

About the current situation

The steel industry is suffering from a global crisis due to the slump of steel prices because of massive increase in exports at dumping prices, especially from the Far East and also due to the existing production overcapacities.

The European steel producers have concerns that, in particular, the Chinese steel industry is impeding the fair competition with their obviously subsidised products. Additionally the European steel industry has to buy CO₂-certificates resulting in higher production costs, which the oversea producers do not have. Due to the strict environmental regulations, the European steel producers have modernised their plant and equipment to the latest technological level resulting in 30 % lower CO₂ emission per ton than Chinese manufacturers. Since 1990, the steel industry in Germany has reduced the energy required per ton of finished steel product by 20 %.

If innovative European producers are lost from the market place, the steel will still be required, but will then be produced in less efficient plants. This will mean that the German steel industry will lose up to 80.000 workplaces and a further 500.000 workplaces in the associated industries will also be at risk.

Furthermore the envisaged climate protection objectives would not be achieved.

Therefore efficient trade defence instruments of the EU are vital right now in order to compensate the existing international trade distortions. On 15 February more than 5.000 European steel workers have marched on the streets in Brussels for this objective, among them a delegation of Stahlwerk Thüringen and on 11 April over 45.000 people emphasised these requirements at several steel production sites in Germany.

The German Steel Industry is going to face this international challenge and is demanding a fair playing field!