

# EU solidarity at work: Commission offers financial aid to Greece, Poland, Lithuania and Bulgaria following natural disasters

Commissioner for Regional policy Corina Crețu said: *"We are moving from words of support to concrete actions with our new financial aid proposals for Greece, Poland, Lithuania and Bulgaria. Solidarity is one of the founding principles of our Union and the EU Solidarity Fund is one of its most tangible expressions."*

Money from the [EU Solidarity Fund](#) can be used to support reconstruction efforts and cover some of the costs of emergency services, temporary accommodation, clean-up operations and the protection of cultural heritage, in order to relieve the financial burden borne by national authorities in the wake of natural disasters.

The amount of €34 million is divided as follows:

## **€2.5 million for the Greek island of Kos after the July 2017 earthquake**

On 20 July 2017 an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 on the Richter scale hit the island of Kos, in the South Aegean region, causing severe damage to parts of the island. The €2.5 million can be used, in particular, to cover the costs of protection measures for monuments and archaeological sites, as well as for the restoration of transport infrastructure.

In June 2017, the Greek island of Lesbos in the Aegean Sea was also hit by an earthquake. In an [earlier proposal](#) adopted in February, the Commission proposed to offer EUSF support worth €1.3 million to Lesbos.

## **€12.2 million for Poland after the August 2017 storms and rainfalls**

Between 9 and 12 August 2017, violent storms and heavy rainfall affected the three Polish regions of Kuyavian-Pomeranian, Pomeranian and Greater Poland, destroying tens of thousands of hectares of forests and crops as well as transport and energy infrastructure. The districts of Toruń and Gdańsk were the hardest hit. The €12.2 million can be used to cover some of the expenses related to clean-up operations in forests, clearing fallen trees from roads and railways, and to help restore damaged infrastructure.

## **Almost €17 million for Lithuania following the 2017 rainfall and floods**

Throughout the summer and autumn of 2017, Lithuania suffered continuous rainfall and floods which damaged the network infrastructure and agricultural lands. The money can be used to help cover the costs of restoring the network and water management infrastructure, including dams and drainage systems.

## €2.2 million for Bulgaria after the storms and floods of October 2017

On 25 and 26 October 2017, the region of Burgas, in south-eastern Bulgaria, experienced intense rainfall and violent storms that damaged bridges and roads as well as hospitals and schools. The €2.2 million can help alleviate the costs linked to repairing essential public infrastructure.

### Background

Member States hit by a natural disaster can request different kinds of short and longer term EU support. The [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) can be activated during a crisis by a Member State. The Commission has also proposed to strengthen short term EU crisis response through a new system called [RescEU](#).

The [EU Solidarity Fund](#) can be requested by Member States to support long-term reconstruction efforts in the aftermath of a disaster. Today's proposal for EU Solidarity Fund assistance now has to be approved by the European Parliament and the Council. The funding will reach the four Member States shortly afterwards.

### More information:

[EU Solidarity Fund](#)

[Factsheet – How is EU Solidarity Fund aid calculated?](#)

[National factsheets](#)

[EU Solidarity Fund interventions since 2002](#)

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## [Small cut in EU's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2016 but transport](#)

# emissions keep increasing



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The EEA's '[Annual European Union greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2016 and inventory report 2018](#)' shows a 0.4 % decrease in the total EU greenhouse gas emissions in 2016, compared with 2015. From 1990 to 2016, the EU has reduced its net greenhouse gas emissions by 22.4 %, surpassing its 20 % reduction target by 2020. These figures include emissions from international aviation, which are covered by EU targets but not accounted in national totals under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The Agency's Briefing '[Trends and drivers in greenhouse gas emissions in the EU in 2016](#)', also published today, shows that the emission decrease in 2016 was mainly due to using less coal to produce heat and electricity. Greenhouse gas emissions from road transport increased for the third year in a row. Emissions in the residential and commercial sector also increased because the winter of 2016 was slightly colder than the winter of 2015.

## **Figure 3: GHG emissions by sector in the EU-28**

EU greenhouse gas emissions have decreased since 1990 as a combined result of policies, economic factors and, on average, milder winters, the EEA analysis shows. The largest emission cuts have been made in the energy sector, due to energy efficiency improvements, an increased use of renewables and a less carbon intensive mix of fossil fuels – more gas, less coal and oil.

Although the 2016 developments are positive, there are already indications that EU greenhouse gas emissions increased in 2017, the EEA analysis warns.

The EEA will publish preliminary estimates of 2017 emissions in the autumn.

## **Other key findings:**

- The 0.4 % decrease in EU greenhouse gas emissions in 2016 occurred while the EU's gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 2.0 %. Emissions are expected to decrease further as GDP per capita increases, showing that a growing economy and addressing climate change can go hand in hand.
- The United Kingdom and Spain accounted for the largest decreases in GHG emissions in absolute terms in the EU in 2016. Reductions in those countries were largely because of lower consumption of solid fuels (mainly coal) in the power sector.
- There was a relatively large increase in emissions in Poland, particularly in the road transport sector.
- Emissions covered by the EU emissions trading system (ETS) decreased in 2016, in particular for the energy supply sector (mostly electricity and heat production) and the industry sector (mostly iron and steel). The decrease in the power sector was the result of a sharp decline in coal consumption.
- Based on Eurostat data, there was a decline in nuclear electricity generation. This was more than offset by the increase in the use of renewable energy sources.
- Compared with 1990, the EU economy uses less energy, and does so more efficiently, and with lower greenhouse gas emissions. Improved energy efficiency will continue to play a key role in cutting future emissions but further efforts will also be needed to achieve the EU's joint 40 % reduction target by 2030.

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## **Coordinated action day in four European countries following the G20 riots in Hamburg**

30 May 2018

PP0 Hamburg and the special police unit 'Black Block' have been conducting investigations into a number of suspects allegedly involved in the G20 riots that occurred in July 2017 in Hamburg, especially in the Elbchaussee and the Sternschanze district. Eurojust supported the national judicial and law enforcement authorities from the beginning of the investigations by facilitating the cooperation.

On 29 May 2018, led by the German Desk, a coordination centre was set up at Eurojust's premises to coordinate several house searches in Spain, France, Italy and Switzerland. Eurojust contributed to the success of this

multinational action day by providing logistical and operational support to the countries involved.

For more information, please refer to the [joint press release of the PP0 and Police Hamburg in German](#) (also available in [pdf format](#)), as well its [English translation](#).

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