



Council of European Employers
of the Metal, Engineering and
Technology-based industries



RESTRUCTURING – A KEY FACTOR FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS OF EUROPEAN INDUSTRY

- CEEMET, ECEG and EURATEX joint statement on the Commission Green Paper on Restructuring

CEEMET, ECEG and EURATEX welcome the positive overall approach of the Commission to the necessity of restructuring for companies to be able to adapt to continuous change in the economy and society.

The Commission should however take the following points into account in coming Commission initiatives concerning restructuring, which are of particular importance to companies competing on a global market as is the reality for the member companies of the three organisations.

- Restructuring is a key factor in ensuring international competitiveness for European companies and therefore a necessary tool for companies which are active on a global market, which is particularly the case for companies in the industrial sector. Transformation and restructuring of companies are a normal evolution in the pattern of successful companies.
- Company restructuring is based on the strategic and economic decisions of an individual company (or group of companies). Such decisions depend on a range of different and interrelated factors. Framework conditions must also make it possible for companies to deal with both crisis-induced restructuring scenarios and restructuring scenarios prompted by strategic considerations. Thus, there can be no single solution to address the restructuring of undertakings.
- CEEMET, ECEG and EURATEX have doubts on the feasibility of an EU-level initiative concerning an anticipative approach as outlined in the Green Paper. Restructuring needs are by their very nature difficult to predict, as shown by *i.a.* the economic crisis of 2008-2009. Should the Commission take initiatives on this topic, they must thus be considered carefully. A single approach applicable to all kinds of companies and situations would have negative effects on the development of companies and thus on the jobs they provide. It would be

better to focus efforts on helping to create framework conditions facilitating swift restructuring.

- Framework conditions for restructuring processes should allow for restructuring to be decided and carried out as rapidly and with as little bureaucracy as possible. These frameworks, including Active Labour Market Policies and Labour Law, must allow for flexibility and take into account that restructuring cannot generally be foreseen, and must not add additional burdens for companies (*e.g.* costs for reallocation or costs for training for new jobs, *i.e.* re-training).
- There is already an extensive range of legislative and other instruments dealing with restructuring. CEEMET, ECEG and EURATEX are of the opinion that no further such legislation is needed, particularly not on the EU level.
- The autonomy of Social Partners at company, sector, national and European levels should be respected.
- The Commission could make a concrete and helpful contribution by identifying and disseminating examples of good or best practice on how to create good framework conditions allowing for swift restructuring and by continuing to support Social Dialogue.

About CEEMET, ECEG and EURATEX:

CEEMET (Council of European Employers of the Metal, Engineering and Technology-Based Industries) is the European employers' organisation representing the interests of the metal, engineering and technology-based industries. Its members are national employers' organisations and federations, representing 200 000 member companies across Europe. The vast majority of them are SMEs, providing over 13 million jobs of direct employment.

ECEG (European Chemical Employers Group) is the social affairs organisation of the European chemical industry, grouping national employers' federations of the sector from 24 countries. Via its national member federations ECEG represents some 10,000 companies of the chemical industry with more than 1 million employees in Europe. ECEG is a partner within the Cefic family of European organisations, representing the employers' interests of the European chemical industry.

EURATEX (European Apparel and Textile Confederation) is the voice of the European Textile and Clothing (T&C) industry and promotes, in the context of globalization, the competitiveness and the sustainable growth of the industrial T&C pipelines in Europe. Besides social and education affairs its main activities encompass trade, research and innovation as well as environmental issues. Its EU-27 national organisations or federations represent more than 146.000 companies employing over 1,8 million direct jobs. Among its 50 members EURATEX also has representatives from the EFTA countries in addition to countries in the Euromed area.

(CEEMET and ECEG have both submitted responses to the Commission Green Paper on Restructuring.)