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*Plenary sitting*

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**A8-0181/2016**

24.5.2016

## **REPORT**

on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council  
on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund  
(application from Greece – EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa)  
(COM(2016)0210 – C8-0149/2016 – 2016/2050(BUD))

Committee on Budgets

Rapporteur: Liadh Ní Riada

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (application from Greece – EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa)  
(COM(2016)0210 – C8-0149/2016 – 2016/2050(BUD))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2016)0210 – C8-0149/2016),
  - 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<sup>1</sup> (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<sup>2</sup>, 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<sup>3</sup> (IIA of 2 December 2013), and in particular point 13 thereof,
  - having regard to the five previous EGF applications related to the retail sector,
  - having regard to its resolution of 13 April 2016 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF/2016/000 TA 2016 - Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission)<sup>4</sup>,
  - 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 (A8-0181/2016),
- 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 or of the global financial and economic crisis and to assist their reintegration into the labour market; whereas the EGF benefits workers who have been

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 855.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0112.

dismissed from small and medium-sized enterprises and multinationals, regardless of the policies or interests which motivated the closure decision, in particular of the latter ones; whereas the EGF Regulation and Union trade policy should further focus on how to safeguard jobs, production and know-how within the Union;

- B. whereas the Union's financial assistance to workers in need 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 Greece submitted application EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa for a financial contribution from the EGF, following dismissals in the economic sector classified under the NACE Revision 2 Division 47 (retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles) in the NUTS level 2 regions of Central Macedonia (Κεντρική Μακεδονία) (EL12) and Thessalia (Θεσσαλία) (EL14), and whereas 557 dismissed workers, as well as 543 young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) under the age of 30 from the same regions are expected to participate in the measures; whereas the workers were dismissed following the bankruptcy and closure of Supermarket Larissa ABEE;
- D. whereas the application was submitted under the intervention criteria of point (a) of Article 4(1) of the EGF Regulation, which requires at least 500 workers being dismissed over a reference period of four months in an enterprise in a Member State, including workers dismissed by suppliers and downstream producers and / or self-employed persons whose activity has ceased;
  - 1. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in point (a) of Article 4(1) of the EGF Regulation are met and that, therefore, Greece is entitled to a financial contribution of EUR 6 468 000 under that Regulation, which represents 60 % of the total cost of EUR 10 780 000;
  - 2. Notes that the financial contribution will target 557 workers made redundant, of which 194 are men and 363 are women;
  - 3. Recalls that another 543 young people under the age of 30 that are not in employment, education or training in the same region might be provided with personalised services such as occupational guidance under the Youth Employment Initiative;
  - 4. Notes that the Commission respected the deadline of 12 weeks from the receipt of the application from the Greek authorities, on 26 November 2015, until finalising its assessment on the compliance with the conditions for providing a financial contribution, on 14 April 2016 and notified it to Parliament on 15 April 2015;
  - 5. Notes that in addition to the 557 workers dismissed, 543 young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) under the age of 30 from the same regions are expected to participate in the measures and receive personalised services co-financed by the EGF; notes that the request of the Greek authorities to include NEETs in these measures is due to the lack of jobs in the region compared with the high number of job seekers, 73,5% of

unemployed persons being unemployed for more than 12 months in Thessalia (Eurostat);

6. Notes that, as a consequence of the deep recession of the Greek economy followed by a decline of household consumption and purchasing power, the volumes of retail trade of food, beverages and tobacco were more than 30 % lower in 2015 than the early-crisis volumes of 2008; notes that the sales of Supermarket Larissa followed the same downwards trend ;
7. Notes, therefore, that Supermarket Larissa, a cooperative of small grocery stores founded in 1986, with 42 shops and 600 workers, could not overcome its losses and had to close its shops during the second quarter of 2014; points out that this was not prevented by the austerity measures, in particular wage cuts (-30 %), the renegotiation of leases and the putting off of the maturity date of bills; notes that this situation is also due to the drastic reduction in loans to enterprises, in a context where quantitative easing by the ECB failed to kickstart loans; notes that this case is a dramatic result of the continuous pressure by creditors on Greece and of European austerity policy;
8. Welcomes the fact that the Greek authorities started providing the personalised services to the affected workers on 26 February 2016, ahead of the decision on the granting the EGF support for the proposed coordinated package;
9. Notes that the income-support measures will be strictly limited to a maximum amount of 35 % of the overall package of personalised measures, as set out in the EGF Regulation, and that those actions are conditional on the active participation of the targeted beneficiaries in job-search or training activities;
10. Notes that although the cooperative applied some austerity measures such as wage cuts, renegotiation of the leases, putting off the maturity date of bills, proposing cheaper products and reducing operation costs it had to start closing its shops one after another;
11. Notes that the measures planned by Greece for the dismissed workers and for the NEETs comprise the following categories: occupational guidance; training, retraining and vocational training; contribution to business start-up; participation allowance and training allowance; mobility allowance;
12. Notes the rather high amount (EUR 15 000) to be received, as part of personalised services, by the workers or NEETs who will set up their own business; notes, at the same time, that a large number of the redundant workers have an entrepreneurial background which increases their chances of success in this sector;
13. Notes the possibility that some of the new businesses will take the form of social cooperatives and welcomes, in this context, the efforts of the Greek authorities to enhance the sector of social economy in Greece;
14. Notes the importance of launching an information campaign in order to reach the NEETs who could be eligible under these measures; recalls its position on the need to help the NEETs in a permanent and sustainable way;
15. Welcomes the fact that the coordinated package of personalised services was established through further consultations with representatives of the beneficiaries and social partners;

