

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0445/04  
by Mario Mastella (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Crisis at the AST plant in Terni

The German group Thyssen-Krupp, the leading steel producer which owns the AST plant at Terni in Italy, recently announced the closure of the electrical steel department there.

This decision will affect at least 900 workers, including those in related industries. The closure seems totally unjustified and has aroused considerable dismay and prompted strong protest from the workers involved and the trade unions represented in the firm. The closure would entail the dismantling of a well-established industrial centre which is at the forefront of the industry because of its facilities, equipment and, above all, the highly skilled workforce, and would have significant social repercussions, since it contributes to a high level of employment in the area, especially among young people.

Can the Commission therefore:

- ascertain whether the decision was taken in accordance with the European directives safeguarding workers and whether, more specifically, it may constitute an infringement of Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002<sup>1</sup> of 12 December 2002 on State aid for employment;
- ascertain whether consultations were held in good time between management and workers' representatives, as stipulated in Article 2 of Council Directive 98/59/EC<sup>2</sup>;
- state, finally, what steps it will take to safeguard the future of the 900 workers, since Italy continues to have one of the highest rates of unemployment in the European Union?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 337, 13.12.2002, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 225, 12.8.1998, p.16.