

PRESS RELEASE**REACH:
Council Commonsense**

EUROCHAMBRES welcomes the compromise reached at yesterday's Competitiveness Council as a welcome decision particularly for SMEs, which are the backbone of Europe's economy. Only by progressing in this way REACH can be made workable for business.

Paul Skehan, Deputy Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"The original proposal would have been a big burden for small business. Now the political agreement on the chemicals regulation lets reason prevail in a very contentious and heated debate. Our commitment to a more pragmatic and workable approach has paid off."*

EUROCHAMBRES is particularly satisfied with progress made in terms of:

1. Registration:

- A registration based on risk will help overcome some of the excessive costs of registration. Supplementing the Commission's tonnage thresholds with risk-based factors – by permitting use and exposure categories rather than looking at every conceivable use of a substance or at every possible exposure scenario – was one of business's main concerns.
- Reduced information requirements for substances produced in volumes between 1 and 10 tonnes, where the risk to humans or the environment is insignificant, are also an important alleviation.

2. Authorisation: EUROCHAMBRES welcomes decisions on a case by case basis as the Council proposes, rather than having a fixed 5 year time frame.**3. Evaluation:** An enhanced role for the European Chemicals Agency in evaluating substances is crucial. This will allow both achieving the objectives of the regulations, and ensuring that European industry is not placed at a competitive disadvantage.

Mr Skehan added: *"Business has never questioned the objectives of REACH. However, red tape must be held at bay to leave SMEs room to develop. Otherwise the business location Europe is put into danger and jobs are lost."*

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