedure](#)

[Financial assistance for countries seriously affected by a major public health emergency \(March 2020\)](#)