REPORT


Committee on Budgets

Rapporteur: Iris Hoffmann
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION ............................................. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNEX: DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ...... 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPLANATORY STATEMENT ......................................................................................... 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNEX: LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS ........ 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNEX: LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ............. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ................................................................. 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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, 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 budgerary matters and on sound financial management (application EGF/2014/014 DE/Aelo Solar from Germany)


The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2014)0726 – C8-0012/2015),
– having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020², 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 management³ (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 (A8-0030/2015),

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 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;

D. whereas Germany submitted application EGF/2014/014 DE/Aleo Solar for a financial contribution from the EGF, following 657 redundancies, 390 from Aleo Solar AG, a company operating in the NACE 2 Division 26 'Manufacturing of computer, electronic and optical products', and 267 from its two subsidiaries, with 476 persons expected to participate in the measures, during and after the reference period from 7 March 2014 to 7 July 2014, linked to a decline in the Union's market share in solar module companies;

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 Germany is entitled to a financial contribution under that Regulation;

2. Notes that the German authorities submitted the application for EGF financial contribution on 29 July 2014, supplemented it by additional information up to 23 September 2014 and that its assessment was made available by the Commission on 16 December 2014;

3. Welcomes the fact that, in order to provide workers with speedy assistance, the German authorities decided to initiate the implementation of the personalised services to the affected workers on 11 April 2014, well ahead of the decision and even the application on granting the EGF support for the proposed coordinated package;

4. Considers that the redundancies in Aleo Solar AG are linked to major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation, with the revenue share of China increasing from 11 % to 45 %, while that of Germany fell from 64 % to 21 % between 2005 and 2011; notes that due to huge Chinese overcapacities in solar modules, which neither its own consumers nor the world market can absorb, EU prices dropped by 40 % in 2011 compared to 2010 and thus below the production costs of Aleo Solar AG; notes that in 2013, the EU approved additional duties on solar modules originating in China, and a minimum price which is still, however, below the production costs of German producers;

5. Notes that in 2010 Aleo Solar AG had a turnover of EUR 550 million and a profit of EUR 43 million and that this declined rapidly from 2011 and by 2013 had reached losses of EUR 92 million; stresses that various efforts to restructure and improve efficiency have been made, but that, unfortunately, it has not managed to return to profitability;

6. Notes that this is the second EGF application with regard to the solar module manufacturing with several more to come;
7. Notes that the redundancies at Aleo Solar AG are expected to have a negative impact on the Prenzlau/Brandenburg region, where per capita income is well below the national average and the unemployment rate the highest in Germany with 15.5 % and 16.4 % respectively; highlights that the inclusion of the redundancies from Aleo Solar AG would increase this rate by 0.9 %; regrets that there is no immediate prospect of the redundant workers finding any equivalent new jobs, due to a relatively low population density and lack of potential employers: the area has mostly small and medium-sized enterprises, and only 10 enterprises (0.3%) have more than 249 workers (Aleo Solar AG was one of these major employers);

8. Notes that the coordinated package of personalised services to be co-funded includes the following measures for the reintegration of 476 redundant workers into employment: vocational training, careers advice and guidance, peer groups/workshops, entrepreneurship advice, inter-regional advice for mobility, job search by a professional job searcher, follow-up mentoring for workers who have found a new job but might need advice to secure this job or because it involves resettling, a training allowance of 60 % of the worker's previous net income in line with Article 7(1)(b) of the EGF Regulation;

9. Notes that the authorities plan to utilise the maximum allowed 35 % of all costs on allowances and incentives in the form of training allowances (Transferkurzarbeitergeld) constituting 60 % or 67 % of a worker's previous net income – depending on the household situation of the beneficiary – which is in line with the practice where workers become unemployed in Germany; notes that the training allowance is not a substitute for passive social protection measures and is tied to strict conditions to undertake the training and other activities that have been organised;

10. Welcomes the fact that the co-ordinated package of personalised services has been drawn up in consultation with the representatives of the targeted beneficiaries, taking into consideration the potential of the area and the business environment;

11. 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;

12. Notes that 164 of the Aleo Solar AG workers made redundant in Prenzlaus were rehired by an Asian consortium, which bought the plant from the liquidator; notes that the reasoning of the German authorities for enabling these workers to benefit from the measures to be funded by the EGF is that the security of their new employment was not certain at that time;

