

Deeper Transatlantic Cooperation through the EU-US Trade and Technology Council

31 Recommendations for the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Trade and Technology Council

October 2022

Background and General Comments

At the last ministerial meeting of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council (TTC) in May 2022, the European Union (EU) and United States (US) agreed on working programs for the ten different working groups. They also identified common goals and areas for increased cooperation. Now, the working groups should produce concrete deliverables. These outcomes should be swiftly implemented by both sides.

The Transatlantic Business Initiative (TBI) urges the EU and the US to dismantle trade and investment barriers while collaborating closely on avoiding new barriers. To ensure the sustainable success of the TTC, business stakeholders actively need to be involved in the TTC consultations. The virtual "EU Futurium" platform does not allow for a real dialogue and a structured exchange of stakeholders with the European Commission. We urge that stakeholders are continuously engaged in the TTC process to guarantee a practical and relevant outcome. Transparency on governmental bodies and agencies involved in each of the working groups (beyond their generic mailboxes) will facilitate the identification of concrete deliverables.

Close cooperation between the EU and US is increasingly more important in times of current global challenges. Instead of going it alone, both sides need to work closer with like-minded partners to face the challenges together and pursue joint solutions.

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Working Group 1: Technology Standards Cooperation

Recommendation 1: Set up the *Strategic Standardization Information* (SSI) mechanism and ensure close coordination with stakeholders from industry

During the last ministerial meeting of the TTC, the EU and the US agreed to establish a *Strategic Standardization Information* (SSI) mechanism. Strategic analyses and the prioritization of international standardization requirements significantly strengthen the competitiveness of the EU and US. Appropriate projects should be supported and embedded in the framework of the *European Standardization Strategy*. This SSI mechanism now needs to be concretized and further details on the functioning of the SSI are required. Close coordination should be ensured with interested parties, ideally via the High-Level Forum on European Standardisation.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that standardization is business-driven and -supported

Technical standardization should be oriented to the needs of the market and to practicality. Standardization is business-driven and -supported. Economic operators ensure that the right content is standardized at the right time. All stakeholders should strive for harmonized international standards on different technologies, insofar as this is reasonable and practicable for industry as the addressee of such standards. Both sides need to work together to develop international standards, e.g., in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, telecommunication networks, cloud and data governance, cybersecurity as well as fields for the green and digital tansformation. Technical standardization should be carried out within the framework of recognized and established processes in international standardization organizations.

Recommendation 3: Develop closely aligned and interoperable standards and create a common transatlantic AI ecosystem

Given the shared fundamental societal values of the US and EU, efforts should be made in artificial intelligence (AI) to develop closely aligned and interoperable standards to strengthen transatlantic AI ecosystems. A legal framework on AI should consider the differences between B2C and B2B AI applications since the Industrial AI market is posing tremendously different challenges from those in the internal market. Transatlantic cooperation on setting (ethical) standards for AI should ensure that a horizontal regulation does not hinder innovation due to overregulation. Existing international standards, like the Open Platform Communications Unified Architechture (IEC 62541), should be the basis of interoperability for these transatlantic ecosystems. The risk-based approach supported by the EU and US is appropriate to strengthen the necessary trust in the security of AI-based systems. We therefore welcome the TTC's push for increased cooperation and a methodological alignment of risk assessment. Semiconductors should also be included in the scope of Working Group 1 due to their importance in the context of international standardization for areas such as AI.

Working Group 2: Climate and Clean Tech

Recommendation 4: Harmonize the frameworks for sustainable finance

In addition to technical standards, there should also be a harmonization of the frameworks for sustainable finance. While there are differing views in the transatlantic community on the approach and necessary legislative and non-legislative steps to be taken, the standards and taxonomies developed in the EU, Canada, and the US should be compatible and interoperable. Reducing fragmentation should therefore be a common priority across jurisdictions on a transatlantic, but ideally also on an international level. Sustainability reporting standards should provide a focused, relevant, and decision-useful set of standardized metrics to be disclosed, combined with a clear materiality principle. There should also be an alignment on legacy bonds, i.e. there should be no disadvantage arising for bonds that have been emitted before agreeing on new common standards, which might not be met by all previously emitted sustainability bonds.

