

Press release – Solidarity Fund: €823 million in EU aid for eight member states



The €823 million in aid from the [European Union Solidarity Fund \(EUSF\)](#) will be distributed as follows:

- More than €132.7 million to be made in advance payments to Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Hungary, and Portugal in response to the major public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.
- Croatia will receive €683.7 million to help the country deal with the devastating effects of the earthquake in Zagreb and the surrounding area in March 2020. A first disbursement of €88.9 million was already [released](#) in August 2020.
- More than €7 million will go to Poland to assist with reconstruction efforts following floods in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship province in June this year.

EU Solidarity Fund modified in response to COVID-19

As part of the [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative](#) (CRII), in 2020 the scope of the EU [Solidarity Fund rules was extended](#), enabling the EU to help countries respond to major public health emergencies.

Overall, 19 EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain) and three accession countries (Albania, Montenegro, and Serbia) have requested assistance in tackling the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. Of these, seven countries requested the payment to be made in advance, which Budget Committee MEPs approved following a vote.

[Background information on the EU Solidarity Fund](#)

More information and a table with precise amounts per country can be found in [Parliament's draft report](#) and the [Commission's proposal](#).

The [report](#), drafted by [Olivier Chastel](#) (RENEW, BE), recommending the approval of the aid was adopted by 40 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 abstention.

The [report approving the accompanying draft amending budget](#), by rapporteur Monika Hohlmeier (EPP, DE), was adopted with 40 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 abstention.

Next steps

The Council of Ministers approved the aid on 30 October. The draft reports still need to be approved by the full Parliament, after which the financial aid can be disbursed. The Commission is currently assessing the applications received. Once this has been completed, it will put forward a proposal to make the final payments.

[Press release – High-level Inter-parliamentary Conference on Migration and Asylum in Europe](#)



The conference will open with keynote speeches by Parliament and Commission Presidents David Sassoli and Ursula von der Leyen, the Presidents of the German parliament, Wolfgang Schäuble, of the Portuguese parliament, Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, and of Slovenia's parliament, Igor Zorčič.

[Watch the opening session](#) (click on hyperlinks to access streaming).

It will be followed by a debate on “[Managing asylum and migration together](#)” with contributions from Presidents Sassoli, von der Leyen and Schäuble as well as Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson, UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi and International Organization for Migration Director General António Vitorino.

MEPs, MPs and other guests will then continue working in three different groups, on the:

[Closing remarks](#) will be delivered by Presidents Sassoli and Schäuble.

[Full programme of the conference](#)

[Regulatory sandboxes and experimentation clauses as tools for better regulation: Council adopts conclusions](#)



The Council today adopted a set of conclusions on the role of regulatory sandboxes and experimentation clauses in an innovation-friendly, future-proof, sustainable and resilient EU regulatory framework.

Regulatory sandboxes are defined as concrete frameworks which, by providing a structured context for experimentation, enable where appropriate in a real-world environment the testing of innovative technologies, products, services or approaches – at the moment especially in the context of digitalisation – for a limited time and in a limited part of a sector or area under regulatory supervision ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place.

Experimentation clauses, often the legal basis for regulatory sandboxes, are defined as legal provisions which enable the authorities tasked with implementing and enforcing the legislation to exercise on a case-by-case basis a degree of flexibility in relation to testing innovative technologies, products, services or approaches.

In these conclusions, the Council affirms that regulatory sandboxes can offer significant opportunities particularly to innovate and grow for all businesses, especially SMEs, including micro-enterprises as well as start-ups, in industry, services and other sectors.

The Council therefore encourages the Commission to continue considering the

use of experimentation clauses on a case-by-case basis when drafting and reviewing legislation, as well as to evaluate the use of experimentation clauses in ex-post evaluations and fitness checks on the basis of an exchange of information with member states.

Finally, it calls upon the Commission to present the findings of this evaluation in the **first half of 2021**, followed up by practical recommendations for the possible future use of regulatory sandboxes and experimentation clauses at EU level in the **second half of 2021**.

[Towards a more dynamic, resilient and competitive European industry: Council adopts conclusions](#)



The Council today adopted a set of conclusions setting out how recovery from the COVID-19 crisis can be used as leverage for a more dynamic, resilient and competitive European industry.

