

Brussels, 2 April 2026

To

Ms Sabine Weyand
European Commission
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Ms Kerstin Jorna
European Commission
kerstin.jorna@ec.europa.eu

Urgent action needed to address unfair trade and safeguard Europe's silicon metal industry, jobs and strategic autonomy

Dear Ms Weyand,
Dear Ms Jorna,

We are writing to you further to our letter of November 2025, in which we raised serious concerns about the deteriorating situation of the European silicon metal and manganese industries.

Since then, the situation has not improved — it has worsened.

Despite silicon metal being officially recognised as both a Critical Raw Material and a Strategic Raw Material under the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), no effective trade defence measures have been introduced. As a result, European producers continue to face severe pressure from low-priced and distortive imports.

The consequences are now materialising. Following six months of short-time work, workers at Ferroglobe's plants in France have returned to their workplaces. However, silicon production has not resumed, as market conditions — shaped by unfair competition and the absence of protective measures — do not allow for viable operations. This is a stark and concrete example of the risks we highlighted in our previous correspondence.

Silicon metal remains indispensable for key industrial value chains, particularly in the aluminium and chemical industries, as well as in sectors underpinning the green and digital transitions. Allowing Europe's production capacity in such a strategic material to erode further is a serious industrial and political mistake.

As we underlined in November, the EU already relies heavily on imports to meet its silicon needs. Continued inaction will only deepen this dependency, undermining Europe's strategic autonomy while exposing supply chains to increasing external risks.

At the same time, this situation is having a profound social impact. Highly skilled workers are bearing the consequences of plant shutdowns and production halts, with hundreds of jobs directly at risk and many

more affected across the value chain. The loss of this industrial capacity would also mean the irreversible loss of expertise and know-how built over decades.

It is increasingly difficult to reconcile the EU's stated ambitions on strategic autonomy with the absence of effective measures to protect its remaining production base.

We therefore reiterate our call for immediate and decisive action.

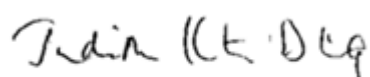
In particular, we urge the European Commission to:

- **Align trade policy with strategic objectives** by ensuring that materials recognised as strategic are effectively protected against unfair competition;
- **Act swiftly and effectively against distortive imports**, including dumping practices that threaten European production and employment;
- **Ensure targeted and proportionate measures**, distinguishing clearly between unfair trade practices and imports from partners integrated into Europe's industrial ecosystem. Countries such as Norway contributes positively to European value chains and should absolutely not be adversely affected by safeguard measures;
- **Safeguard employment and skills** through a coherent industrial strategy that supports quality jobs and is grounded in strong social dialogue.

The situation is urgent. Without prompt intervention, Europe risks irreversible plant closures, further job losses and the permanent weakening of a sector that is essential to its industrial future.

We remain ready to engage constructively with the Commission to identify and implement the necessary solutions.

Yours sincerely,



Judith Kirton-Darling
General Secretary