December 2025

EK’s proposals for better EU regulation

Confederation of Finnish Industries

Welcome to read EK’s proposals for better EU regulation!

EK supports the efforts of EU to simplify regulation and reduce overlapping regulatory requirements. This work must be continued, but the level of ambition should be raised.

Together with BusinessEurope’s 141 proposals, EK proposes that EU decision-makers pay particular attention to 76 proposals aimed at simplifying and streamlining regulation at the EU level without compromising the core objectives of regulation.

The proposals were prepared in cooperation between BusinessEurope, EK, and its member organisations during 2025. Further information on the proposed measures is available from BusinessEurope, EK, and its member organisations.

The EK’s proposals partly overlap with those of BusinessEurope, but the EK’s proposals takes into account the national characteristics of Finnish industries.

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Better Regulation

1) Transition Clauses
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Transition Clauses

EU Legislation

The European Commission's Better Regulation Framework includes guidance concerning Tailored transition periods or provisions when adopting new legislation (tool #24):

"New rules and regulation may place a heavy burden on existing firms who made their investments in production facilities and started operations under the older rules. Since significant changes in the existing structure can be prohibitively costly, in specific cases, existing firms can either be exempt or given a specific timeframe to conform. The extent of the adjustment period may also be conditioned on firm-specific characteristics such as technology, the date at which the capital was required, and firm size.

In such cases, it may be useful to carefully consider the implication of transition clauses. It is important to bear in mind that provisions imposing asymmetric standards on existing firms versus newer ones may deter new entrants (entry barriers), dampen new investment by incumbent businesses, and allow continuation of inefficient production (exit barriers). "

Burden description

The transition period is important because companies often place orders 1.5–2 years in advance, and unsold products must also be allowed to be sold in the following sales season.

Suggested measures

Transition periods should be at least 24 months for new obligations, so that the changes can be taken into account sufficiently early in companies.

Hannu Ylänen
Chief Policy Adviser, Better Regulation
hannu.ylanen@ek.fi, +358 40 743 7620

Preliminary Guidelines

EU Legislation

The European Commission's Better Regulation Framework includes guidelines concerning guidances documents containing legal interpretation of EU law (tool #41).

Burden description

Guidelines for companies must be prioritised early as the lack of guidance creates significant legal uncertainty for companies, increasing the risk that obligations are interpreted or applied incorrectly, which can lead to excessive precautionary measures that raise costs and slow down business processes.

In the worst case, the absence of guidelines results in inconsistent enforcement of the regulation across Member States, making it more difficult to operate in the internal market.

Suggested measures

A complex requirement should not enter into force if the guidelines necessary for its compliance is not available.

Timely examples: REACH-restrictions, the Regulation on Deforestation-free Products, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation)

Hannu Ylänen
Chief Policy Adviser, Better Regulation
hannu.ylanen@ek.fi, +358 40 743 7620

Impact Assessments of Amendments

EU Legislation

The European Commission's Better Regulation Framework includes Chapter 2-3, which contains guidelines on how to carry out an impact assessments and how to identify impacts in them.

Burden description

The absence of impact assessments for amendments introduced by the European Parliament and the Council creates significant operational uncertainty for companies, as they cannot anticipate how new obligations will affect their activities.

Without a structured analysis of costs and impacts, companies may face disproportionate requirements and are forced to make rapid adjustments to compliance systems and product development, which increases costs and diverts resources from core operations. Overall, this weakens the competitiveness of European companies.

Suggested measures

Impact assessments should be carried out for substantial amendment proposals when changes are being introduced to the Commission's original proposal that affect companies' competitiveness and operating conditions.

At present, no impact assessment is conducted for the legislative compromises reached in trilogue negotiations, even when the changes to the proposed legislation are significant.

Hannu Ylänen
Chief Policy Adviser, Better Regulation
hannu.ylanen@ek.fi, +358 40 743 7620

Monitoring Regulatory Costs

EU Legislation

In 2025, the European Commission published its first Report on Simplification, Implementation and Enforcement.

According to the Commission, with the Omnibus packages and other simplification measures it has proposed, savings of up to 8.6 billion euros can be achieved from companies' recurring administrative costs. The proposals already presented are the first step in the Commission's objective to reduce both the resulting costs and the reporting obligations by at least 25 percent for all companies, aiming for savings of 37.5 billion euros, as well as by at least 35 percent for small and medium-sized enterprises by the year 2030.

Burden description

According to the current Presidency of the Council, Denmark's assessments, the proposals currently being negotiated and implemented would cause companies annual costs of about 71–86 billion euros and one-off costs of about 63–70 billion euros. So, at the same time as the Omnibus proposals have managed to cut costs, there is legislation already on the table leading to nearly ten times higher costs.

At the background lies the fact that the amount of EU Directives and Regulations has increased 729 percent between the years of 1994-2024, and the volume is continuously growing.

Although some EU legislation has positive effects, this does not change the fact that regulatory obligations result in compliance costs — which are an expense to companies just like customs duties or tax increases. Obligations cannot simply be added without consequences for business success and growth.

Suggested measures

The costs arising from regulation should be monitored systematically at EU level. One model for this could be the National Regulatory Council (Germany), which has been monitoring the costs arising from regulation since 2011.

