

**Question for written answer E-003976/2025/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Post-safeguard regime and reciprocity in global sustainability standards

In the EU, substances of very high concern such as hexavalent chromium are subject to some of the strictest restrictions worldwide, driving European producers to innovate and invest in alternative solutions. By contrast, imports of steel products – including tinplate and electrolytic chromium coated steel manufactured with hexavalent chromium – continue to enter the EU market freely, without restriction.

This creates clear regulatory asymmetry, undermines innovation and investment in the European steel packaging sector, and weakens the EU's strategic autonomy.

The Commission has committed to proposing, by the third quarter of 2025, a measure to replace the EU's existing steel safeguard. To be effective, a measure of this nature needs to also achieve reciprocity in global sustainability standards:

1. When and how will the Commission propose to address the restriction on imports of products/articles manufactured using substances that are banned for use in processes within the EU but that can be freely used outside of the EU with the resulting products imported without restriction into the EU – such as steel products produced with hexavalent chromium?
2. How will the post-safeguard regime be designed to ensure reciprocity in standards and reinforce the Steel Action Plan's capacity objectives, and will it include a stricter tariff-rate quota system – for example, through reduced volumes and higher above-quota tariffs?
3. Will the new measure take effect by the first quarter of 2026?

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