Recommendation 5: Increase promotion of Green Public Procurement (GPP)

In the context of the initiatives for the development of clean and low-carbon products, services, and technologies, Working Group 2 refers to the importance of increased promotion of Green Public Procurement (GPP). This is also in line with joint activities on public procurement in the context of Working Group 10. In this respect, the intention is to work towards a common understanding of sustainability aspects in public procurement procedures, focusing on green products, services, and technologies and identifying best practices. The TBI recommends strengthening cooperation and promotion on GPP. An EU initiative on this topic exists already, which also provides environmental criteria, although on a voluntary basis. This initiative could be a basis for discussion in Working Group 2. It is important that the implementation and application of any relevant rules should be non-discriminatory and the specification of environmental aspects is concrete and non-discriminatory in relation to the product or service to be procured. This is essential to specify the necessary environmental requirements and avoid arbitrary and competition-distorting specifications. Technologies should be promoted that reduce carbon in their application, e.g., certain semiconductors.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen cooperation on electromobility without discriminating against non-US manufacturers and suppliers of cars and materials

The TBI expressly supports the goal of Working Group 2 to strengthen electromobility. We welcome a strong focus on joint measures for the rapid comprehensive deployment and expansion of charging infrastructure. The EU and US should now take concrete steps towards the stated goal of mutually recognized operating requirements and testing procedures for e-vehicles and charging stations.

Support measures for electromobility on both sides of the Atlantic should be based on transatlantic cooperation, integrated supply chains, and production networks to strengthen innovation and to improve resilience. The requirements regarding the battery production and final assembly of electrical vehicles to claim tax credits in the United States' *Inflation Reduction Act* (IRA) could disadvantage European and other foreign companies. The requirements could also slow down the ramp-up of electromobility in the US. Discrimination against European and other foreign companies should therefore be avoided during the implementation of the IRA.

Recommendation 7: Cooperate on the scale-up of carbon-neutral fuels

In addition to the massive scale-up of electromobility, the decarbonization of transport and a faster pathway to independence from fossil fuels requires the use of carbon-neutral fuels and the associated comprehensive refueling infrastructure. This applies to the decarbonization of the existing fleets of cars and trucks and to the further decarbonization of air, sea, and non-electrified rail transport. Regarding international air and sea transport, climate protection measures such as the use of carbon-neutral fuels should be further developed and enforced under the umbrella of the UN organizations International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO). Working Group 2 should therefore additionally focus on the cooperation on carbon-neutral fuels and advance their scale-up.

Recommendation 8: Cooperation to foster clean tech and energy efficiency initiatives

Clean, green, and circular technologies, combined with energy efficiency gains and decentralized energy systems, can be vital contributors to the energy transition and to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Transatlantic cooperation – such as, for example, the US-Germany Climate and Energy Partnership – can enable more best practice sharing and implementation of innovative solutions to tackle climate change challenges.

Recommendation 9: Coordinate US and EU regulatory policies that support a circular economy transformation

Prior TTC statements recognize the benefit of work on specific initiatives to accelerate the deployment of clean, low carbon products and technologies that can help achieve common climate goals, including those that support the transition to a more circular economy and prevent environmental degradation such as pollution. As part of the TTC agenda that supports a trade facilitative approach to remanufacturing, refurbishment, repair, and reuse as part of the circular economy agenda, we also think that the TCC should establish initiatives that help ensure the transition from waste products to commercial feedstock, which would create even greater economic activity and recovery. Policy examples that could promote this transition are:

- Development of recycled plastic standards and EV battery passports;
- Common approaches to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes;
- Efficient regulatory procedures to promote recycled content;
- Customs and trade facilitation measures that remove temporary import duties and restrictions on maritime transport and coordinate data collection and processing.

Recommendation 10: Cooperate on establishing a "climate club"

The EU and US should communicate frequently on any plans from each government to implement carbon border adjustment mechanisms (CBAMs). Any implementation of CBAMs should be done on a plurilateral basis, rather than unilaterally, as a patchwork of uncoordinated CBAM laws would create new barriers to trade between the EU and US. Instead, they should build upon their

G7 committment on establishing a "climate club" and involve as many economies as possible that have higher environmental standards for the production of steel and aluminum.

Recommendation 11: Align approaches in lifecycle greenhouse gas assessment methodologies, including carbon foot printing

Both sides should cooperate in developing joint understandings and methodologies for product carbon footprints and embedded emissions along value chains as a foundation to strengthen carbon mitigation policies – also in cooperation with other institutions such as a climate club or the OECD.