Hannu Ylänen
Chief Policy Adviser, Better Regulation
hannu.ylanen@ek.fi, +358 40 743 7620

Digital Economy

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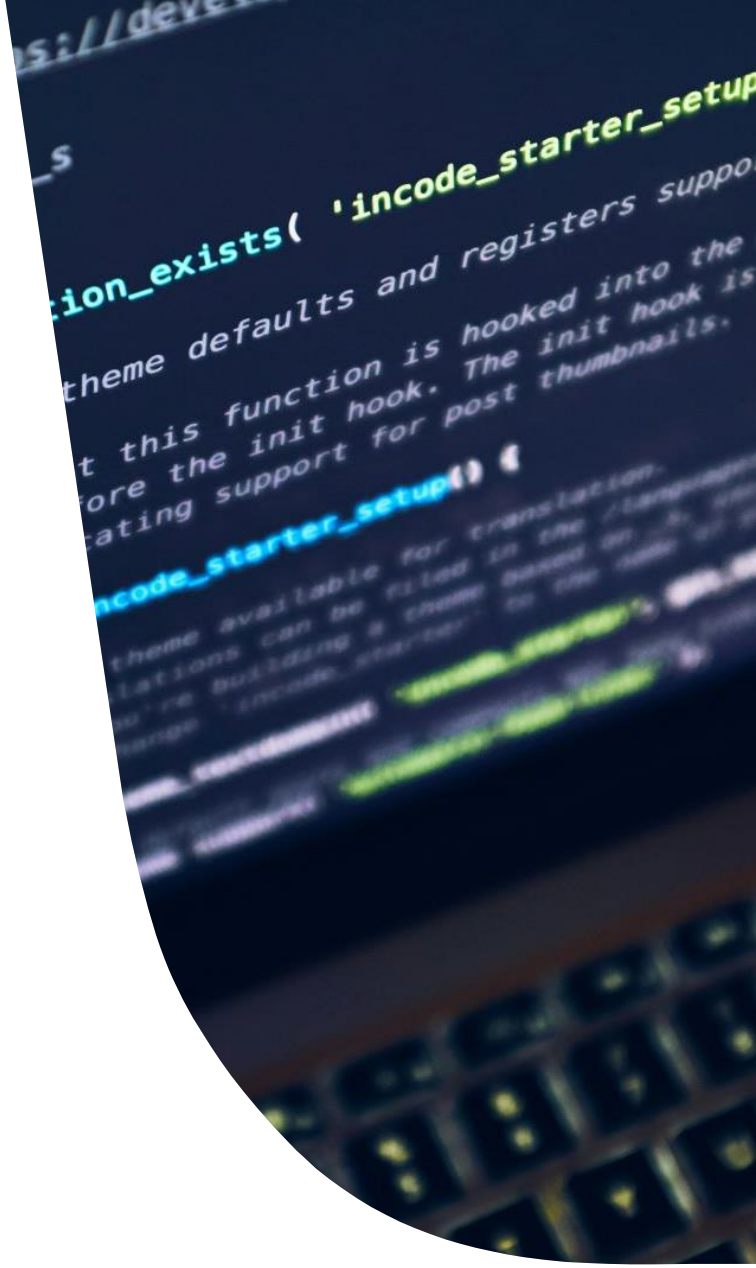

AI Act (1/2)

EU Legislation

Regulation (EU) 2024/1689: The aim of the regulation is to set clear, risk-based rules for AI developers in the EU.

At the EU level, several stakeholders have discussed postponing the application of certain obligations under the AI Act, but the Commission has not yet taken up these proposals, and the Act will continue to be applied according to the planned, phased schedule for the time being.

Burden description

Due to the lack of uniform technical standards, companies have not had a long time to implement the obligations of the standard into their processes.

The lack of uniform technical standards has caused unnecessary unpredictability in AI development and costs for companies.

Suggested measures

The more technical obligations of the AI Act (Annexes I and III, obligations concerning high-risk use) should only apply once harmonized technical standards are available and companies have had sufficient time to incorporate standard-compliant practices or technology into their processes.

The application of the technical obligations of the AI Act should be postponed by at least two years, as the implementation of the obligations is unclear to companies and the Commission has not yet provided any clarifying guidance on the matter. See also the content changes to the Regulation described in the following section.

Peppiina Huhtala
Senior Legal Adviser, AI and Digital Economy
peppiina.huhtala@ek.fi, +358 45 678 1306

AI Act (2/2)

EU Legislation

Regulation (EU) 2024/1689: In order for the EU to gain a competitive advantage from artificial intelligence, the obligations of the AI Act must be clarified from their current form.

Burden description

For example, Article 59 of the Act defines when it is possible to deviate from the original purpose of processing personal data under the GDPR in a protected testing environment. This is allowed if the AI model is being developed to promote public health, public safety, critical infrastructure, or the green transition.

The exceptions should be clarified and expanded to also cover companies' own AI development needs.

Suggested measures

The possibility for market surveillance authorities to gain access to the source code of an AI system (Art. 74(13)) should be completely removed.

The responsibilities between the provider, deployer, and downstream provider of an AI model or system should be clarified within value chains. For example, it is unclear when a company becomes responsible for fulfilling the obligations of the provider (as defined in the Regulation) that places the AI model or system on the EU market, instead of merely acting in the role of a deployer.

Peppiina Huhtala
Senior Legal Adviser, AI and Digital Economy
peppiina.huhtala@ek.fi, +358 45 678 1306

GDPR

EU Legislation

Regulation (EU) 2016/679: One of the EU's key objectives is for European companies to use artificial intelligence in their business operations by the end of the decade. To achieve these goals, the requirements of the GDPR must also be clarified in relation to those of the EU AI Act.

Key questions requiring clarification include whether European AI models can be trained on data containing personal information, and what level of pseudonymization or anonymization is sufficient.

