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P9_TA(2021)0471

Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2021/001 ES/País Vasco metal — Spain

European Parliament resolution of 25 November 2021 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers following an application from Spain — EGF/2021/001 ES/País Vasco metal (COM(2021)0618 — C9-0377/2021 — 2021/0316(BUD))

(2022/C 224/23)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2021)0618 — C9-0377/2021),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/691 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 ([1]) ('EGF Regulation'),

— having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 of 17 December 2020 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021-2027 ([2]), and in particular Article 8 thereof,

— having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources ([3]), and in particular point 9 thereof,

— having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs,

— having regard to the letter from the Committee on Regional Development,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A9-0319/2021),

A. whereas the Union has set up legislative and budgetary instruments to provide additional support to workers who are suffering from the consequences of globalisation and of technological and environmental changes, such as changes in world trade patterns, trade disputes, significant changes in the trade relations of the Union or the composition of the internal market and financial or economic crises, as well as the transition to a low-carbon economy, or as a consequence of digitisation or automation;

B. whereas Spain submitted application EGF/2021/001 ES/País Vasco metal for a financial contribution from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), following the displacement of 491 workers in the NUTS 2 region of País Vasco (ES21) in Spain, within a reference period for the application from 2 June 2020 to 2 December 2020;

C. whereas the application relates to a total of 491 displaced workers whose activity has ceased, out of which 192 occurred in the course of collective redundancies that were notified to the authorities in six companies ([4]);

D. whereas the application is based on the intervention criteria of Article 4(2), point (b), of the EGF Regulation, which requires the cessation of activity of at least 200 displaced workers over a reference period of six months in enterprises operating in the same economic sector defined at NACE Revision 2 division and located in one region or two contiguous regions defined at NUTS 2 level in a Member State;

([1]) OJ L 153, 3.5.2021, p. 48.
([2]) OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 11.
([3]) OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 28.
([4]) Auxiliar Troquelería SL, Calderería del Oria, Matricería Deusto, Mecanizados de la Industria Vasca SLU, Taller Mecanizado Pablo López Lacalle SL, Tratamientos Superficiales Iontech SA.

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E. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic, the strict lockdown measures implemented in Q2 2020 in Spain and the subsequent shortages of supplies and raw materials have adversely affected the metal sector in the country;

F. whereas in the Basque region, the fabricated metal products sector represents 27,4 % of the gross value added of the industry ([5]), while the EU-28 average is 18,8 % ([6]);

G. whereas in 2020 (year on year variation), production in Spain fell by more than 50 % in 18 % of the metal enterprises, turnover fell by more than 50 % in 16 % of the businesses and a third of metal enterprises experienced a decrease between 30 % and 50 % of both production and turnover ([7]);

H. whereas, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social and economic consequences, the Commission reinforced and underlined the role of the EGF as an emergency tool ([8]) and allowed for cases directly linked to the pandemic to be financed from the EGF;

I. whereas Spain reports on its compliance with the recommendations set out in the EU Quality Framework for anticipation of change and restructuring ([9]) and highlights the key concepts of the Basque Vocational Training Plan, Basque Employment Strategy and the Green jobs programme;

1. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in Article 4(2), point (b), of the EGF Regulation are met and that Spain is entitled to a financial contribution of EUR 1 214 607 under that Regulation, which represents 85 % of the total cost of EUR 1 428 950, comprising expenditure for personalised services of EUR 1 384 950 and expenditure for implementing the EGF ([10]) of EUR 44 000;

2. Notes that the Spanish authorities submitted the application on 25 June 2021, and that the Commission finalised its assessment on 7 October 2021 and notified it to Parliament on the same day;

3. Notes that the application relates in total to 491 displaced workers whose activity has ceased, out of which 192 occurred in the course of collective redundancies notified to the authorities in six companies ([11]); further notes that Spain expects that 300 out of the total eligible beneficiaries will participate in the measures (targeted beneficiaries);