16. Reminds 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. Highlights the need to improve the employability of all workers by means of adapted training and expects that the training offered in the coordinated package will meet both needs of the workers and the business environment;
18. Calls on the Commission to provide more details in future proposals on the sectors having prospects to grow, and therefore to hire people, as well as to gather substantiated data on the impact of the EGF funding, including on the quality of jobs and the reintegration rate achieved through EGF;
19. Notes that the Greek authorities confirm that the eligible actions do not receive assistance from other Union financial instruments;
20. Appreciates the improved procedure put in place by the Commission, following the Parliament's request for the accelerated release of grants; notes the time pressure that the new timetable implies and the potential impact on the effectiveness of case instruction;
21. Recalls its appeal to the Commission to assure public access to all the documents related to EGF cases;
22. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;
23. 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*;
24. 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 from Greece – EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa)**

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

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<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Article 15(4) 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<sup>2</sup>, and in particular point 13 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) aims to provide support for workers made redundant and self-employed persons whose activity has ceased as a result of major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation, as a result of a continuation of the global financial and economic crisis, or as a result of a new global financial and economic crisis, and to assist them with their reintegration into the labour market.
- (2) The EGF is not to exceed a maximum annual amount of EUR 150 million (2011 prices), as laid down in Article 12 of Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013<sup>3</sup>.
- (3) On 26 November 2015, Greece submitted an application EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa for a financial contribution from the EGF, following redundancies in Supermarket Larissa ABEE in Greece. It was supplemented by additional information provided in accordance with Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013. That application complies with the requirements for determining a financial contribution from the EGF as laid down in Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 855.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884).

- (4) In accordance with Article 6(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013, Greece has decided to provide personalised services co-financed by the EGF also to 543 young persons not in employment, education or training (NEETs).
- (5) The EGF should, therefore, be mobilised in order to provide a financial contribution of EUR 6 468 000 in respect of the application submitted by Greece.
- (6) In order to minimise the time taken to mobilise the EGF, this decision should apply from the date of its adoption,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

For the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016, the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund shall be mobilised to provide the sum of EUR 6 468 000 in commitment and payment appropriations.

*Article 2*

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. It shall apply from [*the date of its adoption*]\*.

Done at ,

*For the European Parliament*  
*The President*

*For the Council*  
*The President*

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\* Date to be inserted by the Parliament before the publication in OJ.



## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### I. Background

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund has been created in order to provide additional assistance to workers suffering from the consequences of major structural changes in world trade patterns.

According to the provisions of Article 12 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020<sup>1</sup> and of Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013<sup>2</sup>, the Fund may not exceed a maximum annual amount of EUR 150 million (2011 prices). The appropriate amounts are entered into the general budget of the Union as a provision.

As concerns the procedure, according to 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<sup>3</sup>, in order to activate the Fund the Commission, in case of a positive assessment of an application, presents to the budgetary authority a proposal for mobilisation of the Fund and, at the same time, a corresponding request for transfer. In the event of disagreement, a trilogue shall be initiated.

### II. Supermarket Larissa application and the Commission's proposal

On 14 April 2016, the Commission adopted a proposal for a decision on the mobilisation of the EGF in favour of Greece to support the reintegration in the labour market of workers made redundant in Supermarket Larissa ABEE operating in the NACE Rev. 2 division 47 (Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles) in the NUTS<sup>4</sup> level 2 regions Central Macedonia (Κεντρική Μακεδονία) (EL12) and Thessalia (Θεσσαλία) (EL14).

This is the fifth application to be examined under the 2016 budget and refers to the mobilisation of a total amount of EUR 6 468 000 from the EGF for Greece. It concerns 557 workers made redundant and 543 targeted young persons not in employment, education or training (NEETs).

