

Position Paper by EUROMETAL

Why Europe's steel and metal value chains are demonstrating in Brussels?

Brussels, 7 September 2026

Executive Summary

On 7 September 2026, representatives of Europe's steel, metals distribution, processing and downstream manufacturing industries will bring a visible message to Brussels: Europe must preserve the industrial value chains on which its green transition, strategic autonomy, employment and resilience depend.

The truck convoy is not a protest against Europe. It is a demonstration for a strong European industrial base, fair competition, climate credibility and secure supply chains.

The reason is clear: steel-intensive manufactured goods and steel derivatives increasingly enter the European market without equivalent trade, origin, carbon and regulatory obligations. This shifts production, jobs and emissions out of Europe while weakening the industrial base that Europe needs most.

1. Why the Truck Convoy is necessary

European companies support open markets, decarbonisation and fair trade. However, these objectives cannot be achieved if European producers and processors carry ETS, energy, labour and regulatory costs while competing with imported steel-based products that do not face comparable conditions.

The existing EUROMETAL analysis shows that imported steel derivatives are substantial steel-containing industrial goods, yet many are not classified as steel products under customs rules. As a result, they can fall outside safeguards and outside the current CBAM scope.

- Steel-intensive imports can bypass measures that apply to primary steel.
- European processing, know-how and recycling flows are increasingly relocated outside the EU.
- Resulting imbalance undermines investment confidence and weakens SMEs throughout the value chain.

2. The scale of the problem

According to the EUROMETAL basis [paper](#), the examined shortlist of critical steel derivatives increased from 3.774 million tonnes in 2010 to 8.050 million tonnes in 2024. This represents growth of 213%.

Especially dynamic growth is visible in rail technology, electrical machinery, automotive components, metal furniture and prefabricated constructions. Some product groups show increases well above 300%, with springs exceeding 1,000% growth.

3. What is at stake?

The impact goes far beyond steel mills. Steel distribution, service centres, processors and downstream industries form the practical industrial infrastructure of Europe.

The basis paper links around 100,000 direct jobs to steel trade and distribution, around 300,000 direct jobs to steel production, and around 13.6 million jobs in downstream industries to competitive European steel and metal value chains.

- Manufacturing depth and technical know-how.
- Industrial employment across regions and SMEs.
- European capacity for infrastructure, mobility, defence, energy and construction.

- The credibility of the green transition through real emissions reduction rather than relocation.

4. Carbon leakage has moved downstream

CBAM and ETS are designed to prevent carbon leakage and support lower-emission production. Yet when imported steel-intensive finished goods remain outside equivalent obligations, processing can shift outside the EU and emissions can re-enter the Union embedded in products.

This does not reduce emissions. It relocates emissions and removes industrial value creation from Europe.

5. Why Brussels must act now

The EUROMETAL basis paper also highlights the risk of trade diversion. The United States and Canada have tightened protection systems for steel-based products through Section 232, Melt & Pour rules and the expansion of measures to derivatives. Without appropriate EU action, Europe risks becoming a destination market for diverted overcapacity and carbon-intensive steel-based products.

A visible truck convoy in Brussels is therefore necessary to show that this is not an abstract policy debate. It affects real companies, real drivers, real workers and real communities.

6. EUROMETAL's policy message

EUROMETAL calls for a coherent policy framework covering the entire steel value chain. Measures must close circumvention pathways while remaining compatible with fair trade and Europe's climate ambition.

- Extend trade-defence instruments to steel-intensive products and derivatives.
- Expand CBAM gradually to steel derivatives and steel-intensive industrial goods.
- Introduce robust origin, traceability and Melt & Pour logic where appropriate.
- Create transparency obligations for steel content, origin, embedded emissions and precursor materials.
- Strengthen a practical Made in Europe framework for strategic procurement, infrastructure, defence, energy transition and mobility projects.

7. Conclusion

The Brussels truck convoy on 7 September 2026 delivers one central message: Europe must not allow its industrial base to be silently eroded through unfair competition, downstream carbon leakage and regulatory circumvention.

There can be no Green Deal without industry, no strategic autonomy without manufacturing, and no resilient Europe without European steel and metal value chains.

Key message for policymakers

The convoy asks the European institutions to ensure that trade, climate and industrial policy apply consistently across the full steel value chain, including steel derivatives and steel-intensive manufactured goods.

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