
Recommendations to the European Parliament 2024-2029





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WHO WE ARE

The American Chamber of Commerce to the EU is a



Trade association



Representing **160+ American companies** committed to and invested in Europe



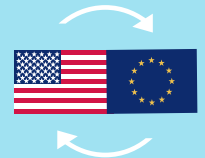
From a **wide range** of sectors

WHAT WE WANT

Our goals are:



To build a stronger and **more united EU**



To maintain and strengthen the **transatlantic relationship**

WHAT WE STAND FOR

As a respected **policy partner**, we stand for:



Trust



Expertise



Excellence



Transparency

OUR WORK

Our work focuses on:



Sharing knowledge
(publications, policy positions)



Fostering debate
(events, meetings)



Connecting people
(business, government and civil society)



Building bridges
(Member States, EU and US)

Introduction

The arrival of a new EU mandate brings with it a renewed sense of purpose and opportunity. This fresh energy comes at a critical moment as the EU takes on the tasks of restoring growth for businesses and consumers, making the European economy sustainable and secure as well as enabling the digital transformation of the Single Market. As the EU navigates this new chapter, it is crucial to address these tasks with urgency and collaboration.

The last mandate was shaped by a range of challenges – both foreseen and unforeseen. Chief among them was Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, demanding a swift response to support the Ukrainian people and defend democracy. At the same time, the EU had to contend with a pandemic and longstanding challenges like climate change and the EU's growing competitiveness gap.

The previous mandate shows that the new European Parliament must not only address today's challenges but also prepare Europe for future shocks. This resilience will come from fostering an environment that is conducive to innovation and growth in the Single Market, where businesses are not overwhelmed by regulatory complexity and administrative burdens. It is up to the European Parliament to put Europe on that path to competitiveness, acting as the transparent check on fellow EU institutions as well as ensuring that the needs of citizens and businesses are reflected in EU legislation.

The recommendations put forward in this document – while not exhaustive – are our way of contributing to discussions on how to build a stronger and more united EU. American companies in Europe have long been committed to partnering with policymakers to address the challenges of our time, and this new EU mandate is no different. The €7.8 trillion transatlantic economy is a powerful force to support Europe's prosperity and security. The American Chamber of Commerce to the EU (AmCham EU) is ready to work with the new Parliament to turn its potential into tangible progress for Europe's future.

Attractiveness of Europe

Agenda for Action 2024-2029



The attractiveness of Europe is under threat. A heavy regulatory agenda, protectionist trends and sluggish growth have created a difficult environment for business in a context of global uncertainty. But the future does not have to be bleak. With decisive action, the EU can reset the agenda and boost its competitiveness in the global economy. American companies stand ready to help build a brighter future in Europe.

Our *Agenda for Action* outlines the three priority areas that should drive the European political agenda to strengthen the attractiveness of the region and tackle global issues.



A competitive, sustainable and digital Single Market

- Regulatory burden
- Innovation
- Sustainability
- Digital



A strong and resilient Europe on the international scene

- Trade
- Transatlantic relationship
- Security
- Global standards



An equitable and democratic Europe

- Skills
- Inclusion
- Democracy
- Future of the EU

Learn more: amchameu.eu/agendaforaction

AFET

Foreign Affairs



ISSUE**Ukraine's economic recovery and reconstruction**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Russia's war of aggression has significantly affected Ukraine's economy, infrastructure and stability, complicating its recovery and EU membership aspirations. The EU's support is crucial for Ukraine's sustained recovery and modernisation. The Ukraine Facility should be implemented effectively, ensuring funds are distributed transparently and accountably while incorporating feedback from all stakeholders, including the private sector. The EU should favour projects that provide both immediate relief and long-term support for Ukraine's economic development and infrastructure. Extending financial support beyond the current budgetary framework would offer Ukraine a reliable financial outlook, crucial for planning and implementing extensive reconstruction and reform projects. Enhancing the capabilities of Ukrainian institutions to manage and use EU funds effectively is also needed, including training in project management, financial oversight and anti-corruption measures.

Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration

Integration of Ukraine into Euro-Atlantic structures (the EU and NATO) is essential not only for its security and economy but also for broader regional stability. Euro-Atlantic integration counters the challenges posed by Russia's war of aggression, which has violated international law and destabilised the region. The EU has a vital role in facilitating Ukraine's smooth integration, both politically and practically. The EU should continue to provide the necessary support to align Ukraine's legal and regulatory frameworks with those of the EU, fostering better governance and combating corruption. The EU should continue to strengthen Ukraine's defence capabilities through ongoing NATO cooperation during and after the war. In addition, as Ukraine moves closer to EU accession, the EU should ensure stable trade relations with Ukraine by considering extensions to trade agreements like the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements and Autonomous Trade Measures. Lastly, for the EU to be the bulwark of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, it should maintain its strong political and diplomatic positions, continuing sanctions on Russia and employing stringent export controls and trade defence strategies. These measures are essential to maintain peace and security in Europe.

SEDE

Subcommittee on Security and Defence



ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS
Third-country participation in EU-funded programmes related to defence, space, industry and procurement

US companies provide high-skilled jobs, substantial investments and technological innovations. Excluding these entities from major EU funding and procurement programmes could distort the market, reduce Europe's competitiveness and weaken the EU's ability to address geopolitical challenges. The EU should ensure closer cooperation with like-minded allies to strengthen its Defence Technological and Industrial Base, focusing on its long-term competitiveness, while producing the capabilities required by the armed forces. The EU should also ensure fair implementation of various initiatives, including the European Defence Fund (EDF), the European Space Programme and Horizon Europe, conscious of the global nature of the defence and space industries and preserving open markets and fair competition. Finally, the EU should promote the participation of EU-based subsidiaries of American companies in EU and Member State-funded research and development (R&D), procurement and sustainment programmes. This should be based on their added value, locally developed intellectual property (IP) and overall contribution to the EU's technological and industrial base.

Transatlantic alignment on space regulations

Increasing militarisation in space, coupled with fragmented and uncoordinated regulations, could increase security threats. Cybersecurity measures for space assets remain critical for both military and civilian purposes. The EU should align its regulations to avoid negatively affecting Europe's competitiveness. This includes internally coordinating its regulatory measures for space and building a strong international framework that avoids a regional patchwork. The EU should consolidate the EU-US Space Dialogue to coordinate policies and share information on space activities, including to address emerging threats, harmonise standards and develop joint strategies for space exploration and commercial activities. The EU should also encourage transatlantic public-private partnerships to drive innovation and commercial growth in the space sector. In addition, the EU should negotiate reciprocal market access agreements to facilitate easier entry and operation for space companies in both the EU and the US.