The application was sent to the Commission on 26 November 2015 and supplemented by additional information up to 10 December 2015. The Commission has concluded, in accordance with all applicable provisions of the EGF Regulation, that the application meets the conditions for a financial contribution from the EGF.

The Greek authorities state that the event giving rise to the redundancies is the bankruptcy and closure of Supermarket Larissa cooperative shops, following the drop of the purchasing

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 855.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Commission Regulation (EU) No 1046/2012 of 8 November 2012 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) as regards the transmission of the time series for the new regional breakdown (OJ L 310, 9.11.2012, p. 34).

power of Greek households and the drastic reduction of loans to enterprises and individuals.

The personalised services which are to be provided to workers made redundant consist of five types of measures for redundant workers and NEETs covered by this application: (i) occupational guidance, (ii) training, retraining and vocational training, (iii) contribution to business start-up, (iv) participation allowance and training allowance, (v) mobility allowance. One of the measures under the Occupational guidance consists of launching information campaigns aimed specifically at the NEETs in the view of defining the beneficiary group.

According to the Commission, the described measures constitute active labour market measures within the eligible actions set out in Article 7 of the EGF Regulation. These actions do not substitute passive social protection measures.

The Greek authorities have provided all necessary assurances regarding the following:

- the principles of equality of treatment and non-discrimination will be respected in the access to the proposed actions and their implementation,
- the requirements laid down in national and EU legislation concerning collective redundancies have been complied with,
- the proposed actions will not receive financial support from other Union funds or financial instruments and any double financing will be prevented,
- the proposed actions will be complementary with actions funded by the Structural Funds,
- the financial contribution from the EGF will comply with the procedural and material Union rules on State aid.

Greece has notified the Commission that the sources of national pre-financing or co-funding is the National Public Investment Programme..

### **III. Procedure**

In order to mobilise the Fund, the Commission has submitted to the Budget Authority a transfer request for a global amount of EUR 6 468 000 from the EGF reserve (40 02 43) to the EGF budget line (04 04 01).

This is the fifth transfer proposal for the mobilisation of the Fund transmitted to the Budgetary Authority to date during 2016.

The trilogue procedure shall be initiated in the event of disagreement, as provided for in Article 15(4) of the EGF Regulation.

According to an internal agreement, the Employment and Social Affairs Committee should be associated to the process, in order to provide constructive support and contribution to the assessment of the applications from the Fund.

## **ANNEX: LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

CO/jb D(2016)19124

M. Jean Arthuis  
Chair of the Committee on Budgets  
ASP 09G205

**Subject: Opinion on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) for the case EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa from Grece COM(2016) 210 final**

Dear Chair,

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) as well as its Working Group on the EGF examined the mobilisation of the EGF for the case EGF/2015/011 GR/Supermarket Larissa and adopted the following opinion.

The EMPL committee and the Working Group on the EGF are in favour of the mobilisation of the Fund concerning this request. In this respect, the EMPL committee presents some remarks without, however, putting into question the transfer of the payments.

The deliberations of the EMPL committee are based on the following considerations:

- A) Whereas this application is based on Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 (EGF Regulation) and relates to 557 workers made redundant in Supermarket Larissa ABEE in Grece, operating under the NACE Revision 2 Division 47 (Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles), in the NUTS level 2 regions of Central Macedonia and Thessalia, within the reference period from 3 May 2015 to 3 September 2015;
- B) Whereas in order to establish the link between the redundancies and the global financial and economic crisis addressed in Regulation (EC) No 546/2009 Greece argues that the Greek economy was in deep recession for six consecutive years (from 2008 to 2013), since 2008, Greek GDP has decreased by 25,7%, public consumption by 21% while unemployment increased with about 19% (ELSTAT); whereas, to deal with foreign debt repayments, since 2008 the Greek government has increased tax rates, streamlined public expenditure and decreased public employees' salaries and wages in the private sector decreased also in attempt to increase the competitiveness of the Greek economy; whereas an immediate effect of reduced income was a decrease in consumption, strongly affecting the retail sector, in which Supermarket Larissa operates;
- C) Whereas the workers were made redundant following the bankruptcy and closure of Supermarket Larissa ABEE;

D) Whereas more than half (65,2%) of the workers targeted by the measure are women and 34,8% are men; whereas the largest majority (86%) of workers are between 30 and 54 years old.

