

# 5. **OPEN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY BASED ON PROMOTING COMPETITIVENESS IN EUROPE**

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The Spanish presidency of the Council is called upon to lead the debates on **the definition of the current concept of the “open strategic autonomy” of the EU**, which will be the core topic of the informal European Council meeting in Granada on 6 October. In this regard, we believe that it is **important to enlist the cooperation of the private sector**, due to its experience and in line with the priorities set out above, to establish just what this means and how the concept should be developed.

- The concept of strategic autonomy has evolved since it was first coined (in the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy of 2016) to reflect the need to strengthen security and the collective defence of the EU in a multipolar world with continual changes on the geopolitical chessboard, characterised by coexisting global

challenges on a large scale. **With the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine** it has become **even clearer** that the EU needs to prioritise the protection of its citizens **responding to current dependencies on third countries**. That means boosting capacity and the defence industry, as well as fostering autonomy in other basic areas for the proper functioning of the internal market.

- **At the CEOE** we therefore believe that **open strategic autonomy must be backed up by a boost to competitiveness in the EU**, brought about by strengthening its **strategic industries**, consolidating and diversifying **strong, resilient supply chains** and, of course, implementing **policies** that boost competitiveness that deal with existing shortcomings.

- To attain that open strategic autonomy we need to invigorate economic and industrial activity and **strengthen both the internal resilience of the internal market and the EU's leadership on a global scale in all areas**. Special attention must be paid to areas such as energy, industry, digitalisation and technology (particularly cyber-security), health, agri-food, investment and trade policies, the defence

- industry, critical raw materials and waste recycling and valorization techniques, but the **definition of open strategic autonomy in the EU must not leave behind any sector or Member State** and must not succumb to the temptation of protectionism.
- The functioning of strategic value chains must be ensured and necessary actions must be taken to make those chains autonomous and resilient.

