

# Article – Coronavirus: EU countries to get help from Solidarity Fund



In an extraordinary plenary session on Thursday 26 March, MEPs will vote on a [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 proposes to broaden the Solidarity Fund's scope to add major public health crises to the natural emergencies initially covered.

The hardest hit member states should get access to financial support of up to €800 million in 2020. Support would 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 can only support the recovery from disasters such as floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and droughts. Public health emergencies such as Covid-19 do 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 would be extended to cover assistance to the population in case of health crises and to cover measures to contain infectious diseases.