

V

*(Announcements)*PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON
COMMERCIAL POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Notice of initiation of a partial interim review of the anti-dumping measures applicable to imports of
certain hot-rolled flat products of iron, non-alloy or other alloy steel originating in Russia**

(2021/C 18/10)

The European Commission ('the Commission') has received a request for a partial interim review pursuant to Article 11(3) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1036 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2016 on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Union ⁽¹⁾ ('the basic anti-dumping Regulation').

1. Request for review

The request for review was lodged by Eurofer ('the applicant'), on behalf of Union producers. The partial interim review is limited in scope to the examination of dumping as far as one Russian exporting producer, PAO Severstal (TARIC additional code C218), is concerned.

2. Product under review

The product subject to this review is certain flat-rolled products of iron, non-alloy steel or other alloy steel, whether or not in coils (including 'cut-to-length' and 'narrow strip' products), not further worked than hot-rolled, not clad, plated or coated, originating in Russia ('the product under review'), currently falling under CN codes 7208 10 00, 7208 25 00, 7208 26 00, 7208 27 00, 7208 36 00, 7208 37 00, 7208 38 00, 7208 39 00, 7208 40 00, 7208 52 10, 7208 52 99, 7208 53 10, 7208 53 90, 7208 54 00, 7211 13 00, 7211 14 00, 7211 19 00, ex 7225 19 10 (TARIC code 7225 19 10 90), 7225 30 90, ex 7225 40 60 (TARIC code 7225 40 60 90), 7225 40 90, ex 7226 19 10 (TARIC code 7226 19 10 90), 7226 91 91 and 7226 91 99.

The following products are not covered by this investigation:

- (i) products of stainless steel and grain-oriented silicon electrical steel;
- (ii) products of tool steel and high-speed steel;
- (iii) products, not in coils, without patterns in relief, of a thickness exceeding 10 mm and of a width of 600 mm or more; and
- (iv) products, not in coils, without patterns in relief, of a thickness of 4,75 mm or more but not exceeding 10 mm and of a width of 2 050 mm or more.

3. Existing measures

The measures currently in force are a definitive anti-dumping duty imposed by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/1795 ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 176, 30.6.2016, p. 21.

⁽²⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/1795 of 5 October 2017 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain hot-rolled flat products of iron, non-alloy or other alloy steel originating in Brazil, Iran, Russia and Ukraine and terminating the investigation on imports of certain hot-rolled flat products of iron, non-alloy or other alloy steel originating in Serbia (OJ L 258, 6.10.2017, p. 24).

4. Grounds for the review

The request pursuant to Article 11(3) of the basic anti-dumping Regulation is based on sufficient evidence, provided by the applicant that, as far as the dumping of PAO Severstal is concerned, the circumstances on the basis of which the existing measures were imposed have changed and that these changes are of a lasting nature.

The applicant provided evidence pointing to PAO Severstal having taken the strategic decision to change its operating business model and increase its export volumes to the EU. Import statistics appear to corroborate the increase in volumes. The applicant further provided evidence pointing to PAO Severstal's higher prices in the domestic market than in the export market, which appears to stem from the domestic market structure. In addition, the applicant provided evidence of significantly increased dumping margins. In particular, a comparison of PAO Severstal's normal value and their export prices to the Union indicates that the dumping margin appears to be significantly higher than the dumping margin of 5.3 % established in the original investigation. Moreover, the applicant also provided evidence pointing to PAO Severstal having made plans to increase its capacity despite a weak domestic demand.

Therefore, the applicant alleges that the existing measures are no longer sufficient to counteract the dumping.

5. Procedure

Having determined, after informing the Member States, that sufficient evidence exists to justify the initiation of a partial interim review limited to the examination of dumping, the Commission hereby initiates a review in accordance with Article 11(3) of the basic anti-dumping Regulation.

The review will assess the need for the continuation, removal or amendment of the existing measures in respect of PAO Severstal.

Regulation (EU) 2018/825 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾, which entered into force on 8 June 2018 (TDI Modernisation package), introduced significant changes to the timetable and deadlines previously applicable in anti-dumping proceedings. The time limits for interested parties to come forward, in particular at the early stage of investigations, are shortened.

The Commission also draws the attention of the parties that further to the COVID-19 outbreak a Notice ⁽²⁾ has been published on the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak on anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations that may be applicable to this proceeding.

6. Review investigation period

The investigation of the level of dumping will cover the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 ('the review investigation period').