Transatlantic Defence Technological and Industrial Cooperation

A strong and prosperous Transatlantic Defence Technological and Industrial Cooperation is instrumental for maintaining sustainable growth and global security. The EU must encourage capability development programmes that include both EU and US stakeholders to enhance cost-effective innovation, standardisation, interoperability, interchangeability and technological leadership on both sides of the Atlantic. In addition, the EU must establish open, reciprocal and resilient defence markets. The EU should also seek to encourage seamless trade, cooperation and technology transfers among like-minded partners as part of EU-NATO cooperation.

AGRI

Agriculture and Rural Development



ISSUE

Common Agricultural Policy

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the constant global demographic growth, policymakers need to ensure a proportionate rise in food production. The CAP is critical to creating a fairer and greener European agricultural ecosystem that can meet the world's demands. To meet this purpose, the EU must develop R&D initiatives in agriculture, including digital and precision farming. The EU should also invest in incentivising farmers to adopt more sustainable agriculture. Finally, the EU should ensure a well-functioning international agri-food supply chain that supports a resilient economy.

Food security and affordability

The United Nations defines food security and affordability as all people, at all times, having physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. To this end, the EU should designate the entire food production chain as essential. Export restrictions for agricultural raw materials hinder the necessary free trade policies that contribute to greater food security. Therefore, the EU should stimulate free trade for agricultural products by leveraging different trade agreements to diversify supply chains and grow the volume of goods traded. The EU must implement short- and long-term measures, agreed through private-public collaboration, to ensure sustainable food security and affordability. The EU should also make innovation accessible to farmers to enable them to fulfil their full production potential with the advancement of sustainable agricultural machinery technologies. In addition, the EU should ensure that regulatory frameworks do not create additional uncertainties in global food production and trade flows.

See other relevant priorities:

- Trade of agri-food products (p. 33; INTA)

ECON

Economic and Monetary Affairs



ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Banking Union**

The EU consistently supports strengthening financial stability through enhanced prudential requirements and improved recovery and resolution mechanisms. As noted in the recent Draghi report, completing the Banking Union is crucial for advancing the Economic and Monetary Union and ensuring a stable, safe and reliable financial ecosystem for the EU. The EU should finalise recovery and resolution mechanisms and ensure a uniform application of international banking standards – notably the Basel framework – to prevent competitive distortions and capital misallocation. Additionally, the EU should promote the free flow of capital and liquidity, avoiding regulations that lead to fragmentation or inhibit the centralised management of resources by cross-border groups.

Capital Markets Union

Open, well-functioning and appropriately regulated transatlantic capital markets are a crucial driver of long-term economic growth and competitiveness in Europe. In today's context of geopolitical tensions, which create additional market fragmentation and increase obstacles to cross-border investments and efficient capital allocation, it is more important than ever to complete the Capital Markets Union (CMU) and strengthen the EU's financial sector. In line with the principles of the CMU, the EU should apply an open, flexible and outward-looking approach to ensure equal and non-discriminatory access for third-country financial institutions and avoid additional obstacles to cross-border investments. The EU must also avoid fragmentation of global liquidity pools. The approach to market access should not be driven by localisation agendas nor should the EU systematically impose stringent wide-reaching conditionalities. The EU must instead advance global trade for financial services to minimise current and potential foreign direct investment (FDI) restrictions on EU companies that transact in multiple jurisdictions, as well as advance risk-transfer solutions for large risks (eg climate and cyber risks). Finally, the EU should also ensure access to third-country insurance market capacity for EU clients.

Digital finance and payments

The integration of financial technology can revolutionise the financial sector through new business models, services and products. This requires a regulatory framework that both encourages and facilitates financial institutions' adoption of digital business models and innovative payment solutions. The EU should focus on outcomes, fostering industry innovation and enhancing consumer experiences, while maintaining strong consumer protection. Additionally, EU regulations must ensure a level playing field and avoid creating an asymmetric regime that could disadvantage third-country companies.

ISSUE**International alignment
in sustainable finance
legislation**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The EU's leadership is critical to building international momentum on sustainable finance. An ambitious transition requires international cooperation and the mobilisation of global financial markets. The EU should strive for international alignment, which is key to prevent fragmented jurisdictional approaches and promote harmonisation. Likewise, the EU should promote discussions in international forums and cooperate with third-country stakeholders to ensure regulatory certainty and international alignment in environmental, social and governance (ESG) disclosures. The EU should also ensure equal and non-discriminatory access for all third-country financial institutions, businesses and investors to help support and grow the European economy.

**Proportionate and
predictable competition
enforcement**

Abandoning long-standing competition best practices puts the future of rules-based, predictable and proportionate antitrust enforcement at risk. Using competition rules to achieve industrial policy goals may decrease the attractiveness of Europe as an investment destination. Instead of bending to political pressure to set aside long-standing principles of competition policy, the EU should focus on improving the efficiency and relevance of antitrust procedural rules and maintain their coherence with modern and fast-moving markets and with other EU policies, particularly the Digital Markets Act. The EU should also improve the Commission's current competition policy and enforcement set-up to fully protect due process. In addition, the EU should pursue a more cooperative and open approach to stakeholders, using public consultations and publishing guiding principles. Finally, the EU should promote the contestability of markets to ensure the growth of fledgling and innovative EU companies in critical sectors.

ISSUE**Sustainable
finance framework
implementation**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting the EU's climate and sustainability goals requires private capital. However, its potential has not yet been fully leveraged. Before the EU takes any further regulatory action, it needs to proportionately and workably implement its new framework for sustainable finance (including sustainability reporting), as well as consider complex default and potential market risks. The EU should adopt an evidence-based, flexible and outward-looking approach that ensures coherence and future proofing. This means allowing for the practical mobilisation of private capital through clear and workable guidelines, including a definitive and objective definition of 'sustainable'. Without such clarity, investors face regulatory uncertainty, which can hinder investments. The EU must avoid exclusionary approaches towards entire sectors: for the entire economy to transition, all sectors need access to finance for their own transformations. Additionally, the EU must account for the extensive efforts and resources required for the green transition. This includes sequencing the implementation timelines of new regulations to give businesses adequate time to prepare and adjust their operations. Finally, businesses need clear guidance and harmonised implementation of the sustainability reporting framework – particularly concerning the requirements for third-country companies – to establish the necessary regulatory certainty and facilitate compliance across borders.

