



US AUTO MARKET AT A CROSSROADS NAVIGATING SHIFTING POLICIES AND TARIFFS

Exploring risks and opportunities for OEMs and suppliers

EFESO
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
INSIGHT

Management summary

Navigating US Auto Policy Under President Trump: Risks and Opportunities

President Donald Trump's re-election introduces significant risks and opportunities for the global automotive industry. By imposing new import tariffs – as announced before – Trump's administration is taking the protectionist agenda to the next level: 25% on Canada and Mexico, and an additional 10% on China. The upwards spiral is in full swing, with counteractions from the affected countries to each new tariff imposed by US. E.g., China enacted penal tariffs on US goods ranging from 10% to 15% on specific goods, incl. vehicles. Tariff rises of 25% will hit global companies relying on steel and aluminum, especially automakers. If they cannot pass on the cost to consumers through higher prices, profits will be hit.

While the US market, with 16 million annual vehicle sales, remains the second-largest globally, automakers should not and likely will not center strategies on US policy alone. The EV market has experienced growth in recent years but is currently seeing slower expansion. With companies like GM, Ford, VW, and Stellantis scaling back electrification targets, conventional vehicle sales might fill the gap, partly due to limited availability of affordable EV models and delayed new product launches.

Faced with new US regulations and protectionist policies, automakers must ensure their strategies are adaptable. The recent election has shown that voters can shift their allegiances quickly, and already in the midterms in two years, things can change. However, global plans must prioritize megatrends over volatile US policies.

In the following pages, we outline the challenges and propose how to navigate the uncertainties with strategies that center around speed, adaptability, and foresight.



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Managing Director



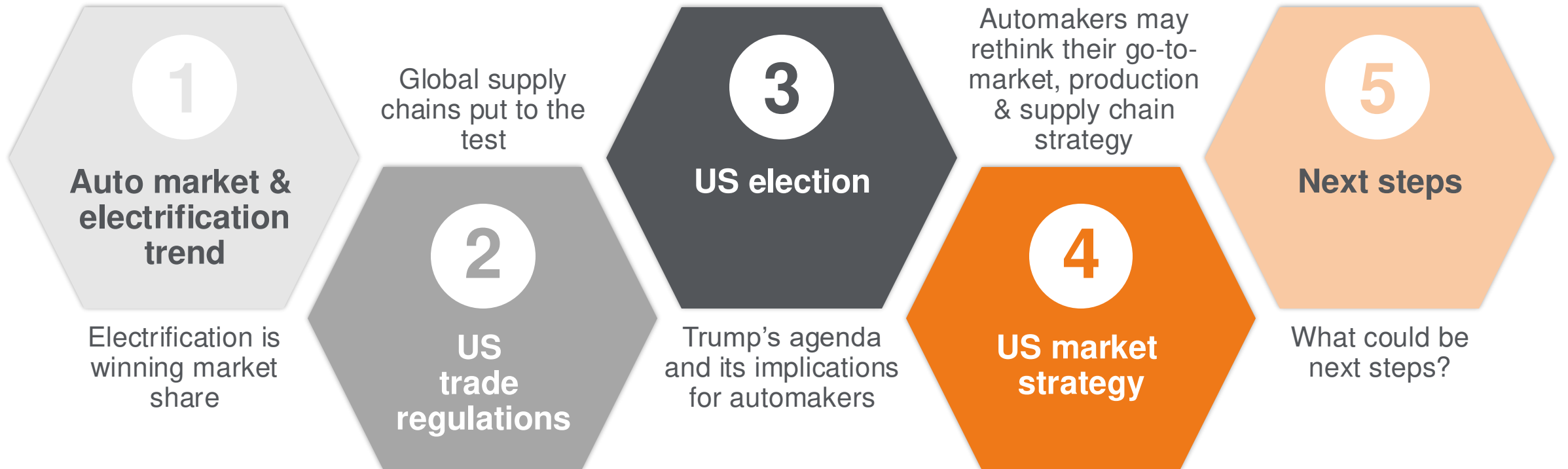
Dr. Kenneth Sievers
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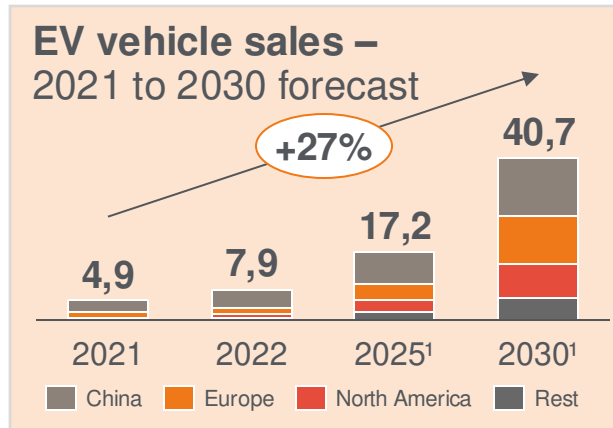
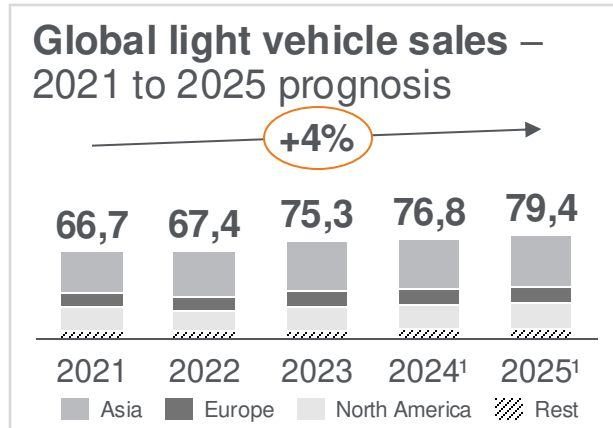
Julian Tutmann
Principal