7. Investigating the exporting producer concerned (PAO Severstal)

In order for the Commission to obtain the information it deems necessary for its investigation, PAO Severstal and its related ⁽³⁾ companies are requested to fill in a questionnaire within 37 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/825 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 amending Regulation (EU) 2016/1036 on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Union and Regulation (EU) 2016/1037 on protection against subsidised imports from countries not members of the European Union (OJ L 143, 7.6.2018, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ On the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak on anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations (OJ C 86, 16.3.2020, p. 1).

⁽³⁾ In accordance with Article 127 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/2447 laying down detailed rules for implementing certain provisions of Regulation (EU) 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the Union Customs Code, two persons shall be deemed to be related if one of the following conditions is fulfilled: (a) they are officers or directors of one another's businesses; (b) they are legally recognised partners in business; (c) they are employer and employee; (d) a third party directly or indirectly owns or controls or holds 5 % or more of the outstanding voting stock or shares of both of them; (e) one of them directly or indirectly controls the other; (f) both of them are directly or indirectly controlled by a third person; (g) together they control a third person directly or indirectly; or (h) they are members of the same family. Persons shall be deemed to be members of the same family only if they stand in any of the following relationships to one another: (i) husband and wife, (ii) parent and child, (iii) brother and sister (whether by whole or half blood), (iv) grandparent and grandchild, (v) uncle or aunt and nephew or niece, (vi) parent-in-law and son-in-law or daughter-in-law, (vii) brother-in-law and sister-in-law. In accordance with Article 5(4) of Regulation (EU) No 952/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council of 9 October 2013 laying the Union Customs Code, 'person' means a natural person, a legal person, and any association of persons which is not a legal person but which is recognised under Union or national law as having the capacity to perform legal acts (OJ L 269, 10.10.2013, p. 1).

A copy of the above-captioned questionnaire for exporting producer is available in the file for inspection by interested parties and on DG Trade's website https://trade.ec.europa.eu/tdi/case_details.cfm?id=2507

8. Interested parties

Other parties will only be able to participate in the investigation as interested party from the moment they make themselves known, and provided that there is an objective link between their activities and the product under review. Being considered as an interested party is without prejudice to the application of Article 18 of the basic anti-dumping Regulation.

Access to the file available for inspection for interested parties is made via TRON.tdi at the following address: <https://tron.trade.ec.europa.eu/tron/TDI>. Please follow the instructions on that page to get access ⁽⁶⁾.

9. Other written submissions

Subject to the provisions of this Notice, all interested parties are hereby invited to make their views known, submit information and provide supporting evidence. Unless otherwise specified, this information and supporting evidence must reach the Commission within 37 days of the date of publication of this Notice. In order to obtain the information it deems necessary for its investigation, the Commission may send questionnaires to interested parties that have come forward.

10. Possibility to be heard by the Commission investigation services

All interested parties may request to be heard by the Commission investigation services. Any request to be heard must be made in writing and must specify the reasons for the request as well as a summary of what the interested party wishes to discuss during the hearing.

The hearing will be limited to the issues set out by the interested parties in writing beforehand.

In principle, hearings will not be used to present factual information which is not yet on file. Nevertheless, in the interest of good administration and to enable Commission services to progress with the investigation, interested parties may be directed to provide new factual information after a hearing.

11. Instructions for making written submissions and sending completed questionnaires and correspondence

Information submitted to the Commission for the purpose of trade defence investigations shall be free from copyrights. Interested parties, before submitting to the Commission information and/or data which is subject to third party copyrights, must request specific permission to the copyright holder explicitly allowing the Commission a) to use the information and data for the purpose of this trade defence proceeding and b) to provide the information and/or data to interested parties to this investigation in a form that allows them to exercise their rights of defence.

All written submissions, including the information requested in this Notice, completed questionnaires and correspondence provided by interested parties for which confidential treatment is requested shall be labelled 'Sensitive' ⁽⁷⁾. Parties submitting information in the course of this investigation are invited to reason their request for confidential treatment.

⁽⁶⁾ In case of technical problems please contact the Trade Service Desk by email trade-service-desk@ec.europa.eu or by telephone +32 22979797.

⁽⁷⁾ A 'Sensitive' document is a document which is considered confidential pursuant to Article 19 of the basic anti-dumping Regulation and Article 6 of the WTO Agreement on Implementation of Article VI of the GATT 1994 (Anti-Dumping Agreement). It is also a document protected pursuant to Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).

Parties providing 'Sensitive' information are required to furnish non-confidential summaries of it pursuant to Article 19(2) of the basic anti-dumping Regulation, which will be labelled 'Open for inspection by interested parties'. Those summaries should be sufficiently detailed to permit a reasonable understanding of the substance of the information submitted in confidence.

If a party providing confidential information fails to show good cause for a confidential treatment request or does not furnish a non-confidential summary of it in the requested format and quality, the Commission may disregard such information unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated from appropriate sources that the information is correct.