See other relevant priorities:

- Targeted transaction screening (p. 32; INTA)

FISC

Subcommittee on Tax Matters



ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Direct tax decluttering**

The European tax regime is extremely cluttered. The EU should examine ways to reduce administrative burdens on businesses, particularly with the current implementation of the global 15% minimum corporate income tax (Pillar 2). It should also review and simplify existing measures aimed at increasing administrative cooperation and transparency and addressing base erosion and profit shifting. The EU must avoid overlapping legislation that creates duplicative compliance and reporting requirements.

Taxation of remote workers

The rise in remote work following the pandemic has uncovered significant tax uncertainties that prevent businesses from allowing workers to work remotely for personal reasons. The EU should support efforts at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) level to update the Model Tax Conventions, Commentaries and Transfer Pricing Guidelines. That would ensure that remote work done for purely personal reasons does not produce unnecessary corporate income tax implications. The EU should continue to study what issues remain at the EU level following an adequate OECD solution.

The Faster and Safer Tax Relief of Excess Withholding Taxes (FASTER) Directive implementation

The FASTER Directive proposes to make withholding tax procedures in the EU more efficient and secure for investors, financial intermediaries and Member State tax administrations. The EU needs to implement the Directive as consistently as possible across the Union and integrate it with other corporate and capital market processes.

ISSUE**Value added tax exemptions for charitable donations****VAT in the Digital Age (ViDA)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

VAT liability for companies that make large or regular donations can reach a tipping point where donations are no longer a viable option. Instead, these companies are forced to destroy these wholesome goods that could otherwise be donated. Reassessing this system could create significant social benefits and bolster key EU sustainability goals, such as those in the Waste Framework Directive and sustainability reporting. The EU should encourage Member States to put in place VAT for charitable donations that contain sufficient anti-fraud measures but are still simple, electronically supported and neutral towards the type and use of donated goods. Additionally, the EU should encourage Member States to ensure that within these systems, eligible charity partners are broadly defined to allow recognised charities and special entities such as schools, orphanages, hospitals and hospices to receive donated goods, even if they come from different Member States. The EU should consider an EU-wide registry for charity partners or entities that are automatically qualified to receive donations.

The ViDA package aims to adapt to the changes brought by digital transformation and update tax regimes across the Union. The EU should encourage ViDA's quick implementation to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises and larger businesses alike can immediately reap its benefits. The EU should also ensure that Member States are aligned with ViDA and do not implement new VAT systems.

ENVI

Environment, Public Health and Food Safety



ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Batteries Regulation**

The implementation of the Batteries Regulation will take place through secondary legislation and have far-reaching consequences. The detail and structure of the proposed secondary legislation (eg carbon footprint declaration, durability and performance requirements, due diligence policies etc) and the architecture of the Digital Product Passport (DPP) are key to effective implementation. The EU should ensure that the relevant secondary legislation is published well before the implementation date of the respective requirement. Otherwise, the implementation timelines must be suitably revised or extended.

Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) implementation

The ESPR has been finalised, and its implementation through secondary legislation will have far-reaching impacts. The activities and structure of the proposed Ecodesign Work Plan 2025-2029 and the architecture of the DPP are key to effective implementation. The EU should support product-specific ecodesign measures, while avoiding horizontal measures that might overlap with other legislation. When developing product-specific ecodesign requirements, the EU must ensure adequate transition time and account for trade-offs between different environmental aspects, as well as ensuring alignment with sectoral legislation. The EU should avoid double regulation and ensure that the REACH regulation remains the EU's primary chemicals regulation. The EU should also ensure that the secondary legislation and working plans for the implementation of ecodesign requirements at different phases are available in a timely manner. Likewise, DPP standards and the respective non-legislative acts must also be available in a timely manner and offer a high level of protection for confidential business information and alignment with the International Organization for Standardization.

Low-carbon and competitive economy

The private sector is keen to support the EU in achieving carbon reduction and climate neutrality while maintaining a competitive economy. However, the more ambitious the targets and legislative requirements and the shorter the relevant implementation period, the larger the investments required for industries to adapt and comply. Additionally, the current lack of measures equivalent to the EU Emissions Trading System in third countries puts EU energy-intensive sectors in an unfavourable position. The EU should develop low-carbon technologies and low-carbon business solutions. The EU should also ensure that its climate and energy policy framework is all-encompassing and balances sustainability, competitiveness and innovation. Furthermore, the EU should ensure that Member States proactively translate the 2030 biomethane production goals into their National Climate and Energy Plans and enact appropriate fiscal measures to scale up the use of biomethane and related technologies. Finally, the EU should establish enabling conditions for achieving the 2040 climate target once issues with competitiveness have been resolved.

ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) implementation**

The PPWR offers a significant opportunity to enhance the Single Market, streamline EU packaging regulations and reduce market fragmentation by advancing Europe's transition to a climate-neutral and circular economy. To smoothly implement the PPWR, the EU should quickly adopt evidence-based secondary legislation and guidance documents to ensure minimal disruption to value chains that depend on packaging for the commercialisation of products in the European market, while ensuring that all stakeholders can contribute to a workable PPWR implementation. Recycling and reuse objectives must consider the specificities of each sector and must not jeopardise the safety of operators and users. For example, recycling medical technologies' packaging waste faces severe constraints, as such waste is often contaminated with hazardous chemicals, biological agents or bodily fluids.

Pellets Regulation

The Commission's proposal for a Regulation on preventing pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution must ensure coherence with other EU and international initiatives. Such initiatives include the ongoing work on plastic pellet management during maritime transport under the International Maritime Organization, the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) restriction on microplastics adopted in October 2023 and the recently agreed revision of the Industrial Emissions Directive.

