

POSITION ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL OMNIBUS



Eurochambres position on the Environmental Omnibus

The Environmental Omnibus represents a positive step towards reducing administrative burdens stemming from EU environmental legislation. Eurochambres welcomes that several core demands of the chamber network are reflected in the simplification package, including the deletion of the SCIP database and measures to streamline permitting procedures. However, the package remains limited in scope and leaves several key legislative files unaddressed. Further efforts will therefore be required to ensure that EU environmental legislation becomes more coherent, proportionate and workable for businesses, particularly SMEs.

1. Executive summary

The eighth Environmental Omnibus simplification package marks a step in the right direction towards addressing the cumulative regulatory burden stemming from EU environmental legislation. Eurochambres welcomes several proposed changes, such as streamlined Environmental Management System (EMS) requirements, which reflect key recommendations from the chamber network. At the same time, the simplification package does not address key legislative files, such as the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), and only partially reduces administrative burdens in areas such as the Industrial Emissions Directive. The chamber network therefore calls for the following key changes to the proposed simplification package:

- **Ensure a proportionate and workable Environmental Management System (EMS) framework under the Industrial Emissions Directive:** ISO 14001 and EMAS should be explicitly recognised as sufficient to fulfil EMS requirements in order to avoid redundant or parallel compliance obligations and provide legal certainty for operators.
- **Establish a coherent and accelerated permitting framework across sectors and projects:** The introduction of a toolbox covering provisions on overriding public interest, tacit approval, and dispute settlement procedures is welcomed. However, limiting its application to strategic projects reduces its effectiveness and should therefore be extended across sectors and projects.
- **Introduce a binding cut-off date for environmental assessments:** The absence of a clear cut-off date leads to repeated requests for updated data and delays in permitting procedures. A defined reference point based on the situation at the time of application is necessary to ensure legal certainty and avoid unnecessary administrative burdens.

The Environmental Omnibus can only be a first step in reducing administrative burdens stemming from EU environmental legislation. Further efforts must address outstanding challenges in key legislative files such as the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation and the Nature Restoration Regulation. Eurochambres therefore urges policymakers to revisit its list of over [60 simplification proposals](#).

2. Why the chamber network considers the eighth Omnibus simplification package relevant

Regulatory burden remains one of the key challenges for European businesses, especially SMEs. This is confirmed by the latest edition of the [Eurochambres Economic Survey](#). Based on responses from more than 40,000 European entrepreneurs, regulatory burden was identified as the second biggest challenge for 2026, surpassed only by labour costs. Despite recent simplification initiatives, the Commission's commitment to reduce administrative burdens by 25% for businesses and 35% for SMEs has not yet materialised in practice. This assessment is reinforced by the results of the [European Parliament of Enterprises 2025](#), where over 700 entrepreneurs from across sectors overwhelmingly (98%) reported that the first year of the simplification agenda had produced no noticeable improvement.

Environmental legislation is a particularly complex area of EU regulation. Businesses face extensive documentation, reporting, and authorisation requirements that generate significant compliance costs, thereby undermining competitiveness. Evidence from the Trinomics [study](#) on environmental administrative costs shows that across the environmental acquis, businesses face approximately 250-400 administrative obligations, resulting in an estimated €8-9 billion in administrative costs per year.

Against this background, chambers consider the Environmental Omnibus an important initiative to address the cumulative regulatory burden stemming from EU environmental legislation. To support the simplification agenda, Eurochambres compiled, ahead of the proposal, a list of over [60 simplification proposals](#) covering 13 EU environmental laws. These recommendations target burdensome obligations in areas such as water, waste, industrial emissions, and due diligence legislation, with the objective of ensuring a competitive and workable transition for European businesses, especially SMEs.

3. Eurochambres remarks on the environmental simplification package and the proposed amendments

The chamber network generally welcomes the proposed Environmental Omnibus simplification package. The initiative reflects several key recommendations from Eurochambres' list of over [60 simplification proposals](#), including the deletion of the SCIP database, the suspension of the obligation to appoint authorised representatives for extended producer responsibility (EPR) in cross-border situations, and measures to speed up permitting procedures and reduce administrative costs.

These measures respond directly to long-standing concerns raised by businesses across the chamber network. The package also aligns with findings from the Trinomics [study](#) on environmental administrative costs, which identifies waste legislation, environmental permitting procedures, and requirements related to industrial emissions as among the most administratively burdensome areas for businesses.

At the same time, the Environmental Omnibus falls short of expectations. Several legislative dossiers identified by businesses as particularly burdensome, such as the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and elements of the Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR), are not addressed and will be discussed in more detail in Section 4. In other areas, such as the Industrial Emissions Directive, the simplification measures remain

limited in scope and do not fully resolve the underlying complexity faced by companies. Moreover, the practice of postponing necessary improvements to later reviews or stress-tests, such as in the case of the Birds and Habitats Directives, fails to reflect the urgency of reducing administrative burdens for businesses.

