

EN
P-001692/2024
Answer given by Ms Ferreira
on behalf of the European Commission
(15.10.2024)

1. The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF)¹ can only be activated at the request of Portugal which has a deadline of 12 weeks as from the first damage occurred, demonstrating that the total direct damage exceeds the thresholds specified in Article 2 Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002. The EUSF may cover a part of the costs for emergency and recovery operations incurred by public authorities². Pursuant to Article 2(3) of the above Regulation, the EUSF may provide support to outermost regions in cases of ‘regional natural disasters’ if the direct damage exceeds 1% of the concerned region’s gross domestic product (instead of the normally applicable excess of 1.5% of direct damage).

Support is also available under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development³ for prevention, restoration and resilience against fires, with a planned amount in Madeira of EUR 36.6 million for 2014-2022, and EUR 11.9 million for 2023-2027.

2. In its Communication on the Outermost regions⁴, the Commission has committed itself to supporting actions on risk prevention and resilience as regards natural disasters, fostering knowledge exchange and giving due consideration when implementing the EUSF. The Commission is also fully committed to offer all possible support to Portugal and the outermost regions, including Madeira, in its fight against the wildfires.

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3) as amended by Regulation (EU) No 661/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 May 2014 (OJ L 189, 27.6.2014, p. 143) and by Regulation (EU) 2020/461 of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 March 2020 (OJ L 99, 31.3.2020, p. 9). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32002R2012>

² This means, for example, the recovery of essential infrastructure, provision of temporary accommodation to the population, cleaning-up operations, and protection of the cultural heritage.

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013, OJ L 435/1, 6.12.2021.

⁴ COM(2022) 198 final.