

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000241/26
to the Commission
Pasquale Tridico (The Left), Dario Tamburrano (The Left), Carolina Morace (The Left)
(21 January 2026)**

Subject: Rheinmetall's sale of its automotive division and the impact on jobs, industry and strategic sectors: the case of the Pierburg plant in Livorno

German group Rheinmetall AG has announced that it will sell its automotive division (Rheinmetall Automotive/Pierburg) as part of its plan to pivot to the defence sector. One of the plants concerned is the Pierburg facility in Livorno, a centre of industrial and technological excellence which employs around 240 people and which is involved in researching and developing sustainable mobility solutions.

So far, not enough information has been disclosed concerning the reasons behind the move, the identities of the potential buyers and whether any industrial plans are in place to guarantee that the Pierburg plant will remain operational, that investments will be made and that employees will keep their jobs. Trade unions have highlighted that the sale could result in the facility being liquidated, a scenario that would have a knock-on effect on jobs and the preservation of key industrial expertise. Rheinmetall's proposed sale could also be at odds with the EU's environmental transition, re-industrialisation and strategic autonomy objectives.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of Rheinmetall's plan to divest its automotive division and its implications for the Pierburg plant in Livorno?
2. Will the Commission check whether Rheinmetall has complied with the EU regulations governing the information and consultation rights of workers, employment protection, and the operational continuity of industrial facilities?
3. What monitoring tools will the Commission adopt to prevent relocations, preserve skills and thwart plans that are at odds with the EU's industrial policies and environmental transition objectives?

Submitted: 21.1.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(18 March 2026)**

1. The Commission is aware of Rheinmetall's plan.
2. The Commission does not monitor corporate strategies of individual companies and has no legal powers to intervene in discussions between management and worker's representatives on restructuring plans. However, the EU legal framework provides for minimum requirements on social dialogue within undertakings, including about obligations to inform and consult workers at national or transnational level in the process of restructuring. Directive 98/59/EC⁽¹⁾ requires employers that contemplate collective redundancies to consult staff representatives in good time with a view to an agreement and to notify the competent public authority to seek solutions to the problems raised by redundancies.
3. As regards monitoring tools, under the Clean Industrial Deal ⁽¹⁾, the Commission will launch in March 2026 a European Fair Transition Observatory (EFTO), a two-year pilot project to support policy monitoring and strengthen the evidence base on the impact of industrial transformation and the transition to climate neutrality. It focuses on employment trends and transition management, quality of jobs and broader social and distributional impact of industrial change. Specifically, as set out in the Automotive Action Plan, EFTO also aims to pinpoint expected future 'hot spots' of employment dislocations and inform forward-looking interventions to address them. One of the thematic reports produced as part of the project will be dedicated to this topic. EFTO can help ⁽²⁾ provide evidence on actions and best practices needed to ensure that transitions are aligned with EU industrial policies and clean transition objectives. EFTO aims to have a detailed sectoral dimension, covering also the automotive sector.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/competitiveness/clean-industrial-deal_en.

⁽²⁾ Through policy mapping, best practice identification and quantitative data collection.