



**VIRGINIJUS SINKEVIČIUS**  
Commissioner for Environment  
Oceans and Fisheries

Brussels,  
Ref. Ares(2021)5688176  
22.09.2021

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[REDACTED] industriAll European Trade Union

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The European Steel Association (EUROFER)

E-mail: [REDACTED] [@eurofer.eu](mailto:[REDACTED]@eurofer.eu)

Dear [REDACTED] Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter and shared insights concerning the importance of increasing the circularity and the decarbonisation of the European steel sector.

The European Green Deal<sup>1</sup>, the Circular Economy Action Plan<sup>2</sup> and the Zero Pollution Action Plan<sup>3</sup> provide a clear mandate and directions on the revision of the EU rules on the shipment of waste, where the primary focus is placed on the need to address the challenges of exports of EU waste to third countries that might face serious environmental and human health problems, as well as security issues in cases of illegal waste trafficking. In this context, the Commission is thoroughly working on different possibilities to propose a new regime governing the export of non-hazardous waste outside the EU in the upcoming revision for the Waste Shipment Regulation, with a view to adopting the legislative proposal later this year.

In addition to proposing new rules on the export of waste outside the EU, the Commission will propose to streamline the current EU legal framework to encourage more shipments of waste going for preparation for reuse and recycling within the EU.

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2019) 640 final

<sup>2</sup> COM(2020)98 final

<sup>3</sup> COM(2021) 400 final

Today only 12% of raw materials used by the EU's industry come from recycling. Such low use of secondary materials signals a considerable loss of valuable resources for the EU in its transition to a circular economy. Therefore, by updating, clarifying and facilitating provisions for intra-EU shipments, the Commission will seek to contribute to opening up new possibilities for the EU industry to enter fully into circular economy models and lower their carbon footprint. It would contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives set out under the EU's "Fit for 55" initiative<sup>4</sup> to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 55% by 2030, as compared to 1990 levels. This is the case especially for the steel industry, identified, in the Commission's New Industrial Strategy for Europe<sup>5</sup>, as a priority among the energy intensive industries for the transition to a circular and climate neutral European economy<sup>6</sup>, where higher uptakes of scrap are key in decarbonizing the steel sector.

It is very encouraging to see that the European steel sector is ready to contribute to the promotion of the circular economy by increasing uptake of secondary materials.

The revision of the Waste Shipment Regulation will aim to enhance the transition to a circular economy in the EU. It will complement other actions implementing the Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan.

In this process, we count very much on close cooperation with industrial sectors. Only joint efforts will allow us to successfully tackle the challenges associated with the transition to a circular economy and achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal.

Yours sincerely,



Virginijus Sinkevičius

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<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_21\\_3541](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_3541)

<sup>5</sup> COM(2021) 350 final

<sup>6</sup> SWD(2021) 353 final