Peppiina Huhtala
Senior Legal Adviser, AI and Digital Economy
peppiina.huhtala@ek.fi, +358 45 678 1306

Burden description

Conflicting requirements create legal uncertainty for companies and slow down the adoption of AI, particularly by public sector authorities across the EU. Unclear interpretations of the GDPR must not unduly hinder research, development, innovation, and the growth of data-driven business in the EU. For example, the concept of personal data has, partly due to the case law of the CJEU, expanded too broad scope in the EU.

Companies need scalable solutions for typical low-risk personal data processing situations. Before the GDPR, this worked effectively through sector-specific codes of conduct, but the process under Article 40 of the GDPR has made their development too burdensome.

The relationship between ePrivacy regulation and the GDPR must also be clarified so that companies are not required to apply overlapping obligations. In particular, more user-friendly solutions are needed for cookie practices, allowing the use of functional and security-related cookies without separate consent.

Suggested measures

The GDPR should not be applied to the processing of personal data if the processing is temporary and the purpose of processing is not related to the data subject ("non-personal use of personal data"). The legal bases for processing personal data should be further clarified. The possibility to rely on contract-based processing should be expanded, and the balancing test related to the use of legitimate interest should be entirely unnecessary in most everyday personal data processing situations.

The adequacy of anonymization and pseudonymization of personal data should also be clarified. It should be sufficient to meet the requirements if, for a third party, the data can no longer be considered to contain personal information.

The relationship between the GDPR's restriction on automated decision-making (Article 22, the so-called profiling ban) and the provisions of the EU AI Act should be clarified from its current form.

In addition, Article 5(3) of the ePrivacy Directive concerning cookie consent should be repealed, as cookies largely constitute personal data and could therefore be processed under the GDPR. This would increase legal certainty by reducing interpretation differences between Member States.

Digital Fairness Act

EU Legislation

The Commission is planning to propose new consumer protection regulation for the digital environment in autumn 2026.

The new regulation would address, among other things, dark patterns, design features that cause addictive behaviour, social media influencers, and personalization.

The proposal would likely include a so-called fairness-by-design obligation, a reversed burden of proof regarding unfair practices, and mandatory age verification / assessment.

The European Commission's public consultation on the future Digital Fairness Act (DFA) ran from 17 July to 24 October 2025.

Burden description

This would involve additional regulation that would increase the obligations of companies. The focus should be on effective enforcement and harmonized guidance, not on creating new, detailed, and quickly outdated lists of prohibited practices.

Suggested measures

It is premature to introduce new additional obligations, and the focus should primarily be on the proper implementation of recently adopted regulations (DSA, DMA, UCPD, AIA, GDPR, DA, and GPSR). New regulation should only be considered if a genuine legislative gap is identified, not merely due to shortcomings in enforcement.

The DFA would introduce additional regulation for companies in an already heavily regulated sector, where consideration should rather be given to easing regulation.

Asko Metsola
Senior Legal Adviser, IPR, Internal Market, and Consumer Regulation
asko.metsola@ek.fi, +358 40 840 3735

Ecodesing for Sustainable Products

EU Legislation

The Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) is a key instrument for promoting sustainable product design and the circular economy.

As part of the regulation, the introduction of a Digital Product Passport (DPP) is a significant tool, but it must be practical and administratively reasonable.

Burden description

Regarding the ban on the disposal of unsold products and related reporting, recycling should not be equated with disposal. According to the waste hierarchy, recycling is the primary solution when reuse is not possible, and it provides valuable raw materials for industry.

The Omnibus initiative offers an opportunity to address regulatory fragmentation and build a clearer and fairer operating environment, which reduces administrative burden and directs resources where they have the greatest impact.

Suggested measures

The implementation of its delegated acts must be clear and the timelines realistic, so that companies have a genuine opportunity to adapt their design, procurement, and production processes to new requirements.

Regarding the DPP, the data collection and management must be reasonable and harmonized throughout the value chain.

EU-level standards and a common framework for mandatory content are needed, so that companies have a clear understanding of what information is required in the product passport, in what format, and how the information is shared.

At the same time, it is essential that the system also allows companies to voluntarily publish additional information, which increases the practical value of the DPP and supports its use as part of business operations.

Fanny Larsen & Leena Nyman
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683
leena.nyman@ek.fi, +358 50 464 9990

A well-functioning internal market

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Consumer Protection

EU Legislation

Consumer protection legislation have been updated over the past two parliamentary terms. For example, the rules governing the sale of goods, the accessibility of online stores, the requirements for price disclosure and other marketing practices, as well as sellers' information-provision obligations have all been clarified and expanded. A separate set of Directives aimed at supporting sustainable consumption has also been introduced. However, the regulatory work has been fragmented, and opportunities to streamline consumer protection legislation have not been openly examined.

Asko Metsola
Senior Legal Adviser, IPR, Internal Market, and Consumer Regulation
asko.metsola@ek.fi, +358 40 840 3735

Burden description

Although certain rules concerning the sales channel and the subject of the contract, such as the right to withdraw from a distance contract, will remain necessary, requirements concerning additional information provided to consumers or the technical implementation of services (for example, a cancellation button) are characteristic of online commerce. The additional regulatory burden placed on digital commerce may unnecessarily slow its development.

EU legislation on mandatory consumer information has become highly complex. In particular, the legislation requires that consumers be given extensive information in advance in online commerce (distance selling). Consumers already struggle to understand the information provided and to identify the most relevant points in the vast amount of material. Companies also need greater flexibility in how they deliver information, both in terms of quantity and presentation.