Targeted REACH revisions

The EU must implement the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability and meet the goals of climate neutrality and a circular economy, while supporting the economy and integrating different aspects of chemicals management. The EU's chemicals regulations should be targeted and incremental to ensure investment certainty. The EU should also make further improvements to the Regulation on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) by clarifying deadlines, streamlining processes, improving enforcement and preventing regulatory overlap with sector-specific legislation. Finally, the EU should keep the principles of risk assessment and science-based decision-making at the core of its chemicals legislation.

Universal per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) restriction under REACH

The proposed PFAS restriction raises significant concerns regarding its broad scope and lack of differentiation among various PFAS. Banning all PFAS without scientific justification could disrupt current operations across many sectors. The proposal's lack of exemptions for critical industries, such as medical technology, and high-tech sectors like semiconductors, clean energy and industrial manufacturing, could hinder technological advancements and economic stability.

ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Universal per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) restriction under REACH (cont.)**

The restrictive timelines and inadequate consideration of the availability and viability of alternatives amplify these concerns and could potentially force value chains out of Europe. Any potential PFAS regulation must be proportionate, balancing environmental protection with the economy. The EU should consider adopting timebound derogations and exemptions from the restriction, where necessary, for essential industrial and professional applications, particularly those crucial for European sovereignty and strategic sectors, as well as for their manufacturing. In addition, the proposal should align with the main principles of the Green Deal and other relevant packages and extend derogations and exemptions for key applications in medical technology, clean energy and high-tech industries where no viable alternatives exist. Furthermore, the EU should ensure that remanufactured, refurbished or repurposed products and components are excluded from the scope. Finally, the EU should implement a science-based, risk-differentiated regulatory framework to maintain the balance between human health, environmental preservation and the continued operation and growth of Europe's industrial sectors.

Waste Framework Directive

The Commission's proposal to revise the Waste Framework Directive aims to reduce food waste and bring about more circular and sustainable management of textile waste. To meet this purpose, the revision should enable greater harmonisation through reporting guidelines and EU eco-modulation criteria as well as include good governance principles for the efficient and transparent organisation of producer responsibility organisations.

Water resilience

Increasing water scarcity across the EU and the rising frequency of extreme weather events pose significant threats to both humans and economic stability. Water scarcity is already affecting 40% of the European population, and further stress on water resources is predicted. The existing water infrastructure is not resilient enough to cope with these challenges. The EU should enhance infrastructure resilience by reducing water leakages and promoting water reuse technologies. Furthermore, the EU should support the implementation of advanced digital monitoring systems using artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things to provide real-time data on water quality and quantity. This would facilitate better management and crisis mitigation. Finally, the EU should foster public-private partnerships for ecosystem restoration and increase funding for water-resilient projects to support national and local efforts.

ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Digitalisation of healthcare**

Digitalisation has the potential to transform healthcare delivery, making it more efficient, personalised and accessible. The European Health Data Space (EHDS) should promote the use of health data to improve patient care, facilitate research and support health policy development. To enable this paradigm shift, EHDS needs to strike a balance between facilitating access for data users to conduct life-saving research and protecting people's privacy and the rights of data holders. The EU should also promote the adoption of telemedicine and other digital health tools and their integration into national healthcare systems. Furthermore, the EU should support initiatives that leverage health data for research and innovation and facilitate collaboration between healthcare providers, researchers and technology companies.

Financing of healthcare and research

Sustainable financing of healthcare and research is fundamental to advance medical knowledge and ensure the availability of high-quality care. Adequate funding enables the development of new treatments, supports public health initiatives and enhances the overall resilience of healthcare systems. Increased funding for Member State healthcare systems is required to provide high-quality care and handle future health crises. Furthermore, the EU should boost investment in medical research and innovation through programmes such as Horizon Europe and prioritise funding for projects that address significant health challenges, including chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and cancer, pandemics and emerging health threats. Lastly, the EU should encourage public-private partnerships to leverage the private sector's expertise and resources.

Patient access to innovation

Access to innovative medical treatments and technologies is crucial for improving patient outcomes and advancing healthcare systems. The EU's regulatory framework, including the pharmaceutical package and the Medical Devices Regulation, plays a vital role in ensuring that patients can benefit from the latest medical advancements. To ensure timely access for patients to innovative products and to safeguard Europe's competitiveness in life sciences, the EU should establish a predictable and robust regulatory and IP framework. The EU should streamline the approval process for new drugs in the revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation. The EU should also revisit the Medical Devices Regulation to address bottlenecks in its implementation. In addition, the EU should harmonise regulatory requirements across Member States to simplify the market entry process for innovative treatments and devices.

ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**See other relevant priorities:**

- Energy market (p. 35; ITRE)
- Common Agricultural Policy (p. 11; AGRI)
- Industrial policy for open markets and green innovation (p. 36; ITRE)
- International alignment in sustainable finance legislation (p. 14; ECON)
- Low-emission transport system (p. 43; TRAN)
- Sustainable finance framework implementation (p. 15; ECON)
- Twin green and digital transition (p. 37; ITRE)

IMCO

Internal Market and Consumer Protection



ISSUE**Consistency and fairness in the EU's Consumer Agenda****Consolidation and alignment of digital policies (eg artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and data)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing consumer protection regulations are not effectively and consistently enforced, which leads to uneven compliance among businesses and makes those that comply less competitive. The EU should ensure that all existing EU consumer protection regulations are clear, enforceable and consistently applied across Member States as well as enforce legislation uniformly and without discrimination. In addition, the EU should adhere to Better Regulation principles when crafting new consumer legislation and apply a cost-benefit analysis during the legislative process. Furthermore, the EU should create coherent and consistent enforcement mechanisms, including for the digital sector. Finally, the EU should harmonise consumer protection standards across the bloc to avoid discrimination against businesses because of where they are based.

The 2019-2024 Commission mandate published many pieces of digital legislation. After five years of intense legislative work, businesses now find themselves in a complex digital regulatory landscape, with severe regulatory overlaps and a lack of public-private collaboration in implementing digital policies. The EU should clarify and map out all the requirements in digital policy while identifying overlaps and potential contradictions. Likewise, the EU should foster public-private collaboration to ensure that businesses' concerns are addressed to minimise business disruption. When it comes to the Cyber Resilience Act, the EU must develop sector-specific guidelines to better accommodate industries' unique characteristics and support them as they gradually comply. With regards to the AI Act, the EU should provide guidelines to better distinguish the high-risk and low-risk product categories as soon as possible. The EU must issue guidelines for the Data Act in a timely manner to ensure uniform implementation across Member States.

