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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(9.12.2025)

The use of hexavalent chromium substances is subject to several complementary pieces of EU legislation, for example, Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006¹ concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), and Directive 2004/37/EC² on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens, mutagens or reprotoxic substances at work (CMRD).

The Commission has no concrete plans for import restrictions on hexavalent chromium-treated steel products but is preparing to shift hexavalent chromium substances from authorisation to restriction under REACH. The current phase of this transition process is the development of opinions by the scientific committees of the European Chemicals Agency.

The Commission is studying the health and economic impact of a possible revision of the occupational exposure limit for chromium VI compounds under CMRD. Such revision would contribute to workers' protection, while avoiding excessive burden. The current work is informed by scientific evidence, such as a Risk Assessment Committee of European Chemical Agency Opinion, and subject to stakeholder input.

The scope of the planned steel measure proposed on 7 October 2025³ does not include reciprocity in standards. Its core policy objective is to address the trade-related negative effects of global overcapacity by limiting imports into the EU's market. Potential actions on standards may need to be addressed through other policy initiatives. Its enforcement date depends on co-legislators, with the current steel safeguards set to expire at the end of June 2026.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2006/1907/oj/eng>.

² Directive 2004/37/EC <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02004L0037-20240408>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0726>.