

Simplification through Omnibus-packages – lessons learnt?

Europe still has significant work to do on regulatory simplification. 40% of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise's member companies see regulatory burdens as a major challenge, but recent experience shows that targeted reforms and strong political commitment can reduce them. Future simplification efforts should be ambitious but focused, based on clearly identified problems and informed by business experience.

A few Omnibus packages are not enough to reduce the regulatory burden on companies. Instead, simplification and Better Regulation should become a long-term strategic priority across the entire EU policy cycle and all EU institutions. This requires effective cooperation among all co-legislators, with the aim of making future Omnibus packages unnecessary.

One year ago, the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise welcomed the European Commission's ambition to reduce regulatory burdens for businesses and strengthen European competitiveness. At the same time, we cautioned that Omnibus packages, reopening recently adopted legislation, could consume significant political and administrative resources, trigger attempts to broaden the scope of legislative files and ultimately undermine the objectives of simplification.¹ Now, with some Omnibus-packages still ongoing, some finalized and others not yet started, what are the lessons learnt?

1. Experiences gained

Looking back at the Omnibus-packages presented so far, we see a mixed but largely positive picture. Some of our concerns have proven true, while others are less significant than anticipated.

Overall, the experience suggests that Omnibus-packages can be a useful tool for regulatory simplification, provided they remain *targeted, evidence-based* and focused on *clearly identified problems*. Reopening legislation is resource intensive, and, in several cases, discussions have moved beyond simplification into broader debates about policy objectives, extensive political negotiations and significant stakeholder debates. This has been particularly evident in politically sensitive files such as parts of the Sustainability Omnibus, and the ongoing Digital Omnibus. In several cases, the negotiations have shown a gap between the political ambition to reduce burdens and the outcome of technical discussions, undermining the objective of meaningful simplification. It is key that the strategic priorities from the highest political level are clearly reflected throughout the whole process, even in technical discussions.

While negotiations relating to sustainability reporting and due diligence were lengthy, resource intensive and politically complex, the proposed CBAM revisions that

¹ See position paper from the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, August 2025 https://www.svensktnaringsliv.se/english/simplification-through-omnibus-packages_1238091.html

were part of the same Omnibus-package, were accepted swiftly and have the potential to reduce administrative burdens for many companies. The same applies to the "stop-the-clock" measures related to sustainability reporting, due diligence and the high-risk parts of the AI Act, where delayed application addressed a clearly identified implementation problem: companies could not reasonably be expected to comply with complex obligations before the necessary standards, guidance and conformity assessment structures were in place. These targeted measures reduced legal uncertainty and avoided unnecessary compliance costs without reopening the core policy choices. These examples show that Omnibus-initiatives can be meaningful and deliver substantial burden reductions relatively quickly, if there is a clear problem to solve and sufficient political commitment to address it.

While the [Commission's own estimates](#) point to significant reductions in recurring administrative costs through the Omnibus-packages, indicating that the exercise could generate tangible value for European businesses, it is too soon to estimate the real effects for companies. Also, competitiveness, better regulation and simplification have evolved from largely technical discussions into political priorities at the highest level of the European Union and the Member States. This political shift has been instrumental in driving progress and should be maintained in the years ahead.

2. Learnings for future simplification initiatives

Based on the experiences gained so far, we conclude that Omnibus packages can play a significant role in strengthening European competitiveness and reduce administrative burden for businesses. They should be used selectively and only where the expected benefits clearly outweigh the costs and risks associated with reopening legislation. To be successful, they must be

targeted, evidence-based and focus on clearly identified problems. Impact assessments are important to achieve these aims.

The following principles should guide future simplification efforts and Omnibus packages:

- ✓ **Strategic priority**
Strong political commitment at the highest level is essential. Simplification efforts are most successful when they have support across the institutions and are treated as a strategic competitiveness priority reflected throughout all negotiations and technical discussions.
- ✓ **Involve businesses early**
The practical experiences of businesses should be at the center of all simplification efforts. Early engagement is key to identify genuine burdens and necessary to develop workable solutions.
- ✓ **Simplification must be problem-driven**
Simplification should focus on addressing clearly identified burdens and practical implementation challenges and be based on appropriate impact assessments, avoiding political symbolism.
- ✓ **Avoid reopening fundamental policy compromises and maintain a clear focus on simplification**
Simplification initiatives should remain focused on their original objective: to simplify. When simplification efforts evolve into broader political renegotiations, complexity, uncertainty and legislative deadlock risk outweighing intended benefits. For example, adding new requirements during the process undermines the strategic simplification purpose. Such issues

should instead be part of the regular review of the legislation, and not in a simplification package.

✓ **Prioritize regulatory coherence**

Significant gains are achieved by removing overlaps, inconsistencies and duplicative requirements across legal instruments and by clarifying the interaction between them.

3. What is next?

Europe is far from done with simplification. [40% of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise's member companies](#) identify regulatory burden as a major challenge.

Recent experience shows that burden reductions through Omnibus-packages are possible with targeted reforms and strong political commitment. Simplification works best when it addresses clearly identified problems, focuses on practical and targeted solutions and actively incorporates business experiences. Future Omnibus initiatives should therefore be ambitious in their objectives but disciplined in their scope.

As an inspiration for future simplification, BusinessEurope has presented the [BusinessEurope Omnibook](#) with the most pressing regulatory burdens

across policy areas, alongside concrete suggestions to address them and [a position paper](#) for the simplification of the digital rulebook, including a series of concrete examples to illustrate where and how (digital) regulation can and must be simplified to reduce the burdens that hold back European businesses. Looking at these comprehensive suggestions, the upcoming digital fitness check and other initiatives in the pipeline, it is very clear that Europe is far from done with simplification. However, a few Omnibus-packages alone will be insufficient to alleviate the regulatory burden faced by companies. Simplification and Better Regulation must be treated as a long-term strategic priority, spanning the entire policy cycle and all EU institutions – from the design of new legislation to the review and simplification of existing rules that are no longer fit for purpose or create unnecessary burdens for businesses.

We need all the co-legislators to collaborate effectively towards a common goal. Then, no more Omnibus-packages should be needed in the future.

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