Overview



Despite growth slow down, electric vehicles have gained significant market share over the last years, and are expected to gain more market share in the long run



Regional market view

Asia:

- ~40 million units sold in total, overall growth steady, slowing down after strong recovery
- thereof ~8 million EVs sold in China and ~15 million EVs projected by 2030

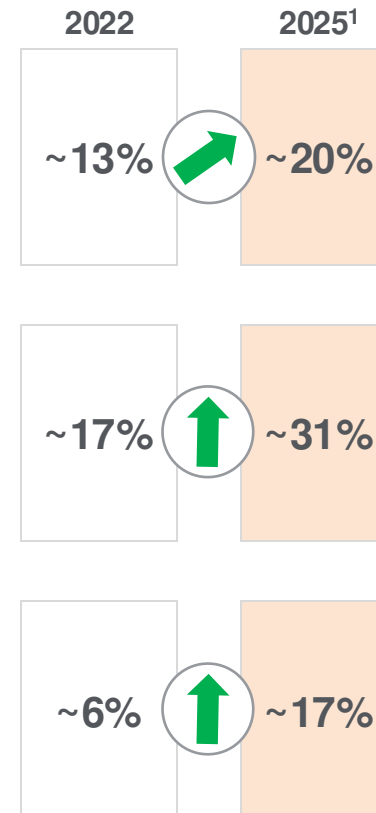
Europe:

- ~12 million units sold in total, slight growth
- thereof ~4 million EVs sold in WEU & ZEU and ~12 million EVs projected by 2030

North America²:

- ~19 million units sold in total, slight growth
- thereof ~3 million EVs in NA and ~8 million EVs projected by 2030

EV share develop.



