

EMF project GMEECO II finalised under dramatic circumstances

The EMF finalised the General Motors Europe Employees' Co-operation II (GMEECO II) project in January 2009. The 12-month project, co-financed by the European Commission, has been implemented, together with the General Motors Europe Employee Forum (EEF - the EWC of GME), under dramatic circumstances. One of the original objectives of the project was to internally agree on the planned site selection process for the next generation "global gamma platform" (Corsa, Meriva, Tigra, etc.) in order to reduce internal competition among the involved sites in Spain and Germany and a potential production site in Poland (FSO Warsaw). The second project target concerned the threatened future of engine, transmission, and component production in Europe (GM Powertrain) and involved discussion of possible strategies and reactions to this threat – (see also ParL newsletter July 2008 – <http://www.sda-asbl.org/TestiPDF/Parl3-08-En.pdf>).

Since early autumn, however, the framework of the project has changed dramatically as we have seen the financial and economic crisis unfold and the parent company, the General Motors Corporation in Detroit, enter its ongoing struggle for survival - the outcome of which is still unclear. New project tasks were put on the agenda in order to address the crunch. From the moment that the unforeseen slump in car sales and customer demand had its first impact on employment in Europe in autumn 2008 (temporary workers dismissed; temporary closure of plants with short-time working arrangements, etc.) the project tasks were re-defined via the integration of all GME sites in Europe, including the trade unions concerned, and by drafting a strategy on how to react to the management demand to save more than 750M US Dollars of structure costs in European activities.

The "one voice" approach of the EEF has been successfully implemented during this difficult time, including the demand that forced redundancies or even plant closures would not be accepted by the European workers' representatives – a precondition for talking about the required savings and how to achieve them. Thus the outcome of GMEECO II has been successful up to now, but the near future will show whether GM has a future in the US and how this future might shape up in Europe.

More information, including the 12-minute GMEECO II video which gives firsthand assessments from workers' representatives of GME, can be obtained by following this link: <http://www.emf-fem.org/Projects/GME-ECO-II-Project>. Daily updated news from the EEF and from workers of the GME sites can be accessed under: <http://gmworkersblog.com/>

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