ISSUE

Creation of a Digital Single Market

RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, the Single Market for digital services and technologies is far from being a reality, even with the Digital Single Market strategy. Reaching the Digital Decade targets of 2030 and future investments are fundamental for the growth of the digital economy. To this end, the EU should create a Digital Single Market where people can benefit from the free movement of online services, goods and data. The EU should ensure that it remains an attractive and open market to foreign investors by avoiding discriminatory and protectionist policies. In addition, the EU should apply principle- and risk-based policymaking to keep frameworks relevant for fast-evolving technologies. The EU should also accelerate investment, innovation and entrepreneurship to foster the uptake and scale-up of new technologies while investing in connectivity. Finally, the EU should strengthen coordination between Member States on export controls, including the application of export controls to dual-use 'critical technologies'.

Cross-border trade and customs

Tariffs, barriers and a lack of harmonisation and streamlining of procedures make business suboptimal and costly for companies engaged in international trade. Improved customs procedures could enhance business practices and create the conditions for increased investment and innovation between the EU and key strategic partners like the US and the UK. To this end, the EU should enhance customs procedures in trade agreements and push for ambitious trade facilitation initiatives under the Trade and Technology Council (TTC). In addition, the EU should ensure a smooth cross-border relationship with the UK and the implementation of the Windsor Framework.

E-commerce

The expansion of digital commerce has demonstrated that current customs rules are not fit for the realities of today's supply chains. To remain competitive in light of the e-commerce revolution, the EU must balance the needs of e-commerce businesses and consumers, while maintaining safety and security. The EU should encourage the integration of the new E-commerce Agreement into the World Trade Organization (WTO) rulebook, extend the WTO's Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions at the next Ministerial Conference and establish a permanent moratorium.

Green Deal and other customs-related initiatives implementation

The role of customs authorities has changed, and the trend towards non-fiscal tasks has accelerated and added successively more responsibilities to customs processes. In this environment, the EU should ensure streamlined, inclusive, sector-agnostic and coherent policy that makes trade as smooth as possible when implementing the Green Deal and other initiatives with a customs dimension (eg the Green Claims Directive, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism [CBAM], Deforestation Regulation and Forced Labour Regulation).

ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Forced Labour
Regulation
implementation**

As written, the Forced Labour Regulation could create confusion due to an incoherent policy framework, non-working tools, increased administrative burden and market actors' rising operating costs, caused by uncertainty. To ensure its success, the regulation needs further legal clarifications on each of these issues. The EU should clarify administrative procedures available to contest decisions and ensure that investigations are only initiated in cases of substantiated concerns. These should be risk based and founded on evidence. The EU should also ensure the effectiveness of the regulation's investigative mechanism and allow sufficient time for companies to provide all the information requested by authorities. It should additionally take the complexity of supply chains into account.

**Union Customs Code
(UCC)**

Although the EU operates in a Customs Union and constitutes a Single Market, the free movement of goods continues to face considerable obstacles, including counterfeit products. The proposed reform of the EU Customs Code should contribute to a more seamless and secure trade environment. The EU should ensure the swift rollout of information technology systems associated with the UCC Work Programme by 31 December 2025. The EU should also extend customs simplifications under the Trust & Check Trader scheme and establish a streamlined European Data Hub. Furthermore, the EU should ensure that the Liability of Indirect Representation has a comprehensive risk assessment, robust safeguards and clear guidelines, while the proposed marketplace importer requirements apply proportional obligations. In addition, the EU should make the EU Customs Authority responsible not only for enforcement and risk management but also for the uniform interpretation of customs legislation. Likewise, the EU should harmonise customs infringements, non-criminal sanctions and restrictions and prohibitions, all while limiting sanctions to cases of obvious negligence or intentional infringement. Finally, the EU should adapt the implementation timelines and the reduction in temporary storage periods.

See other relevant priorities:

- International digital cooperation (p. 36; ITRE)
- Development of trustworthy and resilient technologies (p. 35; ITRE)
- Targeted transaction screening (p. 32; INTA)
- Twin green and digital transition (p. 37; ITRE)

INTA

International Trade



ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Coherence between trade and other policy areas**

Companies must now implement a multitude of new, overlapping EU regulations that significantly impact trade and customs. Going forward, the EU should more effectively include a trade angle in impact assessments of new legislation and potential future competitiveness checks. In addition, the EU should reduce the burden for operators in measures that have an impact at the border and on customs (eg Green Deal measures with a trade component) by simplifying procedures and reducing compliance costs.

Current and future trade agreements

Free trade agreements (FTAs) balance competition, ensure a level playing field, reinforce the resilience of supply chains, limit risk through diversification of imports and exports and increase social and sustainability standards globally. To boost competitiveness, the EU must enhance its bilateral trade relations through the conclusion and enforcement of ambitious FTAs. In particular, the EU should ratify FTAs with Mercosur, Mexico and Chile and conclude FTA negotiations with Australia, Indonesia, India, Thailand and the Philippines. The EU should also ratify the investment chapter of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. Furthermore, the EU should reopen negotiations with Malaysia, work towards agreement with ASEAN countries and avoid reopening already concluded FTAs. Likewise, the EU should ensure that existing trade agreements remain effective over time, including by not overloading FTAs with other policy objectives, which could disincentivise trade partners and hurt the EU economically. The EU should also ensure that current and future bilateral FTA negotiations include a strong digital chapter. Finally, the EU should make progress on the revision of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences Regulation.

EU-China relationship

Geopolitical challenges, as well as technology competition between the US and China, require the EU to play a leading role on the international scene and strive for enhanced global cooperation. The EU should continue coordinating with its most important like-minded partner, the US, on common challenges posed by China through existing cooperation forums like the TTC. The EU should also strategically manage its relationship with China so as to allow businesses to reap the benefits of the Chinese market while mitigating the risks posed by its policies and geopolitical challenges.

EU-UK relationship

It is vital for the EU to maintain a positive relationship and a comprehensive economic partnership with the UK. To provide business with certainty, the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement should be implemented thoroughly alongside the Withdrawal Agreement and Windsor Framework and the EU and UK should ensure close communication to minimise disruption and regulatory divergence.

