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Plenary sitting

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<TitreType>MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION</TitreType>

<TitreSuite>to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission</TitreSuite>

<TitreRecueil>pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure</TitreRecueil>

<Titre>on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)</Titre>

<DocRef>(2018/2633(RSP))</DocRef>

<RepeatBlock-By><Depute>Patrick Le Hyaric, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Merja Kyllönen, Neoklis Sylikiotis, Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Marina Albiol Guzmán, Paloma López Bermejo, Barbara Spinelli, Younous Omarjee, Ángela Vallina</Depute>

<Commission>{GUE/NGL}on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group</Commission>

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B8‑0158/2018

European Parliament resolution on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

(2018/2633(RSP))

*The European Parliament*,

– having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), in particular Articles 6, 9, 151, 152, 153(1) and (2), 173 and 174 thereof,

– having regard to Article 174 of the TFEU on economic, social and territorial cohesion, in particular in areas affected by industrial transition,

– having regard to the revised European Social Charter,

– having regard to Articles 14, 27 and 30 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,

– having regard to its resolution of 5 October 2016 on the need for a European reindustrialisation policy in light of the recent Caterpillar and Alstom cases[[1]](#footnote-1),

– having regard to its resolution of 14 September 2016 on social dumping in the European Union[[2]](#footnote-2),

– having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Articles 22 and 23 thereof on economic and social rights and the right to work,

– having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2017 on a European Pillar of Social Rights[[3]](#footnote-3),

– having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 7 July 2016 on the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly[[4]](#footnote-4),

– having regard to its resolution of 25 November 2014 on employment and social aspects of the Europe 2020 strategy[[5]](#footnote-5),

– having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2013 with recommendations to the Commission on information and consultation of workers, anticipation and management of restructuring[[6]](#footnote-6),

– having regard to its previous resolutions on the steel industry and on the restructuring, transfer and closure of companies in the EU,

– having regard to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises,

– having regard to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy,

– having regard to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights,

– having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas closures and layoffs are being announced throughout the EU while economies are returning to growth and shareholder values have been maximised; whereas transfers of activities within the Union towards cheaper labour unit-cost locations are still occurring, as in the cases of Carrefour, Embraco, Kingfisher, Castorama and Brico Dépôt, sometimes even calling for active participation by those who are losing their jobs;

B. whereas restructuring of companies, incentivised by the maximisation of profit for the benefit of the shareholders, leads to mass redundancies, often in already economically deprived regions, as in Siemens’ decision to close down facilities in Germany and the Netherlands resulting in the loss of over 4 400 jobs, while the same companies have received subsidies and funds from the respective Member States;

C. whereas the Brazilian multinational Embraco has announced the closure of its branch near Turin in Italy in favour of moving to Slovakia, where it expects to obtain major economic and fiscal advantages by means of state aids and Structural Fund payments; whereas Embraco is not in crisis and its 500 highly specialised workers have been made redundant but not for economic reasons, and are even expected to be the trainers of the Slovak workers;

D. whereas the UK firm Kingfisher has announced the relocation to Poland of the accounting service of its business and the elimination of 446 jobs at its French subsidiaries Castorama and Brico Dépôt; whereas the French employees have been asked to train the Polish colleagues who will replace them before being fired;

E. whereas globalisation has introduced new global chain value production schemes, with fiercer competition between business actors; whereas fair trade in industrial products must respect workers’ rights, environmental rules and other social and fiscal standards;

F. whereas social, environmental, and fiscal dumping cannot be accepted, be it within the EU or in our trade relations with external partners;

G. whereas new models of consumption can lead to massive layoffs in the retail sector, as in the case of Carrefour, or in the field of services, as in the numerous redundancies announced in the banking sector;

H. whereas corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to companies taking responsibility for their impact on society; whereas European enterprises should apply European CSR standards in their organisation of work and decision-making processes;

I. whereas companies involved in restructuring have a responsibility to put social dialogue at the heart of the restructuring processes and should act in a socially responsible manner, as experience has shown that socially and economically sustainable restructuring is never achieved without sufficient social dialogue focused especially on the information, consultation and participation of workers;

J. whereas constant open and fair dialogue with social partners remains key to ensuring smoother production and work transitions, tackling mental and physical wellbeing in the workplace and designing new work relations with employers while respecting and enhancing workers’ rights;

1. Express its strong solidarity with workers who are facing closures and the imposition of work-related mutations and demands that measures be urgently adopted to support them;

2. Deplores the double negative impact of companies’ restructuring plans, namely mass redundancies and waste of public funds; calls on the Member States and the Commission to put in place social obligations with regard to workers’ rights in the case of restructuring when companies are beneficiaries of public funds, and strongly condemns closures and restructuring plans which leave thousands of workers jobless solely in order to maximise capital revenues; further believes that companies should be obliged to return direct and indirect public funding received in the previous two years if they relocate to another country;

