

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH



EUROPE'S INDUSTRY EUROPE'S JOBS OUR FUTURE

Europe's industry is being hollowed out from the inside. The factory gates may remain open but engineers, product designers, HR personnel and IT specialists are being quietly let go, with their work then shipped to service hubs abroad or handed to subcontractors. This is silent deindustrialisation, and it is happening across multiple industries and countries.

When the brains leave Europe, the factories follow.

White-collar workers, who make up 41% of Europe's manufacturing workforce, are often the first ones cut because they are the easiest target. But in this time of massive transformation, Europe needs white-collar workers more than ever.

EUROPE IS LOSING THE PEOPLE WHO INVENT ITS FUTURE

Management calls it 'restructuring' or 'efficiency gains'. But these jobs cuts add up to a structural crisis.

65%

of car and supplier plants surveyed in Bavaria **relocated development work in the past year**, and 57% plan to move more.¹

720,000+

Cedefop forecasts a **loss of about 720,000 office clerk jobs** across the entire EU by 2035 (an 8% drop).²

58,000+

engineers and IT specialists were out of work in Germany at the end of 2025, the highest number on record.³

MAJOR WHITE COLLAR JOB CUTS AT EUROPE'S LARGEST FIRMS:

⊖ **ArcelorMittal: 5,600**

Support jobs across Europe under review

⊖ **BASF: 2,000**

Business-service posts in Berlin at risk & IT unit more than halved

⊖ **Volvo Cars: 3,000**

Office-worker jobs targeted in 2025 & a 2026 white-collar hiring freeze

⊖ **Opel: 6,000**

Engineering cuts gone or going at Rüsselsheim since 2017

⊖ **Continental: 7,150**

5,400 admin and 1,750 R&D posts (worldwide)

⊖ **Bosch: 5,500**

Total cuts, mostly in driver-assistance and software division (worldwide)

⊖ **Volkswagen: 4,000**

Product development jobs in Wolfsburg

⊖ **Audi: 7,500**

Indirect jobs slated for removal by 2029

➡ **Cut the engineers today, close the plant tomorrow.**

THE RESULT: EUROPE IS FALLING BEHIND ON INNOVATION

While Europe's companies cut the people who innovate, their competitors are investing in them. Europe is not just losing jobs. It is losing the race for technological superiority and weakening its strategic autonomy.

1/2

As a share of sales, **EU firms invest half as much in R&D as US firms** (4.4% vs 8.4%).⁴

6.8% vs 15.4%

Growth in business investment in the Euro Area versus the United States, 2021-2024.⁵

➡ **You cannot win the future by firing the people who build it.**

Companies say cutting white-collar jobs saves money. In reality, it destroys the know-how, teams and experience that make innovation possible, and once that knowledge leaves, it rarely comes back.

When expertise moves abroad, Europe loses the capacity to design the next generation of products.

Meanwhile, the same companies keep paying their shareholders record dividends, without articulating a long-term vision. Workers are paying for short-term thinking with their jobs. **Enough is enough.**

¹ IG Metall Bayern, 2026. <https://tinyurl.com/58t44u3k>

² Cedefop, "Office clerks: skills opportunities and challenges" <https://tinyurl.com/yf6dn5t4>

³ WirtschaftsWoche/dpa, "Mehr als 58.000 Ingenieure und IT-Fachkräfte ohne Job", 2026. <https://tinyurl.com/mpeey9v6>

⁴ European Commission JRC, 2025 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard, December 2025.

<https://tinyurl.com/yvetfn27>

⁵ ECB, 2025. <https://tinyurl.com/59msuknj>

OUR DEMANDS TO POLICY MAKERS

Europe needs an industrial strategy that ties public support and investment to European production and jobs across the value chain.

Publicly supported products should meet a **minimum European-content threshold**.

"Made in Europe" must stand for good jobs, strong social and environmental standards, and fair-trade reciprocity.



1. NO PUBLIC MONEY WITHOUT BINDING CONDITIONS

Public support must guarantee **jobs, collective bargaining, reskilling and protection against relocation**. No subsidised funds for dividends or buybacks and **clawbacks when commitments are broken**.

3. KEEP THE VALUE CHAIN IN EUROPE

Guarantee and deliver **affordable clean energy** for our industries. Anchor raw materials, components, research and development and final production in Europe, creating **good jobs under strong social and environmental standards**, while extending local-content requirements to other strategic sectors.

2. USE EUROPEAN DEMAND TO SUPPORT EUROPEAN INDUSTRY

Use **public procurement and other incentive schemes** to stimulate demand for European-made goods and secure investment in European production and supply chains.

4. MAKE IT IN EUROPE

Public policy must support products with substantial, verifiable European content. That means technology developed here, components produced here, workers skilled here and value created here.

OUR DEMANDS TO MANAGEMENT

1. STOP THE BLEED

Halt the **job cuts in production and support services, and demands for worker concessions**. We need a serious plan to save industry.

3. INVEST IN OUR COMMON FUTURE NOW

Rather than maximizing profits, **ensure that sites, RDI and skills are invested in**. Abandoning technology leadership is a corporate choice, not an inevitability.

2. RESPECT WORKERS AND PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES

Strong worker participation and industrial relations are key to transforming Europe's industries. Companies must **honour collective agreements and respect workers' rights to information and consultation**.

4. DON'T TALK DOWN EUROPE

Stop using global competition to justify undercutting local workers. Europe has the skills and innovation to lead; management must **champion domestic production and reinvest in its future** instead of talking down its potential.