Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: redundancies in the retail sector in Greece

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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 2 918 500** in commitment and payment appropriations in respect of redundancies in the retail sector in Greece.

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 Greece has requested assistance in respect of a case concerning 642 redundancies, all targeted for assistance, in two enterprises in the retail sector ('supermarket and supplier') operating in the regions of Central Macedonia and Attica where the greatest number of ALDI stores was located and that smaller numbers of ALDI redundancies also occurred in other Greek regions, such as Eastern Macedonia-Thrace, Western Macedonia, Epirus, Western Greece, Mainland Greece and Peloponnese and that all 642 redundant workers are targeted for EGF assistance, Members request the institutions involved to make the necessary efforts to accelerate the mobilisation of the EGF for the requested amount. They appreciate in this sense the improved procedure put in place by the Commission, following the Parliament's request for accelerating the release of grants. They hope that further improvements in the procedure will be reached in the framework of the upcoming reviews of the EGF.

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 on the coordinated package of personalised services to be funded from the EGF includes information on the complementarity with actions funded by the Structural Funds.

Members welcome the fact that following repeated requests from the Parliament, for the first time the 2011 budget shows payment appropriations of EUR 47 608 950 on the EGF budget line 04 05 01. This dedicated allocation will avoid transfers from other budget lines, as happened in the past, which could be detrimental to the achievement of the various policies objectives.

Lastly, they welcome the foreseen reinforcement of the EGF budget line 04.05.01. by EUR 50 million through Amending Budget 3/2011, which will be used to cover the amount needed for the present application.