13. Notes that the 104 workers made redundant in the administrative centre in Oldenburg are not included in the measures to be funded by the EGF; notes that the employment situation in this region is much more promising;
14. Regrets that the risk of long-term unemployment for the redundant workers is high and stresses therefore the importance of measures encouraging workers to look beyond the immediate area and take up job offers which can be found in other regions;

15. Considers that workers in the 55-64 and 15-29 age groups are at a higher risk of prolonged unemployment and exclusion from the labour market; considers therefore that these workers have specific needs when it comes to providing them with personalised approach;

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. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;

19. 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*;

20. 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/2014/014 DE/Aleo Solar, from Germany)

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
and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1927/20061, 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 management2, and in particular point 13 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

(1) The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) was established 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
addressed in Regulation (EC) No 546/20093, or as a result of a new global financial
and economic crisis and to assist them with their reintegration into the labour market.

(2) Article 12 of Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/20134 allows the
mobilisation of the EGF within a maximum annual amount of EUR 150 million (2011
prices).

(3) Germany submitted an application to mobilise the EGF, in respect of redundancies in
Aleo Solar AG and two of its subsidiaries in Germany, on 29 July 2014 and
supplemented it by additional information as provided by Article 8.3 of Regulation
(EU) No 1309/2013. This 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.

4 Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual
(4) The EGF should, therefore, be mobilised in order to provide a financial contribution of an amount of EUR 1 094 760 for the application submitted by Germany,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

For the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund shall be mobilised to provide the sum of EUR 1 094 760 in commitment and payment appropriations.

Article 2

This decision shall be published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament

The President

For the Council

The President
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 and of the Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006, 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, 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. The Aleo Solar application and the Commission's proposal

On 16 December 2014, the Commission adopted a proposal for a decision on the mobilisation of the EGF in favour of Germany to support the reintegration in the labour market of workers made redundant, due to major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation.

This is the fourth application to be examined under the 2014 budget and refers to the mobilisation of a total amount of EUR 1 094 760 from the EGF for Germany. It concerns 657 redundancies in the reference period from 7 March 2014 to 7 July 2014. The application is based on the intervention criteria of Article 4(1)(a) of the EGF Regulation, which requires at least 500 workers being made redundant or self-employed persons' activity ceasing, over a reference period of four months in an enterprise in a Member State, including workers made redundant and / or self-employed persons' activity ceasing in its suppliers and downstream producers.

The application was sent to the Commission on 29 July 2014. The Commission has concluded that the application meets the conditions for deploying the EGF as set out in Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013.

According to data referred to by the German authorities, Aleo Solar is only one of many European solar enterprises that have become insolvent, quit the solar business, shut down production wholly or partially, or sold out to Chinese investors over the past few years (since

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Between 2005 and 2011, the revenue share of China increased from 11 % to 45 %, while that of Germany fell from 64 % to 21 %.

China has built up huge overcapacities in solar modules, which neither its own consumers nor the world market can absorb; this coupled with the worldwide decline in demand has led to a collapse in prices. As a result of locally available financial support for manufacturers in China, and the priority given to the sector by the current Chinese 5-year plan (2011-2015), these companies are able to survive and grow by selling their output cheaply on markets abroad. More than 90 % of Chinese production is exported, of which 80 % into the EU. In 2011, EU prices dropped by 40 % compared with 2010, to a level below the production costs of Aleo Solar. In 2013, the EU approved additional duties on solar modules originating in China, and a minimum price which, however, is still below the production costs of German producers.

Aleo Solar in 2010 had a turnover of EUR 550 million and a profit of EUR 43 million; this declined rapidly from 2011 and by 2013 had reached losses of EUR 92 million. Despite various efforts to restructure and improve efficiency, it did not manage to return to profitability, and went into liquidation and closed or sold off its facilities, while some other German solar companies struggling with losses moved production to the Far East, e.g. Malaysia.

The coordinated package of personalised services to be co-funded includes following measures for the reintegration of 476 redundant workers into employment: vocational training, careers advice and guidance, peer groups/workshops, entrepreneurship advice, inter-regional advice for mobility, job search by a professional job searcher, follow-up mentoring for workers who have found a new job but might need advice to secure this job or because it involves resettling, a training allowance of 60% of the worker's previous net income.