EV sales growth outperforming overall vehicle sales

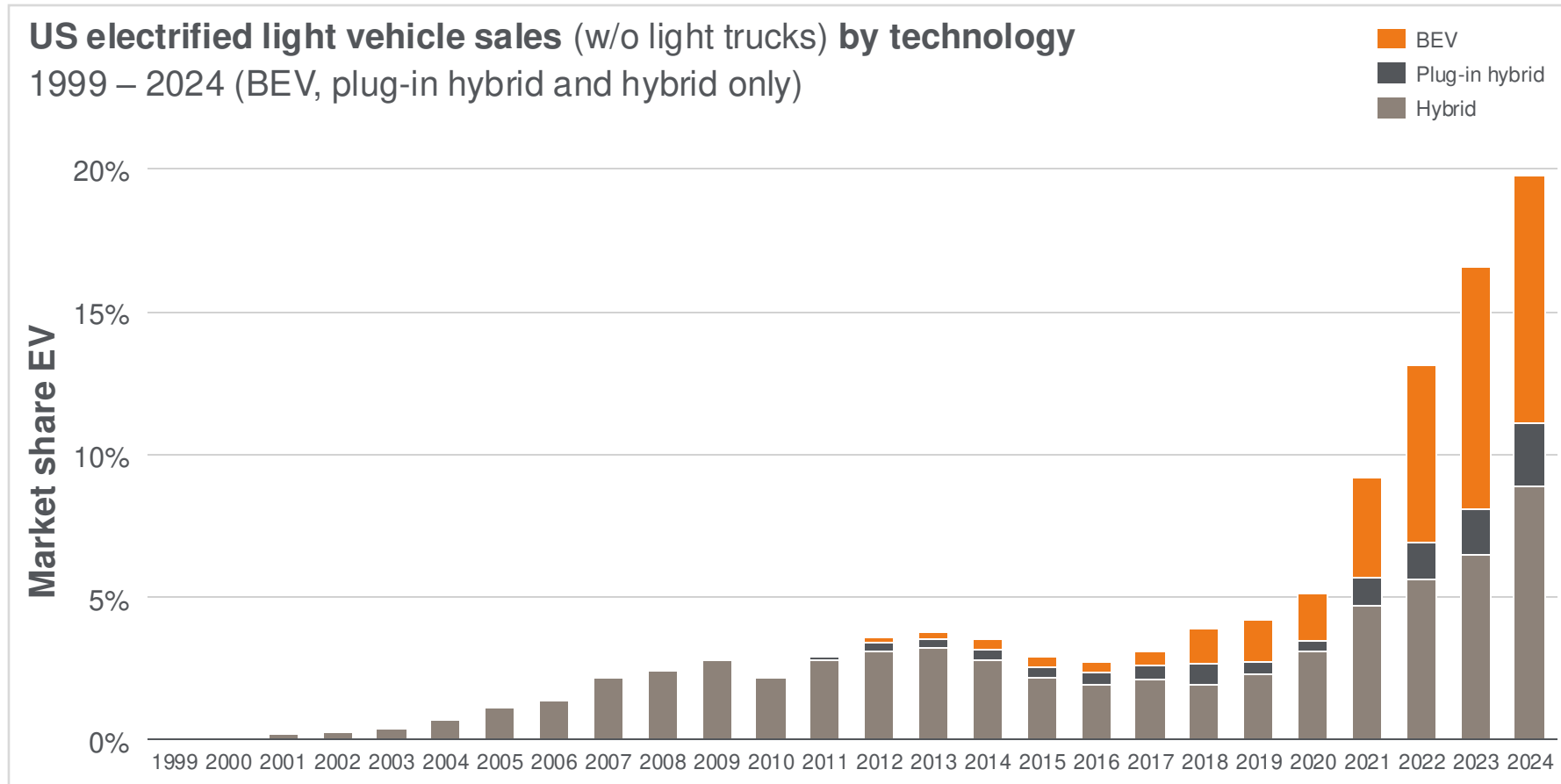
Market share expected to further increase up to ~50% by 2030



Europe and China with significant and increasing EV market shares, while US is catching up.



