



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Only 23% of key structural reforms implemented across EU Europe's competitive position weakening as a result

Only 23% of the EU Commission's key recommended national-level reforms have been implemented in the past year, according to a BUSINESSSEUROPE report published today. Issued annually, the BUSINESSSEUROPE Reform Barometer examines the 'country specific recommendations' that are aimed at tackling structural problems in EU Member State economies, thus enhancing competitive performance.

With less than a quarter of reforms being progressed, EU competitiveness is weakening. The BUSINESSSEUROPE report shows that:

- The overall tax burden in the EU is now 50% higher than the US and 30% higher than Japan
- The average tax wedge on low income workers is 40% higher than in the US and Japan
- R&D investment continues to lag the US and Japan, with the EU share of worldwide patent applications falling
- Administrative requirements to start a business in the EU are 3 times more burdensome than in competing developed economies

Commenting on the report's findings, Markus J. Beyrer, Director General of BUSINESSSEUROPE said: "While we endorse the Commission's reform recommendations, it's very disappointing that implementation is not happening to any great extent, considering the global competition that the EU faces. Our figures are extremely worrying and show the damage that can result from political inaction. Restoring Europe's competitive position through concerted action at both EU and national level is now critical and the upcoming Spring Council meeting provides an opportunity to make progress."

The BUSINESSSEUROPE [Reform Barometer](#) is compiled with analysis from national business federations across Europe who assess progress made by their respective Governments in driving structural reform. While [Individual country assessments](#) differ, the Barometer presents the aggregate figures.

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