

**Question for written answer E-003854/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Andi Cristea (S&D)

Subject: Tariff quota allocated to North Macedonia for category seven steel and its impact on downstream users in the EU

Regulation (EU) 2026/1384 and Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1457 have significantly reduced tariff quotas for steel imports. Economic operators say that the quota allocated to North Macedonia for category seven steel (heavy quarto plates) is exhausted by the middle of each quarter.

For over 12 years, one Romanian shipyard has been buying around 95 % of the plates it needs (6 000-7 000 tonnes/year) from a manufacturer in North Macedonia. Deliveries have now come to a halt even though the order was placed back in January/February 2026. The shipyard has not been able to find an EU-based supplier offering the same surface preparation and deliveries that are synchronised with production. Delays mean shipbuilding for European customers cannot begin on time, entailing potential contractual penalties.

1. When setting the tariff quota for category seven steel, did the Commission assess the impact on downstream industries, such as shipbuilding, which depend on stable trade flows?
2. Does the Commission intend to adjust this quota or allow the reallocation of unused volumes when determining the allocations applicable from 2027?
3. What mechanisms does it have in mind for avoiding disruption of supply to EU users for whom there are no realistic alternatives within the Union?

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