EU job-search aid for redundant workers in Belgium, Germany and Poland

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Some 3,000 workers made redundant in Belgium, Germany and Poland in 2013-2014 should receive EU aid worth €6.3million to help them find jobs, the Budgets Committee recommended on Thursday. The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) aid still has to be approved by Parliament as a whole and the Council of Ministers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country, town, region</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
<th>Amount of aid (in €)</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>EP rapporteur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium, La Louvière, (Hainaut region)</td>
<td>Duferco, NLMK</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>981,956</td>
<td>steel manufacturing</td>
<td>Andrej Plenkovic (EPP, HR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium, Auelais (Namur region)</td>
<td>Saint-Gobain Sekurit Benelux SA</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>1,339,928</td>
<td>manufacturing of safety glass for cars</td>
<td>Liadh Ní Riada (GUE/NGL, IE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium, Gosselies (Charleroi region)</td>
<td>Caterpillar Belgium S.A.</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>1,222,854</td>
<td>machinery manufacturing</td>
<td>Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE, FI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium, Liège</td>
<td>ArcelorMittal Liège S.A.</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>1,591,486</td>
<td>steel manufacturing</td>
<td>Victor Negreścu (S&amp;D, RO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany, Prenzlau/Brandenburg region</td>
<td>Aleo Solar and two subsidiaries</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>1,094,760</td>
<td>solar modules</td>
<td>Iris Hoffmann (S&amp;D, DE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland, Kujawsko-Pomorskie Province</td>
<td>Zakłady Chemiczne Zachem and two suppliers</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>115,205</td>
<td>chemical industry</td>
<td>Jan Olbrycht (EPP, PL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Belgium: metal, machinery and glass manufacturers

Rapid decline in the EU’s global steel market share forced steelmakers Duferco to close and NLMK to downsize, resulting in 708 redundancies in the Hainaut, a former coal-mining and steelmaking area with an already high unemployment rate of 17.7%. The €981,956 EGF aid will reimburse part of the retraining and job search costs for 701 workers.

In a separate application for the steel industry, Belgium asked for €1,591,486 in EGF aid for ArcelorMittal Liège, where 910 redundant workers needed retraining and new jobs.

Saint-Gobain Sekurit, which made safety glass for cars at Auelais in Namur province, a region in severe economic and social difficulties, had to close its plant due to rising imports of, and declining demand for, its products in the EU. The Belgian authorities asked for a €1,339,928 EGF contribution to reimburse half of the total costs of finding new jobs for 257 mostly production line workers.

Mine machinery maker Caterpillar relocated production to third countries due to declining demand for its products in Europe. Its plant in Gosselies (Charleroi region) reduced production, resulting in redundancies in a region that has an employment rate of only 52%. The €1,222,854 EGF aid will help to get 630 workers back to work.
Poland: chemical industry

Zachem and two of its subsidiaries in Kujawsko-Pomorskie province, which has Poland’s highest unemployment rate closed down after losing out to competition from Asian suppliers of its leading product toluene diisocyanate (TDI). 615 of the workers it made redundant are eligible for EGF aid. The Polish authorities applied for €115,250 to cover half of the costs of getting them back to work.

Next steps

Parliament as a whole is to vote on the applications at its March plenary session. The Council’s decision is expected on 9 March.

Background

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund was set up to provide additional support for workers made redundant as a result of major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation or the financial crisis and to help them find new jobs. Between 2014 and 2020, the annual ceiling of the fund is €150 million.

Redundant workers are offered measures such as support for business start-ups, job-search assistance, occupational guidance and various kinds of training. In most cases, national authorities have already started taking measures and have their costs reimbursed by the EU when their applications are finally approved.

Useful information

• All draft reports available here
• The Commission’s EGF page

• Committee on Budgets: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/budg/home.html

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