

Press release

EUROFER supports industry workers' demonstration: EU inaction puts thousands more European steel jobs at risk

Brussels, 04 February 2025 – The European Steel Association (EUROFER) supports the demonstration of thousands of industry workers taking place tomorrow, 5 February, in Brussels, organised by industriAll. Steel workers from across the EU will join workers from other manufacturing industries to call on the European Commission to save our industry and preserve employment by investing in good industrial jobs and the transition, while combating global overcapacity and unfair trade.

"Highly skilled, passionate, motivated steelworkers are the heartbeat of the European economy. But our heart is on life support. Without immediate action from the European Union, there will be more plant closures and job losses in the steel industry. Communities that rely directly and indirectly on steel, local economies that depend on it, are being abandoned by Europe's political leaders. For every direct job in the steel sector, seven more are created in the EU's economy: steel is at the core of many other sectors, from automotive, construction and defence to renewable energy systems and aerospace. If steel disappears from Europe, value chains and prosperity will disappear too", said Axel Eggert, Director General of the European Steel Association (EUROFER).

Key facts highlight the severity of the crisis:

- The European steel industry provides over 300,000 direct jobs and supports more than 2.2 million indirect jobs. Nearly 100,000 steel jobs have already been lost in the past 15 years, with more cuts looming now due to unprecedented challenges.
- Global steel overcapacity is at record levels - 551 million tonnes in 2023, four times the EU steel production - and projected to increase further to about 700 million tonnes by 2026.
- EU steel production has plummeted by 34 million tonnes since 2018, falling to just 126 million tonnes in 2023. Imports now account for 27% of the EU market.
- Capacity utilisation in the EU has sunk to an unsustainable 60%. The EU is the only major region globally to have reduced steelmaking capacity over the past 15 years - by 35 million tonnes, including 9 million in 2024 alone.

"As the perilous state of our industry becomes ever more apparent, we have witnessed a ratcheting up of cross-party political support. From last week's meeting of trade, industry, energy and research committees in the European Parliament to today's informal EU Council meeting of

Trade and Competitiveness ministers in Warsaw, there is a strong call for immediate action. The question is, will the European Commission deliver what is needed?”, asked Axel Eggert.

Following the presentation of the Competitiveness Compass, which rightly identifies the vulnerability of the European steel industry in a climate of low demand, high energy prices, and unfair competition, the European steel industry expects both the Clean Industrial Deal and the Steel and Metals Action Plan to deliver genuine solutions to longstanding challenges.

Critical measures include, as proposed in the [industriAll-EUROFER European Steel Action Plan](#):

- Assertive enforcement of the EU trade defence instruments, and a more robust tariffication regime to stop the spill-over impact of global steel excess capacity.
- A Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) that works in practice, preventing circumvention or resource shuffling and preserving EU steel exports.
- Affordable clean energy by passing the benefits of renewable and low-carbon electricity to consumers.
- Retaining steel scrap in Europe for the circular economy, decarbonisation and energy security.

“The initiatives to be put forward by the Commission over the next weeks will determine the life expectancy of the European steel industry, and with it, European manufacturing, Europe’s competitiveness, and Europe’s security. Save Our Steel!”, concluded Mr Eggert.

Notes for editors

Contact

Lucia Sali, Spokesperson and Head of Communications, +32 2 738 79 35, (l.sali@eurofer.eu)

About the European Steel Association (EUROFER)

EUROFER AISBL is located in Brussels and was founded in 1976. It represents the entirety of steel production in the European Union. EUROFER full members are steel companies and national steel federations throughout the EU. The major steel companies and national steel federations in Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom are members. The European Steel Association is recorded in the EU transparency register: 93038071152-83.

About the European steel industry

The European steel industry is a world leader in innovation and environmental sustainability. It has a turnover of around €191 billion and directly employs around 303,000 highly-skilled people, producing on average 140 million tonnes of steel per year. More than 500 steel production sites across 22 EU Member States provide direct and indirect employment to millions more European

citizens. Closely integrated with Europe's manufacturing and construction industries, steel is the backbone for development, growth and employment in Europe. Steel is the most versatile industrial material in the world. The thousands of different grades and types of steel developed by the industry make the modern world possible. Steel is 100% recyclable and therefore is a fundamental part of the circular economy.