

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2573/05
by Francis Wurtz (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Future of the Ford production site at Blanquefort

Since 2001, the Ford Aquitaine Industries works committee has had no clear information as to the future of jobs at the Ford and G  trag Ford Transmissions plants in Blanquefort.

The Ford management decided that the Blanquefort plant would only produce five-gear gearboxes despite the fact the American market in six-gear models is currently expanding. The two plants at Blanquefort have therefore been faced with a fall in production.

Despite the works committee's repeated appeals to the management at local, national and European level for information regarding future plans and developments on the Blanquefort site with a view to maintaining jobs and the site itself on a long-term basis, no response has been forthcoming.

However, the American, European and local management maintain that the Blanquefort plant is the most successful in the world in terms of costs, quality, flexibility, industrial relations and reactivity and that it has always responded very rapidly to new challenges.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Ford's European management informs its European works council about the Blanquefort site's future?

The fact that a high-level group on the European motor car industry, known as 'CARS 21 Competitive Automotive Regulatory System for the 21st century', was set up by the Commission at the beginning of 2005 has merely heightened workers' fears and made this request all the more justified and urgent.