

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002053/24
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (ECR)
(14 October 2024)**

Subject: EU measures on customs controls and duties for online purchases of low-cost and low-quality products from China

The growth in online purchases of cheap and very low-quality products from China is seriously harming the economy and the safety of European consumers.

Those products, which are often sold at derisory prices, not only undermine the competitiveness of European businesses, but also pose serious risks to consumers' health and safety. Many of them do not meet the quality and safety standards imposed by the European Union and, as a result, numerous cases of defective or dangerous products have been reported.

In the light of the above:

1. What steps will the Commission take to scale up customs controls on products imported from China by means of e-commerce platforms?
2. Is it considering introducing specific import duties for products that do not meet European quality and safety standards?
3. What initiatives are being planned that will help European companies to compete with Chinese companies' low-cost, low-quality products?

Submitted: 14.10.2024

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(6 February 2025)**

The large volume of parcels sent to EU consumers via e-commerce platforms from third countries presents challenges in ensuring compliance with EU consumer protection and product safety rules.

The Commission is committed to enhancing cooperation with Member States to enable customs and other authorities to better identify and remove unsafe or non-compliant products entering the Union.

On 17 May 2023, the Commission proposed a comprehensive Customs Reform package ⁽¹⁾ to strengthen EU customs' capacity to monitor goods, particularly e-commerce items.

This includes the creation of a new EU Customs Authority and an EU Customs Data Hub, which will centralise data to improve targeting of unsafe products.

The reform also eliminates customs duty exemptions for goods valued up to EUR 150 and designates platforms and sellers registered for the Import One Stop Shop as 'deemed importers', making them responsible for compliance.

Under the Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽²⁾, the Commission works with national authorities to enforce rules, focusing on very large online platforms and search engines (VLOPs and VLOSEs).

It has designated nine online marketplaces as VLOPs, including Zalando, Amazon, AliExpress, Shein and Temu and initiated formal proceedings against Temu (31 October 2024) for potential DSA breaches related to illegal products, addictive design, recommendation systems, and researcher data access, and against AliExpress (March 2024) for issues concerning illegal products and consumer protection, recommendation systems, and researcher data access.

In June and October 2024 Temu and Shein were also asked to provide further information to address concerns on content moderation, dark patterns, trader identification, and user wellbeing.

The Commission prioritises ensuring a level playing field through effective customs, tax, safety controls, and sustainability standards.

In line with its 2024-2029 political guidelines and Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy's mission letter, tackling challenges associated with e-commerce platforms remains a key focus, particularly through the enforcement of the new General Product Safety Regulation².

⁽¹⁾ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Union Customs Code and the European Union Customs Authority, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 952/2013.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act) that entered into application on 17 February 2024.
