Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2025/008 BE /Liberty – Belgium

2026/0066(BUD) - 29/04/2026 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted by 586 votes to 48, with 16 abstentions, a resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) for workers made redundant following a request from Belgium - EGF/2025/008/BE/Liberty.

As a reminder, the Belgian authorities submitted the application on 13 November 2025, and following the receipt of additional information from Belgium, the Commission finalised its assessment and notified it to Parliament on 2 March 2026.

Parliament approved the proposal for a decision to mobilise the EGF to provide a financial contribution of **EUR 2 033 869** in commitment and payment appropriations from the EU budget for the financial year 2026, in response to the request submitted by Belgium following 507 redundancies in Liberty Galai Belgian Branch (Liberty) (manufacture of basic metals).

The contribution represents **85%** of the total cost of EUR 2 392 788, comprising expenditure for personalised services of EUR 2 358 922 and expenditure for preparatory, management, information and publicity, control and reporting activities of EUR 33 866.

Events leading to redundancies

Liberty has faced years of financial difficulties prior to the bankruptcy declaration due to adverse steel market conditions, COVID-19-related supply chain disruptions, and high energy prices following Russia’s war of aggression against

Ukraine combined with the Union’s dependence on imported fossil fuels and insufficient deployment of cheaper energy sources. Liberty Steel Liège’s galvanizing lines have been idle since December 2021, mainly because of a lack of raw materials, triggering a restructuring operation that led to its legal transfer to Liberty Galai in 2023. Parliament regrets that production activity did not resume despite the takeover and culminated in bankruptcy.

The difficulties faced by Liberty Steel are also linked to company-specific factors following its acquisition from ArcelorMittal by the GFG Alliance. Serious concerns were expressed about the financial sustainability of the business model and the failure to fulfil investment commitments, which contributed to the deterioration of the plant’s economic situation and resulting redundancies.

Beneficiaries

The application relates to 507 targeted beneficiaries, who were made redundant by the company Liberty. Liberty’s bankruptcy represents a major social shock for Wallonia, a region whose labour market has already been weakened by other restructuring events. The steel sector remains an important economic sector for Belgium, with the ratio of steel jobs per inhabitant remaining high. Moreover, 1 in 4 registered job seekers in Wallonia are over the age of 50 and face greater barriers to re-entering the labour market. 69 % of the workers made redundant have a low level of education.

Personalised services

The personalised services to be provided to workers include the following measures: (i) outplacement and vocational guidance; (ii) training, retraining and vocational training, including IT skills; (iii) support towards business creations; (iv) contribution to business start-up; (v) incentives and other allowances.

Belgium started providing personalised services to the targeted beneficiaries on 1 June 2025 and the period of eligibility for a financial contribution from the EGF will be from that date until 24 months after the date of the entry into force of the financing decision.

Lastly, Parliament noted that the Belgian authorities provided assurance that the principles of equality of treatment and non-discrimination will be respected in the access to the proposed actions and their implementation, and that any double financing will be prevented. Assistance from the EGF must not replace actions that are the responsibility of public authorities or companies under national law or collective agreements.