ISSUE**EU-US relationship and transatlantic economy**

RECOMMENDATIONS

As strategic partners, the EU and the US share fundamental values and interests. The transatlantic economy remains the largest, most prosperous and most innovative of its kind in the world. However, current geopolitical, economic and social issues challenge the foundations of the global order, with major repercussions for stability, peace and prosperity. In this environment, the EU should deepen regulatory cooperation across the Atlantic to remove and avoid creating barriers to trade and investment in the name of national security, while also resolving existing outstanding trade disputes. The EU should also continuously collaborate with the US in the development of technical standards for emerging technologies and prioritise this issue in plurilateral and multilateral forums. In addition, the EU should work with the US on a clean industrial revolution, avoid zero-sum competition, and conclude the Global Agreement for Sustainable Steel and Aluminium and the Critical Minerals Agreement with the US. More broadly, the EU should align its diplomatic efforts to ensure peace and prosperity.

Open trade in a geopolitical world

The geoeconomic fragmentation created by current crises highlight the importance of secure and diverse supply chains and their role in international trade, economic growth and competitiveness globally. The EU must promote open, free and rules-based trade and make trade policy a priority for the next mandate. The EU should keep its market open for imports to ensure that EU businesses can source their raw materials from different suppliers at reasonable costs instead of becoming dependent on only a few. The EU should also reduce the bureaucratic burden on EU operators and traders of new ESG initiatives (CBAM, the EU Deforestation Regulation etc). In addition, the EU should open new markets to EU exports by reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers. Internally, the EU should keep working towards an enhanced business environment and stronger Single Market, which is essential to safeguard its attractiveness (eg through customs facilitation). When adopting trade defence or compensatory measures, the EU should also avoid an EU-first approach, potentially protectionist practices and the imposition of additional tariffs on imported goods that constitute inputs to downstream EU industry. Furthermore, the EU should thoroughly assess the impact of restrictive and defensive measures on trade and keep these measures transparent, targeted, temporary and of last resort. Finally, the EU should focus on economic de-risking instead of decoupling from countries that present a risk to EU economic resilience and do not share similar values.

ISSUE**Targeted transaction screening**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Foreign Investment Screening Regulation proposal aims to better coordinate Member States' investment screening and establish a clearer system for cross-border investment screening in the EU. However, its broad scope and lack of specificity may subject many low-risk transactions to scrutiny, hindering the identification of truly risky transactions and creating new investment barriers in the EU. The EU must set clearer requirements for national FDI screening systems based on the principles of transparency, good governance and due diligence. The EU must narrow the scope of transactions subject to FDI screening and the Cooperation Mechanism to a clearly defined set of high-risk technologies. The EU must also seek to increase resources for FDI screening teams. In addition, the EU must better align filing requirements and timelines between merger control, foreign subsidies screening and FDI clearance. For outbound investment screening, the EU should aim, whenever possible, to define the scope of sectors or products subject to monitoring as clearly as possible and strive for coherence with existing legislative and regulatory tools. The EU must ensure that monitoring remains focused on high-risk technologies to avoid unnecessary scrutiny of low-risk transactions, which could create additional investment barriers.

Trade and Technology Council (TTC)

The TTC has achieved several successes that have strengthened transatlantic cooperation, but more should be done to amplify its impact. Policymakers have an opportunity to build a TTC fit for the future by refining its objectives, simplifying its workstreams and increasing transparency and stakeholder engagement. The EU should clarify its output and ensure razor-sharp focus by advancing strategic workstreams that create transatlantic approaches to common global challenges. The EU should also, in concert with the US, create a more permanent platform by reassessing the TTC's structure, political component and voluntary nature. The EU should also encourage transparency and increase stakeholder engagement, as well as enhance its external dimension by working in alignment with existing forums and dialogues between the EU and the US (eg G7/G20, and WTO) and using them as a springboard to advance shared priorities.

ISSUE

Trade of agri-food products

RECOMMENDATIONS

As outlined in the Farm to Fork strategy and the Green Deal, the EU is focusing on creating more sustainable food systems. Reciprocity in food trade agreements, also known as mirror clauses, should be applied correctly as they otherwise can risk preventing the private sector from efficiently promoting sustainable food systems. The EU should provide a science-based assessment of import standards that ensures trade agreement predictability, guarantees compliance with WTO rules and recognises the local specificities of EU trading partners. The EU should conduct an impact assessment of the effects of mirror clauses and develop a common vision on mirror clauses in collaboration with global partners and organisations while including other stakeholders in the decision-making process. In addition, the EU should consider the adoption of equivalence agreements with third countries that have similar production methods to the EU.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