Suggested measures

The Commission should carry out a Fitness Check on the information obligations related to the sale of goods, particularly distance selling. The Fitness Check should focus on the administrative burden generated by collecting and providing various types of information and on the usefulness of that information for consumers. In addition, it would be necessary to initiate an assessment of the need for a comprehensive update of consumer protection legislation.

The circular economy could be promoted by introducing lower compliance criteria for used and refurbished goods than for new products (taking product safety into account), such as for packaging and accessories supplied with the item. Furthermore, limiting the right of withdrawal in distance selling contracts could reduce misuse.

It should also be examined whether the definition of the seller's liability for defects or other obligations towards consumers can better consider situations in which the consumer has failed to follow the instructions for use, care, or maintenance of the product.

Green Claims

EU Legislation

COM(2023) 166 final (ongoing): The objective of the proposed Directive is to create criteria that would stop companies from making misleading claims about environmental merits of their products and services.

The proposed Directive (now in trilogue) aims to tackle greenwashing claims, by requiring companies to verify and back up environmental claims by providing scientific evidence and information; it sets minimum requirements for the substantiation, communication, and verification of explicit environmental claims on products and services.

Burden description

The proposed Directive is unclear and complex. The requirements concerning certification process and ex-ante verification are disproportionate and cost-intensive.

EP and Council texts have made some improvements but the EP text for example hints at a ban on making green claims for products that contain hazardous substances.

Given the interpretation challenges already observed with the Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive, clarification and more detailed guidance for consistent implementation would first be needed before introducing additional requirements under the Green Claims Directive.

Suggested measures

In addition to clarifications between with the Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive:

a) The Directive should avoid overly complex or prescriptive rules that risk triggering “green hushing.” A balanced transition system is needed, allowing continued use of existing claims/labels that broadly meet Directive requirements; b) Greater harmonisation of ex-ante verification and certification is required to prevent diverging approval systems across Member States; c) A simplified verification procedure should be ensured for certain claims, with possible exemptions for existing ISO environmental label standards; d) References to hazardous substances should be deleted, as this Directive is not the appropriate instrument to regulate them; e) The Directive’s scope should remain focused on consumer protection and fair competition, not on regulating voluntary carbon markets. Over-scrutiny of company-free choices could discourage voluntary sustainability efforts.

Unfounded or incomplete claims can already be addressed through stronger monitoring and enforcement by Member States. Unless the Directive is precise and realistically applicable to SMEs, it should be withdrawn.

Santeri Suominen
Senior Legal Adviser, Capital Markets
santeri.suominen@ek.fi, +358 50 463 7822

Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition

EU Legislation

The objective of the Directive (EU) 2024/825 is ensure that consumers receive better and more harmonised information on product's durability, reparability or recyclability, when buying a product.

Under the Directive, advertising may no longer use expressions such as 'responsible', 'environmentally friendly', or 'ecological', unless the company can reliably substantiate these claims and demonstrate that its operations meet a high level of environmental protection. The burden of proof is quite high, and using such claims will require companies to conduct extensive data collection about their products and value chains.

Under the Directive, ten new commercial practices are added to the list of practices that are prohibited under all circumstances (Annex I of the UCPD). These include e.g. presenting a sustainability label that is not based on a certification scheme or not validated by a public authority, as well as making vague or generic environmental claims.

Burden description

The implementation of the Directive on is expected to have a significant impact on product packaging and labeling practices. All consumer-facing products and packaging must comply with the new labeling and claims requirements by 27 September 2026, with no transitional period allowed.

Products not meeting updated requirements, such as incorrect environmental claims or missing labels, may become unsellable, leading to potential waste and resource strain – contradicting sustainability goals.

The scope of the Directive is broad and there are still many unanswered questions. Among other things, the status of responsibility labels that are widely used nationally is unclear. Similarly, it is unclear what will happen to products purchased for storage before the Directive comes into force, and there is a risk that large quantities of products will have to be destroyed. Based solely on estimates from companies in the retail sector, the costs and lost sales in Finland could amount to several hundred million euros.

Suggested measures

The start of the Directive's application should be postponed. This would require a new legislative proposal from the Commission in the form of a so-called 'stop-the-clock' mechanism.

Clarification and practical guidance are urgently needed on the interpretation of key definitions, and which labels or logos fall within the scope of the directive to reduce regulatory burden and ensure consistent implementation across Member States.

Consideration should be given to postponing the deadline for implementation and application of the Directive by at least two years.

Other option would be to allow the sale of in-stock products even after the application period.

Asko Metsola
Senior Legal Adviser, IPR, Internal Market,
and Consumer Regulation
asko.metsola@ek.fi, +358 40 840 3735

Price Indication Directive

EU Legislation

Directive 98/6/EC, amended by Directive 2019/2161: The background of the Directive was to ensure the effectiveness of EU's consumer protection law, which was considered to be compromised by diverging marketing across Member States.

There were gaps in national law regarding effective and proportionate penalties, and misleading marketing was common.

Burden description

According to the new Article 6a, when announcing a price reduction, the trader must also indicate the prior price at which the product was marketed during a certain period preceding the reduction, usually 30 days before the application of the discount.

The unclear wording of the Article 6a has led to inconsistent interpretation and varying practices among Member States, as a result of which companies have had to abandon marketing practices that are more understandable for consumers, and price reductions have become less transparent.

Suggested measures

The cooperation between the supervisory authorities of the Member States should be strengthened to ensure consistent interpretation of Article 6a.

