

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000652/26
to the Commission
Idoia Mendia (S&D)
(16 February 2026)**

Subject: Protecting industrial sovereignty and employment in the steel sector amidst global trade instability

The steel industry is a fundamental pillar of the EU's strategic autonomy and a driver of industrial employment in regions such as the Basque Country. However, the sector is facing increasing pressure from asymmetric global competition, as well as from third countries imposing heavier tariffs.

Tubos Reunidos recently announced a labour force adjustment plan cutting over 300 jobs in the Basque Country, which highlights the impact of the situation on industrial employment. The company's decision responds to the decline in margins and volumes following exemptions being abolished and the strategic US market being impacted by tariffs. That decline has been exacerbated by geopolitical and economic uncertainty.

If the EU is aiming for industrial sovereignty, preventing trade distortions from resulting in the loss of both jobs and productive capacity is a priority.

1. What urgent trade protection measures does the Commission intend to adopt to protect strategic companies such as Tubos Reunidos from tariff pressure from third countries?
2. How will the Steel and Metals Action Plan, adopted by the Commission in 2025, ensure that European steelworks remain viable and that jobs are retained in the current context of global instability?

Submitted: 16.2.2026

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(15 April 2026)**

The Commission is aware of the challenging situation of Tubos Reunidos, including the impact on its exports of the 50% duty applied by the US.

In this respect, the Commission is engaging with the US on ring-fencing the EU and US markets from overcapacity and ensuring secure supply chains, including through tariff-rate quotas to improve access for EU steelmakers into the US market ⁽¹⁾.

Under the Steel and Metals Action Plan (SMAP) ⁽²⁾, the Commission focuses on six pillars addressing energy costs, carbon leakage, industrial capacity, circularity, jobs and investment.

The Commission put forward a proposal to address the negative trade-related effects of global overcapacity in October 2025 ⁽³⁾, that is currently in co-decision and expected to be effective as of 1 July 2026.

This measure will provide an effective level of protection against the negative trade-related of global overcapacity in the EU market, improving the economic performance of EU steelmakers.

In March 2026, the proposal for the Industrial Accelerator Act ⁽⁴⁾ was adopted, creating lead markets for clean industrial products, like steel used in construction and cars under the CO₂ emissions performance standards framework. Finally, the SMAP places strong emphasis on protecting quality industrial jobs and supporting workers and regions in transition.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) ⁽⁵⁾ provides support when restructuring is unavoidable. The Fund co-finances active labour market measures designed to help displaced workers re-enter employment.

On 26 February 2026, the European Parliament and EU Member States reached a political agreement to enhance the EGF, introducing anticipatory support for workers at risk of redundancy.

⁽¹⁾ Joint Statement on a United States-European Union framework on an agreement on reciprocal, fair and balanced trade — Trade and Economic Security: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-statement-united-states-european-union-framework-agreement-reciprocal-fair-and-balanced-trade-2025-08-21_en.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0125>.

⁽³⁾ [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=COM\(2025\)726&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=COM(2025)726&lang=en).

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52026PC0100>.

⁽⁵⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/691 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) and repealing Regulation (EU) 1309/2013 (OJ L 153, 3.5.2021, p. 48-70: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2021.153.01.0048.01.ENG).