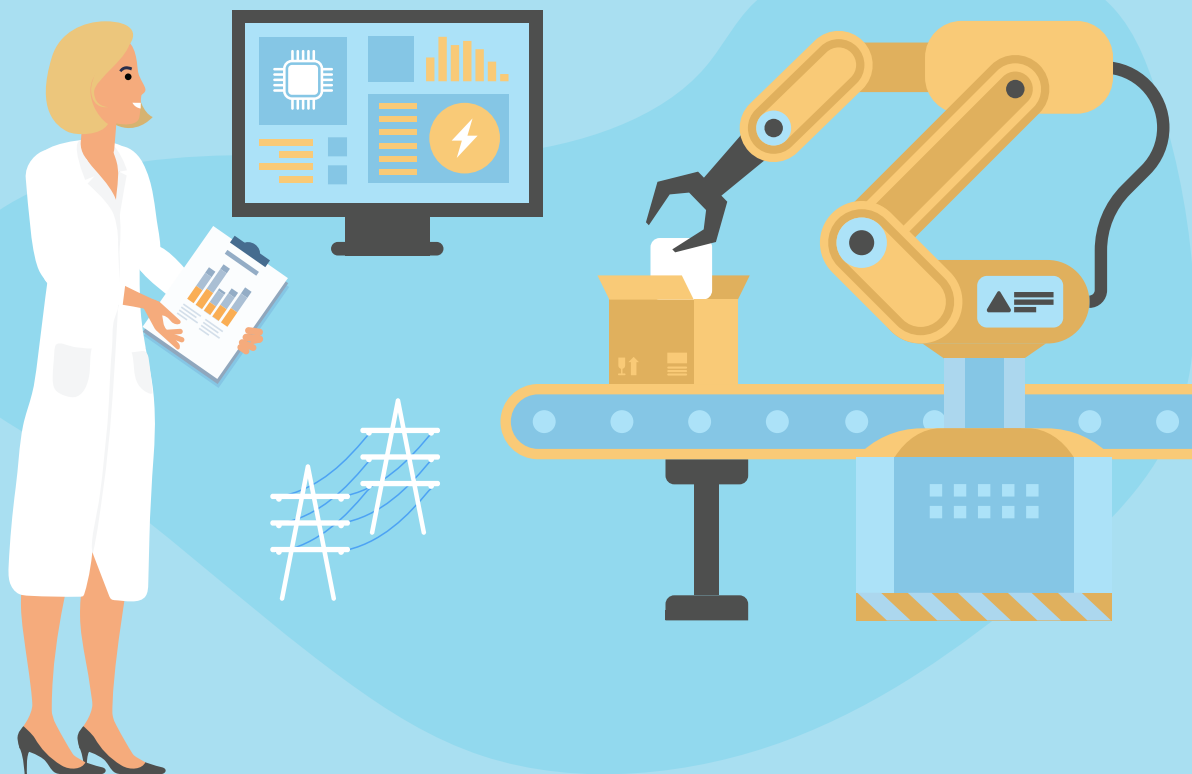
A rules-based international trade order, with the WTO as its arbiter, is the only way to ensure a stable international environment that fosters commerce and safeguards the global economy from fragmentation. In its current form, the WTO is not fit for 21st-century challenges. Two of its main functions, the dispute resolution mechanism and the negotiation function, are in crisis because of disagreement among the members about their functioning. To address these issues, the EU should promote reforms to make the WTO more efficient at all levels. Specifically, the EU should encourage a conclusion of the e-commerce plurilateral negotiations, extend the Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions and establish a permanent moratorium within the WTO. The EU should also advocate for regulatory convergence between the EU and the US, while opening up new avenues for multilateral and plurilateral cooperation (eg through G7/G20 and the OECD).

See other relevant priorities:

- Food security and affordability (p. 11; AGRI)
- Forced Labour Regulation implementation (p. 28; IMCO)

ITRE

Industry, Research and Energy



ISSUE

RECOMMENDATIONS**Development of trustworthy and resilient technologies**

To reap the full benefits of digital technologies, there needs to be a high degree of user trust. Technical systems' ability to handle and protect personal and sensitive business data is a significant reputational risk for companies. The development of strong public-private partnerships is essential to find effective solutions to enhance users' safety in complex value chains. The EU should ensure future e-Privacy rules are strictly aligned with the General Data Protection Regulation. Furthermore, the EU should build a common understanding around ethics, transparency and accountability in AI. The EU should also adopt risk-based and proportionate solutions for security, focusing on cybersecurity frameworks that rely on technical measures and are aligned with existing consensus-based international standards.

Education and skills for a fair twin transition

Achieving 2030 targets and ensuring that the EU remains an attractive destination for investment depend on narrowing the digital skills gap and reducing data illiteracy. Employers need a workforce with inter-disciplinary profiles and transferable skills that can fill the increasing vacancies for green jobs and AI roles. The EU should therefore support lifelong learning programmes, upskilling and reskilling initiatives and investments in education to adapt academic curricula to a digitalised economy and society. The EU should also encourage public-private partnerships in curriculum development to ensure inclusion of in-demand skills and specific business requirements. In addition, the EU should strengthen collaboration and partnership in R&D among European research centres, educational institutions and the private sector – both within and outside the EU.

Energy market

Especially given the recent energy crisis, Europe needs a liberalised, secure and sustainable energy market that allows for the transition to a low-carbon economy. However, the current approach to energy risks excluding low-carbon technologies that, although not labelled green, still help to lower carbon emissions. Additionally, current permitting processes are slow, and their outcomes can be unpredictable. This drives investment away from European projects and is a significant impediment to the success of the EU's critical raw materials (CRM) policy. The EU should incentivise and support CRM mining, refining and recycling projects (with circularity in mind) through improved permitting processes.

ISSUE**Industrial policy for open markets and green innovation****International digital cooperation**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing regulatory incoherence hinders green innovation. To address this, the EU should ensure that third-country entities have the same opportunities as European companies to qualify for incentives like the Net-Zero Industry Act and other Green Deal Industrial Plan schemes, acknowledging their role in fostering innovation, employment and growth within the net-zero economy. The EU should ensure that any new green regulations encompass all sectors across the value chain. In addition, the EU should increase manufacturing capacity across all sectors to support the development and retention of targeted low-carbon technologies in the EU. Furthermore, the EU should stimulate innovation and remove unnecessary administrative and reporting requirements to facilitate the deployment of sustainable technologies that enable the green transition, especially in key sectors such as energy and sustainable aviation. This could be achieved through systematic competitiveness checks and other evaluations of how administrative processes in existing legislation impact industry.

To achieve the 2030 Digital Decade targets and remain competitive, Europe must build strong international digital partnerships. Transatlantic cooperation can reinforce Europe's ambitions in a geopolitically uncertain world. The EU should create and strengthen global alliances with trusted partners, including public and private partnerships, to reach shared policy goals (eg shaping technical standards). The EU should build a TTC fit for the future and advocate for the use of international platforms like the OECD or the G7 to develop common standards, definitions and initiatives in the digital sphere. The EU should also cooperate with the US on the EU-U.S. Data Privacy Framework and the effective functioning of the mechanisms that ensure its development.

ISSUE

Twin green and digital transition

RECOMMENDATIONS

Digital technologies play a vital role in the EU economy and underpin the Union's plans to achieve energy security. EU measures addressing the information and communication technology sector's energy consumption must not undermine the critical role of digital technologies in reducing carbon emissions and helping the EU achieve its energy and climate objectives. The EU should create a policy environment that allows for the rapid scaling, development and deployment of solutions to achieve the green transition and climate neutrality by 2050. Furthermore, the EU should strengthen EU-US cooperation on green and digital issues. The EU should also quantify the benefits of digital solutions for green issues in a systematic way, including through an accurate methodology developed by the European Green Digital Coalition, among others. Finally, the EU should harmonise, implement and align labels and codes of conduct with already existing internationally agreed standards.

