

Resolution on social and employment aspects of restructuring processes: the need to protect jobs and workers' rights

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on social and employment aspects of restructuring processes: the need to protect jobs and workers' rights.

Parliament underlined the principles of the **European Pillar of Social Rights** and, in particular, principle 5 on secure and adaptable employment, principle 7 on information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals and principle 8 on social dialogue and involvement of workers. It stressed the urgent need for an **ambitious competitive European industrial policy** with significant investment that will support the services of general interest and innovation and strengthen social progress and meet climate targets. This policy should be combined with resilient and strong national public services, such as access to social protection, decent and affordable housing and sustainable transport.

Members welcomed the establishment of a **European Competitiveness Fund**, as envisaged by the President of the European Commission and reiterated its call for the economic governance framework to be strengthened by a **common investment instrument at EU level** in order to achieve the EU's current and future priorities, including the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Commission and the Council are called on to reinforce the European instrument for temporary support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency instrument (**SURE**) to support short-time work schemes, workers' income and workers who would be temporarily laid off in the context of the green transition.

The delivery of a European industrial policy for quality jobs requires the full involvement of **social partners** and needs to be implemented through social dialogue and collective bargaining. The Commission is called on to present an **ambitious quality jobs roadmap** and to ensure the full involvement and consultation of social partners in the design and implementation of the upcoming European clean industrial deal.

Concerning **trade policies**, Members stressed that future trade agreements must include labour clauses in line with ILO standards to ensure that global trade protects workers and SMEs. In the context of the forthcoming revision of the **European Public Procurement Directive**, the Commission is urged to further promote collective bargaining and the use of the social clause, and preferential treatment for companies whose workers are covered by collective agreements. Contracting authorities must exclude from public tenders economic operators that have engaged in criminal activities. Parliament stressed that public procurement should strategically strengthen corporate social responsibility.

Members considered that the EU should invest in vital sectors and essential products to strengthen the **EU's strategic autonomy**, as well as the **digital and green transitions**, such as zero-emission transport, renewable energy, clean tech and digital technologies, including artificial intelligence. These investments must fully respect existing legislation on workers' rights and strengthen community development.

The resolution underlined that **social dialogue** in the anticipation and management of these processes is essential to safeguard and create quality jobs. Restructuring processes must respect fundamental workers' rights, such as the right of information and consultation. **Trade unions** should be equipped with sufficient resources and capacity to assess a company's decision to restructure. Members called for further safeguards to be put in place to ensure collective bargaining and to prevent the misuse of restructuring

processes as a means to forego employers' obligations. In addition, penalties should be imposed in instances of infringements and non-compliance.

Member States are urged to ensure **quality upskilling or reskilling**, life-long learning, employee training and career development support. Upskilling and reskilling should be prioritised as far as possible before job cuts are considered.

Members stressed that it is essential to ensure **equal treatment** and equal access to economic opportunities for women, paying attention to the most vulnerable (women with disabilities, single mothers, women belonging to minorities and migrant women).

The Commission is called on to:

- put in place mechanisms that help to **avoid forced redundancies**, such as temporary support programmes to protect employment during transitions, avoiding the loss of strategic industrial capacity and skilled workforces;
- ensure that the **clean industrial deal** should focus on strategic industries, avoiding the delocalisation of production and loss of jobs, while strengthening the European social model and social justice;
- consider the establishment of a **framework directive** to address the challenges and complexities associated with employers' obligations in subcontracting chains and labour intermediaries in Europe to ensure decent working conditions and the respect of worker's rights and to end abusive subcontracting;
- support the social partners in their efforts to include issues related to the **green transition** in collective bargaining at the appropriate levels.