4. Recalls that the social impacts of the redundancies are expected to be important for workers, as well as the entire Basque region, where the number of unemployed persons increased by 25 % between March and August 2020 ([12]), and where long-term unemployment represented 55,6 % of total unemployment in May 2021 (3,6 percentage points higher than in January 2021) and unemployed persons with basic education or less represented 60,8 %; recalls also that the wage gap between men and women is 22,6 % and the temporary employment rate is 25,8 % in the Basque region, 11.6 percentage points above the Union average, which is 14,2 %;

5. Points out that most of the displaced workers are in the second half of their professional career and have a low level of formal qualification;

6. Notes that Spain started providing personalised services to the targeted beneficiaries on 11 June 2021 and that the period of eligibility for a financial contribution from the EGF will therefore be from 11 June 2021 until 24 months after the date of the entry into force of the Financing Decision;

([5]) https://es.statista.com/estadisticas/1220166/porcentaje-del-vab-total-en-espana-por-sector/
([6]) https://www.eustat.eus/elementos/El-32-del-VAB-industrial-esta-generado-por-sectores-de-nivel-tecnologico-alto-o-medio-alto-en-2019/not0018911_c.html
([7]) Report on the economic impact of COVID-19 on the metal sector. October 2020- https://atra.gal/files/noticias/Archivos_3680.pdf
([8]) COM(2020)0442.
([9]) COM(2013)0882.
([10]) In accordance with Article 7(5) of the EGF Regulation.
([11]) Auxiliar Troquelería SL, Calderería del Oria, Matricería Deusto, Mecanizados de la Industria Vasca SLU, Taller Mecanizado Pablo López Lacalle SL, Tratamientos Superficiales Iontech SA.
([12]) Avance de los datos del mercado laboral del año 2020 (labor market data for 2020).

7. Recalls that personalised services provided to the displaced workers and self-employed persons following the decision consist of the following actions: profiling sessions, occupational guidance, job-search assistance, support and/or contribution to business creation, re-skilling, up-skilling and on-the-job training, as well as participation allowances; the measures were planned to be in line with the Spanish circular economy strategy and the training contributes to boost the process of digital transformation in the industry;

8. Notes that Spain started incurring administrative expenditure to implement the EGF on 1 February 2021 and that expenditure on preparatory, management, information and publicity, control and reporting activities will therefore be eligible for a financial contribution from the EGF from 1 February 2021 until 31 months after the date of the entry into force of the Financing Decision;

9. Welcomes that the co-ordinated package of personalised services was drawn up by Spain in consultation with the social partners ([13]); the involvement of social partners was ensured by their representation in Lanbide's governance board, which is made up of representatives of the regional government, trade unions and employer organisations;

10. Welcomes that the coordinated package of personalised services will contribute to the dissemination of horizontal skills required in the digital industrial age as well as in a resource-efficient economy, in line with Article 7(2) of the EGF Regulation;

11. Recalls that the proposed actions constitute active labour market measures within the eligible actions set out in Article 7 of the EGF Regulation and do not substitute passive social protection measures;

12. Stresses that the Spanish authorities have confirmed that the eligible actions do not receive assistance from other Union funds or financial instruments;

13. Takes note of the notification of Spain that the financial contribution will be managed and controlled by the same bodies that manage and control the European Social Fund Plus;

14. Reiterates that assistance from the EGF must not replace actions which are the responsibility of companies, by virtue of national law or collective agreements, or any allowances or rights of the recipients of the EGF allocation to ensure full additionality of the allocation;

15. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;

16. 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*;

17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution, including its annex, to the Council and the Commission.

([13]) The application was approved by Lanbide, the Basque public employment service (social partners are part of the governance board), on 2 July 2021. Meetings were also held on 19 January and 2 February 2021 with Federación Vizcaína de Empresas del Metal, (federation of metal enterprises of Biscay), Asociación de Empresas de Guipúzcoa — ADEGI (Business association of Gupúzcoa) and SEA-Empresas Alavesas (business associations of Alava).

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ANNEX

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers following an application from Spain — EGF/2021/001 ES/País Vasco metal

(The text of this annex is not reproduced here since it corresponds to the final act, Decision (EU) 2021/2159.)