

As GM cuts in US, Fiat Chrysler invests in Italian plants

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Fiat Chrysler Automobiles said Thursday that its plants in Italy would return to full employment with a 5 billion-euro (\$5.7 billion) investment in new cars and engine technology, including a fully electric version of the 500 city car and a plug-in hybrid Alfa Romeo compact utility vehicle.

In a plan that contrasts with General Motor's announcement this week of deep cuts in North America, Fiat Chrysler CEO Mike Manley said the company would launch 13 all-new or restyled models from 2019 to 2021, while also developing hybrid and fully electric [engine technology](#).

Manley disclosed the plans to Italian unions, which have been seeking reassurances for Italy's under-utilized plants since a new five-year strategy was announced in June.

"It is a courageous plan in a difficult context, in which, for example, the U.S. [automotive industry](#) is significantly reducing its workforce," said the secretary general of the Uilm metalworkers' union, Rocco Palombella.

The all-electric 500 will be built in Mirafiori, in Turin, while the Alfa Romeo utility vehicle will be built in Pomigliano, near Naples, along with a mild-hybrid version of the compact Panda.

The company will also add production of a hybrid plug-in Jeep Renegade and a European version of the Jeep Compass to its plant in

Melfi in the south of Italy.

Union officials said Fiat also announced that it would delay plans to stop production of diesel engines, instead launching production of an updated diesel [engine](#) at its plant in Pratola Serra, near Naples.

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