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REACH VOTE IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: SOME LIGHT AND MUCH SHADE OVER WORKABLE REACH

The European Parliament has voted in favour of a few useful and positive amendments, namely on registration. The compromise adopted by the three main political forces goes in the right direction to make REACH more workable for small and medium enterprises.

The compromise facilitates the registration of low tonnages (1-10T) compared with the Commission proposal by introducing a limited prioritisation of substances, and gives industry responsibility to decide whether or not they fulfil the prioritisation criteria. However, it lacks any risk-based approach for higher tonnages.

Unfortunately, the adopted amendments on authorisation/substitution create some serious problems for industry. The stricter criteria for granting an authorisation put industrial processes at risk with no environmental or health benefit. The introduction of time limits ignores the reality of industry's product cycles. Requesting a substitution plan even if the risk is proved to be adequately controlled is contrary to a risk-based approach.

Ernest-Antoine Seillière, President of UNICE: *"The outcome of the vote today by the European Parliament is not good enough to make REACH workable for industry as a whole. UNICE will keep up its efforts on authorisation/substitution issues to make innovation happen in Europe. The Council and the Commission must make the necessary changes to achieve a cost-effective and workable REACH."*

NOTE TO THE EDITOR

UNICE is the voice of more than 20 million small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 39 central industrial and employers' federations from 33 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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