Working Group 3: Secure Supply Chains

Recommendation 12: Increase collaboration on rare earth magnets

The TBI shares the TTC's analysis of the importance of rare earth magnets for the economic and climate ambitions of the US and EU as well as the challenges around the rare earth magnets supply chain. The concentration of exploration and further processing of rare earths in China illustrates high transatlantic dependency and susceptibility to value chain risks.

We welcome the close cooperation between the EU and US within the framework of the TTC and in the Minerals Security Partnership between Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the US, and the European Commission. Now, concrete collaborations should be identified and planned, for example involving geological services and (export) financing institutions.

Recommendation 13: Increase diversification and resilience in solar and semiconductor supply chains

The TBI agrees with Working Group 3's assessment regarding challenges in the solar supply chain and access to raw materials.

EU activities have so far focused on the issues of sustainability, transparency, and traceability in the (raw material) supply chain and, above all, corporate due diligence. Heavily underweighted are the important topics of diversification and resilience in supply chains, which have suddenly come into focus following the Russian attack on Ukraine and also with a view to China. The EU und US should increase cooperation in diversifying and building up resilience in (solar) supply chains, for instance by establishing adequate framework conditions for (re-)building integrated value chains, taking the current realities into account.

In addition, both sides should develop common strategies to secure the semiconductor supply chain, including semiconductor equipment, materials, and raw materials as well as assembling, packaging, and testing. They should also aim to find a common understanding of leading-edge semiconductors. The EU and US should continue to support investments in small and medium-sized companies, especially to drive the digital transformation and advanced manufacturing throughout the entire value chain.

Recommendation 14: Establish a joint early warning and mapping mechanism for semiconductors only in close coordination with industry

Industry experts should be closely involved in the development, rollout, and implementation of the joint early warning and mapping mechanism. The proposed exchange of information on supply chains must safeguard the trade and supply chain secrets of the semiconductor industry.

A well functioning warning system should be based on qualitative feedback from industry experts. The semiconductor industry is exposed to many risks that are difficult to predict, including geopolitical and natural risks. The current chip shortage, for example, has several causes — including geopolitical challenges and tensions, the pandemic, as well as purchasing strategies and just-in-time supply chains in parts of the industry. A merely quantitative mapping mechanism based on current or historical figures would neither help avoid shortages nor predict the next crisis. Hence, involving industry experts at an early stage offers the possibility to prepare for the next crisis based on a qualitative assessment and a quantitative simulation of possible future shortages. For example, shortly after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, many companies used best- and worst-case scenarios to predict the consequences of the conflict on their supply chains. Combining these insights could help to assess the broader impact of a crisis in future without collecting vast amounts of quantitative data. The close and early involvement of industry experts could ensure a much earlier qualitative assessment of the next crisis and quantitative simulation of possible future shortages.

We disagree with the establishment of an early warning mechanism that includes the declaration of the "crisis stage", as proposed in the EU Data Act. If the EU Commission and the US Administration aspire to set up such a mechanism, it should be strictly limited to national security (e.g. security and defence) as well as a limited number of highly critical sectors (e.g. health). While increasing the transparency of the EU semiconductor value chain is desirable, it should not be an end in itself. Only data that is essential for crisis predication should be collected. The approach proposed by the EU Commission currently contains too many unanswered questions regarding the mandatory release of information, mandatory prioritization, joint procurement, and export controls. In addition, the recently concluded two-month pilot project for the early warning system did not involve a diverse range of companies that could have helped form a holistic picture – for example, from SMEs to large entities and from suppliers to buyers of semiconductors.

Working Group 4: ICTS Security and Competitiveness

Recommendation 15: Effectively strengthen resilience of ICTS solutions

The TBI supports the TTC's approach to strengthening security, diversity, resilience, and interoperability in ICTS supply chains. We welcome that the evaluation of the trustworthiness of manufacturers of ICTS solutions will be based on the EU's 5G toolbox and comparable approaches. It is crucial for transatlantic businesses that there is no discrimination against market participants based on their origin or headquarters. Certification schemes should primarily contain technical requirements that are suitable for strengthening the cyber resilience of a solution. Effectively strengthening the resilience of ICTS solutions requires a holistic approach that encompasses all actors along the value chain.

