



EUROPEAN AGENDA

BUSINESS COSTS RISE DESPITE EU PLEDGE TO CUT RED TAPE

The European Commission has promised that its red-tape reduction agenda would lower administrative costs for businesses. But many companies are questioning whether the promised savings are materialising.

Large and mid-sized firms report increasing legal and consultancy expenses as they try to prepare for the numerous EU regulatory changes introduced under the simplification agenda. According to Philippe Pierre of PwC Luxembourg, companies are seeking extensive support to interpret new rules and understand the gap between current practices and future obligations.

Over the past year, Brussels has responded to political and industry pressure with 10 “omnibus” packages aimed at reducing paperwork. These measures have exempted thousands of companies from environmental and carbon reporting, proposed lighter vehicle testing rules, and suggested extending the use of certain pesticides with fewer checks.

Businesses, however, are still adjusting. Pierre describes the current phase as one of “digestion” and says companies need guidance to recalibrate compliance strategies that had already been put in place. Some analysts argue that the rapid pace at which the Commission adopted Green Deal legislation, and the equally rapid push to revise much of it, has left companies struggling to keep up. Byron Maniatis of Hogan Lovells notes that legislation is being adopted so quickly that quality is sometimes uneven, prompting firms to seek external advice.

The Commission insists that the simplification agenda is primarily intended to ease burdens on small and medium-sized enterprises, with Maniatis acknowledging progress in reducing requirements for SMEs. Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis has emphasised that many SMEs see regulatory burdens as their biggest obstacle and that simplification should allow them to focus on innovation and growth.

NGOs, meanwhile, warn of increasing “corporate capture” in EU policymaking. Corporate Europe Observatory notes that business groups overwhelmingly dominate bilateral meetings with Commissioners on simplification efforts, raising concerns about the balance of influence. [Read more](#)

SOURCE: POLITICO PRO 08/04/2026

LEATHER INDUSTRY INTENSIFIES LOBBYING TO AVOID INCLUSION IN THE EU DEFORESTATION LAW

As talks continue on the future scope of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), leather industry leaders, MEPs and government representatives gathered in the European Parliament this week to urge the European Commission to exclude leather from the law.

The meeting follows remarks from Environment Commissioner Jessika Roswall suggesting that the Commission is considering removing leather products from the EUDR as part of an upcoming review.

The possibility has triggered intense lobbying. NGOs warn that excluding leather would create policy inconsistencies, noting that beef from cattle raised on deforested land would be banned while leather from the same animals could still enter the EU market. Industry groups counter that the current rules impose disproportionate burdens on a sector they say has limited links to deforestation.

MEP Dario Nardella argued that the leather sector supports jobs and regional supply chains, a position echoed by industry representatives including Fabrizio Nuti of Nuti Ivo Group. Italian officials and MEPs also expressed support for amending the annex to ease obligations.

Trade partners added to the pressure. Representatives from Canada, the United States and Australia warned that EUDR requirements may be too costly for exporters, with some threatening to redirect products to other markets.

NGO voices pushed back. Earthsight highlighted studies linking EU demand for hides to significant forest loss and warned that an exemption would weaken incentives for more sustainable agricultural practices.

Luis Planas Herrera, speaking for Commissioner Roswall's Cabinet, did not reveal the Commission's position but said the review will be guided by an objective, science-based assessment. [Read more](#)

SOURCE: POLITICO PRO 08/04/2026

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

PLASTIC INDUSTRY PLAYERS UNITE TO DEFEND THEIR PRIORITIES

On the occasion of the “high-level dialogue” marking the official relaunch of the Circular Plastics Alliance (CPA), European Plastics Converters, Plastics Recyclers Europe, and Plastics Europe are calling for “urgent” measures to “accelerate the transition to circularity,” in a letter published on 8 April.

The organisations particularly stress the need to restore “level playing field” conditions, notably by supporting circular plastics produced within the EU and by “closing loopholes” in control and enforcement systems.

