Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: redundancies in the manufacture of natural stone products in Spain

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The Committee on Budgets adopted the report drafted by Barbara MATERA (EPP, IT) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for an amount of **EUR 1 422 805** in commitment and payment appropriations in respect of redundancies in the manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products (natural stone) in Spain.

Members recall that the European Union has set up the appropriate legislative and budgetary instruments to provide additional support to workers who are suffering from the consequences of major structural changes in world trade patterns and to assist their reintegration into the labour market. Given that Spain has requested assistance in respect of cases concerning 300 redundancies in 66 enterprises operating in the NACE Revision 2 Division 23 (Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products) in the NUTS II region of Comunidad Valenciana, and that this application fulfils the eligibility criteria set up by the EGF Regulation, Members request the institutions involved to make the necessary efforts to accelerate the mobilisation of the EGF for the requested amount.

Members recall the institutions' commitment to ensuring a smooth and rapid procedure for the adoption of the decisions on the mobilisation of the EGF, providing one-off, time-limited individual support geared to helping workers who have suffered redundancies as a result of globalisation and the financial and economic crisis.

They also recall that:

- assistance from the EGF must not replace actions which are the responsibility of companies by virtue of national law or collective agreements, nor measures restructuring companies or sectors;
- the information provided by the Commission on the coordinated package of personalised services to be funded from the EGF includes detailed information on the complementarity with actions funded by the Structural Funds (the committee reiterates its call to present a comparative evaluation of these data in the Commission annual reports as well);
- the functioning and the added value of the EGF should be evaluated in the context of the general assessment of the programmes and various other instruments created by the IIA of 17 May 2006 within the process of the 2007-2013 Multiannual Financial Framework mid-term review.

In parallel, Members welcome the fact that, in the context of mobilising the EGF, **an alternative source of payment appropriations to unused European Social Fund has been proposed by the Commission**, following the frequent reminders by the European Parliament that the EGF was created as a separate specific instrument with its own objectives and deadlines and that appropriate budget lines for transfers must therefore be identified.

They also note that, in order to mobilise the EGF for this case, payment appropriations will be transferred from a budget line dedicated to the support of SMEs and innovation (even if they regret the severe shortcomings of the European Commission when implementing the framework programmes on competitiveness and innovation, particularly during an economic crisis which should significantly increase the need for such support).

Lastly, Members welcome the new format of the Commission's proposal, which presents in its explanatory memorandum clear and detailed information on the application, analyses the eligibility criteria and explains the reasons which led to its approval, which is in line with Parliament's requests.