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Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2022/001 FR/Air France — France

European Parliament resolution of 23 June 2022 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 France — EGF/2022/001 FR/Air France (COM(2022)0201 — C9-0170/2022 — 2022/0143(BUD))

(2023/C 32/19)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2022)0201 — C9-0170/2022),

— 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]) ('MFF Regulation'), and in particular Article 8 thereof,

— having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council and the 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 letters from the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and from the Committee on Regional Development,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A9-0183/2022),

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 while making mobility accessible to all, or as a consequence of digitisation or automation;

B. whereas the Union has extended the scope of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) to provide financial support in case of any major restructuring event, and thus covering economic effects of the coronavirus crisis;

C. whereas France submitted application EGF/2022/001 FR/Air France for a financial contribution from the EGF, following 282 displacements in the economic sector classified under the NACE Revision 2 division 33 (Repair and installation of machinery and equipment) and 51 (Air transport) mainly 12 French NUTS level 2 regions in mainland France ([4]) and four French NUTS level 2 regions overseas ([5]), within a reference period for the application from 1 July 2021 to 1 November 2021;

([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]) Île-de-France (FR10), Nord Pas de Calais (FRE1), Alsace (FRF1), Pays de la Loire (FRG0), Bretagne (FRH0), Aquitaine (FRI1), Languedoc Roussillon (FRJ1), Midi Pyrénées (FRJ2), Auvergne (FRK1), Rhône Alpes (FRK2), Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur (FRL0) and Corse (FRM0).
([5]) Guadeloupe (FRY1), Martinique (FRY2), Guyane (FRY3) and La Réunion (FRY4).

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D. whereas the application relates to 282 displaced workers whose activity in the company Air France and two of its subsidiaries ([6]) has ceased during the reference period, while 1 298 workers were displaced before or after the reference period as a consequence of the same events that triggered the cessations of activity of the displaced workers during the reference period and all 1 580 workers will thus be considered eligible beneficiaries;

E. whereas the application is based on the intervention criteria of Article 4(2), point (a), of the EGF Regulation, which requires the cessation of activity of at least 200 displaced workers over a reference period of four months in an enterprise in a Member State, including workers displaced in suppliers and downstream producers and/or self-employed persons whose activity has ceased;

F. whereas Air France was severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, which caused a sharp decline in income and traffic;

G. whereas the restructuring of Air France regional subsidiaries into Hop raised social concerns even before the COVID-19 crisis started, and during the pandemic, Air France decided to sharply reduce the capacity of Hop both in terms of staff and aircrafts;

H. whereas French authorities have implemented various measures, such as State-guaranteed loans, to support Air France, but the company still had to undertake additional measures to face the crisis, including downsizing operations, redefining the domestic network, and simplifying support functions, which led to reductions in staff;

I. whereas the Commission declared that the health crisis resulted in an economic crisis, set out a recovery plan for the economy and underlined the role of the EGF as an emergency tool ([7]);

J. whereas airline companies in Europe have faced severe problems and challenges due to global competition and whereas measures are needed to strengthen the protection of the rights of airline workers at Union level and make sure that this important sector stays competitive and decent workplaces are kept within the Union;

K. whereas the EGF shall not exceed a maximum annual amount of EUR 186 million (in 2018 prices), as laid down in Article 8 of the MFF Regulation;

L. whereas the Union plays an important role in providing the necessary solidarity through financial contributions from the EGF, which aims to reintegrate beneficiaries rapidly into decent and sustainable employment within or outside their initial sector of activity, while preparing them for a greener and more digital European economy;

1. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in Article 4(2), point (a), of the EGF Regulation are met and that France is entitled to a financial contribution of EUR 17 742 607 under that Regulation, which represents 85 % of the total cost of EUR 20 873 656, comprising only expenditure for personalised services;

2. Notes that the French authorities submitted the application on 21 January 2022, and that the Commission finalised its assessment on 10 May 2022 and notified it to Parliament on the same day;

3. Notes that the application relates in total to 1 580 displaced workers whose activity has ceased; welcomes the fact that France expects that all of the eligible beneficiaries will participate in the measures (targeted beneficiaries);

4. Recalls that the social impacts of the redundancies are expected to be important for France, in particular in the region Île-de-France, where 57 % of the displacements took place; notes that the French labour administration specified that Air France's restructuring affected the employment balance in the territories concerned; emphasizes that regions and economic sectors facing difficulties require an integrated and common European response to support their resilience;

([6]) Hop and Hop Training.
([7]) COM(2020)0442.

5. Points out that 56 % of the displaced workers are women and 30,8 % are over 54 years old; further notes that 96 of the displaced workers have disabilities;

6. Notes that France started providing personalised services to the targeted beneficiaries on 1 February 2021 and that the period of eligibility for a financial contribution from the EGF will therefore be from 1 February 2021 until 24 months after the date of the entry into force of the financing decision;

7. Recalls that personalised services to be provided to the workers consist of the following actions: advisory services and vocational guidance, training, including horizontal competencies, re-skilling, up-skilling, internships, and vocational training, contribution to business creation, hiring benefits, quick reemployment allowance, salary top-ups as well as intensive job-search assistance; stresses the importance of quickly providing job opportunities in the Union to dismissed qualified workers;

8. Reiterates in that context the important role the Union should play in making available the necessary qualifications for the just and digital transitions in line with the European Green Deal and major European policy goals; supports strongly that the EGF continues to show solidarity with persons affected and maintains the focus on the impact of restructuring on workers in the rest of the current MFF period; calls for future applications to maximise policy coherence;

9. Welcomes the fact that the co-ordinated package of personalised services was drawn up by France in consultation with staff and union representatives ([8]);

10. Welcomes the fact that Air France has set up an extensive package of active labour market measures aimed at assisting the workers dismissed, in line with its legal obligation;

11. Points out that Air France regularly offers trainings for its staff in which attention is paid to digital skills and skills required in a resource-efficient economy, as part of it 'Skills Development Plan' and welcomes that those trainings remain available to the displaced workers for the duration of their participation in the EGF measures; stresses the importance of preparing workers for a green and digital Union economy and working towards the twin transitions;

12. Notes that the digital and green transformation will also have an effect on the labour market especially in the aviation sector; therefore special attention should be paid to qualified education, including vocational training and promoting the so-called dual apprenticeship system, which has proven to be effective in some member states;

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

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 displaced workers, 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;

([8]) SNPNC, UNAC, UNSA-PNC, CFDT, FO, and CFE/CGC.

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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 France

(EGF/2022/001 FR/Air France)

(The text of this annex is not reproduced here since it corresponds to the final act, Decision (EU) 2022/1164.)