

INTERGRAF

International confederation for printing and allied industries a.i.s.b.l.

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Cooperation, communication and education key issues in restructuring

Small and medium-sized printing companies convened in Milan in 15th and 16th June together with their employee representatives to discuss socially responsible restructuring of the industry. The participants identified open communications and education amongst the key issues. They also stressed that a clear vision and openness to new business models are vital for surviving in the fast-changing media environment.

The participants identified open, two-way communications, education of staff and good management amongst the key issues in socially responsible restructuring. However, some limitations were recognised. For example, the organisation of training can be difficult for a small company due to a lack of sufficient resources. Closer cooperation between companies and help from the authorities is therefore urgently needed. In order to secure the industry's future, it is vital to seek new forms of cooperation across the communications industry, enhance communication between stakeholders and have a clear understanding of how to formulate and implement change. Equally, the printing industry must be made more attractive for young people to meet future employment needs. The participants found the workshop very useful and wished for similar meetings at country level.

The meeting's Chairman Fons Bakkes (KVGO) praised the good atmosphere and open and honest discussions. *"We shared a distinct sense of urgency: socially responsible restructuring is on the top of the agenda of every stakeholder in the graphical industry in Europe. All stakeholders, present and represented, displayed an outspoken willingness to change in order to adapt to the new and developing realities. This workshop was an example of the spirit of cooperation that is needed to enable the industry in the ongoing process of restructuring."*

The event was the second of the two workshops organised by the EU-funded project on socially responsible restructuring of printing companies, which aims to identify the way forward for the industry and help it to adapt to change. The meeting targeted small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) from across Europe, with the involvement of the social partners. The programme was divided between small group discussions, plenary sessions and presentations featuring best practices. The workshop's aim was to stimulate free exchange of information and collect best practices. It gathered participants from the UK, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland and France.

The findings of the workshops will be presented on November 23rd 2010 in Brussels together with a research study, which will deliver a more detailed examination of the causes, issues and impacts of restructuring. In addition, it will feature a practical toolkit for companies. The event is open to all Intergraf associations, UNI Europa Graphical and affiliates, and company and employee representatives. Interpretation will be available in German, Italian, French and English.

The project is a joint initiative involving Intergraf, KVGO (Netherlands), Assografici (Italy), bvdM (Germany), trade unions FISTEL-CISL (Italy), UNITE (UK), VER.DI (Germany) and UNI Europa Graphical. It is funded by the European Commission's DG Employment.

Project website: http://www.intergraf.eu/responsible_restructuring



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More high resolution pictures are available upon request.