

Connecting people, disconnecting workers: Nokia's disastrous strategy must stop, now!

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Over the last couple of years, Nokia slashed thousands of jobs across Europe, downsized key R&D capacities, reduced its European footprint and transferred activities to so-called "low-cost countries" at the expense of quality production. At a time when our societies are undergoing the largest and fastest digital transformation ever, such a badly thought-out strategy is shocking. Whilst the EU is committed to supporting large scale investment in the ICT sector (with regard to digital infrastructures, electronics, digital skills...), Nokia is depriving itself of the essential technological expertise and know-how it needs to seize the opportunities offered by high growth markets (5G, cybersecurity, cloud computing technology, to name but a few).

As if that destruction of industrial value and strategic know-how was not enough of a recipe for disaster, Nokia keeps implementing restructuring plans and recently announced yet another 1,233 job cuts in France, including in R&D. Who's next?

"Who's next?" is precisely what the extremely worried Nokia workers, who are left in the dark, anxiously wonder. They are left in the dark because of the persistent breach of Nokia's European works council's rights to be properly informed and consulted on how to anticipate and ensure a socially responsible management of change at Nokia. They are also left in the dark because Nokia's restructuring decisions are linked to everything but a sound industrial rationale. Nor can the COVID-19 crisis explain Nokia's strategy since the ICT sector was fortunately spared the economic downturn. Nor can any potential financial turbulence explain Nokia's strategy since its economic viability is not at stake. The only explanation lies in a short-term obsession with cost savings and large dividend payments to the detriment of Nokia's long-term industrial development.

IndustriAll Europe vehemently opposes a shareholder-oriented strategy which will irreversibly damage Nokia's ability to serve the demands for a strong Digital Europe and put the situation of thousands of Nokia workers and their families into jeopardy. The future of Nokia rests solely on a forward-looking industrial strategy that not only fosters innovation capacities, but also job creation and high-quality jobs and ensures that Nokia thrives over the long term.

IndustriAll Europe therefore urges Nokia's management to:

- ⇒ **Immediately halt all restructuring projects**
- ⇒ **Deliver a strategic industrial plan which will secure Nokia's long-term development and its sound contribution to a digital Europe**
- ⇒ **Comply with its European and national legal obligations to inform and consult worker and trade union representatives before taking any final decision**

Committed to defending the future of Nokia jobs and sites across Europe, European trade unions will pursue their coordination at national and European level in the coming weeks under the auspices of industriAll Europe and consider further trade union actions.