Against this background, the chamber network considers the Environmental Omnibus to be another step forward in the simplification agenda, but by far not the final step. Continued efforts will be required to achieve a more coherent, proportionate, and business-friendly regulatory environment.

Waste Framework Directive – Directive 2008/98/EC

To reduce administrative burden for businesses, the Commission proposes to suspend the requirement for producers to appoint an authorised representative for extended producer responsibility (EPR) in member states where they sell products but are not established, until 1 January 2035. The suspension is not limited to the Waste Framework Directive but also applies to equivalent provisions in the Batteries Regulation, Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, Single-Use Plastics Directive, and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive. By contrast, existing rules requiring authorised representatives for producers established in third countries remain unchanged.

- **Suspension of the requirement to appoint an authorised representative:** The chamber network strongly supports the proposed change. The obligation is particularly burdensome for SMEs and low-volume operators, as the administrative and financial costs of appointing authorised representatives in multiple member states may exceed the commercial value of cross-border activities, discouraging participation in the single market. At the same time, consistent enforcement of EPR obligations across member states should be ensured in order to maintain a level playing field, particularly in the context of e-commerce activities involving third-country sellers.

Linked to EPR reporting, the environmental simplification package proposes to harmonise reporting frequency with which producers must report on the quantities of products they place on the market in a member state, setting a maximum reporting frequency of once every 12 months. The objective is to reduce administrative burden, particularly for producers operating in multiple member states and for SMEs. Further simplification, harmonisation and digitalisation of EPR schemes, including the establishment of a centralised EU one-stop shop for EPR reporting and registration, is expected to be addressed in the forthcoming Circular Economy Act.

- **Reduction in reporting frequency:** The chamber network supports limiting reporting frequency to once per year, as this has the potential to reduce administrative burden for companies operating across multiple member states. At the same time, the actual burden reduction will depend on implementation at national level, as in some member states monthly or quarterly reporting currently remains important for the functioning of EPR systems.

- **Planned introduction of an EU one-stop shop for EPR schemes:** The Commission's intention to further simplify EPR obligations, notably through a one-stop shop for EU-wide registration and reporting, is welcomed by Eurochambres. This aligns with a key demand in our [position on the Circular Economy Act](#) and would provide relief for European businesses while strengthening the functioning of the single market. In this context, the one-stop shop should also contribute to a more coherent enforcement framework, particularly in relation to cross-border e-commerce and third-country sellers placing products on the EU market.

As acknowledged by the Commission, the SCIP database has proven ineffective in informing recyclers about the presence of hazardous substances in products, while imposing substantial administrative costs on companies. The Commission therefore proposes to repeal the SCIP reporting obligation, while integrating relevant substances of very high concern (SVHC) information into the Digital Product Passport (DPP) framework.

- **Deletion of the SCIP database:** The chamber network has repeatedly highlighted the significant administrative burden created by the SCIP database and its limited practical value for recyclers. Eurochambres therefore strongly welcomes its deletion in the simplification package.
- **Planned inclusion of SVHC data in the Digital Product Passport (DPP):** In principle, a practical, standardised and interoperable Digital Product Passport can simplify reporting and notification obligations while improving information flows across value chains. At the same time, experience with the SCIP database illustrates the importance of careful design to avoid unnecessary administrative burdens and limited practical value. The implementation of the DPP should therefore respect the principle of data minimisation, keep integration costs manageable, and ensure cybersecurity and the protection of business-sensitive information. Consequently, the inclusion of SVHC data must be carefully assessed to ensure proportionality.

Batteries Regulation – Regulation (EU) 2023/1542

Alongside the proposed changes concerning authorised representatives for extended producer responsibility (EPR), the Commission proposes targeted amendments to the Batteries Regulation. The proposal clarifies that any manufacturer, importer, distributor, or other entity that sells batteries in one member state while being established in another member state or in a third country is considered a “producer”, regardless of the sales method used, including distance selling. This clarification aims to ensure consistent application of EPR obligations across different sales channels. The proposal also clarifies labelling requirements for hazardous substances in batteries, specifying that labelling obligations apply to substances of very high concern (SVHC) as defined in Regulations (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH) and Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 (CLP).

- **Clarification of producer definition:** The chamber network supports the proposed amendment, as it closes unintended gaps in the current framework and ensures consistent application of extended producer responsibility obligations across sales channels, including distance selling, for example via non-EU platforms. While these changes are welcome, the direct reduction of administrative burden for businesses remains limited.

