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Welcome to CIP@EU – a newsletter published by the Brussels Delegation of CIP – The Confederation of Portuguese Business. CIP is the largest and most representative Employers Confederation in Portugal, and national social partner. We are the voice of over 150,000 companies, with 1,8 million employees and a turnover of over 70% of the Portuguese GDP.

The second edition our newsletter focuses on the following main topics:

- **Trade policy**
- **Circular economy**
- **Better regulation**

In addition, for the Portuguese speaking audience, I am pleased to announce CIP has launched a [new page in its website about European funds and programmes](#) which provides simple information about the MFF, Next Generation EU and National resilience plans, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Invest EU, Horizon Europe etc. This page is a work in progress, which will be progressively expanded. We welcome any comments or suggestions for improvement you may have!

We also invite you to visit our [website](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

I wish you a pleasant reading,
Joana Valente
Head of EU Office

[CIP views on the revision of EU trade policy](#)

The European Commission is expected to present its new trade strategy, including WTO reform initiative on the 17 February. In the build-up to this EC proposal, CIP has been actively working on the topic, and has answered to the public consultation on trade policy. We have equally answered to the consultations on Generalised System of Preferences and on foreign subsidies.

CIP considers **the EU must continue advocating for international free trade**, and an ambitious negotiation agenda, fighting protectionism. Not only must we ensure that existing free trade agreements (FTAs) are implemented in an effective way, followed by proper monitoring and evaluation, but also we must press ahead with the ratification and implementation of already agreed ones. Among these, CIP highlights the special importance of the EU-Mercosur agreement not only for strategic and economic reasons, but also from a sustainability perspective.

The **EU trade policy must be less naïve**. Trade defence instruments (TDCs) must function in a quick and effective way if it is to actually protect European industry. The EU system of TDCs is



the one that less protection offers to its industry, worldwide. Moreover, the **current TDCs do not cover a number of existing gaps**. For instance, these do not protect from subsidised services nor subsidised investments nor there is no way to prevent subsidised entities from accessing European funds. This is why we defend the creation of a foreign subsidy instrument to ensure a level playing field in the European internal market.

Concerning Generalised System of Preferences, its revision must adapt eligibility criteria of beneficiary countries and concentrate benefits in the less developed countries contributing to diversification of the beneficiaries' production systems.

It also urges to reform and strengthen the WTO. The resolution system must be restored and fully functioning and trade rules should be adapted to the evolution of the world economy, including when it comes to subsidies, state owned enterprises and export credits. Multilateral agreements should be promoted on specific areas and flexibilities offered to countries which are not "less developed" should be rigorously justified.

Contact: [Patrícia Gonçalves](#)

[CIPs circular economy project](#)

As part of its engagement with sustainability issues, and the commitment to contribute to the Green Deal goals, CIP is launching a project called E+C which stands for More Circular Economy, which kicks-off with a [webinar on the 18 February](#). This webinar will showcase the contribution of Portuguese companies to a greener Europe, with representatives from the European Commission, national authorities and companies to discuss the never ending issue of opportunities of circular economy. The overall project CIP is leading, intends to promote, in a bottom-up approach, the adoption of circularity metrics by national companies, with a view to create awareness and demonstrate good practices and a proficient methodology to identify opportunities of progression in this field. To give it a good start, we are glad to have the participation of **Jarkko Havas from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation** to explain how an enterprise can measure their circularity and how useful the results can be to bust circularity in their organizations. Register [here](#).

Contact: [Silvia Machado](#)



Promote better regulation as a growth lever

Business-friendly regulation and elimination of unnecessary regulatory burden and compliance costs are long term growth levers, that help to modernize European economy, with ground to innovate and a forward looking as possible.

Business face complexity, regulatory overlap, and inconsistency between different pieces of legislation.

Industry is aware that several new proposals are expected this year. We are concerned that with the ambitious political agenda of the current Commission, **speed too often prevails over proper consultation and evidence-based decision making**.

All institutions at EU and national level must bear in mind that digitalization is not a synonym of simplification. There is a need that digitalization leads to real simplification, namely of compliance with mandatory permit procedures and reporting obligations.

There is always room for improvement at national and European level. The administrative and legislative culture must change. We need to do better!

EU legislation should reach the objective at the lower cost for all. Credibility, acceptability, reasonability, and proportionality must apply. **Simplification should not be intended as deregulation**.

Keep on reading this article about better regulation [here](#)!

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