Recommendation 16: Strengthen transatlantic cybersecurity and resilience without discriminating against EU or US suppliers

The TBI strongly supports the goals of promoting harmonised technical security requirements and improving the level of cybersecurity in both the US and the EU. The TTC can play another crucial role in promoting alignment, standards, and in strengthening a common approach to transatlantic cybersecurity. Coordinated Vulnerability Disclosure principles and authorities refraining from using vulnerabilities and backdoors in IT solutions (hardware and software) are paramount to ensure a high degree of cyber-resilient products, services, and processes. Cybersecurity requirements and schemes should not discriminate against suppliers from respective partners and should adhere to WTO commitments, in particular with regard to national treatment and market access provisions. The TBI therefore calls for implementing the EU draft European Cybersecurity Scheme for Cloud Services (EUCS), which is currently being considered by the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA). The EUCS should not impede European companies from utilizing digital solutions from trustworthy non-EU vendors. Measures to ensure a risk-adequate level of cybersecurity in the area of cloud computing should not lead to protectionism.

Recommendation 17: Strengthen global cyber resilience

Internet connectivity is a key competitive factor and the basis of future industrial and economic production and service systems with a wide range of applications. Financial support to third countries to build secure ICTS infrastructures as well as to deploy an effective risk-based cybersecurity framework is a constructive means to strengthening global cyber resilience in a comprehensive manner. Measures to ensure digital resilience should be in line with the principle of an open international trade environment.

As cyberattacks impose an increasing risk for businesses, closer transatlantic cooperation and investment in research and development of cyberrisk mitigating measures is required. The EU and US should initiate technical dialogue towards the mutual recognition of cybersecurity certifications as a result of conformity assessments based on international standards.

Recommendation 18: Increase cooperation and intensify information exchange on 6G research

Close collaboration and intensified information exchange between the US and EU on 6G research and development is essential to best leverage the potential of this next generation of mobile communications based on our shared values. A coordinated transatlantic approach to fostering investment in the rollout of 5G and 6G communication technologies as well as international harmonization of frequency policies is necessary to avoid a globally fragmented frequency land-scape. A harmonized approach would support the industry in generating scale effects to provide low-cost communication.

Working Group 5: Data Governance and Technology Platforms

Recommendation 19: Balance legitimate interests in protecting trade secrets with the goal of increasing transparency

The TBI understands the importance of combating illegal content and disinformation. We welcome the goal of creating transparency and a clear legal framework for all parties involved. It needs to take into account the legitimate interest of businesses to protect trade secrets as much as industrial or intellectual property. The exchange of industry best practices is also welcome. The TBI expects the establishment of a structured TTC dialogue on regulatory measures under consideration on both sides of the Atlantic, with a view to minimizing unintended barriers to transatlantic trade. Policymakers should take into account the difference between B2C and B2B scenarios, e.g. with respect to regulating platforms. To preserve the interests of economic actors and especially smaller players, it is essential to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. EU and US regulators should support a diversity of emerging business models, especially when it comes to B2B data and industrial platforms.

Recommendation 20: Continue close transatlantic exchange on issues of competition law

We support the establishment of a structured dialogue on issues of platform governance and competition in digital markets. The close transatlantic exchange on issues of competition law should be continued. Consistent approaches and the avoidance of legal fragmentation, especially on new regulatory issues such as dealing with gatekeepers on platform markets, can increase legal certainty for companies. Coherence is important and generally preferable to going it alone at the national level. Regulatory measures frequently impose a strong encroachment on entrepreneurial freedom, internal growth, and competition, which must be justified.

Working Group 6: Misuse of Technology Threatening Security & Human Rights

Recommendation 21: Coordinate more closely on security issues, new technologies, and human rights protection

The TBI welcomes the fact that new technologies are being dealt with in Working Group 6. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is one of the reasons why the EU and the US need to coordinate more closely on this. A responsible approach to security technologies is crucial to these efforts. The clear commitment to the importance of an undisturbed and free internet is also welcome. The working group's announcement that it will work together with researchers to better identify and understand manipulated and false information online is another step in the right direction.

Closer collaboration between transatlantic partners is needed to counter cyberattacks and create more resilient organizations. Possible cooperation could focus on intelligence sharing pre/post cyber incidents and/or exchanging best practices that address common challenges. Additionally, the EU and US should promote responsible state behavior in cyberspace to establish more binding and internationally accepted rules.

Working Group 7: Export Controls Cooperation

Recommendation 22: Continue close cooperation on export controls

The transatlantic partners' export controls against Russia and Belarus are unprecedented – both in the way they have been coordinated and in the way they have deprived strategic sectors of material and industrial inputs.

