

GOALS AND POTENTIAL COURSES OF ACTION FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

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OF THE WHEAT EXPORTED IN THE WORLDWIDE comes from Russia and Ukraine.

THE EU IS DEPENDENT ON ASIA FOR

80%

of its semiconductors.

THERE IS AN URGENT NEED TO WORK EFFECTIVELY AND IN A COORDINATED MANNER TOWARDS REAL STRATEGIC AUTONOMY FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION.

Although many solutions already exist to help Europe to embrace and pursue this ambition effectively, the various crises suffered by the continent in recent years have highlighted the insufficient degree to which these are used, and the need for the European Union's stakeholders to express this common ambition in a more concrete and determined manner by asserting themselves as an autonomous and strategic power.

The EESC is putting together a set of recommendations aimed at promoting a strong and strategic Europe in economic and commercial terms, capable of defending a socially equitable roadmap for environmental and digital transitions.

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THE EESC'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE THE EUROPEAN UNION'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

1 DEPLOYING COORDINATED AND COHERENT ACTION ACROSS ALL EU POLICIES

- Establish a **transversal roadmap**, under the aegis of the Presidency of the European Commission, involving all EU bodies (the European Parliament and Council, and the Commission's Recovery and Resilience Task Force (RECOVER)).
- Reform **European competition policy**, which must fully take onboard the challenges of strategic autonomy and its three principles (openness, sustainability, firmness) and encourage the emergence of "benchmark" companies in terms of production, innovation or standardisation.

2 ENABLE THE EUROPEAN UNION TO CHOOSE ITS DEPENDENCIES RATHER THAN ENDURE THEM

- Facilitate access to funding and approval procedures in order to encourage the emergence of **innovative and resilient projects in sensitive sectors** (digital, health, batteries, semi-conductors).
- Organise **national and regional public debates** in the Member States to better explain the relocation choices contributing to the objective of strategic autonomy to the public.

3 MAKING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT A MAJOR FACTOR IN STRENGTHENING EUROPE'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

By supporting local stakeholders in their efforts to achieve more virtuous and resilient production

- Have the European Commission accelerate and amplify its action plan for the social and solidarity economy (SSE).
- Provide more support to economic stakeholders to encourage the deployment of eco-design and the circular economy.

By promoting the European model of sustainable development on the world stage

- Reform **the rules of the World Trade Organisation** (WTO) to better incorporate sustainable development issues, in particular by using the derogations (environmental exception) provided for in the GATT agreement.
- Introduce **new sustainability instruments** that give real substance to the European commitments and model for sustainable development, and urgently implement a border carbon adjustment mechanism and fair sector-specific mirror clauses.
- Include social, environmental and security of supply clauses in the **bilateral and multilateral agreements** in which the EU participates in order to **promote European values and balanced relationships** contributing to the security of value chains.