In these conclusions, the Council stresses the **need for European solidarity** to master a swift, sustainable and inclusive economic recovery and a long-term sustainable future of the EU industry impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It reiterates that the **green and digital transition** and the EU economic recovery should be just and built around the principles of competitiveness, Single Market integration, sustainability, cohesion, inclusiveness, circularity and environmental protection, solidarity and observe social standards.

It reaffirms the importance of achieving **strategic autonomy while preserving an open economy** in the most sensitive industrial ecosystems and specific areas, such as health, defence industry, space, digital, energy and critical raw materials.

According to the Council, the answer to the economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis and growing international competition must be one of **reinforced and stronger European cooperation and integration** that leads to the creation of a **sustainable, attractive and competitive business environment**.

Such an environment should be characterised by :

- a fully functioning, deepened and strengthened Single Market, including in the services sector,
- an effective level playing field for European businesses to compete on the internal market and internationally in global value chains,

- a world-leading, safe, resilient and interoperable data infrastructure and communication networks,
- the up- and reskilling, training and employability of workers,
- a well-functioning European standardisation system,
- EU technological leadership,
- smart specialisation,
- sustainability,
- strengthened European value chains and
- security of supply of raw materials in Europe.

In order to monitor developments in the field, the Commission is invited to define **key performance indicators** for monitoring the industrial strategy and competitiveness by the end of March 2021.

Finally the Commission is called upon to present an **update of its New Industrial Strategy** ahead of the European Council in March 2021.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

[EIB and other large multilateral development banks increase commitment to road safety](#)



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- **In a joint statement, 10 of the world's largest MDBs commit to an ambitious and integrated approach to road safety.**
- **The MDBs also welcome the global call for ambitious road safety action, international cooperation and multilateralism to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals for road safety.**

Today, in a virtual meeting, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and nine other multilateral development banks (MDBs) signed a [high-level joint statement on road safety](#), under the auspices of the World Health Organization and the [United Nations Road Safety Collaboration](#).

In the statement, the MDBs welcome the global call for increased road safety action, ambition, international cooperation and multilateralism in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals for road safety. The statement highlights the MDBs' aim to provide further access to safe, affordable and sustainable transport systems for all and to improve road safety, with special attention to the needs of vulnerable road users. The signatory MDBs also aim to seek synergies with other priorities, such as climate action and resilience, by expanding support for public transport. The banks will therefore appoint high-level Road Safety Champions in each institution to promote road safety.

The joint statement has been signed by the following MDBs:

- Andean Development Corporation
- African Development Bank
- Asian Development Bank

- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- World Bank
- Inter-American Development Bank
- Islamic Development Bank
- New Development Bank
- European Investment Bank

EIB Vice-President Lilyana Pavlova, responsible for the Bank's transport operations and current chair of the Multilateral Development Banks' Road Safety Working Group, said: "Millions suffer and succumb to road injuries and deaths every year. This needs to change. I am convinced that bringing together the reach and impact of the world's leading development banks and our continued joint commitment to safer roads can make a big difference – and help to save lives."

The Multilateral Development Banks' Road Safety Working Group, chaired by the EIB, will continue to develop a common approach to road safety issues in support of [the Stockholm Declaration and a new Decade of Action](#) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals for Road Safety.

In February 2021, the working group will meet to outline the deliverables following today's statement.

Road accidents kill 1.35 million people worldwide every year. It is the leading cause of death among children and young people between the ages of five and 29. Worldwide, more people die because of road traffic injuries than from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or diarrhoeal diseases. The UN World Health Organization considers road deaths and injuries as an acute epidemic. Apart from the loss of life and immeasurable emotional trauma and social impacts, the economic losses due to road accidents represent around 3% of GDP.

To address the issue, a Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety was held in Stockholm in February 2020. It culminated in the Stockholm Declaration, which calls for a new target to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries by 50% from 2020 to 2030. It invites strengthened efforts on road safety management, safer roads, vehicles and people, and enhanced post-crash care. The Declaration was endorsed by a UN General Assembly Resolution on 31 August 2020.