

Explanations of vote

- Report: Berend (A6-0123/2006)

Francisco Assis, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Paulo Casaca, Fausto Correia, Edite Estrela, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Elisa Ferreira, Ana Maria Gomes, Joel Hasse Ferreira, Jamila Madeira, Manuel António dos Santos e Sérgio Sousa Pinto (PSE), in writing . (PT) The Portuguese members of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament abstained from the vote on the report on the EU's Solidarity Fund because, although this Fund is an instrument of the highest importance for the policy of European solidarity, it did not undergo the necessary reforms to make it more effective and workable in terms of its objectives.

On the other hand, despite the fact that the proposals aimed at including drought in the report before us were incorporated, some of which we had tabled, insufficient attention is paid to the phenomena of extreme drought and high temperatures, to the natural disasters that have lain waste to a number of European countries, especially in southern Europe. As they develop slowly, these phenomena are rarely perceptible over a short space of time.

These proposals also state that the removal of the regional criterion from the scope of the regulation, only appearing as a public criterion, is clearly inadequate. This amendment was a waste of time in terms of the objective of recovering the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the affected areas, with the support of this instrument.

We should like to emphasise the fact that, in spite of everything, some progress was made in relation to the doctrine, and that, accordingly, its particular character was acknowledged.