- **Clarification of labelling requirements for hazardous substances:** The chamber network supports the intention to clarify the scope of reporting and labelling obligations related to substances of very high concern (SVHC). However, to ensure legal certainty and coherence within the EU framework for chemicals and product legislation, the definition of SVHC in the Batteries Regulation must fully align with the definition under REACH (Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006). Eurochambres therefore proposes the following **amendments to Article 1 of proposal COM(2025) 981**:
 - Amendment to Article 1(1)(b) – deletion of the reference to Annex VI of Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008:
“[...] (b) the following point (69) is added: ‘substance of very high concern’ means any substance which fulfils the criteria laid down in Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and is identified in accordance with Article 59(1) of that Regulation, ~~or any substance which fulfils the criteria laid down in Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and listed in Annex VI of Regulation (EC) 1272/2008.~~’ [...]”
 - Amendment to Article 1(4) – deletion of the words “equal or”:
“(4) in Annex VI Point 8 in Part A is replaced by the following:
‘8. the substances of very high concern within the meaning of Article 3(1)(69) which are present in the battery, other than mercury, cadmium and lead, with a concentration ~~equal or~~ above 0.1%, weight on weight.’”
- **Unnecessary labelling requirement for visible fee (Article 74(5), Regulation (EU) 2023/1542):** The mandatory labelling of the visible fee, requiring producers to display EPR-related costs separately at the point of sale, creates a significant organisational burden for manufacturers and retailers without delivering meaningful added value. Eurochambres therefore propose to delete Article 74(5) of the Batteries Regulation through the following **amendment to Article 1 of proposal COM(2025) 981**:
 - Amendment to Article 1 – deletion of Article 74(5) of the Batteries Regulation (EU) 2023/1542
“Article 1 [...]”
(6) in Article 74, paragraph 5 is deleted.

Clarification: The deletion removes the requirement that the costs covered by the producer under Article 56(4), points (a) to (d), shall be shown separately to the end-user at the point of sale of a new battery.

The proposal further amends requirements for batteries used in light means of transport (LMT). Under the current rules, such batteries must be removable and replaceable at cell level, which has raised safety concerns when faulty cells are not replaced under the right conditions. The Commission therefore proposes that LMT battery packs should instead be removable and replaceable at module level by independent professionals.

- **Removable and replaceable batteries at module level:** The chamber network supports the proposed amendment, as it addresses unintended safety risks and better reflects technical feasibility for manufacturers and repair operators. The change improves legal certainty and safety outcomes, while maintaining repairability objectives. However, the direct administrative burden reduction for businesses is expected to be limited.

Industrial Emissions Directive – Directive 2010/75/EU

The Commission proposes targeted amendments concerning the Environmental Management System (EMS) requirements under Article 14a of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED). These include extending the deadline for preparing and implementing EMS obligations to 1 July 2030 (instead of 2027) and allowing two or more installations under the control of the same operator, or different operators belonging to the same company within a member state, to operate under a single EMS.

- **Extended timeline and single EMS for multiple installations:** The chamber network welcomes the proposed changes, as they provide businesses with additional time to adapt to the requirements and introduce greater flexibility for companies operating multiple installations. This contributes to reducing administrative complexity and compliance costs.
- **Lack of proportionality and size-based differentiation:** It is regrettable that the proposal does not introduce size-based differentiation or thresholds for EMS obligations under Article 14a. Full EMS requirements should primarily apply to large-scale installations, while smaller operators should benefit from simplified requirements or exemptions. Such differentiation would ensure a more proportionate approach and reduce compliance burdens for SMEs.

The Commission further proposes to **remove several EMS-related requirements**, including the obligation to develop a chemical inventory, substitution plans for hazardous substances, the transformation plan, and the mandatory external audit requirement. The proposal also repeals the empowerment for the Commission to adopt an **implementing act specifying which EMS information must be published**.

- **Removal of certain EMS requirements:** The chamber network welcomes these changes, which reflect key simplification requests from businesses. Requirements such as chemical inventories and transformation plans created unnecessary administrative burdens for companies already operating robust environmental management systems. Nevertheless, the overall burden associated with Article 14a remains significant, including the continued reference to the integration of Best Available Techniques (BAT).
- **Recognition of ISO 14001 and EMAS:** While the deletion of Article 14a would constitute the most effective simplification, at minimum ISO 14001 and EMAS must be explicitly recognised in the legislative text as sufficient to fulfil EMS requirements. This would avoid redundant or parallel compliance obligations and provide legal certainty for operators. We therefore propose the following **amendment to Article 2(1) of proposal [COM\(2025\) 986](#)**:
 - Amendment to Article 2(1) – addition of a new point (e) in Article 14a(2):
“(e) Commonly used and widely understood systems such as ISO 14001 and EMAS as well as sector-specific systems recognised by a Member State are explicitly recognised as an Environmental Management System within the meaning of the present Article 14a.”