Interested parties are invited to make all submissions and requests via TRON.tdi (<https://tron.trade.ec.europa.eu/tron/TDI>) including scanned powers of attorney and certification sheets. By using TRON.tdi or email, interested parties express their agreement with the rules applicable to electronic submissions contained in the document 'CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN TRADE DEFENCE CASES' published on the website of the Directorate-General for Trade: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/june/tradoc_148003.pdf. The interested parties must indicate their name, address, telephone and a valid email address and they should ensure that the provided email address is a functioning official business email which is checked on a daily basis. Once contact details are provided, the Commission will communicate with interested parties by TRON.tdi or email only, unless they explicitly request to receive all documents from the Commission by another means of communication or unless the nature of the document to be sent requires the use of a registered mail. For further rules and information concerning correspondence with the Commission including principles that apply to submissions via TRON.tdi and by email, interested parties should consult the communication instructions with interested parties referred to above.

Commission address for correspondence:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Trade
Directorate G
Office: CHAR 04/039
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: TRADE-R734-HRF-RU@ec.europa.eu

12. Schedule of the investigation

The investigation shall normally be concluded within 12 months and in any event no later than 15 months from the date of the publication of this Notice, pursuant to Article 11(5) of the basic anti-dumping Regulation.

13. Possibility to comment on other parties' submissions

In order to guarantee the rights of defence, interested parties should have the possibility to comment on information submitted by other interested parties. When doing so, interested parties may only address issues raised in the other interested parties' submissions and may not raise new issues.

Comments on the information provided by other interested parties in reaction to the final disclosure should be submitted within 5 days from the deadline to comment on the final disclosure, unless otherwise specified. If there is an additional final disclosure, comments filed by other interested parties in reaction to this further disclosure should be made within 1 day from the deadline to comment on this further disclosure, unless otherwise specified.

The outlined timeframe is without prejudice to the Commission's right to request additional information from interested parties in duly justified cases.

14. Extension to time limits specified in this Notice

Any extension to the time limits provided for in this Notice should only be requested in exceptional circumstances and will only be granted if duly justified. In any event, any extension to the deadline to reply to questionnaires will be limited normally to 3 days, and as a rule will not exceed 7 days. Regarding time limits for the submission of other information specified in the Notice of Initiation, extensions will be limited to 3 days unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated.

15. Non-cooperation

In cases where any interested party refuses access to or does not provide the necessary information within the time limits, or significantly impedes the investigation, findings, affirmative or negative, may be made on the basis of facts available, in accordance with Article 18 of the basic anti-dumping Regulation.

Where it is found that any interested party has supplied false or misleading information, the information may be disregarded and use may be made of facts available.

If an interested party does not cooperate or cooperates only partially and findings are therefore based on facts available in accordance with Article 18 of the basic anti-dumping Regulation, the result may be less favourable to that party than if it had cooperated.

Failure to give a computerised response shall not be deemed to constitute non-cooperation, provided that the interested party shows that presenting the response as requested would result in an unreasonable extra burden or unreasonable additional cost. The interested party should immediately contact the Commission.

16. Hearing Officer

Interested parties may request the intervention of the Hearing Officer for trade proceedings. The Hearing Officer reviews requests for access to the file, disputes regarding the confidentiality of documents, requests for extension of time limits and any other request concerning the rights of defence of interested parties and third parties as may arise during the proceeding.

The Hearing Officer may organise hearings and mediate between the interested party/-ies and Commissions services to ensure that the interested parties' rights of defence are being fully exercised. A request for a hearing with the Hearing Officer should be made in writing and should specify the reasons for the request. The Hearing Officer will examine the reasons for the requests. These hearings should only take place if the issues have not been settled with the Commission services in due course.

Any request must be submitted in good time and expeditiously so as not to jeopardise the orderly conduct of proceedings. To that effect, interested parties should request the intervention of the Hearing Officer at the earliest possible time following the occurrence of the event justifying such intervention. Where hearing requests are submitted outside the relevant timeframes, the Hearing Officer will also examine the reasons for such late requests, the nature of the issues raised and the impact of those issues on the rights of defence, having due regard to the interests of good administration and the timely completion of the investigation.

For further information and contact details interested parties may consult the Hearing Officer's web pages on DG Trade's website: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/trade-policy-and-you/contacts/hearing-officer/>

17. Processing of personal data

Any personal data collected in this investigation will be treated in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁸⁾.

A data protection notice that informs all individuals of the processing of personal data in the framework of Commission's trade defence activities is available on DG Trade's website: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/accessing-markets/trade-defence/>

⁽⁸⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).