

The aluminium industry and its workers strongly oppose the potential suspension of EU trade measures which would be a disaster for European jobs and the European Green Deal

JOINT STATEMENT FROM EUROPEAN ALUMINIUM AND INDUSTRIALL EUROPE

European Aluminium and industriAll European Trade Union (industriAll Europe), representing Europe's aluminium industry and its workers, jointly oppose the Commission's proposed suspension of the definitive anti-dumping duties on Chinese aluminium flat-rolled products (FRPs) which would put at risk European jobs and the decarbonisation of the industry.

On 13 July 2021, the Commission's Definitive Findings in the AD668 investigation confirmed that China practices injurious dumping of aluminium FRPs on the open EU market. The decision was welcomed by both industry and workers who had raised concerns about an unlevel global playing field and Chinese dumping which had doubled for FRPs from **100 kilo tonnes in 2017** to more than **200 kilo tonnes in 2019**. In fact, the aggressive increase of the Chinese market share of Chinese FRP imports **reached 9% in only three years** and was seen as a real threat to European jobs and the successful transition to a greener European aluminium sector.

Earlier this Summer, the European aluminium industry and its workers **welcomed the decision of the Commission to impose just anti-dumping duties** in order to try and level the global playing field. Therefore, the surprising proposal of the Commission for a nine-month suspension of the definitive anti-dumping duties shocked the sector, which is **still trying to recover from the impact of COVID-19** including the production stoppages and cancelling of orders from key aluminium using sectors. Furthermore, the European aluminium industry **has still not recovered from previous dumping** and profitability is barely restored, which is much needed to further invest in the green transformation of the industry and its workforce in Europe.

As the representatives of both the aluminium industry and its workers, European Aluminium and industriAll Europe have grave concerns about a potential suspension of trade measures, both concerning the immediate negative impact and the long-term survival of the aluminium sector, with three main areas of concern.

IMPACT ON JOBS

The aluminium industry employs approximately **1 million Europeans** (direct and indirect jobs) and there is a clear need to protect these highly skilled, quality jobs in Europe. The Commission's proposal to suspend the anti-dumping duties on Chinese aluminium FRPs could lead to the market being flooded with Chinese State-sponsored cheap products, which would be a disaster for the EU which has over **40 rolling mills in 17 Member States**. The proposed suspension on FRPs would put **9,000 direct jobs** and **27,000 indirect jobs** in the European Union at risk.

IMPACT ON THE AMBITIONS OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The carbon footprint of European primary aluminium production is one of the lowest globally: approximately **7kg of CO₂ per kg** of aluminium compared to the Chinese average of **20kg of CO₂ per kg** of aluminium. The European aluminium sector, and its workers, are committed to meeting the ambitions of the European Green Deal to further decarbonise the sector and increase its circularity and sustainability.

However, the European sector needs to invest heavily to make this a reality, and the risk of cheap Chinese aluminium being dumped on the open EU market jeopardises the survival of sustainable aluminium production in Europe. With **75% of Chinese primary aluminium production relying on coal-based energy**, it must be unacceptable for the EU to give favourable access to high carbon imported aluminium and prevent European companies and workers from having the opportunity and the business conditions needed to invest in and produce sustainable aluminium. Moreover, the EU risks losing further production capacity for a material that is **critical to the EU's green transition**. Europe's **strategic autonomy in meeting the ambitions of the European Green Deal** could be severely compromised.

PROCESS OF THE SUSPENSION INVESTIGATION

European industry and its workers have called on the European Commission to take action and ensure that the EU safeguards fair trade. Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for Trade, Valdis Dombrovskis' recent comments (31 August) that **"our companies and their workers can continue to rely on robust trade defence instruments that protect them against unfair trade practices"** were well received. Indeed, the Commission's initial anti-dumping investigation was considered fair and thorough, taking 14 months in total and engaging with relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the sector was shocked by the decision to potentially suspend these much-needed trade defence measures after a hasty investigation **lasting only 30 days during the summer recess**.

The way in which the process of the suspension investigation was rushed through is extremely concerning. Not only was the essential element of ensuring the **"Union interest" not considered**, but there are also real issues with the data, which is **partial and has not been verified**. Furthermore, it is most worrying that industry was given only **three working days** to comment on the suspension decision, breaching all due processes and good administration.

As well as the European aluminium industry and its workers believing that there is no factual basis for the suspension decision, **this decision if replicated for other sectors could be catastrophic for European industry as a whole**. The need for the EU to ensure fair, reliable and just trade measures for its industry, workers and citizens is critical and must not be forgotten.

Against this background, European Aluminium and industriAll Europe fully oppose the nine-month suspension of the definitive anti-dumping duties on Chinese aluminium flat-rolled products, which risks tens of thousands of jobs and stifles the ambitions set out in the European Green Deal and call for an urgently needed in-depth and balanced Union interest investigation.

For more information:

[Press Statement, 10 September 2021](#)

[Open letter to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, 15 September 2021](#)

Contact:

Kelly Roegies, European Aluminium – roegies@european-aluminium.eu
Elsbeth Hathaway, industriAll Europe - Elsbeth.Hathaway@industriall-europe.eu