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- **EMS must not be a prerequisite for a permit:** To ensure legal certainty, it must be clarified that an EMS is not a prerequisite for granting or updating a permit. While operators must prepare and implement an EMS, this obligation must not delay or condition permit decisions. At the same time, a clear and realistic timeline for implementation should be established. We therefore propose the following **amendment to Article 2(1) of proposal [COM\(2025\) 986](#)**:
 - Amendment to Article 2(1) – addition in Article 14a(2) to clarify the role of EMS
“[...] The EMS shall be reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective.
Member States must ensure that an EMS for an installation or set of installations under the control of the same company in accordance with paragraph 1 is prepared and implemented within 4 years of a new permit or update of a permit. An EMS shall not constitute a prerequisite for the granting or updating of a permit.”
- **Deletion of the implementing act on EMS publication requirements:** While the revised Article 14a continues to define EMS content and publication obligations, removing the implementing act may reduce harmonisation of how EMS information is published across member states. Eurochambres therefore calls for clear EU-level guidance to support consistent implementation.
- **Realistic and workable approach to best available techniques and associated emission levels (BAT-AELs):** The chamber network calls for a realistic implementation of BAT-AELs that properly reflects local and site-specific conditions of each installation. Emission limit values should be set within the BAT-AEL range, allowing competent authorities to consider technical feasibility and local environmental conditions. We therefore propose changes to Article 15 (3) of Directive 2010/75/EU through the following **amendment to Article 2 of proposal [COM\(2025\) 986](#)**:
 - Amendment to Article 2 – insertion of a new paragraph 1a amending Article 15(3) of Directive 2010/75/EU
“(1a) Article 15(3) is amended as follows:
(3) The competent authority shall set ~~the strictest achievable~~ emission limit values ~~by applying based on the relevant BAT in the installation~~, considering the entire range of the emission levels associated with the best available techniques (“BAT-AELs”) to ensure that, under normal operating conditions, emissions do not exceed the BAT-AELs as laid down in the decisions on BAT conclusions referred to in Article 13(5). [...]”
- **Indicative approach to BAT-AEPLs:** Resource efficiency and consumption are dependent on many production- and product-specific factors, as well as external factors often beyond the operator’s control (e.g. geographical location or seasonality). Therefore, BAT-AEPLs relating to environmental performance and resource efficiency should remain indicative and not automatically be translated into binding requirements. We therefore propose the following changes to [COM\(2025\) 986](#):
 - Amendment to Article 2 – insertion of a new paragraph 1b amending Article 15(4) of Directive 2010/75/EU
“(1b) Article 15(4) is amended as follows:
(4) Without prejudice to Article 9 (2), the competent authority shall set, for normal operating conditions, indicative ~~binding~~ ranges for environmental performance ~~that are not to be exceeded during one or more periods~~, as laid down in the decisions on BAT conclusions referred to in Article 13(5).”

- **Disproportionate baseline reporting requirements (Article 22):** The requirement to prepare baseline reports entails extensive investigations and expert assessments, which are costly and time-consuming for operators. Moreover, the practical added value for environmental protection is limited, particularly where sufficient information is already available through existing monitoring and permitting procedures. The chamber network therefore calls for the deletion of the baseline report obligation, or at minimum a substantial simplification limiting its application to cases where it is strictly necessary.
- **Avoidance of duplicative publication obligations (Article 24):** For the authorisation of an installation under the IED, an environmental impact assessment is typically also required. This results in duplicative reporting and publication obligations, with companies often required to provide the same information multiple times. The chamber network therefore calls for the deletion of Article 24, or at least for ensuring that publication obligations are streamlined and do not duplicate requirements under environmental assessment procedures.
- **‘Stop-the-clock’ provision:** The revised IED must be transposed into national law by 1 July 2026. At the same time, COM(2025) 986 proposes amendments to Directive (EU) 2024/1785, which are currently under negotiation. To ensure alignment of transposition timelines and avoid inconsistencies, a “stop-the-clock” provision is necessary. This would prevent legal uncertainty and unnecessary administrative burden for both authorities and businesses. We therefore propose the following **amendments to Articles 4 and 5 of proposal [COM\(2025\) 986](#)**:
 - Amendment to Article 4 – modification of Article 4(1) of Directive (EU) 2024/1785
*“Article 4(1) is amended as follows:
(1) Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive by ~~1 July 2026~~ **31 December 2027**. They shall forthwith communicate to the Commission the text of those provisions.”*
 - Amendment to Article 5(1)
*“(1) Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive by ~~[24 months from date of transposition of Directive (EU) 2024/1785]~~ **31 December 2027** at the latest.”*

Medium Combustion Plants Directive – Directive (EU) 2015/2193

The Commission proposal introduces targeted adjustments to facilitate decarbonisation projects using hydrogen-based or oxy-fuel combustion technologies. In particular, it provides that NOx emission limit values (ELVs) are not applicable to combustion plants firing gas with more than 20% hydrogen (by volume). The proposal also introduces flexibility regarding monitoring requirements for certain back-up generators, including those supporting large data centres.

