



Manufacturing industries call on the EU to prevent a “great takeover” as an economic consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak

Brussels, 3 April 2020 – European manufacturers’ Alliance AEGIS Europe calls on the EU for decisive protection against a strategic export push by third country producers and a “great takeover” of European manufacturing companies. Trade defence measures and foreign investment screening need to be strengthened and aid given to companies struggling from unfair trade and now being additionally hit by the dramatic economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis.

The Alliance, bringing together more than 20 European manufacturing associations, fully stands in solidarity with the people affected by this crisis and supports the measures taken to protect the health and safety of people. At the same time, AEGIS Europe asks for urgent and adequate measures to keep EU’s manufacturing industry, the economic backbone of the continent, intact.

“The crisis could become the final straw for many EU manufacturing industries already reeling from unfairly traded, predatory imports”, says Inès Van Lierde, the Chair of AEGIS Europe: “The EU needs to take decisive measures to protect manufacturing companies, prevent a strategic export push by third country producers, and avoid a great takeover of its industry.” In a [letter](#) addressed to the President of the Commission, Ms Ursula von der Leyen, **AEGIS Europe called on the European Commission to ensure protection of the European industry during and in the aftermath of this crisis.** “The objective of free trade must be balanced against the need to protect EU industry from unfair, predatory and anti-competitive practices”, Van Lierde said.

The Alliance particularly asks the European Commission to reinforce existing legislative tools and create new ones to maintain a level playing field for EU industry.

This includes:

- More effective trade defence measures
- More timely reaction to imminent damage by dumping and illegal subsidies
- Extended use of safeguard measures
- Ex officio trade defence investigations by the EU Commission
- Swift agreement on an ambitious International Procurement Instrument
- Ensuring the continued working of the internal market
- Particular aid for companies subject to unfair trade and competition.

Inès Van Lierde: “In this exceptional time, **it is more than ever necessary for the Commission to make expeditious and effective use of the trade defence instruments and increase actions to protect EU industry from unfair practices.**” The Alliance also urged the Commission to step up efforts to address circumvention and absorption.

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About AEGIS Europe:

AEGIS Europe is an industry alliance that brings together more than 20 European manufacturing associations from metals and ceramics to energy and transportation industries committed to manufacturing in the EU on a truly level playing field ensured by a rules-based free and fair international trade. Our members account for more than €500 billion in annual turnover, as well as for millions of jobs across the EU.