



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

*Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
The Chairwoman*

EK/ic
D(2012)47752

M. Alain Lamassoure
President of the Committee on budgets
ASP 13E158

Subject: Opinion on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) for the case EGF/2011/021 NL/Zalco from the Netherlands (COM(2011)450 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/2011/021 NL/Zalco from the Netherlands** 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 2 (a) of the EGF regulation and targets for support all 616 workers of Zalco Aluminium Zeeland Company NV and its two suppliers made redundant between 1 December and 27 December 2011;
- B) Whereas the Dutch authorities argue that the redundancies were caused by the global financial and economic crisis resulting in a sudden drop in consumer demand reflected in 25,7% drop in average EU aluminium usage between 2008-2009, especially in automobile and constructions sectors;
- C) Whereas the Dutch authorities argue that the global and financial crisis led to bankruptcy of Zalco at the end of 2011 despite the attempts to adapt the production process in the last three years of operation;
- D) Whereas Zeeland is a small labour market with limited access and mobility;
- E) Whereas 96,27 % of the workers targeted by the measures are men; whereas 62,82 % of the workers are between 24-54 years old and 18,67 % are older than 54

Secretariat - Address: 2, rue d'Ardenne, B-1047 Brussels
Telephone +32 2 28 44550 - Fax +32 2 28 49072 - Email: ip-empl@europarl.europa.eu

years; whereas 27 of the targeted workers are disabled or suffer from longstanding health problems;

- F) Whereas 44,32 % of the dismissed workers were technicians and further 42,53% were active as plant and machine operators and assemblers;

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 Dutch application:

1. Welcomes this call for the EGF financial contribution by the Dutch Government even though this Member State has opposed the extension of the crisis derogation for the current EGF and jeopardises the future of the EGF after 2013;
2. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in Articles 2 (a) of the EGF regulation (1927/2006) are met and that, therefore, the Netherlands are entitled to a financial contribution under this regulation;
3. Notes that the Dutch authorities submitted the application for EGF financial contribution on 28 December 2011 and that its assessment was made available by the European Commission on 9 August 2012; regrets the lengthy evaluation period;
4. Notes that the application clearly states that 'cuts in public expenditure had a direct negative impact on investments in infrastructure and housing programmes', thus nurturing the vicious circle between austerity and the accelerated destruction of industrial jobs in the EU;
5. Notes that the redundancies will have a noticeable impact on local communities and the number of open positions compared to the number of unemployed; regrets that the application does not provide any statistical data about the labour market concerned;
6. Welcomes the fact that in order to provide workers with speedy assistance, the Dutch authorities decided to start the implementation of the measures on 2 January 2013 well ahead of the final decision on granting the EGF support for the proposed coordinated package;
7. Welcomes the involvement of the social partners in the design of the coordinated package via the Mobility Center Zalco, a collective initiative of the parties involved in the Zeeland labour market;
8. Regrets that the information on the training measures does not describe in which sectors the workers are likely to find employment and if the package is adapted to the future economic prospects in the region;

9. Welcomes the fact that the EGF contribution is planned to support solely active labour measures (training and counselling) and will not be used for allowances;

Yours sincerely,

Pervenche Berès