The Commission should provide detailed guidance on appropriate marketing practices. Regulation should be limited only to misleading practices, using the means of general consumer protection regulation.

Centralized, up-to-date information on the different legislative interpretations in the Member States should be available so that companies can better comply with their obligations when operating in the internal market.

Asko Metsola
Senior Legal Adviser, IPR, Internal Market, and Consumer Regulation
asko.metsola@ek.fi, +358 40 840 3735

Electricity Market Directive (EMD)

EU Legislation

The Directive (2019/244) contains provision regarding billing information (Article 18), and final customers (Article 10).

Burden description

Companies must provide very detailed billing information to final customers. An overload of complex information has been shown to primarily cause confusion among consumers and is therefore not considered beneficial for customers either.

In addition, at present many of the articles enacted in the Directive to protect consumers also apply to end users, who, under the logic of the Directive, include business customers.

Suggested measures

Clarifying billing by removing and simplifying the minimum billing information requirements set out in Annex I should be introduced.

The consumer-protection provisions of the Directive should be restricted to consumer customers only.

Sector-specific: Finnish Energy
EK has no expertise in this matter.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

EU Legislation

Since 2019, the collection rate in Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive has been at least 65% relative to the average quantity of electrical and electronic equipment placed on the market in the previous three years. However, the calculation of the collection rate does not take into account new product categories with a long lifespan, such as heat pumps and solar panels.

Burden description

When these are not replacement purchases but first-time purchases, there is no corresponding WEEE generated for collection, which both lowers and distorts the collection rate.

For example, in Finland in 2023, 12,000 tonnes of heat pumps were placed on the market, but only 48 tonnes were collected. For solar panels, 13,000 tonnes were placed on the market and only 2.5 tonnes were collected.

Suggested measures

The calculation method for the recycling rate of electrical and electronic equipment should be changed to take into account new long-life product categories where no replacement purchases are made, by excluding them from the recycling rate calculation or by modifying the calculation method in some other way.

Sector-specific: Finnish Commerce Federation
EK has no expertise in this matter.

School Fruit and Vegetables Scheme

EU Legislation

EU's school fruit and vegetable scheme is laid down in by the following regulations: Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013 and (EU) No 1370/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Regulations (EU) 2017/39 and (EU) 2017/40 of the European Commission, Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/655, and the Act on the Distribution of Food to Schools (1065/2016). (EU) 2017/39 and (EU) 2017/40, Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/655, and the Act on the Market Organization of Agricultural Products (999/2012) and the regulations issued pursuant to it.

Burden description

The school fruit scheme, which is financed by the European Union, includes very detailed regulations on the use of fruit, vegetables, and berries eligible for support. Compliance is monitored through measures such as inspection visits.

The objective of promoting healthy eating habits and the support itself is worth pursuing. However, detailed instructions for use are inappropriate and the resources used for monitoring are unnecessary. The Food Agency and early childhood education and training providers are wasting time.

Suggested measures

The rules concerning school fruit and vegetable scheme subsidies should be relaxed. For example, the use of raw ingredients to be used in salads should be allowed.

Sector-specific: Finnish Education Employers
EK has no expertise in this matter.

Financial Markets

1) Retail Investment Strategy
2) Financial Data Access Regulation (FIDA)
3) Late Payments

Retail Investment Strategy

EU Legislation

Directive 98/6/EC, amended by Directive 2019/2161: The aim of the strategy was to increase retail investors' participation in capital markets, improve the transparency of investment costs, and strengthen investor protection.

The Commission's proposal is a step in the right direction, but it is not sufficient to achieve the objectives set out in the Commission's communication. The proposal is based on false premises, emphasizing e.g. price regulation, even though retail investors may have other preferences when comparing different investment products.

Burden description

The proposed Directives does not support the Commission's objectives of improving EU competitiveness, promoting retail investment, and simplifying regulatory frameworks. The proposed Directives would i.e. complicate the investment product purchase process, and at worst direct customers towards products that do not match their preferences.

Suggested measures

The development of investment products should be left to the financial markets. There are already a large number of investment products on the European financial markets. The Retail Investment Package should be withdrawn from the EU legislative process.

Santeri Suominen
Senior Legal Adviser, Capital Markets
santeri.suominen@ek.fi, +358 50 463 7822

Financial Data Access Regulation (FIDA)

EU Legislation

COM(2023) 360 final (ongoing): The proposal's objective is to facilitate access to customer financial data, thereby making it easier for customers to benefit from innovative financial services.

According to the Commission's proposal, customers and data users in the EU financial sector cannot efficiently control the access to and sharing of their data beyond payment accounts. As a result, even when customers wish to do so, they do not have widespread access to data-driven financial services and products.

Burden description

In practice the proposed regulation requires financial companies to build or upgrade IT systems, develop data interfaces, and ensure real-time or near-real-time data access. The costs imposed by the regulation may outweigh the benefits (especially for smaller operators) or divert resources from other priorities.

Suggested measures

The outcome of the negotiations should clearly reflect the objectives of implementing the principle of proportionality, simplification, and reducing the administrative burden. If the proposed regulation cannot be amended to remove provisions that threaten to create significant new costs and unreasonably asymmetrical obligations for the financial sector, the proposal should be withdrawn from the EU legislative process.

Santeri Suominen
Senior Legal Adviser, Capital Markets
santeri.suominen@ek.fi, +358 50 463 7822

Late Payments

EU Legislation

COM/2023/533 final: The proposed Regulation would replace the previous Directive on Late Payments.

The revision's objective is to address shortcomings related to asymmetries in bargaining power between large clients (debtors) and smaller suppliers (creditors).