According to the German authorities, the measures initiated on 11 April 2014 combine to form a co-ordinated package of personalised services and represent active labour market measures with the aim of re-integrating the workers into the labour market.

The German authorities have confirmed in their application that:

- 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;
- where the dismissing enterprises have continued their activities after the layoffs, they have complied with their legal obligations governing the redundancies and have provided for their workers accordingly;
- 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.

Concerning management and control systems, Germany has notified the Commission that the financial contribution will be administered by the same bodies within the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales) which administer the ESF. The sources of national pre-financing and co-funding are the Federal budget and the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Labour Agency), who fund the 40 % national contribution.

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 1 094 760.

This is the fourth transfer proposal for the mobilisation of the Fund transmitted to the Budgetary Authority to date during 2015.

The trilogue on the Commission's proposal for a Decision on the mobilisation of the EGF could take a simplified form, as provided for in Article 12(5) of the legal base, unless there is no agreement between the Parliament and the Council.

According to an internal agreement, the Employment and Social Affairs Committee will 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

ZP/ch D(2015)430

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/2014/014 DE/Aleo Solar from Germany (COM(2014)726/1)

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/2014/014 DE/Aleo Solar 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 the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund Regulation (EC) No 1309/2013 and relates to 657 workers dismissed in Aleo Solar AG and its two subsidiaries Aleo Solar Dritte Produktion GmbH (Prenzlau) and Aleo Solar Deutschland GmbH (Oldenburg) which operated in the economic sector classified under NACE Rev. 2 division 26 ('Manufacture of computer, electronic and optical products'); whereas the redundancies made by the enterprises concerned are located in the NUTS level 2 region of Brandenburg within the reference period between 7 March 2014 and 7 July 2014;

B) Whereas Germany in order to establish link between the redundancies and major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation states that Aleo Solar was a German company within the Robert Bosch Group, having production sites in Spain, Italy, the USA, Australia and England, several of which have been sold off within the past few years due to decreasing market share;

C) Whereas between 2005 and 2011, the revenue share of China increased from 11% to 45%, while that of Germany fell from 64% to 21%;
D) Whereas China has built up huge overcapacities in solar modules, which neither its own consumers nor the world market can absorb; this coupled with the worldwide decline in demand has led to a collapse in prices; whereas more than 90% of Chinese production is exported, of which 80% into the EU;

E) Whereas in 2011, EU prices dropped by 40% compared with 2010, to a level below the production costs of Aleo Solar; in 2013, the EU approved additional duties on solar modules originating in China, and a minimum price which, however, is still below the production costs of German producers;

F) Whereas the majority (55.0%) of the workers targeted by the measures are men and 45.0% are women; whereas 69.7% of the workers are between 30 and 54 years old, 20.6% between 55 and 64 years old;

G) Whereas the redundancies have a significant adverse impact on the regional economy in Prenzlau / Brandenburg; whereas per capita income in the region is well below the national average and that the areas of Uckermark and Prenzlau have the highest unemployment rates of Germany, at 15.5% and 16.4% respectively (May 2014);

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 German application:

1. Notes that the application is based on Article 4(1)(a) of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund Regulation (EC) No 1309/2013; agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in the Regulation are met and that, therefore, Germany is entitled to a financial contribution under this Regulation;

2. Notes that this is the second EGF application for workers made redundant in the sector of solar module manufacturing, both of which were based on trade related globalisation;

3. Notes that 164 of the dismissed Aleo Solar workers in Prenzlau were taken back by an Asian consortium, which bought the plant from the liquidator; notes that the reasoning of the German authorities for enabling these workers to benefit from the EGF measures is that the security of their new employment was in that time not certain;

4. Notes that the 104 workers dismissed in the administrative centre in Oldenburg are not included in the measures; notes that the employment situation in this region is much more promising;

5. Notes that the authorities plan to utilise the maximum allowed 35% of all costs on allowances and incentives in form of training allowance (Transferkurzarbeitergeld) constituting 60% or 67% of the worker previous net income – depending on the household situation of the beneficiary – which is in line with the practice with the workers becoming unemployed in Germany;

