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# Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund — application EGF/2022/002 BE/TNT — Belgium

**European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2023 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 Belgium — EGF/2022/002 BE/TNT (COM(2023)0069 — C9-0018/2023 — 2023/0031(BUD))**

(C/2023/413)

*The European Parliament*,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2023)0069 — C9-0018/2023),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/691of 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 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]) ('IIA of 16 December 2020'), and in particular point 9 thereof,

— having regard to the trilogue procedure provided for in point 9 of the IIA of 16 December 2020,

— 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 (A9-0043/2023),

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; whereas this assistance is made through a financial support given to workers and the companies for which they worked;

B. whereas Belgium submitted application EGF/2022/002 BE/TNT for a financial contribution from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), following 548 redundancies ([4]) in the economic sector classified under the NACE Revision 2 division 52 (Warehousing and support activities for transportation) in the province of Liège, within a reference period for the application from 27 March 2022 to 27 July 2022;

C. whereas the application relates to 548 workers made redundant in the company TNT Express Worldwide (Euro Hub) SRL in Belgium (TNT Belgium); whereas the activity of 11 workers ceased between the end of the reference period and the day before the adoption of the proposal by the Commission and those workers will also be eligible for support from the EGF;

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

E. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine have reduced economic competitiveness and have a negative impact on economic growth in Belgium;

([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]) Within the meaning of Article 3 of the EGF Regulation.

F. whereas TNT Belgium had to downsize its workforce in reaction the decision to use Liège airport as a secondary hub, with links to only some European airports, while Paris-Charles de Gaulle became the primary hub of its parent company FedEx, which has resulted in a decreased workload and a reduced number of flights at Liège airport; whereas the changes aimed to strengthen FedEx's position within its highly competitive sector at European and national level.;

G. whereas TNT Belgium announced on 19 January 2021 its intention to dismiss 671 workers and to modify the contracts of another 861 workers; whereas the company, in compliance with the Belgian law on collective redundancies, informed and consulted workers' representatives with a view to exploring any possibility of avoiding or reducing the number of redundancies and mitigating the consequences of job loss; whereas that mandatory procedure has led to a reduction in the number of redundancies and allowed workers to apply for voluntary dismissal;

H. whereas the Union plays an important role in providing the necessary solidarity with workers who lose their jobs in large-scale restructuring events through financial contributions from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) and aims to rapidly reintegrate beneficiaries, irrespective of their nationality, into decent and sustainable employment within or outside their initial sector of activity, while preparing them for a greener and more digital European economy;

I. 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;

1. Agrees with the Commission that the conditions set out in Article 4(2), point (a), of the EGF Regulation are met and that Belgium is entitled to a financial contribution of EUR 1 956 397 under that Regulation, which represents 85 % of the total cost of EUR 2 301 644, comprising expenditure for personalised services of EUR 2 270 644 and expenditure for preparatory, management, information and publicity, control and reporting activities of EUR 31 000;

2. Notes that the Belgian authorities submitted the application on 18 October 2022, and that, following the provision of additional information by Belgium, the Commission finalised its assessment on 8 February 2023 and notified it to Parliament on the same day;

3. Notes that the application relates to 548 workers made redundant in the company TNT Belgium; notes further that 559 workers will be eligible beneficiaries in total, as the EGF should also support 11 displaced workers whose activity ceased between the end of the reference period and the day before the adoption of the proposal by the Commission; welcomes the fact that all the redundant workers are expected to participate in the measures;

4. Points out that a large proportion of the former workforce of TNT Belgium are disadvantaged groups, as 60 % of the displaced workers held low-qualified jobs and almost half of them (47 %) are over 50 years old; recalls that the unemployment rate in Wallonia at 8,7 % is 2,8 % higher compared to the national level and that the employment market in the province of Liège, like that of Hainaut, is particularly disadvantaged compared to other provinces in Wallonia;

5. Notes that Belgium started providing personalised services to the targeted beneficiaries on 1 April 2022 and that the period of eligibility for a financial contribution from the EGF will therefore be from 1 April 2022 until 24 months after the date of the entry into force of the financing decision;

6. Recalls that personalised services to be provided to the workers and self-employed persons consist of the following actions: information, job-search assistance, including identifying job perspectives in other regions of the Member State concerned or in other Member States, occupational guidance and outplacement assistance, trainings, (inter alia horizontal competencies, reskilling, upskilling and internships), retraining and vocational training, and support towards and contribution to business creation, as well as incentives and allowances; welcomes the fact that specialised professionals will provide particular assistance to vulnerable people, irrespective of their nationality, in situations of psychological distress, indebtedness, or recognised disabilities;

7. Welcomes the inclusion of a module on the circular economy, which was developed for former Swissport workers (EGF/2020/005 BE/Swissport) as part of the standard training offer by the Regional Public Employment and Vocational Training Service (Forem), which will be co-financed by the ESF+; reiterates in this context the important role the Union should play in providing the necessary qualifications for the just transformation in line with the European Green Deal; strongly supports the fact that between 2021 and 2027 the EGF will continue to show solidarity with all persons affected, without discrimination and maintain the focus on the impact of restructuring on workers, calls for future applications to maximise policy coherence;

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

9. Notes that Belgium started incurring administrative expenditure to implement the EGF on 19 January 2021 and that expenditure for preparatory, management, information and publicity, control and reporting activities shall therefore be eligible for a financial contribution from the EGF from 19 January 2021 until 31 months after the date of the entry into force of the Financing Decision;

10. Welcomes the fact that the co-ordinated package of personalised services was drawn up by Belgium in consultation with targeted beneficiaries' representatives, including trade unions (FGTB ([5]) and CSC ([6])) and social counsellors who accompanied the workers, to better understand workers' retraining needs after their dismissal; notes the essential role of Belgian trade unions during the negotiations on the redundancy process; recalls the importance of reinforcing the presence of workers' representatives in the workplace;

11. Stresses that the Belgian authorities have confirmed that the eligible actions do not receive assistance from other Union funds or financial instruments, and that the principles of equality of treatment and non-discrimination will be respected in the access to the proposed actions and their implementation;

12. 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;

13. Approves the decision annexed to this resolution;

14. 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*;

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

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([5]) Fédération générale du travail de Belgique.
([6]) Confédération des syndicats chrétiens.

**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 Belgium — EGF/2022/002 BE/TNT**

*(The text of this annex is not reproduced here since it corresponds to the final act, Decision (EU) 2023/1430.)*