

Trade: Commission imposes provisional safeguard measures on imports of steel products

These measures will address the diversion of steel from other countries to the EU market as a result of the recently imposed US tariffs. The safeguard measures will come into effect on Thursday 19 July. Traditional imports of steel products will not be affected.

Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"The US tariffs on steel products are causing trade diversion, which may result in serious harm to EU steelmakers and workers in this industry. We are left with no other choice than to introduce provisional safeguard measures to protect our domestic industry against a surge of imports. These measures nevertheless ensure that the EU market remains open, and will maintain traditional trade flows. I am convinced that strike the right balance between the interest of EU producers and users of steel, like the automotive industry and the construction sector, who rely on imports. We will continue to monitor steel imports in order to take a final decision by early next year, at the latest."*

The provisional measures concern 23 steel product categories and will take the form of a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ). For each of the 23 categories, tariffs of 25% will only be imposed once imports exceed the average of imports over the last three years. The quota is allocated on a first come first serve basis, thus at this stage not allocated by individual exporting country. These measures are imposed against all countries, with the exception of some developing countries with limited exports to the EU. Given the close economic links between the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA) countries (Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein), they have also been exempted from the measures. These exclusions are compatible with both the EU's bilateral and multilateral World Trade Organisation (WTO) obligations.

The provisional safeguard measures can remain in place for a maximum of 200 days. All interested parties will now have the opportunity to comment on the findings of the investigation so far. The Commission will take these comments into consideration in order to reach its final conclusion, at the latest by early 2019. If all conditions are met, definitive safeguard measures may be imposed as a result.

The Commission received overwhelming support for these measures from the EU Member States.

Background

The measures announced today are part of the three-pronged response outlined by the European Commission earlier this year. As a result of the import duties applied by the United States as of 23 March under Section 232 the US Trade Expansion Act of 1962, exporting steel to the United States has become

less attractive. There are already indications that, as a consequence, steel suppliers have diverted some of their exports from the US to the EU. In order to avoid a sudden increase of imports that would cause further economic problems for EU steel producers – who are already suffering from global overcapacity – the Commission considers that provisional safeguard measures are necessary and justified.

The adoption of the measures follows the initiation of an investigation on 26 March. This investigation covers 28 product categories. Imports for 23 steel categories were found to have increased in the last few years, and a further increase of imports – mostly diverted from the US as a result of the Section 232 steel measures – threatens to cause injury to the EU steel industry which has not yet recovered from the steel crisis. WTO rules allow for the imposition of safeguard measures under these circumstances.

An additional duty of 25% will be levied only after the usual level of imports over the last 3 years has been reached. The 25% tariff has been calculated by using an economic so-called partial-equilibrium model which is a standard tool for trade policy analysis by investigating authorities, including the Commission. On the basis of certain facts and assumptions (exclusion of US imports, expected trade diversion, import substitution, etc.) the model is used to establish an out-of-quota tariff that provides a deterrent for imports that go beyond the historic import level.

According to WTO rules, safeguard measures should apply to all imports, irrespective of their origin. However, the WTO also requires that if the imports of developing countries represent less than 3% of the total imports, these imports should be exempted. The Regulation therefore contains a list of developing countries that are exempted from the measures.

For 12 steel product categories covered by the provisional safeguard measures, imports from e.g. China, Russia, Ukraine are currently subject to anti-dumping and countervailing duties. In order to avoid the imposition of “double remedies”, whenever the tariff quota is exceeded, the Commission will consider the suspension or the reduction of the level of these duties to ensure that the combined effect of these measures does not exceed the highest level of the safeguard or anti-dumping/anti-subsidy duties in place.

Next to the safeguards announced today, the EU three-pronged response to the US tariffs on steel and aluminium includes [rebalancing measures](#) targeting US imports, imposed on 20 June and a [legal action in the WTO](#) launched on 1 June.

For more information

[Regulation imposing safeguards](#)

International community strengthens support for Somalia's plans for stability and development

Today, international stakeholders gathered in Brussels for the Somalia Partnership Forum, organised by the European Union together with the Federal Government of Somalia and Sweden. Over 60 delegations took part and agreed on joint commitments in key areas for inclusive politics, peace and security and economic recovery in Somalia.