- **Setting realistic emission limits for the increased use of hydrogen:** The chamber network supports adapting the regulatory framework to reflect the increasing use of hydrogen in combustion processes. However, the proposed threshold of 20% hydrogen content creates regulatory uncertainty for early-stage hydrogen blending projects, where hydrogen shares are typically significantly lower. To ensure regulatory

certainty and enable gradual scaling of hydrogen use, the threshold should be lowered to 5% (by volume). We therefore propose the following **amendments to Annex II of proposal [COM\(2025\) 986](#)**:

- Amendment to point 1(a) of Annex II:
“() The emission limit value is not applicable to combustion plants firing gas with more than **20%** 5% (by volume) of hydrogen. [...]”*
- Amendment to point 1(b) of Annex II:
“() The emission limit value is not applicable to combustion plants firing gas with more than **20%** 5% (by volume) of hydrogen. [...]”*

INSPIRE Directive – Directive 2007/2/EC

The proposal aims to modernise and simplify the INSPIRE Directive by removing certain technical requirements related to data formats and data-sharing infrastructure, while aligning obligations with more recent horizontal EU data legislation. The objective is to reduce administrative complexity for public authorities and improve access to high-quality geospatial data for public and private users.

- **Modernisation of geospatial data infrastructure:** The chamber network supports the modernisation of the INSPIRE framework and its alignment with newer EU data legislation, as this can simplify data-sharing requirements and improve access to geospatial information. However, the application of the “open-by-default” principle must not undermine the protection of sensitive geological, deposit-related, or infrastructure data. The framework should ensure that economic interests, intellectual property rights and security considerations are fully respected.
- **Clarification regarding the deletion of Article 17 on data sharing:** The deletion of Article 17 should not be interpreted as creating a blanket obligation to make all spatial data sets publicly accessible. It must remain possible for member states to restrict access to sensitive or proprietary spatial data, including data relating to critical infrastructure. Eurochambres therefore proposes the insertion of the following new Recitals 14a and 14b in proposal [COM\(2025\) 985](#):
 - New Recital 14a – clarification of data sharing
*“**The deletion of Article 17 of the INSPIRE Directive (Directive 2007/2/EC) should not be interpreted as creating an obligation to make spatial data sets publicly available. In particular, the removal of that provision does not affect the possibility for Member States to restrict access to sensitive location data, critical infrastructure data or proprietary spatial data, which represent a substantial economic value and qualify as intellectual property and business secrets, in accordance with Union and national law, including the possibility to make access to such data subject to appropriate remuneration reflecting their economic value and the investment required for their generation.**”*

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- New Recital 14b – limiting the use and disclosure of data:
“Where access to spatial data is restricted for reasons of security or legitimate economic interests, Member States may ensure that such data are made available exclusively through competent authorities and under controlled conditions, rather than through generally accessible platforms. Access to and reuse of such data should be subject to clearly defined legal conditions and limited to users with the necessary technical, geological, and operational expertise, in order to prevent misuse and mitigate technical, safety-related and security risks. Member States should ensure that access to such data is not provided free of charge but is subject to appropriate remuneration reflecting the economic value of the data and the underlying investment costs.”
- **Interoperability and access rights:** Maintaining interoperability requirements is important to ensure technical usability and harmonisation. At the same time, interoperability must not lead to unintended consequences for access rights to sensitive spatial data. We therefore propose to amend Article 3(7) of Directive 2007/2/EC through an updated definition of “interoperability”, instead of deleting it, by the following **amendments to Article 1 of proposal [COM\(2025\) 985](#)**:
 - Amendment to Article 1(1) – remove point 7 of Article 3 of Directive 2007/2/EC from the deletion list:
“(1) in Article 3, points 5, 7, 8 and 10 are deleted.”
 - Amendment to Article 1(1a) – replacement of point 7 of Article 3 of Directive 2007/2/EC:
*“(1a) in Article 3, point 7 is replaced by the following:
‘7. “interoperability” means the possibility for spatial data sets and services to be technically usable and harmonised, without determining or affecting the level of access to, or publication of, individual spatial data sets, including those whose use may require specific expertise or involve technical or safety-related considerations.’*
- **Protection of security-sensitive spatial data:** Spatial data relating to critical infrastructure or security-sensitive locations must remain subject to proportionate access restrictions where necessary. We therefore suggest introducing the following **amendment to Article 1(2) of proposal [COM\(2025\) 985](#)**:
 - Amendment to Article 1(2) – insertion of a new point (c) amending Article 4 of Directive 2007/2/EC:
*“(2) Article 4 is amended as follows:
[...]
(c) the following paragraph 8 is inserted:
“8. The inclusion of spatial data sets within the scope of this Directive shall not predetermine their level of accessibility. In particular, spatial data relating to critical infrastructure or security-sensitive locations must remain subject to access restrictions for security reasons, as the unrestricted publication of precise location information would increase vulnerabilities and undermine the protection of critical energy infrastructure.”*

