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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
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The current proposal on steel stems from the specific conditions in this sector, meaning globally recognised overcapacity and a safeguard expiring in June 2026. This led to a situation where proposing this kind of measure under Article 207 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union became the only option for effectively safeguarding the steel sector.

The Commission remains attentive to industry feedback to understand specific concerns in the ceramic sector. Nevertheless, for this sector (more specifically the ceramic tableware and kitchenware) anti-dumping measures concerning imports from the People's Republic of China were published and confirmed for further five years on 8 October 2025. However, on 19 December 2024 the Commission initiated a partial interim review of the level of dumping covered by the anti-dumping measure, trade defence instruments that could eventually result in a revision of the actual level of the measures to make them more effective. This investigation is still ongoing and therefore, at this stage, it is too early to draw a conclusion.

When negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs), the Commission consults with the Member States and the European Parliament and takes their opinions into consideration, including the concerns of different industrial sectors. To mitigate potential issues, the FTAs include bilateral safeguard mechanisms that provide a framework for resolving disputes and addressing problems, should they arise. These mechanisms contain specific clauses that enable the EU to implement targeted measures to address and resolve any challenges that may emerge.