For the US, electrified vehicles have captured a 9% share of the light vehicle market over recent years, most coming from BEV and hybrid vehicle sales

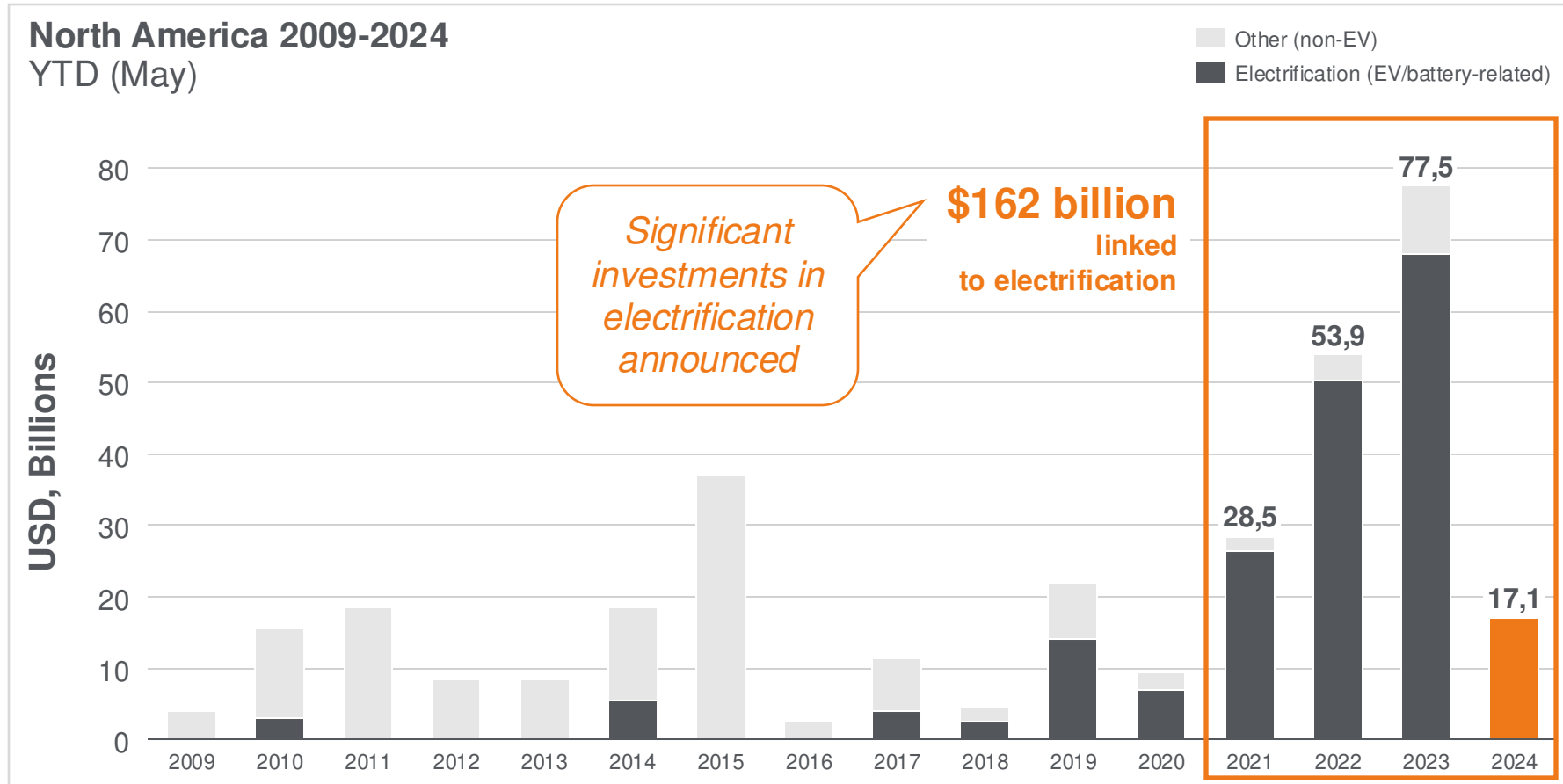


Comments

- **US EV overall market share strongly increased over recent years up to >18% in 2024**
- **Especially BEV sales have grown over the last years up to ~9%**
- **Hybrid vehicle sales grew significantly to ~9%, while plug-in hybrid could capture ~2%**

The overall growth comes from electrification and the automakers investments into it.