Therefore, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to integrate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution concerning the Greek application:

1. Agrees with the Commission that the intervention criteria set out in Article 4(1)(a) of the Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 are met and that, therefore, Greece is entitled to a financial contribution of EUR 6 468 000 under this Regulation, which represents 60% of the total cost of EUR 10 780 000;
2. Notes that the Commission respected the deadline of 12 weeks from the reception of the application from the Greek authorities, on 26 November 2015, until finalising its assessment on the compliance with the conditions for providing a financial contribution, on 14 April 2016 and notified it to Parliament on 15 April 2015.
3. Notes that additionally to the 557 workers dismissed, 543 young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) under the age of 30 from the same regions are expected to participate in the measures and receive personalised services co-financed by EGF; notes that the request of Greek authorities to include NEETs in these measures is due to the lack of jobs in the region if compared with the high number of job seekers, 73,5% of the unemployed persons being unemployed for more than 12 months in Thessalia (Eurostat);
4. Notes that as a consequence of the deep recession of the Greek economy followed by a decline of household consumption and purchasing power the volumes of retail trade of food, beverages and tobacco were more than 30% lower in 2015 than the early-crisis volumes of 2008; notes that the sales of Supermarket Larissa followed the same trend downwards;
5. Notes that, in this economic environment, Supermarket Larissa, cooperative of small grocery stores, despite the austerity measures taken of wage cuts, renegotiation of leases, proposing cheaper products, reducing operating costs, could not overcome its losses and had to close its shops in 2014, followed by the closure of the enterprise and the subsequent layoffs in 2015, when the court ruled on the bankruptcy request;
6. Notes that the measures planned by Greece for the dismissed workers and for the NEETs are comprised in the following categories: occupational guidance; training, retraining and vocational training; contribution to business start-up; participation allowance and training allowance; mobility allowance;
7. Notes the importance of launching an information campaign in order to reach the NEETs who could be eligible under these measures; recalls its position on the need to help the NEETs in a permanent and sustainable way;
8. Highlights the need of improving employability of all workers by adapted training and expects that the training offered in the coordinated package will meet both needs of the workers and the business environment;

9. Calls on the Commission to provide more details in future proposals on the sectors having prospects to grow, and therefore to hire people, as well as to gather substantiated data on the impact of the EGF funding, including on the quality of jobs and the reintegration rate achieved through EGF;
10. Welcomes the fact that the coordinated package of personalised services was established through further consultations with representatives of the beneficiaries and social partners;
11. Notes the rather high amount (EUR 15 000) to be received, as part of personalised services, by the workers or NEETs who will set up their own business; notes, at the same time, that a large number of the redundant workers have an entrepreneurial background which increases their chances of success in this sector;
12. Notes the possible tendency that some of the new businesses will take the form of social cooperatives and welcomes, in this context, the efforts of the Greek authorities to enhance the sector of social economy in Greece;
13. Notes that the income supports measures will be strictly limited to a maximum amount of 35% of the overall package of personalised measures, as set out in the Regulation; and that these actions are conditional on the active participation of the targeted beneficiaries in job-search or training activities;
14. Recalls its appeal to the Commission to assure public access to all the documents related to EGF cases;
15. Reminds that in line with Article 7 of the 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.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas HÄNDEL

EMPL Chair

## ANNEX: LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr Jean ARTHUIS  
Chairman  
Committee on Budgets  
European Parliament

Subject:       **Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund**

Dear Mr. Arthuis,

A Commission proposal for a decision to mobilise the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) has been referred for opinion to the Committee on Regional Development. I understand that it is intended that a report on this will be adopted in the Committee on Budgets on 23 May 2016:

-       **COM(2016)0210** proposes an EGF contribution of EUR 6 468 000 for 557 workers (422 employees and 135 worker-owners) made redundant in Supermarket Larissa ABEE. This enterprise operates in the economic sector classified under the NACE Revision 2 Division 47 (Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles). The redundancies made by Supermarket Larissa are located in the NUTS level 2 regions of Central Macedonia (Κεντρική Μακεδονία) (EL12) and Thessalia (Θεσσαλία) (EL14).

The rules applicable to financial contributions from the EGF are laid down in 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.

The Committee coordinators have assessed this proposal, and asked me to write to you reporting that the majority of this Committee has no objection to this mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to allocate the above-mentioned amount as proposed by the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

Iskra MIHAYLOVA

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	23.5.2016
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 23 -: 3 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Jean Arthuis, Lefteris Christoforou, Jean-Paul Denanot, José Manuel Fernandes, Bernd Kölmel, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Vladimír Maňka, Ernest Maragall, Sophie Montel, Liadh Ní Riada, Jan Olbrycht, Younous Omarjee, Urmas Paet, Paul Rübig, Patricija Šulin, Eleftherios Synadinos, Paul Tang, Daniele Viotti, Auke Zijlstra
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Georgios Kyrtos, Andrej Plenković, Ivan Štefanec, Nils Torvalds
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Laura Agea, Rainer Wieland