Proposal for a Regulation on speeding up environmental assessments (COM(2025) 984)

Lengthy and complex permitting procedures remain a major obstacle to industrial decarbonisation and investment in Europe. They create planning uncertainty, increase costs, and delay projects essential for the industrial transition. This situation is further complicated by a lack of harmonisation across member states regarding procedures, documentation requirements, timelines and administrative coordination. These inconsistencies are particularly burdensome for cross-border projects and SMEs, which often lack the administrative capacity to navigate multiple permitting systems. Against this background, the chamber network welcomes the Commission's proposal to speed up environmental assessments, which reflects key demands from [Eurochambres' contribution to the Environmental Omnibus](#) and the broader simplification agenda.

The proposal introduces key measures on the governance and coordination of permitting procedures. This includes single points of contact, digitalised procedures and improved coordination for cross-border projects. Moreover, member states are required to ensure sufficient administrative resources and training for authorities and to waive administrative charges and fees for small mid-caps and SMEs.

- **Establishment of single point of contact (Article 3):** The chamber network strongly supports setting up single points of contact for environmental assessments. This measure can significantly reduce administrative burden, provided it is implemented consistently across member states. At the same time, it remains unclear whether the role of the single point of contact is limited to purely coordinating and supporting functions. This would undermine its effectiveness, which is why additional responsibilities should be considered to ensure a true single point of contact.
- **Efficient coordination for transboundary environmental assessments (Article 9):** The chamber network welcomes the recognition of the cross-border nature of certain projects and supports provisions encouraging joint procedures and a single point of contact for environmental assessments across member states.
- **Online accessibility of information and digitalisation of permitting procedures (Article 10):** Eurochambres welcomes the requirement to digitalise permitting procedures, including enabling the re-use of data and facilitating interoperability, reflecting key demands from the chamber network. At the same time, adequate digital infrastructure must be available and accessible to all stakeholders, in particular SMEs. With regard to the accessibility of information, publications should not go beyond information already available in environmental impact assessment documentation. In addition, any data published must respect limitations relating to commercial and industrial confidentiality, including intellectual property and data protection. We therefore propose to make the following **addition to Article 10(2)(b) of proposal COM(2025) 984:**
 - Amendment to Article 10(2)(b) – addition concerning commercial and industrial confidentiality:
*“(b) the progress of the environmental assessments and screening procedures, including the upcoming steps of the procedure and the timeline of those steps, as well as information on dispute settlement, **respecting the limitations with regard to commercial and industrial confidentiality, including intellectual property.**”*

- **Administrative costs of environmental assessments (Article 11):** Lengthy and complex permitting procedures require significant financial and human resources from businesses, especially SMEs. The chamber network therefore supports exempting administrative charges and fees for SMEs and small mid-caps. In general, administrative costs for project applicants should be minimised.
- **Resources and training (Article 12):** Providing competent authorities with sufficient resources, training and technical equipment is essential for faster and more reliable permitting procedures. Chambers therefore support the proposed provisions.

The Commission also proposes several measures to streamline and accelerate environmental assessment procedures. These include coordinated procedures where assessment obligations arise under two or more directives, exemptions for projects involving limited changes, and the introduction of maximum durations for screening and environmental assessments.

- **Streamlining of environmental assessment procedures (Article 4):** Consolidated and coordinated approval processes are welcomed, as they reduce administrative burden for companies and improve consistency across member states. However, the requirement to limit the age of data used in assessments to a maximum of five years is not supported by the chamber network. For example, certain types of data do not change frequently, such as geology or flood-risk mapping, which justifies the use of older data. In addition, the proposal already includes a safeguard clause ensuring that data cannot be used where environmental conditions have substantially changed. We therefore propose the following **amendment to Article 4(5) of proposal [COM\(2025\) 984](#)**:

- Amendment to Article 4(5) – extension of the data validity period:
*“(5) [...] When preparing an environmental assessment report, the developer of a project shall be allowed to use data or information as old as **five ten** years, provided that [...]”*

