

"It's time for action not more procrastinating on restructuring" SAYS ETUC (19.1.12)

Yesterday, ten years after the first social partner consultation, the European Commission published a new green paper on restructuring and anticipation. After a decade of consultations (in 2002 and 2005), European projects and hand-wringing at the sight of large scale uncoordinated restructuring, the Green Paper effectively puts 'old wine into new bottles' by returning to a full-scale public consultation rather than addressing concrete steps for EU action on anticipation and restructuring, according to European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

"As the very systems cushioning workers from the brutal impact of economic change are being undermined through austerity and deregulation, worker representatives are increasingly considered only as a means of ensuring the acceptance of change. On the contrary, it is only through consistent and stronger worker participation that change can be managed in a socially acceptable manner, trust is nurtured and anticipation policies can develop", stressed ETUC Confederal Secretary Judith Kirton-Darling on reading the Commission's consultation. "The rules of financial capitalism are global, yet, the applicable standards on workers' participation in corporate strategy and restructuring are still largely shaped at national level, with a few European tools (information and consultation, European Works Councils etc.)", she reminded.

"With economic forecasts pointing downwards now is not the time for the Commission to sit on its hands and intensify the pain for workers", stated Judith Kirton-Darling. "Workers will not be taken in by this charade. We demand concrete anticipation measures today not in another 10 years".

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 84 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.