They also call for a reduction in energy costs to ensure that recycled materials “remain globally competitive,” as the war in Iran is driving up energy prices.

The groups underline the importance of tackling fragmentation in the European market by ensuring coherent and harmonized implementation of existing legislation.

Finally, they urge the removal of regulatory and financial barriers that hinder innovation and investment in circular technologies and call for a strengthening of extended producer responsibility schemes. [Read more.](#)

SOURCE: CONTEXTE 09/04/2026

PLASTIC RECYCLING IN CARS: INDUSTRY EXPLORES FEASIBILITY BUT COST REMAINS A MAJOR BARRIER

A new report from the Global Impact Coalition (GIC), based on a pilot project involving end-of-life vehicles, confirms that recycling plastic from old cars and reusing it in new models is technically possible. The initiative brought together eight companies including BASF, Mitsubishi Chemical Group and Suez, and assessed 100 dismantled vehicles to understand how a closed-loop system could function at scale. The organisations note that recycling and processing technologies are already available. They emphasise, however, that stronger coordination across the entire value chain is required to ensure that plastic can be collected, processed and reused efficiently in new vehicles. According to the report, approximately 80 percent of recovered materials can be dismantled or shredded with low to moderate effort.

Economic challenges remain an important obstacle. Virgin plastic continues to be cheaper than recycled material, which limits uptake by car manufacturers. The report states that reducing dismantling and processing costs, improving material quality and building new supply chains designed for circularity will be essential to close the cost gap.

The GIC concludes by recommending that the sector concentrate on a smaller number of high-value and high-weight components where commercial viability is easier to achieve. This step is presented as essential preparation ahead of upcoming European Union requirements that will oblige manufacturers to use recycled plastics in new vehicles. [Read more.](#)

SOURCE: POLITICO PRO 09/04/2026

CLIMATE POLICY

WRI RAISES CONCERNS OVER INTRODUCING A “ZERO-RISK” CATEGORY IN EU DEFORESTATION POLICY

In an article published on April 7, the U.S. think tank World Resources Institute (WRI) outlines the main consequences that, in its view, would result from the creation of such a category, brought back to the table by the United States, among others, ahead of the late-April revision.

Today, the regulation classifies countries according to three levels of deforestation risk, (low, medium, and high) determining the traceability requirements imposed on importing companies. If a “zero-risk” category were introduced, operators sourcing from these countries would not need to provide a statement proving that their products do not contribute to deforestation, WRI explains.

However, this exemption risks “creating loopholes enabling money laundering”, warns the think tank. Raw materials “from high-risk regions could be shipped to a ‘zero-risk’ country, processed, and then exported to the EU without any obligation to verify their origin.” And this could happen “even without fraudulent intent,” for reasons related to “tax advantages, labor costs, and logistics.”

By exempting certain countries, it would also “expose the regulation to legal challenges before the WTO,” WRI argues. [Read more.](#)

SOURCE: CONTEXTE 09/04/2026

ECHA PREPARES A WORKSHOP ON THE DRINKING WATER DIRECTIVE IUCLID

ECHA will host a hybrid IUCLID Demonstration Workshop to support stakeholders preparing Drinking Water Directive (DWD) applications. The event will offer practical demonstrations and live Q&A sessions on how to compile and submit DWD applications in IUCLID, with a focus on sections specific to the Directive and new to many users.

Participants will be introduced to the new IUCLID DWD application manual, receive updates on upcoming template developments, and learn about validation rules designed to ensure accurate submissions.

This workshop also sets the stage for the main 2026 DWD Stakeholders’ Workshop taking place on 21–22 October.

Whether attending online or in person, participants will gain essential guidance and tools for applications from 2027 onward. Save the date, the programme details are coming soon. [Read more.](#)

SOURCE: ECHA NEWSLETTER 07/04/2026