See other relevant priorities:

- Consolidation and alignment of digital policies (eg artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and data) (p. 26; IMCO)
- Creation of a Digital Single Market (p. 27; IMCO)
- Digitalisation of healthcare (p. 23; ENVI)
- Financing of healthcare and research (p. 23; ENVI)
- Patient access to innovation (p. 23; ENVI)
- Targeted transaction screening (p. 32; INTA)
- Third-country participation in EU-funded programmes related to defence, space, industry and procurement (p. 9; SEDE)
- Transatlantic alignment on space regulations (p. 9; SEDE)
- Transatlantic Defence Technological and Industrial Cooperation (p. 9; SEDE)

JURI

Legal Affairs



ISSUE
**Corporate Sustainable
Due Diligence Directive
(CS3D) implementation**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the CS3D entered into force in July 2024, significant provisions still need further clarification. This lack of clarity risks the Directive's goal of promoting sustainable practices within corporate activities. The current legislation contains extremely narrow implementation timelines, incoherence with the wider policy framework and problematic extraterritoriality impacts. Business needs comprehensive guidance documents to clarify uncertain terms and complex sections of the legislation and offer compliance examples. The EU must ensure that the CS3D is consistently implemented throughout the Single Market to prevent discrepancies in application. Enforcement mechanisms need to be both practical and enforceable, particularly given the extraterritorial impact of the legislation. The EU must regularly integrate stakeholder feedback into the implementation process to address ongoing concerns and facilitate a smoother transition for businesses.

Digital fairness

Consumers should be protected everywhere, regardless of whom they contract with. This starts with the robust enforcement of existing digital fairness rules and the development of improved regulations for the future, drawing on lessons from the past. The EU must enforce existing digital fairness rules by channelling adequate resources, preventing discrimination against size or place of establishment and coordinating with key stakeholders. Policymakers should build rules that protect consumers, deliver legal certainty and avoid negative impacts for innovation and business development. Where feasible, legislation should not be technology or channel specific. Policymakers should also learn from existing legislation and build on international best practices to better understand the effect of new requirements. For example, policymakers can use sandboxing, a regulatory approach that allows for the testing of new policies or innovations in a controlled environment before broader implementation.

ISSUE**IP enforcement in third countries**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Intellectual property rights (IPR) violations are on the rise: according to the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), the number of IPR-infringing goods reported as detained in 2022 (67 million) was approximately 14 million higher than in 2021 (53 million), representing an annual increase of more than 25%. IPR infringements reduce business and government revenues, stifle investment and innovation and hinder economic growth. IP-infringing goods entering the EU market often originate from jurisdictions with weaker enforcement regimes. With such a global challenge, the response must also be global: the magnitude of piracy and counterfeiting in the online and offline world requires effective enforcement responses and fast, coordinated interventions from all players. Policymakers must maintain and strengthen the EU's international efforts against counterfeiting and piracy, and take meaningful actions to prevent IP violations throughout the global supply chain, including through strong EU-US cooperation. The EU should consider appropriate penalties and disincentives for IP infringement. Members of the European Parliament should contribute to the EU Counterfeiting and Piracy Watchlist as well as the 2023 Review of Notorious Markets for Counterfeiting and Piracy for marketplaces outside the EU.

Litigation burden

Increasing litigation costs and profit-driven practices across the EU negatively impact both businesses and consumers, leading to significant financial and reputational damage, while also undermining trust in the legal system. The lack of harmonised rules under the Representative Actions Directive, coupled with insufficient regulation of third-party litigation funding (TPLF), risk promoting forum-shopping and reducing legal certainty. To address these challenges, it is crucial to revise the Representative Actions Directive to include strong safeguards against abusive litigation practices, such as stringent criteria for representing consumers and requirements for consumer consent before launching actions. Additionally, regulations across the EU should be harmonised to prevent forum-shopping and a regulatory race-to-the-bottom in protections against abusive litigation. In addition, the Product Liability Directive must be updated to clarify and streamline liability rules, which protect businesses from litigation risks and ensure consumers have effective avenues for redress. Furthermore, the EU should monitor and regulate TPLF to establish clear oversight of third-party funders, require transparency in funding arrangements and implement mechanisms to prevent conflicts of interest, exploitative practices and geopolitical risks.

ISSUE

Online IP enforcement challenges

RECOMMENDATIONS

The online environment offers tremendous possibilities to distribute content and goods across markets, but it can also facilitate the much wider and quicker proliferation of IP-infringing items. The European Parliament must support the Commission's efforts to address legitimate concerns around illegal content online, including IP-infringing goods. Policymakers should continue to foster multi-stakeholder dialogue alongside public-private engagement to address IP infringement online.

Support for intellectual property rights

Europe needs a predictable and strong IP framework to protect IPR. IPR and innovation are mutually dependent: IP is a key factor for incentivising investment into innovation and creativity, which is vital for the EU's competitiveness. Recent EUIPO studies have shown that IPR-intensive industries account for around 42% of EU gross domestic product, generate 29.7% of all jobs (61 million) and account for most of the EU's trade with the rest of the world. To foster this innovation, the EU must ensure proper and consistent application of existing IPR legislation, in particular by maintaining and strengthening IP protection at the Member State level. Policymakers must raise awareness of the value IPR brings to the EU, IP's role in innovation, competitiveness and economic growth and IP's importance as a pillar for EU economic security and autonomy.

See other relevant priorities:

- International alignment in sustainable finance legalisation (p. 14; ECON)
- Sustainable finance framework implementation (p. 15; ECON)

TRAN

Transport and Tourism



ISSUE**Low-emission
transport system**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The transport industry needs significant investment to contribute to net-zero emissions by 2050. However, those investments are currently unattainable given the overly stringent policy environment. The EU must take a cautious approach to regulation in the mobility sector because of its technical complexity. A book-and-claim system would accelerate the scaling up of sustainable aviation fuel. Additionally, enabling multiple commercial-scale pathways for producing sustainable and/or lower-carbon replacement fuels would help achieve the EU's ambitious targets for the transport sector. Investments should be channelled into the latest generation of transport technologies to ensure the industry remains competitive.

See other relevant priorities:

- Targeted transaction screening (p. 32; INTA)

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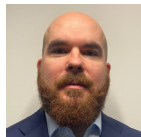
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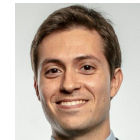
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