The aim of the Revision is to improve the payment discipline of public authorities, large companies, and SMEs, and protect companies from the negative effects of payment delays in commercial transactions.

Burden description

Regulation would become significantly stricter and more rigid. The proposal include e.g. a 30-day payment period as a default rule; derogations regarding late-payment interest, collection costs, and fixed compensation would not be allowed, even with the consent of all parties (any contract terms contrary to the Regulation would be invalid). In addition, there would be regulatory oversight and the possibility of searches, similar to competition law.

Finland and many other Member States are highly critical concerning the proposed Regulation. Before the European parliament elections 15 Member States demanded that the Commission withdraw the proposal and return it for further preparation. The new Commission has not responded to this demand.

Suggested measure

The regulation should be withdrawn, as if implemented, it would significantly interfere with companies' freedom of contract.

The proposal should focus only on payment terms in the public sector.

Santeri Suominen
Senior Legal Adviser, Capital Markets
santeri.suominen@ek.fi, +358 50 463 7822

Competition and Public Procurement

1) Public Procurement Directive(s)
2) Foreign Subsidies Regulation

Public Procurement Directive(s)

EU Legislation

The Commission is revising rules for public procurement, key regulations are the so-called “classic” Procurement Directive (2014/24/EU) and the Utilities Directive (2014/25/EU).

Also, there is increasing pressure to insert policy goals such as european preference, green and social criteria into procurement rules.

Sanna-Maria Bertell
Chief Policy Adviser, Competition and procurement
sanna-maria.bertell@ek.fi, +358 50 473 3688

Burden description

Since their introduction, the Procurement Directives have aimed to increase competition and make the use of public money more transparent. However, it has not been a success story. Competition has continued to decline in the Single Market, and the legal framework remains fragmented, with some elements mandatory and others optional, resulting in misaligned stakeholder incentives.

Administrative burdens and documentation requirements are the main obstacles for companies, especially SMEs, participating in public procurement. Manual form-filling and reliance on public notices are inefficient compared to direct data capture. In addition, reference requirements are inconsistent and burdensome, with bidders often excluded due to unavailable referees or unclear linguistic standards.

Surveys show that companies (particularly in construction and services) find documentation requirements excessive and market dialogue insufficient. Rigid procedures and a limited ability to clarify or amend bids lead to resource drain and frequent complaints.

Suggested measure

a) Rethink procurement legislation with a digital-first approach, focusing on automation and synchronized dataflow.

b) Increase flexibility in procedures, balanced by greater transparency. Regulate only “how to buy”, not “what to buy”.

c) Reduce the number of E-forms and improve data quality for fact-based policy development:

d) Simplify contract negotiations and bidding process.

e) Replace current procedures with two types: open and restricted tender competitions, allowing negotiations in both.

f) Remove competitive dialogue, electronic auctions, and innovation partnerships from directives for simplification.

g) Standardise reference forms and make them accessible in databases, ensuring bidders can review and correct them.

h) Promote openness and transparency for all purchases under the threshold (down to 10,000 euros) via open data.

Foreign Subsidies Regulation

EU Legislation

The EU Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) aims to address distortions in the internal market caused by foreign subsidies. It complements EU State Aid Rules by introducing procedures to investigate and remedy such distortions in mergers, acquisitions, and public procurement. The overarching goal is to ensure a level playing field.

Burden description

EK highlights significant administrative burdens and legal uncertainty under the current framework:

Complexity and unpredictability: Lack of clear guidance on thresholds, indicators, and practical application creates uncertainty for businesses.

Excessive data requirements: SMEs and even larger companies struggle with detailed econometric analyses and duplicative reporting.

Overreach risks: Broad powers for prior notifications and investigations could lead to routine interventions, discouraging investment and participation in tenders.

Public procurement challenges: Fear of consequences may lead authorities to over-notify, increasing costs and delays.

Suggested measure

Rather than just a review, the FSR should be radically simplified. EK proposes several measures to reduce burdens and improve predictability:

Risk-based and proportional approach: Apply de minimis rules, block exemptions for low-risk or policy-aligned subsidies, and simplified notifications for small transactions.

Administrative simplification: Allow annual declarations, reuse data, digitize processes, and offer translated forms and hotlines.

Targeted enforcement: Limit prior notification powers to exceptional, well-documented cases; avoid routine use.

Transparency and consistency: Publish anonymized case summaries, harmonize practices across Member States, and train public authorities.

Sanna-Maria Bertell
Chief Policy Adviser, Competition and procurement
sanna-maria.bertell@ek.fi, +358 50 473 3688

Taxation and Financial Reporting

1) Greening VAT
2) Pending Proposals in Taxation Matters
3) Administrative Cooperation (DAC)
4) Corporate Resource for Europe (CORE)

Greening VAT

EU Legislation

Council Directive 2006/112/EC: Value Added Tax (VAT) is a consumption tax on the value added to nearly all goods and services bought and sold in and into the European Union.

VAT is also an important contributor for the EU's budget, and some EU Member States allow tax-free donations by companies. These include e.g. Belgium, Italy, and France. In some EU countries that permit tax-free donations, however, the threshold for donations has been raised to an unreasonably high level for retailers due to administrative reporting requirements. When implementing tax exemptions, it is important that the threshold for donations is not increased by adding further administrative burdens for retailers, such as new notification or reporting obligations.

Burden description

At present, from the perspective of VAT, it is more cost-effective for companies to destroy goods than to donate them. In addition to creating the wrong incentive, this also imposes an administrative burden on companies.