- **Screening for changes or extensions of projects (Article 5):** Eurochambres supports exemptions for upgrades or modernisation of existing facilities. The exemption should also cover temporary construction-related emissions, which typically have limited and short-term environmental impact. The recent case of the Porthos CCS project illustrates the need to codify such exemptions clearly in EU law. Greater clarity is needed regarding what constitutes “major works” triggering a new assessment. Environmental impact assessments for modifications or extensions should only be required where changes reach thresholds comparable to those for new projects.
- **Substantial preclusion (Article 6):** Eurochambres welcomes the introduction of preclusion mechanisms, which can reduce unnecessary delays and improve legal certainty. To be effective, the provision should be designed in a clear and predictable way across member states, ensuring that arguments not raised during administrative procedures cannot be introduced at later stages. Yet, from the perspective of chambers, the provision “*without prejudice to the right of access to justice*” and the wording “*may preclude arguments*” risk undermining the introduced substantial

preclusion mechanism and creating fragmentation. To ensure a harmonised approach, the chamber network proposes the following **amendment to Article 6 of proposal COM(2025) 984**:

- **Amendment to Article 6 – replacement of “may” with “shall”:**
“In the context of judicial proceedings relating to environmental assessments within the meaning of this Regulation, Member States ~~may~~ shall preclude arguments from being raised before a court of law where they were not raised during the administrative stage, as long as the competent authority made available the necessary information in due time so that those arguments were known or could have been known and reviewed during the administrative stage leading to the authorisation of the project, ~~without prejudice to the right of access to justice.~~”
- **Time-frames for screening and environmental assessments (Article 7):** Eurochambres strongly supports the introduction of timelines for screening and environmental assessments, which reflects a key priority of the chamber network. At the same time, their effectiveness will depend on providing competent authorities with sufficient resources and training, as outlined in Article 12. Where national legislation already provides (even) shorter deadlines, these should continue to apply.
- **Introduction of a cut-off date for environmental assessments:** The proposal does not introduce a clear cut-off date defining the relevant factual and legal situation for environmental assessments. According to the case-law of the European Court of Justice, authorities must rely on the most convincing scientific evidence available at the time of the authorisation decision. In lengthy permitting procedures, this can lead to repeated requests for updated studies and additional assessments. To ensure legal certainty and avoid unnecessary delays, the chamber network calls for the introduction of a binding cut-off date, under which the factual and legal situation at the time of the application serves as the reference point for the authorisation decision.
- **Protected species (Article 8):** Eurochambres welcomes the alignment with the approach introduced under RED III, notably the shift from individual-species protection to population-level assessment. However, population assessments must remain proportionate. Requirements to conduct extensive field studies over large areas risk undermining simplification objectives. Population data should therefore be based primarily on existing data and reasonable effort.
- **Applicability of UNECE Conventions (Article 13):** To ensure faster permitting procedures, chambers emphasise that the implementation should avoid unnecessary over-compliance (“gold-plating”) with international and European legal obligations.

The Commission proposal also introduces a toolbox for strategic sectors or categories, although its precise scope remains dependent on references in sectoral EU legislation. The toolbox includes provisions on overriding public interest, tacit approval, and dispute settlement procedures.

- **Toolbox for strategic sectors or categories (Article 14 and Annexes):** While the objective of accelerating permitting procedures is welcomed by the chamber network, the scope of application remains limited to strategic sectors or categories. Aligned with our [joint statement](#) on permitting, chambers advocate moving beyond a selective focus on “strategic” projects towards a coherent, streamlined and accelerated permitting framework applicable across sectors and projects.

- **Overriding public interest (Annex I):** The provision builds on the approach introduced under RED III and is generally supported. However, to ensure predictability and legal certainty, the criteria for granting overriding public interest should be clearly defined and applied consistently. Excessive discretion in determining whether projects may be considered of overriding public interest risks creating fragmentation and unequal treatment across member states. Eurochambres therefore proposes the **following amendments to Annex I of proposal [COM\(2025\) 984 Annex](#)**:
 - **Amendment to Annex I – modification to improve predictability and ensure legal certainty:**

*“For projects referred to in Article 14(1) of this Regulation and where Union legislation refers to this provision according to Article 14(2) of this Regulation, then, with regard to the environmental assessments and the obligations referred to in Article 4(7) of Directive 2000/60/EC, Article 9(1), point (a), of Directive 2009/147/EC, Articles 6(4) and 16(1) of Directive 92/43/EEC, certain projects developed for strategic sectors or categories shall ~~be considered to be of public interest and~~ **may** be considered to have an overriding public interest and to serve the interests of public health and safety provided that all conditions set out in those Directives are fulfilled.*

