# NGOs challenge European Commission over omnibus simplification package for sustainability laws



A coalition of eight non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has formally lodged a complaint with the European Ombudsman regarding the development process of the European Commission’s Omnibus Simplification Package proposal, which was published on 26 February 2025. The NGOs have raised concerns about the transparency, democratic integrity, and expedited nature of the proposal’s formulation.

The group, comprising ClientEarth, Anti-Slavery International, Clean Clothes Campaign, European Coalition for Corporate Justice, Friends of the Earth Europe, Global Witness, Notre Affaire À Tous, and Transport & Environment (T&E), contend that the proposal undermines existing EU sustainability legislation. They specifically highlight potential dilutions to the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), and the EU Taxonomy Regulation—key components of the European Green Deal.

A spokesperson for the coalition commented on the situation, saying, “We are contesting the Commission’s rushed dismantling of three key pillars of the Green Deal – including laws meant to improve the environmental and human impacts of global trade – a process that completely disregards people and nature’s rights.” The spokesperson further asserted, “The Omnibus proposal was made without any public consultation, sidelining civil society, with a lack of evidence or environmental and social impact assessments, and with a primary focus on narrow industry interests. This reckless move not only weakens sustainability rules but also damages public trust in the EU’s democratic foundations.”

The NGOs accuse the European Commission of neglecting to properly collect evidence and to thoroughly assess the environmental and social impacts of proposed amendments to corporate laws. The coalition also alleges that behind-the-scenes meetings were heavily influenced by oil and gas industry representatives, suggesting a lack of balanced stakeholder engagement. They argue that bypassing comprehensive consultations results in a process that is neither inclusive nor transparent.

Another key element of their complaint addresses compliance with the European Climate Law. The coalition warns that the Omnibus proposal fails to assess its alignment with the EU’s legally binding climate-neutrality target. They further caution that the package may jeopardise the EU’s economic stability and competitiveness, objectives it ostensibly aims to support.

“The so-called simplification does nothing to enhance competitiveness,” the coalition added. “The European Commission is ignoring both evidence and science. Strong sustainability laws like the CSDDD and CSRD are key to the EU’s competitive advantage in a global market where consumers and investors increasingly demand responsible corporate action. We have seen time and time again that vague corporate promises aren’t driving the change we need. Weakening environmental and human rights requirements is a step in the wrong direction.”

In the context of these developments, Ami Taylor, Chief Executive Officer of Goodwork Sustainability UK Ltd, shared her perspective with The Business Travel Magazine. She remarked, “With all the uncertainty surrounding Omnibus, it’s easy to see why some companies might feel justified in pushing sustainability reporting down the priority list – especially if they’ve been treating it as a tick box exercise. But that would be a short-sighted move.” Taylor continued, “This legal action is a clear reminder that regulatory frameworks are still in flux. Businesses that embed sustainability into their core purpose – not as an add-on, but as a guiding principle – will be far better placed to navigate change and build long-term resilience.”

The coalition has called upon both the European Parliament and the Council to reject the Omnibus Simplification Package proposal in light of these criticisms, emphasising that the changes proposed could significantly alter the landscape of EU sustainability legislation. The complaint to the European Ombudsman seeks to highlight the procedural flaws and demand a reconsideration of the approach taken by the European Commission in advancing the proposal.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://dart.deloitte.com/USDART/home/publications/deloitte/heads-up/2025/eu-commission-omnibus-proposal-sustainability-reporting-reduction-csrd> - This source discusses the European Commission’s Omnibus proposal published on 26 February 2025, which aims to reduce sustainability reporting and due diligence requirements under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), confirming the coalition’s concern that the proposal dilutes key sustainability legislation.
* <https://commission.europa.eu/news/commission-proposes-cut-red-tape-and-simplify-business-environment-2025-02-26_en> - This official European Commission press release confirms the adoption of the Omnibus Simplification Package on 26 February 2025 and outlines its objective to simplify and cut regulatory burdens, supporting the article’s context about the expedited nature and focus on simplifying corporate rules.
* <https://finance.ec.europa.eu/news/omnibus-package-2025-04-01_en> - The European Commission’s detailed page on the Omnibus package provides an overview of the legislative areas affected, including the CSRD, CSDDD, and EU Taxonomy Regulation, backing the article’s claim that these key pillars of the European Green Deal are targeted by the proposal.
* <https://www.sedex.com/blog/eu-omnibus-simplification-package-what-you-need-to-know/> - This article explains the scope of the Omnibus Simplification Package, highlighting how it rolls back certain sustainability and corporate reporting requirements, and describes concerns around reduced reporting obligations and due diligence, which corroborates the NGOs’ accusations about undermining sustainability rules.
* <https://normative.io/insight/the-omnibus-simplification-package-explained/> - Normative’s explanation of the Omnibus Simplification Package details the legislative proposal’s timeline, lack of extensive public consultation, and its mix of economic and environmental implications, supporting the complaint about insufficient stakeholder engagement and the absence of proper impact assessments.