

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002508/26
to the Commission
Thomas Pellerin-Carlin (S&D)
(17 June 2026)**

Subject: Establishment of a mechanism to restrict or tax copper waste and scrap exports to third countries

The energy and digital transition is ramping up Europe's copper requirements, as it is vital for electricity grids, renewable energy, electric vehicles and digital infrastructure.

However, the EU is still exporting large volumes of copper waste and scrap to third countries, despite it being a resource that is essential for Europe's industrial autonomy. In France, the fibre roll-out will, by 2030, lead to the gradual dismantling of the old ADSL network, estimated at almost 1 million kilometres of cables. The recycling of those cables should benefit European industry first and foremost.

The Commission is aware of the risks of this metal scrap leakage from the EU and, on 23 July 2025, it activated a surveillance system to monitor imports and exports of metal waste, including copper, to assess their impact on supplies for EU industries.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission planning to propose a mechanism to restrict or tax copper waste and scrap exports to third countries in order to ensure that EU industries have an adequate supply of copper for recycling?
2. Can it provide a timetable for any binding legislative initiatives or additional measures being considered in the wake of this surveillance?

Submitted: 17.6.2026

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(29 July 2026)**

In the European Steel and Metals Action Plan ⁽¹⁾, the Commission recognises the necessity to ensure sufficient availability of scrap for EU producers and outlines actions across different policy areas, including trade.

In this context, in July 2025, the Commission has introduced surveillance of imports and exports of steel, aluminium, and copper scrap.

In December 2025, this has been further strengthened in the RESourceEU Action Plan ⁽²⁾, with a commitment to propose targeted measures on aluminium scrap, and similar measures for copper if this proves necessary.

The copper waste and scrap exports for the period January to May 2026 have registered a small increase of 10.8% in volume terms versus those of the same period last year.

Such an increase has not so far warranted a trade measure or any other legislative initiative for copper waste and scrap. The Commission continues to monitor the situation and stands ready to act if necessary.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2025) 125 final; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=COM:2025:125:FIN>.

⁽²⁾ COM/2025/945 final; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52025DC0945>.