

Question for written answer E-003859/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Pascal Arimont (PPE)

Subject: Battery fires in waste disposal facilities and pressure from imports in the recycled goods sector: protecting the EU's recycling industry and critical infrastructure

The EU's recycling industry has reported a sharp increase in the number of fires in collection vehicles and sites. Incidents caused by the improper disposal of lithium-ion batteries are reported on a daily basis in several Member States. As a result, insurers are backing out or significantly raising premiums or deductibles. Critical waste management infrastructure is thus coming under increasing pressure, including as a result of these improper disposal practices and the strong demand for battery-powered disposable products, such as single-use e-cigarettes, lacking a functional take-back system. At the same time, cheap imports from non-EU countries (some of which are primary goods but declared as 'recycled' products, others are recycled products manufactured under lower environmental standards) crowd out European suppliers and jeopardise investment in modern recycling.

1. In the context of the Batteries Regulation, the Waste Framework Directive or a future circular economy act, what short-term initiatives – such as an EU-wide battery deposit scheme, a fire damage fund financed by manufacturers, or even a ban on single-use e-cigarettes as already implemented in Belgium – is the Commission examining in order to prevent battery fires?
2. How does the Commission intend to put an end to distortions of competition caused by the declaration of primary products as recycled goods or by the import of goods recycled in non-EU countries without equivalent environmental or evidential standards, for example by means of strict evidentiary obligations, market surveillance, or trade or customs instruments?
3. What measures – including in relation to insurability, temporary support and investment in fire protection – is the Commission considering putting in place to stabilise recycling capacities and enhance the enforcement of the EU's legislation on waste?

Submitted: 2.10.2025