



## Budgets Committee approves €1.6 million EU aid to redundant Spanish shoemakers

Committees: Committee on Budgets

**EU aid totalling €1.6 million to help redundant Spanish shoemakers to retrain and find new jobs was approved by the Budgets Committee on Thursday. The aid is to come from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), but the decision must first be endorsed by EU Member States and the European Parliament as a whole.**

The committee approved the EFG aid with 31 votes in favour, 4 against and no abstentions.

Spain applied for the aid in December 2011, for workers in the Valencia region made redundant due to globalisation. The aid, totalling €1,631,565, is to help 876 former employees of 146 footwear manufacturing firms. The Spanish authorities are to contribute a further €1 million.

Growing competition from shoe manufacturers in third countries such as China and India, led to a 16.4% decline in EU footwear exports between 2006 and 2009. In Spain, the number of footwear manufacturers fell by 36% between 2006 and 2010, resulting in over ten and a half thousand workers job losses.

Although the Spanish firms took measures to safeguard their industry, when the economic recession hit, they lacked the financial flexibility needed to cope with the fall in exports. In the Valencia region, 16.64% of footwear manufacturers ceased trading.

The EGF funds will help the 876 workers to find new jobs, through measures such as job search assistance, training, vocational qualifications and support to set up businesses.

The Valencia region was especially hard hit by the recession. In March 2012, another €1.6 million in EGF aid was approved to help redundant construction workers there to find new jobs.

EGF aid applications are still in the pipeline for the Spanish regions of Aragón, Castilla y León and Castilla La Mancha, País Vasco and Galicia.

### Next steps

The Council is expected to approve the EGF aid for former footwear workers on 7 June and the final decision is expected at Parliament's 11-14 June plenary session.

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# Press release

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