This cooperation should continue as announced by Working Group 7 in the areas of licensing procedures, control of emerging technologies, and regulatory practice (bilaterally and with third countries). Both partners should work to remove existing export control barriers to facilitate technological developments (e.g., in climate-neutral mobility). The partners should additionally strive for an export control framework that keeps up with the pace of technological change.

Recommendation 23: Develop a common strategic position in export controls

Comparable standards and requirements reduce bureaucratic burdens for companies, creating markets whose innovative and economic power will be decisive in the race for technological leadership. The EU and US should expand their cooperation and develop a common strategic position of the transatlantic partners in export controls. At a minimum, partners should aim to align the timelines regarding national updates resulting from the multilateral control regimes as well as the development of similar — or even identical — principles for the assessment of sensitive technology. What is more, the harmonization of varying software as a service (SaaS) guidance or a comparable treatment of software with sensitive dormant functions exemplify that increased alignment would provide economic operators with meaningful commercial opportunities.

Working Group 8: Investment Screening Cooperation

Recommendation 24: Increase cooperation in investment controls and involve industry in the consultations

The TBI welcomes the commitment of the EU and US to the importance of openness to investment. At the same time, we recognize an increased requirement for governmental investment controls. Geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine or the systematic undermining by non-market economies of the international rules-based order, warrant a meaningful response. We acknowledge and appreciate efforts that lead to a stabilization of global commercial activity. Actors who securitze their economic relations and leverage interdependencies according to their geostrategic interests should expect to forgo intensified and mutually beneficial commerce. At the same time, investment controls should be a function of and incentivize fair, reciprocal, and long-term market access.

Exchanging experience and data can help target investment controls to limit externalities and ramifications. Going forward, the partners should ensure to closely involve industry in the consultations and to prevent an excessive expansion of protectionist controls driven by industrial policy.

Potential developments could require widening the scope of Working Group 8. Should the US establish a mechanism to screen or even control outbound investment, transatlantic partners should likewise cooperate and work towards an agreement about how such tools might create sensible restrictions on preventing real-economic bulk-risks. However, the partners should be cleareyed on where such restrictions will impede meaningful interdependence among allies.

Working Group 9: Promoting SME Access to and Use of Digital Technologies

Recommendation 25: Facilitate access to digital tools and technologies

We welcome the approach of facilitating access to digital tools and technologies for mediumsized companies in the EU and US. Support programs should be adequately funded and as unbureaucratic as possible.

Data-driven business models are becoming increasingly important for competitiveness. More industrial SMEs and family-owned companies are working on fully recognizing or tapping the potential of new value creation options. At the same time, progress in networking and automating production processes is sometimes slow. Digital processes and new technologies will be more widely used once the added business value of technologies and applications becomes clear.

It is important to raise awareness of the possibilities and challenges of digitalization and cybersecurity among SMEs as well. Best practice guides can help identify potential opportunities and challenges.

In addition, companies need an innovation-friendly environment with a legally secure framework and state-of-the-art digital infrastructures, including in rural areas. Comprehensive investment in digital education and training is necessary to counter the growing shortage of skilled workers, especially in the STEM sector.

Working Group 10: Global Trade Challenges

Recommendation 26: Identify and resolve existing and potential trade differences

Within the framework of the TTC, transatlantic partners should increase efforts to resolve existing trade differences. The EU and the US should urgently work on a permanent resolution on subsidies in the aviation sector and the associated punitive tariffs, which are currently only subject to a moratorium. In addition, the remaining US import restrictions on steel and aluminum from the EU should be fully abolished. Imports from the EU do not endanger the national security of the US.

The implementation of the e-vehicle tax credits in the IRA is becoming another trade barrier that will negatively impact the transatlantic economic and climate cooperation between the US and the EU. Certain provision in the IRA, such as local content requirements in the mobility sector (see Recommendation 6), should be adapted swiftly so as not to constitute new trade barriers. For example, products manufactured in US allied countries should be considered exempt from local content requirements. The EU-US trade relationship should not be strained further by implementing new measures that adversely affect EU businesses.

Similarly, the TBI is concerned that recent efforts to create an EU Cybersecurity Certification Scheme for Cloud Services (EUCS) could create a trade barrier and risks causing further friction in the transatlantic relationship. EU and US representatives have identified both issues and the need for closer alignment; the TBI believes that the TTC should contribute to resolving these and potential future barriers in transatlantic trade.

