

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1208/02  
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to the Commission

Subject: Industrial relocation

In response to the problems encountered by the Member States regarding unemployment, the EU has created a number of instruments for the achievement of full employment (e.g. the European employment strategy and employment guidelines, the European Social Fund and the EQUAL initiative).

Complementarily to the impact of globalisation, leading to the relocation of production in the developing countries and the least developed countries, and the need to conquer new markets, the Member States are now faced with unfair industrial competition from the applicant countries. A current example is that of the Whirlpool company, which is planning to transfer part of its activity from Amiens (France) to Poprad (Slovakia). This transfer would mean 360 direct job losses; in addition, the introduction of subcontracting would lead to the disappearance of a further 150 jobs.

European integration must be carried out in the interests of the wellbeing of our peoples, and one of our priority objectives should be the creation, not the transfer, of wealth. Far from setting existing Member States against applicant countries, the aim should be to ensure job preservation in the former and economic development in the latter.

What action does the Commission intend to take to achieve this twofold goal of preserving existing economic activity, and therefore employment, and creating new forms of economic activity? What action will it take to place limits on the excessive mobility practised by enterprises in the Member States? Is the Commission granting aid, especially financial aid, for enterprises from the Member States setting up production in the applicant countries?