When assessing the fulfilment of the conditions referred to in paragraph 1, the strategic nature of the project, shall be given specific consideration. ~~In such case, Member States may, in duly justified and specific circumstances, to restrict the application of this paragraph to certain parts of their territory, to certain types of technology or to projects with certain technical characteristics.”~~
- **Tacit approval (Annex II):** Tacit approval mechanisms can be a useful instrument to accelerate intermediary administrative steps. However, insufficient clarity may create uncertainty for both project developers and competent authorities. It is therefore important to ensure that mechanisms addressing administrative silence do not shift legal and financial risks onto project developers. The tacit approval, which according to Annex II of the Commission's legislative proposal should only apply to strategic projects, should be extended to all authorisation procedures.
- **Dispute settlement (Annex III):** Priority treatment in dispute settlement procedures may contribute to faster decisions for strategic projects. However, the design of such mechanisms should safeguard procedural fairness and avoid unintended imbalances between projects, particularly in light of the limited capacity of judicial systems.

4. Eurochambres recommendations beyond the proposed Environmental Omnibus

The eighth omnibus incorporates several elements of the list of over [60 simplification proposals](#) submitted by Eurochambres. Further simplification measures have been addressed in separate initiatives, including amendments to the EU Deforestation Regulation and delegated acts under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR).

There are also forthcoming simplification efforts, including the [targeted revision of REACH](#), the [simplification review of the EU Deforestation Regulation](#), and the [Circular Economy Act](#). While these initiatives are presented as contributions to the simplification agenda, it remains to be seen whether they will effectively reduce complexity or simply introduce additional layers of regulatory obligations.

Despite the progress made through the Environmental Omnibus proposal, key legislative files remain either untouched or insufficiently addressed. Eurochambres therefore urges policymakers to revisit its list of over [60 simplification proposals](#), in particular regarding the following legislative acts:

Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR): The regulation aims to harmonise packaging rules and promote circularity across member states. However, instead of providing companies with a practical and proportionate framework, it introduces a complex and burdensome set of requirements, including extensive technical documentation, detailed data reporting obligations, and an unrealistic 100% reuse target for transport packaging.

- **Postponement and streamlining of the PPWR:** The chamber network calls on policymakers to streamline the regulation before its core obligations take effect in August 2026. Key definitions must be clarified, and requirements on technical documentation, recyclability, and reusability should be revised and made proportionate, especially for SMEs. Given the complexity and scale of the changes, the entry into application, including delegated and implementing acts, should be postponed by at least two years (“stop-the-clock”) to allow sufficient time for revision and practical adjustment.

Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR): The regulation establishes a broad framework for product sustainability requirements to be defined through numerous delegated and implementing acts across a wide range of product groups. While the objective of improving product sustainability is supported, the regulatory architecture is highly complex, with overlapping timelines, numerous delegated acts, and extensive Digital Product Passport (DPP) requirements. The cumulative effect risks creating significant implementation challenges, especially for SMEs, and uncertainty regarding international competitiveness.

- **“Start simple and make it work” approach:** Eurochambres urges policymakers to ensure that the implementation of the ESPR is proportionate and workable. Product-specific requirements should undergo practical feasibility and competitiveness checks before adoption. SMEs should benefit from proportionate treatment or targeted exemptions, and implementation periods of at least 36 months should be ensured. The introduction of the DPP must be gradual, respect the principle of data minimisation, keep integration costs manageable, and protect business-sensitive information.

Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR): The business community supports efforts to restore degraded habitats to protect biodiversity, as many economic and entrepreneurial activities rely on healthy ecosystems. At the same time, the current regulation lacks clarity regarding the future legal status of restored areas, especially those outside the Natura 2000 network. In addition, blanket restrictions linked to the non-deterioration principle risk reducing the availability of land for infrastructure, agriculture, or industry, thereby affecting competitiveness and investment certainty.

- **A comprehensive review of the NRR's impact:** The chamber network calls for an urgent review of the practical implications of the regulation, alongside a “stop-the-clock” proposal. In particular, Article 8 concerning urban ecosystems requires a revision to ensure alignment with spatial planning realities. A clear legal framework is needed that balances ecological objectives with socio-economic needs, ensuring proportionality, subsidiarity, and legal certainty for landowners and economic actors.

EUROCHAMBRES

Eurochambres – the association of European chambers of commerce and industry – represents more than 20 million businesses through its members and a network of 1700 regional and local chambers across Europe. Eurochambres is the leading voice for the broad business community at EU level, building on chambers’ strong connections with the grass roots economy and their hands-on support to entrepreneurs. Chambers’ member businesses – over 93% of which are SMEs – employ over 120 million people.

Previous positions can be found here: <https://bit.ly/ECHPositions>

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