6. Notes therefore that no extra incentives for training are provided for the participants by the EGF. Moreover, more personalised and in-depth measures should be encouraged;

7. Regrets that there are no immediate prospects for the redundant workers of finding any equivalent new jobs, due to a relatively low population density and lack of potential
employers: the area has mostly small and medium-sized enterprises, and only 10 enterprises (0.3%) have more than 249 workers (Aleo Solar was one of these major employers);

8. Regrets that the risk of long-term unemployment for the redundant workers is high and stresses therefore the importance of measures encouraging workers to look beyond the immediate area and take up job offers which can be found in other regions;

9. Considers that workers in age groups of 55 and 64, as well as 15 and 29 years of age, are at a higher risk of prolonged unemployment and exclusion from the labour market; considers therefore that these workers require specific needs when it comes to providing them with personalised approach;

10. 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,

Marita ULVSKOG,

Acting Chair, 1st Vice-Chair

c.c. Thomas Händel
ANNEX: LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr Jean ARTHUIS
Chairman
Committee on Budgets
European Parliament
ASP 09 G 205
B 1047 Brussels

Dear Mr. Arthuis,

Subject: Mobilisations of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund

Six separate Commission proposals for decisions to mobilise the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) have been referred for opinion to the Committee on Regional Development. I understand that it is intended that reports on each of these will be adopted in the Committee on Budgets on 26 February:

- COM(2014)0725 proposes an EGF contribution of EUR 981 956 for active labour market measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of 708 workers made redundant following both the closure of Duferco Belgium SA and staff reductions at NLMK La Louvière SA, operating in the sector of the manufacture of basic metals in Hainaut Province, Belgium.

- COM(2014)0726 is a proposal for an EGF contribution of EUR 1 094 760 for active labour market measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of 657 workers made redundant in aleo solar AG and its two subsidiaries, aleo solar Dritte Produktion GmbH (Prenzlau) and aleo solar Deutschland GmbH (Oldenburg), operating in the sector of the manufacture of computer, electronic and optical products in the regions of Brandenburg and Weser-Ems, Germany.

- COM(2014)0734 proposes an EGF contribution of EUR 1 591 486 for active labour market measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of 1285 workers made redundant following redundancies in ArcelorMittal Liège S.A., operating in the sector of the manufacture of basic metals in Liège Region, Belgium.

- COM(2014)0735 is a proposal for an EGF contribution of EUR 1 222 854 for active labour market measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of 1030 workers made redundant in Caterpillar Belgium S.A, operating in the sector of the manufacture of machinery and equipment redundant, in Hainaut Province, Belgium.
- **COM(2015)0009** proposes an EGF contribution of EUR 1 339 928 for active labour market measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of 257 workers made redundant following the closure of the automotive safety glass production plant of Saint-Gobain Sekurit Benelux in Auvelais, Belgium.

- **COM(2015)0013** proposes an EGF contribution of EUR 115 205 for active labour market measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of 615 workers made redundant in the manufacturer of chemical products Zaklady Chemiczne Zachem in Poland.

The Committee coordinators have assessed these proposals, and asked me to write to you stating that the majority of this Committee has no objection to these mobilisations of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to allocate the above-mentioned amounts as proposed by the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

Iskra MIHAYLOVA
### RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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<td><strong>Result of final vote</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td><strong>Members present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Nedzhmi Ali, Jonathan Arnott, Jean Arthuis, Lefteris Christoforou, Gérard Deprez, José Manuel Fernandes, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Jens Geier, Ingeborg Gräßle, Iris Hoffmann, Monika Hohlmeier, Carlos Iturgaiz, Bernd Kölmel, Vladimir Maňka, Clare Moody, Victor Negrescu, Urmas Paet, Pina Picierno, Paul Rübig, Patricija Šulin, Eleftherios Synadinos, Paul Tang, Indrek Tarand, Isabelle Thomas, Inese Vaidere, Marco Valli, Daniele Viotti, Marco Zanni</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Substitutes present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Janusz Lewandowski, Andrey Novakov, Tomáš Zdechovský</td>
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<td><strong>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Paulo Rangel</td>
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