3. Recalls that EU Structural Funds may not be used in a way that directly or indirectly supports the relocation of services or production to other Member States;

4. Condemns short-term views prioritising capital returns and dividends to shareholders at unsustainable levels over investment and responsibilities towards workers and local communities;

5. Rejects any notion of competition between workers over labour rights or between enterprises in social, environmental and fiscal matters, and condemns all forms of social and economic dumping;

6. Calls for better enforcement of labour laws within the Member States through labour inspectorates, and for effective measures to enforce labour laws in the context of transnational work patterns, for example by creating a European labour inspectors’ force;

7. Calls on the Commission to come forward with a European framework for insolvency proceedings that puts not only creditors but also workers at the centre of the process, focusing on preserving as many jobs as possible;

8. Calls on the Commission to revise competition policy and state aid rules with a view to facilitating public intervention aimed at maintaining social and regional cohesion, improving labour and environmental standards and addressing public health concerns;

9. Recalls that the first duty of companies towards society is to pay their taxes; calls on the Commission and the Member States to undertake a comprehensive extension of country-by-country reporting and to introduce more stringent information obligations for companies ceasing activities or declaring insolvency in Member States;

10. Urges Member States to recover all resources dedicated to supporting companies in the form of subsidies, tax breaks, land price reductions, etc when a company decides to relocate or close its production plants, and to ensure adequate social protection, working conditions and decent wages, through legislation or collective agreements, as well as effective protection against unfair dismissal;

11. Calls for the strengthening or better implementation of laws on unfair dismissal; stresses that mass redundancies on economic grounds should be prohibited in cases where the company or corporation is economically successful and/or its sole motivation is to increase profits;

12. Calls on the Member States to establish wage floors in the form of national minimum wages, with due respect for national laws and practices, and to avoid wage competition between Member States;

13. Stresses the fundamental role of CSR in ensuring sustainable economic growth both in the EU and around the world; urges the Commission to adopt a new strategy on CSR that establishes stronger reporting and compliance requirements, and urges the Member States to endorse the promotion of CSR;

14. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to introduce mandatory instruments to compel companies to internalise the social costs of their relocation decisions;

15. Calls on the Commission to ensure a new deep and comprehensive European framework encompassing social, environmental and local corporate responsibilities, for enterprises operating in the EU and for Union entities operating outside it;

16. Stresses that EU standards of CSR cannot be met when a company relocates its production without heeding the social consequences of its economic decisions; calls for mandatory instruments to compel companies to internalise the social costs of their relocation decisions;

17. Points out the need to extend the scope of CSR to include new areas such as the organisation of work, equal opportunities and social inclusion, anti-discrimination measures, and the development of lifelong education and training; emphasises that CSR should cover, for example, quality of work, equal pay, gender equality, career prospects and the promotion of innovative projects supporting the shift towards a sustainable economy;

18. Recalls that the potential aid granted by the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) cannot be used to facilitate workers’ departure, and insists that this fund be used to help workers keep their jobs;

19. Calls for the EU and the Member States to ensure that adequate funding is available for training and recovery actions to facilitate critical transition periods in European industries, and insists that the EGF must be used to help workers take over their factories in order to preserve jobs, rather than to facilitate site closures;

20. Calls for the transformation of the EGF into a European Globalisation and Digitalisation Adjustment Fund offering anticipatory training, retraining courses and tailored services to workers who have lost or could lose their jobs owing to workplace mutations;

21. Calls on the Commission to create a European fund for social and environmental development, investing, thanks to bond emissions and ECB credit support, in the transformation of production tools and workers’ skills at European level in order to embrace production and work changes and make them sources of social and environmental progress;

22. Calls on the Commission to withdraw allocations from the Structural Funds if they are used by a Member State in a distorted and illegitimate way to allow or extend social dumping at national level;

23. Calls for both the EU and the Member States:

• to preserve jobs by avoiding unjustified dismissals and by optimising existing high levels of professional skills while limiting shareholders’ dividends;

• to ensure transparency in financial transfers from a European subsidiary to a US parent company or to tax havens;

• to implement sanctions against companies if they persist in their restructuring plans;

24. Issues a strong call to the EU and the Member States to push for an agreement on the binding UN treaty on transnational corporations which is currently being discussed in the UN Human Rights Council, in order properly to address abuses by transnational companies; calls in this connection for economic, social and cultural rights to be incorporated into the scope of this agreement;

25. Underlines the role of the social partners in the development of a coherent industrial strategy, which must incorporate a social dimension in order to ensure that labour rights are not undermined by the current industrial transition;

26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

1. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0377. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0346. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0010. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0317. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. OJ C 289, 9.8.2016, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. OJ C 440, 30.12.2015, p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)