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EU must act to prevent job losses, says MEP

Press release from Plaid MEP Jill Evans

Plaid MEP **Jill Evans** has welcomed the European Parliament's support for new legislation to help workers whose jobs are put at risk when companies restructure.

The new laws could force companies to properly inform and consult with their workers in the event of any restructuring taking place. This could prevent unnecessary job losses, and help people find new work where possible. The European Parliament voted in favour of the proposals today (Tuesday).

The MEP believes that these measures could be crucial in helping avoid large scale job losses in Wales in the future.

But the UK Government opposes such moves and has already announced a cut from 90 to 45 days in the consultation period before large scale redundancies can take place. This is due to come into force in April.

As well as setting up minimum EU wide standards for consultation with workers whose jobs are under threat, the new legislation could require companies to offer more alternatives to redundancy. This could include reductions in working time or redeployment elsewhere.

Ms Evans said:

"In this economic crisis, we need to be doing all in our power to protect jobs. We know that workers in other countries have had far more protection than workers in Wales and I have fought to change that. We have gone a step backwards again with the UK government's proposal to make it easier for big companies to sack people or make them redundant.

"In the interests of workers and of the Welsh economy there needs to be proper discussion and a proper consultation period. All viable alternatives to redundancy must be fully considered. That means companies must plan well ahead, provide relevant training and work closely with local authorities. That is the kind of proposal we want the Commission to bring forward.

"In Wales we've seen the devastating effects of restructuring on people's lives. While it's not always possible to avoid job losses, there are ways of minimising the damage."

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