



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Brussels, 05 February 2026

**Interinstitutional files:
2025/0385 (COD)**

WK 1923/2026 INIT

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From: Presidency
To: Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry)

Subject: Presidency flash note for the meeting of the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry) on 9 February 2026

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PRESIDENCY FLASH NOTE

4th WP ON COMPETITIVENESS AND GROWTH – INDUSTRY

Monday, 9 February 2026, 10:00

EU-US cooperation on critical minerals

Information from the Commission

The Commission will inform Member States on the latest developments and the next steps regarding EU-US cooperation and MoU negotiations on critical raw materials, including the outcomes of the Critical Minerals Ministerial meeting held in Washington D.C. on 4 February 2026.

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1252

Examination of Presidency compromise proposal (doc. 5820/26)

The Presidency would like to extend its gratitude to all Member States for their valuable and insightful comments. Taking these into consideration, the Presidency has prepared a first compromise proposal on the CRMA amending Regulation. In the morning session, the proposed amendments to the text will be presented in detail, and delegations will then be invited to share their views and provide any further input on the suggested compromise text.

This session aims to foster a constructive discussion to finalize the proposal and ensure broad consensus among Member States.

Follow-up to the European Steel and Metals Action Plan

Exchange of views

In preparation for the upcoming Competitiveness Council, the Presidency would like to address the ongoing developments within the Steel and Metals Action Plan during the afternoon session. Concrete measures have advanced, including a new long-term trade measure for steel currently under the ordinary legislative procedure and an upcoming proposal on aluminium scrap to support decarbonisation and industrial resilience.

Despite this progress, energy costs remain the key driver of competitiveness, with persistently high and volatile electricity prices weighing on production, capacity utilisation, and investment in steel, aluminium, and non-ferrous metals industries. Access to affordable, reliable, and clean energy is a decisive condition for maintaining industrial activity.

In parallel, the Commission has strengthened the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism through reinforced anti-circumvention provisions, an extension to selected downstream products as of 2028, and a Temporary Decarbonisation Fund. While these developments enhance investment certainty and climate policy coherence, they do not fully address the underlying challenge of energy costs faced by energy-intensive industries.

Given these issues, the Presidency would like to raise the following questions for consideration:

1. Do Member States consider that the Steel and Metals Action Plan, as currently implemented, provides an adequate and sufficiently comprehensive framework for industrial resilience and economic security across all metal value chains?
2. Given that high energy costs remain the central impediment to investment, what specific gaps remain between the Action Plan's current measures and the industry's need for affordable baseload energy?
3. Regarding the forthcoming trade measure on aluminium scrap, how do Member States assess the appropriateness of a metal-specific approach, and to what extent do they consider that similar challenges and resilience considerations may arise in other segments of the metal value chain?

We look forward to engaging in productive discussions.

With warm regards,

CY Presidency Industry WP Team

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