To achieve environmental objectives and support the functioning of the circular economy, legislation must be as simple as possible. At present, however, taxation creates a financial barrier to such donations.

Suggested measures

The regulation concerning donations of goods should be simplified and streamlined so that VAT does not act as an obstacle to such donations.

The VAT should be amended to promote the Circular Economy by encouraging companies to donate unsold goods and items used as display models, such as clothing, footwear, electronics, and other products in good condition to charity.

As the conditions for VAT exemption on donations vary between EU countries, regulation should be harmonized at EU level. More detailed legislation on the exemption of donations from VAT would help EU countries find common solutions and apply the rules evenly. This would support the EU's sustainable development and circular economy goals.

Tiina Ruohola
Head of VAT, Economy and Research
tiina.ruohola@ek.fi, +358 40 519 8868

Pending Proposals in Taxation Matters

EU Legislation

Digital Taxation

a) COM(2018) 147 final

b) COM(2018) 148 final

Business in Europe: Framework for Income Taxation (BEFIT)

COM (2023) 532 final

Head Office Tax (HOT)

COM (2023) 528 final

Burden description

There are possible conflicts and overlapping between EU pending proposals (in particularly Digital Taxation and BEFIT) and the already existing EU measures (for instance: ATAD, Pillar Two):

BEFIT: possible conflict with Article 4 of ATAD and Article 13 BEFIT Proposal; redounding elements with Pillar Two.

Digital Taxation: The ongoing OECD Pillar 1 tax cooperation covers these proposals, and there is a possible conflict with the US regarding these measures.

These proposals, by their very existence, create unnecessary legal uncertainty for businesses and Member States.

Suggested measures

Do not introduce anything until Pillar Two is effectively implemented and evaluation of ATAD is complete.

A total carve out third-party debt for interest deduction limitation rule should be introduced (ATAD).

Wait until Pillar Two is effectively implemented to evaluate a BEFIT proposal that aligns with it in determining the Taxable Base.

CFC rules for groups subject to Pillar 2 should be deactivated.

The proposals on Digital Taxation should be withdrawn, as the ongoing OECD Pillar 1 tax cooperation covers these proposals.

Anita Isomaa
Tax Director, Economy and Research
anita.isomaa@ek.fi, +358 40 174 1741

Administrative Cooperation (DAC)

EU Legislation

Directive 2011/16/EU [which was amended several times to extend the scope of automatic exchange of information]

DAC 7 requires platform operators subject to reporting to collect data about sellers who use the Platforms and the compensation they earn on the Platforms. This information must be reported to the tax authority.

The control task must contain information about the compensation that the seller has received for the rental of real estate, personal services, the sale of goods and the rental of means of transport. It thus concerns such incomes that have arisen within the so-called platform economy.

Burden description

During the codification of the Directive on Administrative Cooperation, justified simplifications should be introduced.

The DAC6, which concerns cross-border tax planning arrangements, does not generate any tax revenue for Finland but instead creates an enormous amount of unnecessary administrative burden and reporting.

The reporting obligation for platform operators under DAC7 is excessively broad in relation to its purpose and affects industries that were never intended to be covered. For example, medical clinics offering online appointment booking for doctors.

The Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive (ATAD) has become partly unnecessary and outdated following the adoption of the Minimum Tax Directive.

Suggested measures

The DAC6 reporting obligation should be abolished from companies that are not tax and structuring service providers (consultancy).

The scope of DAC7 should be narrowed. Filing should be done on a one stop shop basis to one jurisdiction only. Reporting and xml scheme should be fully harmonized

Anita Isomaa
Tax Director, Economy and Research
anita.isomaa@ek.fi, +358 40 174 1741

Corporate Resource for Europe (CORE)

EU Legislation

Multiannual Financial Framework ("MFF"): In July 2025, the Commission proposed a new large-company tax, for which companies would be directly liable to the Union, while Member States would handle tax collection on behalf of the Union.

The large-company tax would be an arrangement under the EU's company-based own resources (Corporate Resource for Europe, CORE), aimed at ensuring that the corporate sector operating in the world's largest single market contributes to financing the EU.

CORE would apply to companies with their tax residence within the Union and an annual net turnover exceeding €100,000,000.

Burden description

The proposal faced criticism, and its timing is very poor. Instead of introducing new tax initiatives, the Commission should focus on improving Europe's competitiveness and reducing regulatory burdens.

Suggested measures

The Commission should refrain from any new initiatives concerning corporate taxation, as all the resources of Member States and taxpayers will remain tied up for years in the implementation of the minimum tax directive.

Anita Isomaa
Tax Director, Economy and Research
anita.isomaa@ek.fi, +358 40 174 1741

Employment and Social Policy

1. Traineeship Directive
2. Transparent and Predictable Working conditions
3. Platform Work Directive
4. Pay Transparency Directive
5. European Work Councils (EWC)
6. Posting of Workers Directive
7. Quality Jobs Roadmap and Quality Jobs Act
8. European Pillar of Social Rights

Traineeship Directive

EU Legislation

COM(2024 132 final (ongoing): The Directive's objective is to provide better opportunities for young people to gain practical and professional experience, improve their skills and facilitate their access to the labour market.

The proposed Directive sets minimum requirements to improve and enforce the working conditions of trainees in the Union and to combat employment relationships disguised as traineeships, by establishing a common framework of principles and measures to ensure equal treatment of workers.

Burden description

The Commission's proposed Directive would put considerable reporting obligations, burden of proof, and costs onto employers, which run the risk of discouraging employers, especially SMEs, from providing traineeship opportunities and employment.

