

## INFORMATION NOTE- CUSTOMS

### COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2025/612 Imports of steel products

On 24 March 2025, Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/612 amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/159 was published, imposing a **definitive safeguard measure against imports of certain steel products**, which has been decided to be extended until 30 June 2026.

This decision is based on a comprehensive analysis of the current state of the steel sector in the European Union and global trade trends.

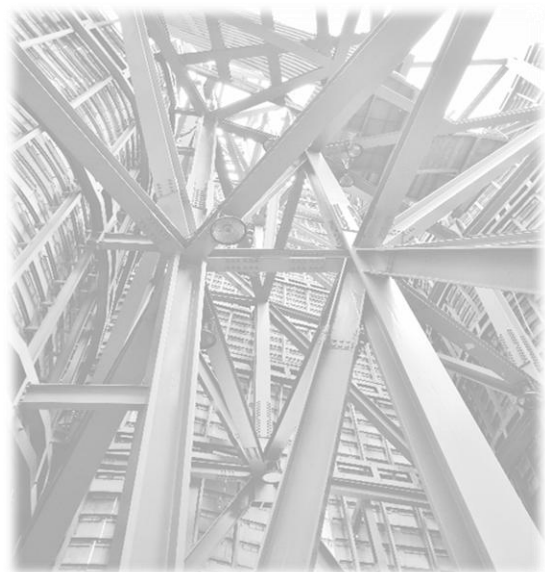
The main reason behind this extension is the need to protect the European steel industry, which continues to face strong competition from imports from third countries.

While the EU has implemented modernisation and sustainability measures in the steel industry, there is still a risk that a premature removal of this measure will lead to a drastic increase in imports, affecting the competitiveness of European companies. Therefore, it has been considered that maintaining this measure is essential to avoid significant economic damage to local production, job losses and reduced investments in innovation within the sector.

The **quota system** that had been previously established, covering 26 categories of steel products, is maintained, so that, once the quotas have been exceeded, additional imports of these products will be subject to a 25% tariff, the

aim of which is to discourage an excessive flow of imports and to ensure that European producers have a fair chance to compete in the domestic market.

**Quotas are distributed on a quarterly basis and are allocated by country and by product category.** This model seeks to prevent a single country or supplier from monopolizing the import quota and guarantees a more balanced distribution among the different market players.



To better manage access to residual tariff quotas, the Commission has established a three-tier classification system:

1. **Products without access to residual quotas:** this category includes those products whose demand within the

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EU is already covered by traditional suppliers.

2. **Products with limited access:** Some products will have access to residual quotas, but with restrictions on the amount that can be imported. This approach seeks to avoid a sudden overload of imports that could distort the market and affect local producers.

3. **Products without limitations on access:** In certain cases, access to residual quotas will be fully open, meaning importers will be able to bring in larger volumes without additional restrictions. This category applies when there is no risk that unfair competition will harm European production, or when local supply is insufficient to cover domestic demand.

This classification model provides greater flexibility and ensures that safeguard measures are applied more efficiently and adapted to market realities.

A key aspect of this review is the **implementation of adjustments to the allocation of tariff quotas to protect smaller suppliers.**

This measure is particularly important for countries and companies that depend on more modest exports, as it gives them the opportunity to maintain their market share without being displaced by large producers that have greater resources and logistical capacity.



The Commission has taken into account the possible effects on the supply chain and other industries that depend on steel, ensuring that the continuation of these measures **will not adversely affect** sectors requiring imports of specific steel products.

Another change introduced is **the updating of the list of developing countries that are excluded** from safeguard measures. The Commission regularly reviews this list to ensure that only those countries with minimal European market share are excluded. If a country starts to significantly increase its steel exports to the EU, it could be reinstated to the list of countries subject to the restrictions.

On the other hand, the Regulation clarifies that countries that have bilateral agreements with the EU are not automatically exempt from these measures.

**Only those agreements that contain a specific clause exempting steel**

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**products from safeguards will be eligible for this exclusion.** This ensures that the protection of European industry is not weakened by trade agreements that do not explicitly provide for such exceptions.

The **extension** of safeguard measures **until 2026** reflects the European Union's determination to protect its steel industry in an increasingly competitive trading environment.

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