

Tuesday 10 March 2015

P8_TA(2015)0045

Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund — application EGF/2014/011 BE/Caterpillar — Belgium

European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2015 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, in accordance with point 13 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management (application EGF/2014/011 BE/Caterpillar, from Belgium) (COM(2014)0735 — C8-0015/2015 — 2015/2021(BUD))

(2016/C 316/29)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2014)0735 — C8-0015/2015),
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (2014-2020) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 ⁽¹⁾ (EGF Regulation),
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 ⁽²⁾, and in particular Article 12 thereof,
 - having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management ⁽³⁾ (IIA of 2 December 2013), and in particular point 13 thereof,
 - having regard to the trilogue procedure provided for in point 13 of the IIA of 2 December 2013,
 - having regard to the letter of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs,
 - having regard to the letter of the Committee on Regional Development,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A8-0033/2015),
- A. whereas the Union has set up legislative and budgetary instruments to provide additional support to workers who are suffering from the consequences of major structural changes in world trade patterns and to assist their reintegration into the labour market;
- B. whereas the Union's financial assistance to workers made redundant should be dynamic and made available as quickly and efficiently as possible, in accordance with the Joint Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission adopted during the conciliation meeting on 17 July 2008, and having due regard to the IIA of 2 December 2013 in respect of the adoption of decisions to mobilise the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF);
- C. whereas the adoption of the EGF Regulation reflects the agreement reached between the Parliament and the Council to reintroduce the crisis mobilisation criterion, to increase the Union financial contribution to 60 % of the total estimated cost of proposed measures, to increase efficiency for the treatment of EGF applications in the Commission and by the Parliament and the Council by shortening the time for assessment and approval, to widen eligible actions and beneficiaries by introducing self-employed persons and young people and to finance incentives for setting up own businesses;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 855.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

Tuesday 10 March 2015

- D. whereas Belgium submitted application EGF/2014/011 BE/Caterpillar for a financial contribution from the EGF, following 1 030 redundancies in Caterpillar Belgium S.A. a company operating in the NACE 2 Division 28 'Manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c.', with 630 persons expected to participate in the measures, during and after the reference period from 1 January 2014 to 30 April 2014, linked to a decline in demand in Europe;
- E. whereas the application fulfils the eligibility criteria laid down in the EGF Regulation;
1. Notes that the conditions set out in Article 4(1)(a) of the EGF Regulation are met, therefore agrees with the Commission that Belgium is entitled to a financial contribution under that Regulation;
 2. Notes that the Belgian authorities submitted the application for EGF financial contribution on 22 July 2014, supplemented it by additional information up to 16 September 2014 and that its assessment was made available by the Commission on 9 December 2014;
 3. Notes that the total budget is EUR 2 038 090, of which EUR 73 378 is dedicated to implementation, and that the financial contribution of the EGF amounts to EUR 1 222 854, which represents 60 % of the total costs of the proposed measures;
 4. Welcomes the fact that, in order to provide workers with speedy assistance, the Belgian authorities decided to initiate the implementation of the personalised services to the affected workers on 1 April 2014, well ahead of the decision and even the application on granting the EGF support for the proposed coordinated package; notes that these personalised services already offered will be eligible for EGF funding;
 5. Considers that the redundancies in Caterpillar Belgium S.A. are linked to major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation, where manufacturing and importing equipment from Asia into Europe has become cheaper for the company than producing in Europe for a declining market; notes that the Gosselies production site has suffered from negative upstream and downstream effects with steel and metal products in Europe hit by competition from emerging economies and the 2009 crisis weakening the European construction and mining sectors, which are Caterpillar's most important clients;
 6. Notes that demand for construction machinery suffered due to a decrease in private and public investment in infrastructure caused by poor performance of the global economy;
 7. Notes that this is the twelfth EGF application from the 'Manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c.' sector, with previous applications distributed equally between the trade and economic crisis criteria;
 8. Regrets that many of the unemployed persons in the Charleroi region are low skilled (59 % do not have upper secondary education) and that 43 % have been unemployed for more than 2 years; regrets that the employment rate in Charleroi is among the lowest in the Wallonia region at 52,26 %; welcomes, therefore, that the authorities decided to apply for EGF funding in order to help dismissed workers;
 9. Notes that the redundancies at Caterpillar are expected to have huge negative impacts on the Charleroi region, which is facing a very difficult labour market situation due to its over-reliance on traditional industrial employment and lack of new industries; points out that the low qualification level of the workers made redundant makes it difficult for them to find a new job in an adverse economic context; recommends that the Commission carry out a survey in order to determine the entrepreneur success stories in the area and help the redundant people with project ideas inspired from the best cases;
 10. Notes that 18 % of the targeted redundant workers expected to participate in the measures are threatened by labour market exclusion as they are part of the 55-64 age group;
 11. Notes that the coordinated package of personalised services to be co-funded covers three main areas: redeployment, training and retraining and promotion of entrepreneurship;

Tuesday 10 March 2015

12. Notes that more than half of the total estimated costs are to be spent on redeployment services, namely support, guidance and integration measures; notes that these services will be provided by FOREM (the public employment and training service of the Walloon Region), which acts as an intermediary body in the implementation of this application;
13. Welcomes the fact that the co-ordinated package of personalised services has been drawn up in consultation with the targeted beneficiaries and the social partners, taking into consideration the potential of the area and the business environment;
14. Recalls the importance of improving the employability of all workers by means of adapted training and the recognition of skills and competences gained throughout a worker's professional career; expects the training on offer in the coordinated package to be adapted not only to the needs of the dismissed workers but also to the actual business environment;
15. Advocates for the future use of the provisions of the EGF Regulation to support young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) in this region;
16. Recalls that, in line with Article 7 of the EGF Regulation, the design of the coordinated package of personalised services should anticipate future labour market perspectives and required skills and should be compatible with the shift towards a resource-efficient and sustainable economy;
17. Stresses that EGF assistance can co-finance only active labour market measures which lead to durable, long-term employment; reiterates that assistance from the EGF must not replace actions which are the responsibility of companies by virtue of national law or collective agreements nor measures restructuring companies or sectors;
18. Welcomes that financial support from the European Social Fund was in the past awarded to a project (En Train — En Transition-Reconversion-Accompagnement) which aimed to develop pedagogical methods for Redeployment Units in general and that the findings of this project are likely to prove useful in the implementation of the planned measures;
19. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;
20. Instructs its President to sign the decision with the President of the Council and arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*;
21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution, including its annex, to the Council and the Commission.

ANNEX

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (application EGF/2014/011 BE/Caterpillar, from Belgium)

(The text of this annex is not reproduced here since it corresponds to the final act, Decision (EU) 2015/471.)
