

Bold EU action required to counter US tariffs threatening automotive suppliers

As a reaction to the US tariffs, including a 25% lever directed at imported European cars, CLEPA stresses that the measures from the Trump administration negatively affect automotive suppliers and trade relations on both sides of the Atlantic. The association calls on European institutions to respond with unity and determination to safeguard the EU's economy.

In addition to the tariffs on aluminium and steel taking effect today, tariffs on automotive parts are expected on 3 May 2025. EU automotive suppliers could face further impact from potential retaliation measures on certain US-sourced products. EU trade ministers will meet on Monday, 6 April, with a possible vote on a first set of retaliation measures as early as Tuesday. These measures would take effect on 16 April in response to the US Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminium.

Benjamin Krieger, CLEPA Secretary General, said:

"With EU suppliers driving a third of foreign direct investment in the US, transatlantic trade ties run deep. But Trump's tariffs are delivering a heavy blow—not just in Europe but also across North American operations, where EU-made components power vehicles exported to the US. For an industry already on edge, this escalation adds further strain.

The EU must respond with unity and strength. The aim: to create the right conditions for a fair, mutually beneficial deal with the US. It must also show real commitment to diversification by advancing trade agreements, starting with Mercosur and Mexico. Finally, we must get competitive again—cut red tape, lower energy cost, reduce the regulatory burden and strategically stimulate local demand to safeguard essential know-how and technological leadership. A well-calibrated response now will shape Europe's economic position for years to come."

Note to the editor

CLEPA, the European Association of Automotive Suppliers based in Brussels, represents over 3,000 companies, from multi-nationals to SMEs, supplying state-of-the-art components and innovative technology for safe, smart and sustainable mobility, investing over €30 billion yearly in research and development. Automotive suppliers in Europe directly employ 1.7 million people in the EU.

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