

**Question for written answer E-005901/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Crisis in the European Union paper industry and production chain, with particular reference to the cases of the BURGO and UPM industrial groups

In Italy, on 15 January 2013, the central management of the BURGO paper manufacturing group informed the Unitary Trade Union Representation at its Mantua plant that, since the company was in crisis, an extraordinary redundancy procedure had been started and that production would cease at the plant on 9 February 2013. The BURGO group has 11 other plants in Italy and one in Belgium. The reasons given by the management are the large sums of money owed to the banks and the heavy losses sustained over the last three years, with the accounts further damaged by the reduction in the price of newspaper.

Two days later, on 17 January 2013, the Finnish paper group UPM expressed its intention to permanently reduce its own manufacturing capacity by at least 580 000 tonnes; the corporate restructuring will also affect the UPM plants in Finland, Germany and France.

These basically simultaneous decisions were announced just a few days apart by two of the main European paper manufacturers in direct competition with each other. The decisions are also linked to the more general problem of a lack of EU industrial policy to support the European paper industry, whose production chain is in serious jeopardy.

Can the Commission say whether it intends to initiate urgent procedures to verify whether the announcements from the BURGO and UPM groups are not in reality the result of 'cartels' or other direct or indirect agreements between the two companies, which are contrary to the principles of competition policy established by the Treaty of Lisbon and which have been thrust upon the workers? What measures will the Commission take to support the EU paper industry?