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Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2017/002 FI/ MICROSOFT 2

European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2017 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (application from Finland — EGF/2017/002 FI Microsoft 2) (COM(2017)0322 — C8-0193/2017 — 2017/2098(BUD))

(2018/C 337/34)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2017)0322 — C8-0193/2017),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (2014-2020) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 ([1]) (EGF Regulation),

— having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 ([2]), 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 management ([3]) (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 (A8-0278/2017),

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 or of the global financial and economic crisis 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;

C. whereas Finland submitted application EGF/2017/002 FI/Microsoft 2 for a financial contribution from the EGF under the intervention criteria of point (a) of Article 4(1) of the EGF Regulation following 1 248 redundancies in Microsoft Mobile Oy and 11 suppliers and downstream producers in Finland operating in the economic sector classified under the NACE Revision 2 Division 62 (Computer programming, consultancy and other activities);

1. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in point (a) of Article 4(1) of the EGF Regulation are met and that Finland is entitled to a financial contribution of EUR 3 520 080 under that Regulation, which represents 60 % of the total cost of EUR 5 559 300;

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 855.
([2]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.
([3]) OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

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2. Notes that Finland submitted the application on 1 February 2017, and that, following additional information provided by Finland, its assessment was finalised by the Commission on 21 June 2017;

3. Recalls that Microsoft acquired the mobile phone business of Nokia and that Microsoft Mobile Oy was established in 2014; notes that approximately 4 700 Nokia employees were transferred to Microsoft Mobile Oy in Finland;

4. Notes that the main reason for the redundancies at Microsoft Mobile Oy is the worldwide competition in the mobile phone sector and the consequent loss of market share by Microsoft Mobile Oy and its Windows-based operating system; notes that the decrease happened despite the fact that Microsoft Mobile Oy launched new mobile devices and invested into design, components and marketing;

5. Acknowledges, with regret, the challenges faced by EU mobile phone manufacturers; considers that appropriate support needs to be offered so that the affected workers can retrain so as to be better placed to find jobs in related or expanding industrial sectors;

6. Concludes that the redundancies are linked to the shift of manufacturing of mobile devices to lower wage countries; notes that the winners in the smartphone manufacture competition have been the US and Asia-based manufacturers using Android or iOS operating system;

7. Recognises that the affected regions of Helsinki-Uusimaa, Länsi-Suomi and Etelä-Suomi have already experienced extensive redundancies by firms in the electronics and software sectors and that Länsi-Suomi and Etelä-Suomi have high regional unemployment rates (14,6 % and 17,5 % of the labour force respectively); notes that 1 000 out of 1 248 redundant workers eligible for the EGF contribution are expected to participate in the measures;

8. Notes that 92,5 % of the targeted beneficiaries are 30-54 years old and that many of the redundant workers are highly educated; notes that unemployment rates of highly educated people have increased considerably in all three regions; is concerned about the already difficult unemployment situation of highly skilled and educated people whose employment prospects would otherwise be traditionally good;

9. Notes that Finland is planning six types of measures: (i) coaching measures and other preparatory measures, (ii) employment and business services, (iii) training, (iv) start-up grants, (v) pay subsidy, and (vi) allowances for travel and accommodation; notes that those actions constitute active labour market measures; notes that sufficient funds are allocated to control and reporting;

10. Notes that the income support measures correspond to 26,74 % of the overall package of personalised measures, below the maximum 35 % set out in the EGF Regulation, and that these actions are conditional on the active participation of the targeted beneficiaries in job-search or training activities;

11. Highlights the importance of active labour market measures supported by the EGF; notes that in previous EGF cases providing face-to-face services for redundant workers has proven to be extremely useful;

12. Welcomes the use of the EURES network service to pass foreign job advertisements to Finnish jobseekers; welcomes the fact that the Finnish authorities are encouraging the redundant workers to fully benefit from their right to free movement;

13. Understands that the EGF-funded training measures will be complementary to those financed by a fund set up by the company to help former employees start small businesses in the IT and other sectors; welcomes this initiative;

14. Welcomes the fact that the Finnish authorities started providing the personalised services to the targeted beneficiaries on 12 July 2016, well ahead of the application for the EGF support for the proposed coordinated package;

15. Welcomes the fact that consultations have taken place with stakeholders including representatives of the Centres for Economic Development ('ELY centres'), the Employment and Economic Development ('TE') offices of the regions concerned, Microsoft, the Technology Industries of Finland, Trade Union Pro, the Union of Professional Engineers in Finland and the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation;

16. Recalls that the design of the coordinated package of personalised services supported by the EGF should anticipate future labour market perspectives and required skills and should be compatible with the shift towards a resource-efficient and sustainable economy;

17. Recognises that the current application is a continuation of a series of previous applications from Finland following the decline of Nokia (EGF/2007/003 FI/Perlos, EGF/2012/006 FI/Nokia Salo, EGF/2013/001 FI/Nokia, EGF/2015/001 FI/Broadcom, EGF/2015/005 FI/Computer Programming, EGF/2016/001 FI/Microsoft and EGF/2016/008 FI/Nokia Network Systems);

18. Notes that there is an on-going EGF intervention (EGF/2016/001 FI/Microsoft) targeted to support the employees made redundant from Microsoft earlier; stresses that the targeted beneficiaries of this proposal are separate from the beneficiaries of that case;

19. Notes that the Finnish authorities have provided assurances that the proposed actions will not receive financial support from other Union funds or financial instruments, that any double financing will be prevented and that they will be complementary with actions funded by the Structural Funds;

20. 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;

21. 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 of measures for restructuring companies or sectors; notes that Finland has confirmed that the EGF contribution will indeed not replace them;

22. Asks the Commission to ensure public access to the documents related to EGF cases;

23. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;

24. 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*;

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

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ANNEX

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund following an application from Finland — EGF/2017/002 FI/Microsoft 2

(The text of this annex is not reproduced here since it corresponds to the final act, Decision (EU) 2017/1600.)