Recommendation 27: Reduce wait times for manufacturers by driving up the number of conformity assessment testing bodies in both the US and EU

Different industrial sectors, the machinery and electrotechnical industries in particular, remain subject to numerous technical barriers to trade having to do with the certification and testing of products (a.k.a. conformity assessment). Some of these barriers could be reduced or removed without compromising safety or quality.

In the short term, a mutual recognition agreement between the US and EU, e.g. in the machinery and electrotechnical and related industries, would likely drive up the number of conformity assessment testing bodies available in both markets that can test to the other market's standards. Currently, regulatory barriers on both sides restrict the amount of EU-domiciled notified bodies that can test to US standards and vice versa, causing manufacturers to have to wait several months to have new products approved to export to the other market. A precedent already exists: the EU and US have in place Mutual Recognition Agreements for Radio Equipment and Electromagnetic Compatibility, which have led to more testing body availability for that sector and shorter wait times. Working Group 10 is the appropriate forum for such an agreement, which could be described as a "quick win."

Over the longer term, the US and EU can achieve more fundamental reduction of costs and market opening by creating a single "NRTL marking" (analogous to the CE marking in Europe), designed to reduce undue market power among the American testing companies, which drives up costs and wait times. Ultimately, the trade-related drag associated with conformity assessment will be eliminated only when the US and EU harmonize the standards underlying their procedures. This is a long-term goal and can only be achieved through international standardization work within the framework of multilateralism.

Recommendation 28: Eliminate industrial tariffs

While negotiations to eliminate industrial tariffs on a large scale are currently not on the agenda of the TTC, we encourage both sides to take up this issue given the importance to economic operators on both sides of the Atlantic. The TBI supports the elimination of tariffs on all industrial goods. A transatlantic agreement on industrial goods should meet WTO standards and thus liberalize "substantially all trade."

Recommendation 29: Strengthen cooperation in public procurement

The EU and US should increase efforts to facilitate trade through cooperation in public procurement and work to make energy and high-tech supplies crisis-proof. With a view to the mutually declared goal of achieving trade facilitation, the European Commission should also use the TTC to address and counteract the tightening of Buy American provisions. The further opening of the

US public procurement market via the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) and bilaterally is a key request of the TBI.

Recommendation 30: Institute early warning mechanism for third-party trade measures

The TBI supports close coordination between the EU and US with a view to maintaining a liberal, non-discriminatory, market- and rules-based trading system and a comprehensive reform of the WTO. Reviving the Appellate Body (AB) is crucial here. In this context, we also welcome the establishment of an early warning mechanism for third-party trade measures. It should now be clarified how this mechanism will function so that the EU and US can use it to its fullest potential and jointly react to new third-party trade and non-trade measures.

The cornerstones of global trade should be a level playing field, the fairest possible reciprocity, and common, high standards in the areas of digital trade, labor, human rights, the environment, and climate to avoid a race to the bottom.

Existing asymmetries and distortions with countries that differ fundamentally in their economic systems should also be addressed through the TTC's highly practice-oriented work and counteracted with coordinated measures.

Recommendation 31: Join forces on WTO, including WTO reform and various multilateral or plurilateral trade agreements

We encourage the EU and the US to join efforts at the WTO to promote meaningful reform of the WTO, including the Appellate Body. Also, the EU and the US should promote the various efforts for plurilateral agreements under the umbrella of the WTO. This includes the expansion of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA). Moreover, we encourage the EU and US to join efforts to make the customs moratorium on electronic transmissions permanent at the upcoming Ministerial Conference. The moratorium has brought extensive benefit to the flow of information to EU and US economies and those of other WTO trading partners.

About the TBI

The Transatlantic Business Initiative (TBI) is the point of contact for economic policy issues, particularly for the German government and the governments of the United States and Canada as well as for EU institutions. The initiative is supported by four business associations: the Federation of German Industries (BDI), the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), the Federation of German Wholesale, Foreign Trade and Services (BGA) and the Association of German Banks (BdB) and advocates for strengthening the economic relations between Germany and the European Union on the one hand, and the United States and Canada on the other. Members of the TBI work in four steering committees, focusing in particular on trade and investment policy, energy and climate policy, data and the digital economy as well as business and finance, and seek to engage with policymakers, regulators and supervisors, business and trade representatives as well as other stakeholders to strengthen transatlantic ties and facilitate coordination on matters of shared interest.

Imprint

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