Automakers have announced investment up to \$162 billion into electrification



Comments

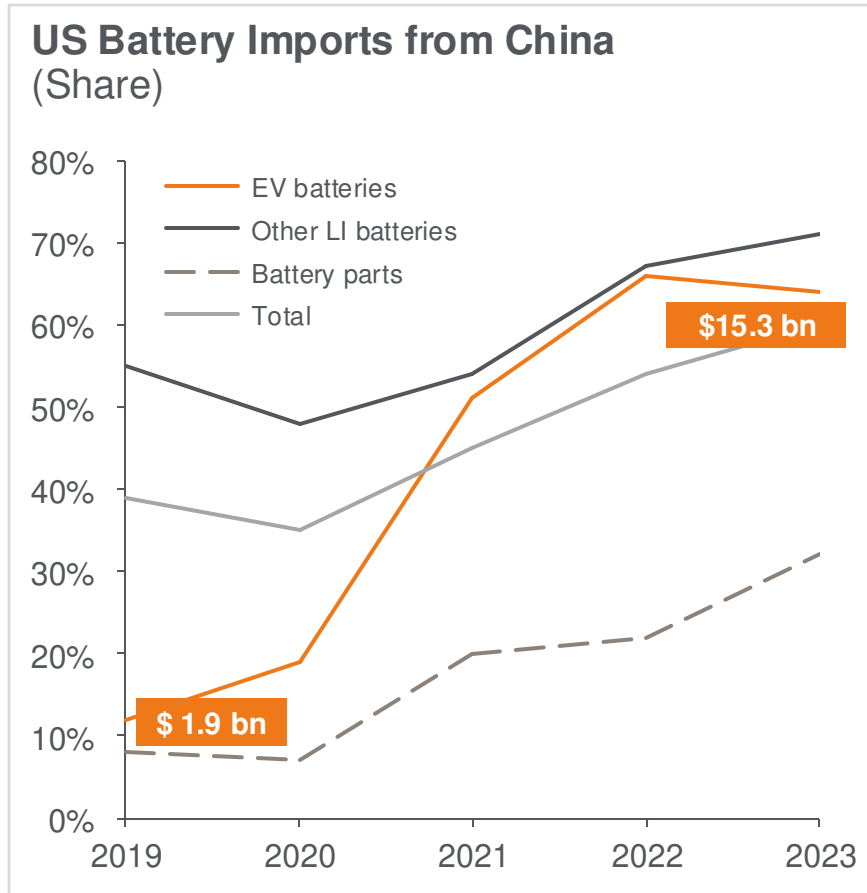
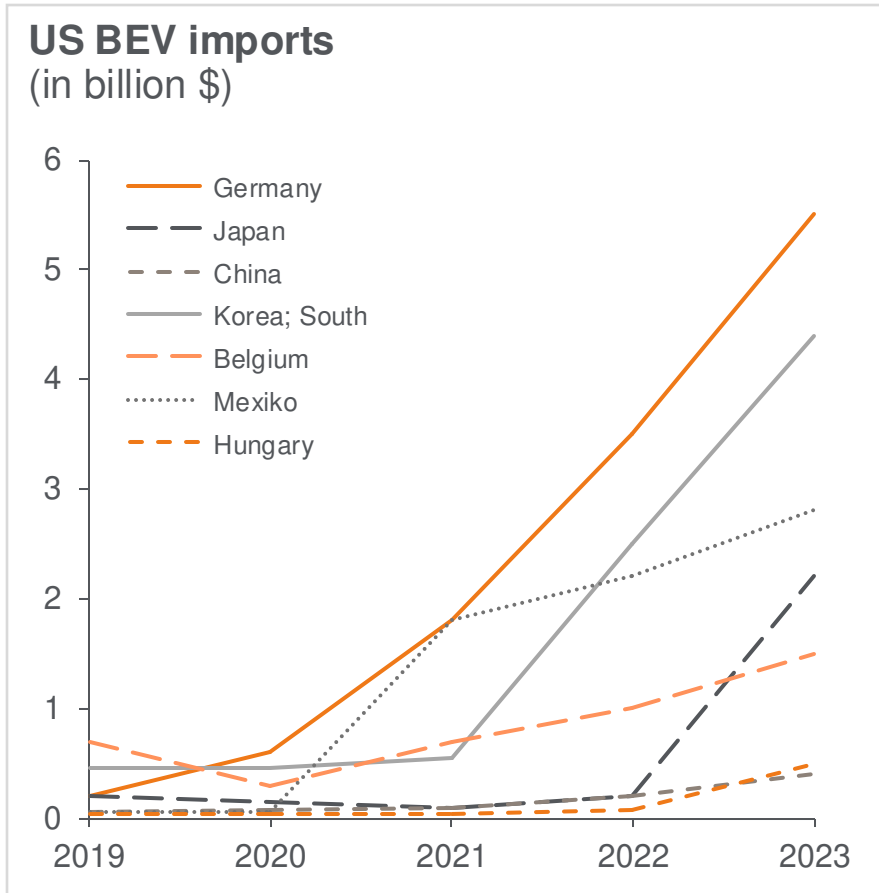
- Automakers investing **\$162 billion** in **BEV** over the last years - **strong increase** compared to pre-Corona years
- **IRA sourcing requirements** are **tightening up**
- **Chinese invests in Mexico** e.g., **BYD plant MX**, up to 150k cars p.a. by end of 2024
- **US-based OEMs expect EV adoption slow-down** e.g., **GM reduces EV 2024 sales forecast**
- **Government incentives for EV buying subsidies** might be eliminated (bill of Republicans)



The increasing investments in electrification leads to significant growth of BEV / battery imports.



The North American BEV imports show significant growth with increasing battery imports coming from China



Comments

- China is the 3rd-largest global exporter of BEVs by value the 7th-largest source of EVs to the US
- Imports from China are not rising like those from other sources, likely due to a 25% tariff under section 301
- US imports of lithium batteries and parts from China increased from \$1.9 billion to \$15.3 billion
- US investment in battery production could significantly reduce imports from China within the next five years

» The US government aims to strengthen local production and reduce dependency on imports.

While US protectionist regulation and tariffs are aiming to foster local production and products, global auto industry must navigate this without panic and a clear long-term focus

Protectionism: a double-edged sword

- The US pursues a **protectionist policy** to push **more domestic production of vehicles & components**, e.g., by imposing **stricter regulations** and increased **import tariffs**
- **New tariffs for China, EU, Mexico and Canada** by the new administration are showing significant impact:
 - › **Non-US-based** but also **US-based** automakers face **diminishing profits**, as most of them have a **supply chain footprint** in **MX** and **Canada**, e.g., as **steel and aluminum tariffs increase** from 10 to 25%
 - › For those with strong **local footprint** in the **US** this is **good news** and provides **opportunities to improve competitive position**



Energy policy and emission targets

- A **pro-fossil-fuel** stance like '**Drill Baby Drill**' will boost **traditional ICE vehicles** in the **short term**
- However, **over-reliance on internal combustion engines** could **risk focus on innovativeness** and **long-term irrelevance** considering **global electrification trends** and **2050 Net Zero** targets



OEMs need to review their US strategy and product mix, if it allows flexibility towards even stricter, trade regulations, and shifting EV demands



US policies and regulations provide both: opportunities and risk.

Four political elements of U.S regulation support the reduction of inflation, strengthen the US based production and buying of regional products while fencing off Chinese products

Inflation reduction act

IRA supports **local production** and **buying of local products** by e.g., **tax credits** for **clean vehicles** and excluding **non-qualified parts and cars**



China 301 tariffs

The further **tightening of tariffs on Chinese products** is bringing the trade war between the **US** and **China** into the next round



Connected vehicles investigation

Connected vehicles investigation suggest to **mitigate US national security risks** by introducing **restrictions** for **Chinese** vehicles / parts



Uyghur forced labor prevention act

Uyghur forced labor prevention act prevents **sale of products made with forced labor** by **increasing inspections**



The regulative landscape will see changes under President Trump that impact automakers localization strategies.



China 301 tariffs – the imposition of tariffs on Chinese products has a significant impact on global supply chains and the US-China trade war is intensifying further



	Previous rate Implementation year	New rate Implementation year
Electric vehicles	25% 2018	100% 2024
Semiconductors	25% 2018	50% 2024
Solar cells	25% 2018	50% 2024
Syringes and needles	0%	50% 2024
Some steel and aluminum products ^{1,2}	7,5% 2019	25% 2024
Lithium-Ion EV batteries ¹	7,5% 2019	25% 2024
Lithium-Ion non-EV batteries ¹	7,5% 2019	25% 2024
Battery parts ¹	7,5% 2019	25% 2024
Some personal protective equipment ^{1,2}	7,5% 2019	25% 2024
Rubber medical and surgical gloves ¹	7,5% 2019	25% 2024
Natural graphite and permanent magnets	0%	25% 2024
Other critical minerals	0%	25% 2024
Ship-to-shore cranes	0%	25% 2024
All other Chinese products ³	0%	10% 2025 → Chinas reaction: 10-15% on specific goods*

Comments

- Higher tariffs imposed on Chinese imports, especially on EVs and key technologies
- Global supply chains into the US market are becoming more expensive
- New imposed by Trump: +10% on all Chinese goods – with corresponding answer from China, intensifying the trade war and further increase the cost pressure

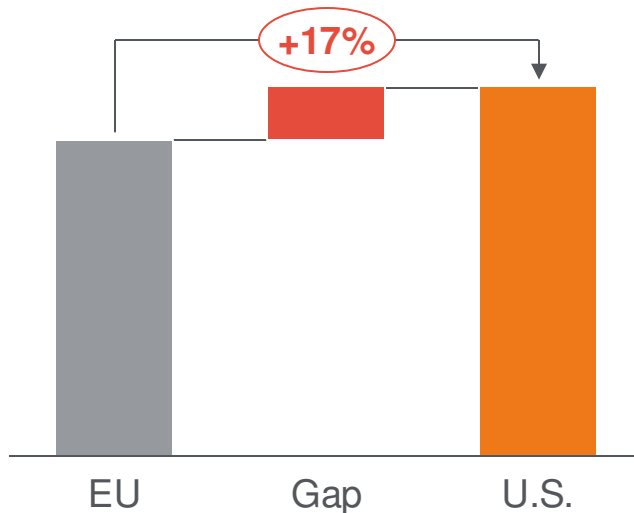


EFESO insight: non-US based automakers localization see 15-20% cost increase* for system parts for passenger cars; US automakers to reduce costs to compensate increases

Axle drive simulation EU vs. US

(Material cost with localization effect (wages, electricity, etc.) considered)

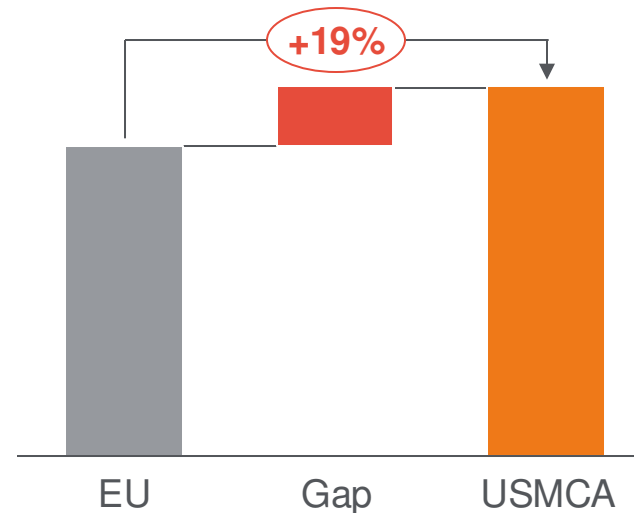
+17% costs switching from EU to US



Transmission simulation EU vs. USMCA

(Material cost with localization effect (wages, electricity, etc.) considered)

+19% costs switching from EU to USMCA



Comments

- Our exemplary **system parts simulations** based on **detailed costing calculations** show additional costs for localization in NA:
 - **+17% cost for axle drive localization in US**
 - **+19% cost for transmission localization in USMCA**

Trump's increasing existing tariffs and imposing new tariffs not only affecting China and EU but also USMCA.



*Material cost with localization effect (wages, electricity, etc.) considered, without additional transport costs, tariffs, investment or lower OEE

Trump's agenda bares risk and opportunities for all automakers, depending on their footprint and their ability to balance changing policies and regulations

01

Rollback of fuel efficiency standards

- EV production urgency reduced; focus may shift to SUVs / trucks
- Risk of lagging behind global EV trends



02

End of \$7,500 EV tax credit repeal EV purchase subsidies

- Higher EV prices reduce demand
- Tesla may gain due to cost leadership; legacy automakers face profitability challenges



03

25% tariffs on Canada / Mexico imports and Aluminum / Steel globally

- Supply chain with increased costs needs re-evaluation
- Pressure to relocate production to US, advantage for those with strong US footprint



04

Additional 10% tariff on Chinese goods, including EV batteries

- Higher EV production costs
- Need for local battery manufacturing



05

Fossil fuel support and clean energy funding cut

- Slower EV transition risks competitiveness in the long run
- Higher costs maintaining ICE and EV portfolios in parallel



Implications for automakers

- Evaluate impact of new tariffs and regulation
- Consider further diversified supply chains
- Adjust product strategies to balance ICE and EV models
- Reduce production costs to stay competitive

US regulation and President Trump's imposed tariffs be evaluated but not dictate automakers' strategies.



The whole automotive industry needs to deliver faster and be more adaptable to change to cope better with fast shifts consumer demands and policies



US vehicle market is **expected** to **grow** only **incrementally** in the coming years, the **right product / market strategy** and **portfolio** makes the difference.



Taxes might be reduced under President Trump in the attempt to reduce the pressure on the middle class, therefore **more companies** and **consumers** may have **more money in their pocket to be spend**.



If **costs** will **rise** for **automakers**, e.g., from increasing import tariffs, the **products prices** for the end **consumer** will **rise**. **Consumers demand** will **decline**, especially for **BEVs**.



US will still **import goods** and **EV technology** from **China going forward**, but it must be evaluated **how to handle** the **additional cost** of e.g., rising import tariffs and the **effects** on the **supply chain strategies**.



With **mid-term elections only 2 years away**, all needs to happen **quickly**. Automakers need to **deliver products faster** and need to be **more adaptable** to **satisfy changing consumer needs better**.



To navigate the challenges, to identify the risks and opportunities we suggest a 5-step approach.



'Never let a crisis go to waste' ... use it to become better!

Five recommended steps to gain transparency and decide US market strategy



01

Baseline

Generate **transparency**:

- On **supply chain** / supply base
- Share of **Chinese parts** / FEOC content
- On **forced labor**
- Impacting **regulations**
- Evaluate the **ability to become qualified**
- **Identify consumer needs**



02

Strategy

- **Explore** new regulation **risks** and **opportunities**
- **Evaluate levers** and **develop measures**



03

Product & market

- **Product / pricing strategy** in US
- **Sales target**
- **Regulations** for different **technologies** (e.g., ICE, BEV)
- **Accelerate product development**



04

Business case

- Develop **market strategy** and calculate **business case**



05

Implementation

- **Decide** and **implement** localization **strategies**
- **Start rapid efficiency programs** in your **supply chains** and your own **operation**



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