

Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2011/025 IT/Lombardy – Italy

European Parliament resolution of 8 October 2013 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, in accordance with point 28 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management (application EGF/2011/025 IT/Lombardia from Italy) (COM(2013)0470 – C7-0206/2013 – 2013/2138(BUD))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2013)0470 – C7-0206/2013),
 - having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management (IIA of 17 May 2006)¹, and in particular point 28 thereof,
 - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF Regulation)²,
 - having regard to the trilogue procedure provided for in point 28 of the IIA of 17 May 2006,
 - 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 (A7-0294/2013),
- 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 scope of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) was broadened for applications submitted from 1 May 2009 to 31 December 2011 to include support for workers made redundant as a direct result of the global financial and economic crisis;
- C. whereas the Union’s financial assistance to workers made redundant should be dynamic and made available as quickly and as 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 for the IIA of 17 May 2006 in respect of the adoption of decisions to mobilise the EGF;
- D. whereas Italy submitted application EGF/2011/025 IT/Lombardia for a financial

¹ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1.

² OJ L 406, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

contribution from the EGF, following 529 redundancies in Lombardia with 480 workers targeted for EGF co-funded measures, during the reference period from 20 March 2011 to 20 December 2011;

- E. whereas the application fulfils the eligibility criteria set up by the EGF Regulation;
1. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in Article 2(b) of the EGF Regulation are met and that Italy is therefore entitled to a financial contribution under that Regulation;
 2. Notes with regret that the Italian authorities submitted the application for the EGF financial contribution on 30 December 2011 and that its assessment was made available by the Commission on 28 June 2013; regrets the lengthy evaluation period of 18 months;
 3. Notes that Lombardia, Italy's most prosperous region, producing one fifth of Italy's GDP, needs to tackle major structural challenges aggravated by the economic and financial crisis; welcomes the fact that Lombardia for the second time avails of the EGF to help deal with economic and social difficulties;
 4. Calls on the Italian authorities to use the EGF support to its full potential and to encourage the maximum number of workers to participate in the measures; recalls that early EGF interventions in Italy suffered from a relatively low rate of budget implementation, mainly due to low participation rates;
 5. Stresses that the Commission has already recognised the impact of the economic and financial crisis on the information and communications technology (ICT) sector and that the EGF has supported workers dismissed in this sector (cases: EGF/2011/016 IT/Agile and EGF/2010/012 NL/Noord Holland);
 6. Notes that the Italian ICT sector has been suffering from strong competition from low-cost countries over the past decade; acknowledges the need to reorganise the sector because of the rapid emergence of new technologies such as cloud computing, various types of e-services and social networks, which have been recognised as a challenge for some years; notes that the digital gap between Italy and leading European countries, as well as other countries in the world, has further widened because of the economic slow-down caused by the crisis; notes that all of those developments have led to the downsizing of ICT personnel in Italian businesses since 2009;
 7. Welcomes the fact that in order to provide workers with timely assistance, the Italian authorities decided to initiate the implementation of the personalised measures on 1 March 2012, well ahead of the final decision on granting EGF support for the proposed coordinated package;
 8. Notes that in order to limit the social impact of the dismissals in the ICT sector, extensive use was made of social safety nets such as the wage compensation fund (CIG) which provided financial benefits to workers as compensation for salary payments; notes with satisfaction that the Italian authorities have not requested any EGF support to finance subsistence allowances;
 9. Notes that the coordinated package of personalised services to be co-funded includes measures for the reintegration of 480 workers into employment such as interview

techniques, profiling of skills, pathway definition, monitoring, coordination and management of the personal intervention plan, tutoring and occupational guidance, exploration of job opportunities with new employers, matching of skills and jobs, mentoring during the first phase of a new employment, advice and support towards self-employment and tutoring and support during traineeship;

10. Notes that training and re-training measures are not included in the coordinated package of personalised services given the fact that those measures will be financed through regional sources;
11. Welcomes the fact that the social partners, and in particular trade unions at local level (CGIL, CISL, UIL, CISAL)¹, were consulted on the design of the measures of the coordinated EGF package; notes that a policy of equality between women and men, as well as the principle of non-discrimination, will be applied during the various stages of the implementation of and access to the EGF;
12. 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;
13. Notes that the coordinated package of personalised services, after consultation with the social partners, contains measures relating to career advice and planning, mentoring, matching of skills and jobs as well as support for self-employment and traineeship;
14. Notes that the information provided on the coordinated package of personalised services to be funded from the EGF includes information on complementarity with actions funded by the Structural Funds; stresses that the Italian authorities confirm that the eligible actions do not receive assistance from other Union financial instruments; reiterates its call to the Commission to present a comparative evaluation of those data in its annual reports in order to ensure full respect of the existing regulations and that no duplication of Union-funded services can occur;
15. Requests that the institutions involved make the necessary efforts to improve procedural arrangements in order to accelerate the mobilisation of the EGF; appreciates the improved procedure put in place by the Commission, following Parliament's request for the accelerated release of grants, aimed at presenting to the budgetary authority the Commission's assessment on the eligibility of an EGF application together with the proposal to mobilise the EGF; hopes that further improvements in the procedure will be integrated and that greater efficiency, transparency and visibility of the EGF will be achieved;
16. Stresses that in accordance with Article 6 of the EGF Regulation, it shall be ensured that the EGF supports the reintegration of individual redundant workers into stable employment; stresses, furthermore, 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;

¹ CGIL (Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro), CISL (Confederazione italiana sindacati lavoratori), UIL (Unione italiana del lavoro), CISAL (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Autonomi Lavoratori)

17. Welcomes the agreement reached in the Council on reintroducing in the EGF regulation, for the period 2014-2020, the crisis mobilisation criterion, which allows for the provision of financial assistance to workers made redundant as a result of the current financial and economic crisis in addition to those losing their job because of changes in global trade patterns;
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 mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, in accordance with point 28 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management (application EGF/2011/025 IT/Lombardia from Italy)

(The text of this annex is not reproduced here since it corresponds to the final act, Decision 2013/526/EU.)