

Press release – EU help for Croatia after devastating earthquakes



The European Commission, together with other European and Croatian institutions, should minimise the administrative requirements to access help and support for people on the ground, MEPs say in the resolution on mitigating the consequences of the earthquakes in Croatia. They warn that Croatian authorities are under considerable financial pressure and that the extremely serious situation in affected areas may lead to an irreversible decline in population with devastating social and economic consequences.

Start reconstruction as soon as possible

MEPs welcome the solidarity shown by member states, EU institutions and the international community through mutual assistance in emergency situations. They stress the importance of the [European Union Civil Protection Mechanism](#) in fostering cooperation among national civil protection authorities across Europe.

They state that together with Commission experts, Croatian authorities should now swiftly assess the overall damage in Sisak-Moslavina County and begin reconstruction as soon as conditions allow. MEPs encourage authorities to ensure the works comply with requirements for earthquake-resistant buildings and infrastructure, and to employ best professional practices and expertise from other member states

Finally, MEPs emphasise that recovery from severe earthquakes – such as those in Croatia – takes considerable time. This should be taken into account when revising the [European Solidarity Fund](#) (EUSF) to ensure that there is sufficient time for funds to be absorbed beyond the current application deadlines.

The resolution was adopted on Thursday, by 677 vote for, five against, and

one abstention.

Background

On 29 December 2020, a 6.4-magnitude earthquake struck central Croatia, killing several people and causing extensive damage to numerous homes and infrastructure around the town of Petrinja. Through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, 15 countries sent immediate assistance, including housing containers, winter tents, sleeping bags, beds, and electric heaters. Croatia had already been hit by a strong earthquake in the Zagreb area in March 2020 that caused over 11.5 billion EUR of damage. One person died and at least 27 others were injured. To help the country deal with the devastating effects of that earthquake, Parliament made 683.7 million EUR available from the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF).