

I Press Release

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Environmental Impact Assessments at risk of getting tangled up in bureaucratic red tape

BUSINESSEUROPE and EUROCHAMBRES expressed their deep concern about the ongoing revision of the directive on Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) which was today voted on in the European Parliament plenary. While the revision was intended as a simplification exercise, most of the proposals tabled so far went just in the opposite direction.

However, both organisations have expressed their relief that the European Parliament's plenary assembly rejected several of the most alarming amendments adopted by the ENVI committee back in July. Notwithstanding, many of the changes confirmed in plenary would still significantly harm the EU as a business location.

Commenting on the vote, Markus J. Beyrer, Director General of BUSINESSEUROPE stated: *"In its current form, the proposed revision clearly goes against the trend to minimise the regulatory burden on business in order to facilitate the economic recovery and strengthen the competitiveness of our industrial core in the EU."*

Although, EUROCHAMBRES and BUSINESSEUROPE recognise the need to assess the environmental impact of projects before they are approved, they underline that this must not be to the detriment of economic considerations.

"The original directive already necessitates long and bureaucratic authorisation procedures. Additional requirements would cause a decline in infrastructure projects and thus reduce job and growth creation opportunities," added Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary-General of EUROCHAMBRES.

The business community now calls on the 28 Member States to align the directive with principles of smart regulation and to drop unnecessary burdens, e.g. mandatory EIA for shale gas exploration, when negotiating the revision in the Council.

EUROCHAMBRES – The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents over 20 million enterprises in Europe – 93% of which are SMEs – through members in 44 countries and a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers.

Contact: Guendalina Cominotti, Tel. +32 2 282 08 66, cominotti@eurochambres.eu

BUSINESSEUROPE represents small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, BUSINESSEUROPE's members are 41 leading industrial and employers' federations from 35 European countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

Contact: Peter Vertessy, Tel. +32 2 237 65 03, p.vertessy@businessseurope.eu