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *"The European Union is leading the international partnership to strengthen Somalia's political, economic and security reform agenda. Today, I announced that the EU will provide additional €200 million to support Somalia's overall stabilisation to create a better future for its people. I also signed the EU's contribution of €114.2 million for the African Union Mission to Somalia until the end of this year. The stability and development of the country is also critical for the stability of the broader region and for Europe."*

The President of Somalia Mohamed **Abdullahi Mohamed** said: *"The Federal Government of Somalia is fully committed to implement the Political Roadmap 2020, Transition plan for security, economic reform and reach out to the whole of Somalia for reconciliation and dialogue. The Somalia Partnership Forum is key for strengthened partnerships with our regional and international partners. We want to work according to the theme of the forum – forward together."*

Minister for Foreign Affairs Sweden, Margot **Wallström**, said: *"The Somalia Partnership Forum has made a number of strong commitments for inclusive politics. We encourage Somalia to adopt national laws and policies that protect women's and girls' human rights and enable them to have a stronger role in society. Somalia has taken very important steps on the pathway for sustainable peace and development. Sweden remains a committed partner and will double our development support to Somalia to approximately \$350 million over the next five years."*

A [Joint Communiqué](#) was adopted which outlines the key outcomes of the Forum.

Background

Over the period 2015-2018, the EU and its Member States provide €3.7 billion to the country in development and humanitarian aid as well as peacekeeping operations.

The EU is a leading supporter of Somalia in a wide range of areas, in particular on security with 3 Common Security and Defence Policy missions in the country: [EUNAVOR ATALANTA](#), [EUTM Somalia](#), [EUCAP Somalia](#). These missions and operations play a significant role in supporting Somalia's efforts to

become a peaceful, stable and democratic country and to take progressive ownership over its own national security. The EU has consistently supported the [African Union Mission to Somalia \(AMISOM\)](#) which has been operating for 10 years now and with €1.73 billion. The EU is currently increasing its security support to the country, reorienting it to more direct support to the Somali institutions.

The EU has also stepped up its humanitarian contribution, with [€89 million in new funding](#) announced last week.

For More Information

[Joint Communiqué](#)

[Opening remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini](#)

[Factsheet – EU’s comprehensive support to Somalia](#)

Statement by Vice-President for the Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič following the trilateral ministerial talks with Russia and Ukraine on the long-term transit of gas to Europe

Today following the trilateral ministerial talks with Russia and Ukraine on the long-term transit of gas to Europe, Vice-President for the Energy Union Maroš **Šefčovič** said:

“This has been a long but a productive day.

I am pleased to announce that today, we have managed to establish a trilateral process with Russia and Ukraine. In other words, we have a joint agreement that today’s meeting was not a one-off exercise.

We have also agreed that we need to separate old and new issues.

All three sides will now mandate their high-level experts to work on four issues

1. The European Union’s gas needs;
2. Ways in which the EU law applied in Ukraine would impact on the future transit contract;

3. Certified transmission system operator; and
4. The tariffs.

They should meet in mid-September.

This will prepare grounds for the next trilateral meeting at the political level that should take place in the course of October. In fact, this will be the frequency of our trilateral talks – approximately six to eight weeks.

To have everyone around one table today and to start building trust was of vital importance. As you know, time is passing quickly and every day we are getting closer to the end of 2019.

You all know the fundamental question – whether on 1 January 2020, we will have an agreement on the long-term transit of Russian gas to the EU through Ukraine in a commercially viable manner.

Therefore, I appreciate the high-level participation from both, Russia and Ukraine, which was necessary to start this process going – I hope that we will continue to see a firm commitment on both sides to reach an agreement at the end of this process.

I am convinced that such an agreement is in everyone's best interest.

So once again, this was a good day, marking a start of what will be a complex, difficult process.

A trilateral process is the most effective platform to seek a satisfactory solution to the gas matters important for involved parties."

Video statement available [here](#).

Overview recruitments – Updated 17 July 2018

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EIOPA appoints new members to its Stakeholder Groups

The Board of Supervisors of the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions

Authority (EIOPA) has appointed new members to the Insurance and Reinsurance Stakeholder Group (IRSG) and Occupational Pensions Stakeholder Group (OPSG). The new members will take up their appointment on 4 September 2018 and will serve a 2½ years term.

EIOPA considered 215 applications from 25 European countries, submitted following an [open call](#). In its selection, EIOPA aimed to achieve geographical and gender balance, as well as an appropriate representation of different types of stakeholders, in particular seeking to strengthen representation of consumers and beneficiaries.

More information in the [press release](#).

New composition of the Insurance and Reinsurance Stakeholder Group, effective 4 September 2018: [\[LINK\]](#)

New composition of the Occupational Pensions Stakeholder Group, effective 4 September 2018: [\[LINK\]](#)