There needs to be a practical, realistic and understandable framework at the national level that does not put excessive and unnecessary administrative burden onto employers.

Suggested measures

The Commission should withdraw the proposed Directive.

Alternatively, significant changes should be made to the proposed Directive so that national and collective agreement-based systems can be maintained.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions

EU Legislation

Directive (EU) 2019/1152: The purpose of the Directive is to improve working conditions by promoting more transparent and predictable employment while ensuring labour market adaptability.

Burden description

The reference period obligations related to variable working hours, and the written response obligations related to requests for a more secure form of employment create administrative burden on companies.

Suggested measures

Return to the previous regulation on employment terms to be provided at the start of an employment relationship. Remove the reference period obligations related to variable working hours and the written response obligations related to requests for a more secure form of employment.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

Platform Work Directive

EU Legislation

Directive (EU) 2024/2831: The Platform Work Directive aims to improve the working conditions of platform workers, such as delivery of food and goods or services to customers.

Burden description

In particular, transparency obligations in chapter 3 and 4 towards employees and competent authorities risk evaluation obligation and information and consultation obligations create significant additional administrative burden and costs for companies.

Suggested measures

Simplify Articles 10 on human oversight and 11 on human review with a view to reducing the related administrative burdens for digital platforms.

Obligations related to algorithmic management should not be extended to cover all workplaces.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

Pay Transparency Directive

EU Legislation

Directive (EU) 2023/970: The purpose of the Directive is to increase pay transparency and equality between women and men.

Burden description

Redundant information requirement for companies that are bound to or apply collective agreements

Potential risk of unproportionate use of right of information.

Excessive reporting burden with too low threshold.

The practical implementation of a single source establishing the pay conditions and the related expectation that employers should enable comparisons with hypothetical workers under article 19 creates many concerns for employers

Suggested measures

Reporting obligations should be lightened, especially for SMEs. All companies with fewer than 50 employees should be excluded from the scope of article 6. The scope of the article 9 needs to be changed to exclude all SMEs with less than 250 workers from the reporting obligations.

The “single source” assessment should be limited to employees working for the same employer.

Markus Äimälä
Director, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
markus.aimala@ek.fi, +358 40 703 2977

European Work Councils (EWC)

EU Legislation

Directive 2009/38/EC: The purpose of this Directive is to improve the right to information and to consultation of employees in Community-scale companies and Community-scale groups of companies.

Burden description

The revision of the Directive will significantly increase the costs and administrative burden for employers related to EWC activities.

The Member States' obligation to introduce new financial penalties for violations of the Directive is particularly problematic because the content of the obligations under the Directive is open to interpretation. For example, the definition of transnational matters and the scope and timing of information and consultation obligations.

The changes in Article 8 and in particular the new Article 8a seriously limit the companies' ability to protect confidential information, for instance market sensitive information. The increased risk of leakage of market sensitive information will increase the administrative burden of the companies to ensure compliance with market abuse regulations. The detailed requirements of the information and consultation procedure (new Article 9) will complicate and even impede rapid decision-making in companies.

Suggested measures

Reduce obligations that increase administrative burdens and costs.

Remove the new requirements related to information and consultation procedures that pose risks to the decision-making capacity and management of European companies (in particular Articles 8, 8a, and 9).

Eliminate legal uncertainty related to information and consultation obligations by clarifying the scope of the directive.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

Posting of Workers Directive

EU Legislation

Directive 96/71/EC: The Directive of Posted Workers ensures a level-playing field, and that the rights and working conditions for posted workers are protected throughout the EU.

Burden description

The A1 requirement for short-term business trips create additional administrative burden for certain business sectors.

Suggested measures

Exempt short-term business trips from the A1 certificate requirement but allow sector-specific exceptions to prevent misuse.

Simplify and digitalize professional qualification recognition systems.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

Quality Jobs Roadmap and Quality Jobs Act

EU Legislation

Commission work programme 2025: According to its work programme, the Commission is set to publish a communication on the Roadmap for Quality Jobs at the end of 2025.

According to information provided by the Commission, the initiative aims to promote fair wages, high health and safety standards, good working conditions, training, and fair transitions for employees and the self-employed, in particular by increasing the coverage of collective bargaining.

Commission work programme 2026: According to the work programme, the commission will launch a legislative package "Quality Jobs Act" in the Q4 2026.

Burden description

The communication includes both legislative and other instruments, and the Commission has mentioned several potential areas for regulation, such as the right to disconnect, remote work, artificial intelligence in the workplace, occupational health and safety (including psychosocial risks, remote work, and heat), restructuring, and the right to training.

Suggested measures

The Commission should refrain from introducing additional binding EU-level labour market regulation. EU-level labour market regulation and other possible measures should support business growth and the ability to create new jobs and hire employees. This requires regulation that is predictable, flexible, and offers more opportunities to take into account the different needs of sectors and companies. The act should be consistent with the Commission's objectives of simplifying regulation and reducing the administrative burden on businesses.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

European Pillar of Social Rights

EU Legislation

Commission work programme 2025: According to its work programme, the Commission is set to publish an action plan on the Pillar of Social Rights at the end of 2025.

There is no information yet on its possible detailed content.

Burden description

It is important not to unnecessarily introduce regulation that increases the administrative burden on businesses or makes the labour market more rigid.

Suggested measures

EU labour market regulation must not undermine the competitiveness of companies operating in Europe. Any potential reforms to labour market regulation should be based on a thorough assessment of their impacts on competitiveness and employment.

The action plan on the Pillar of Social Rights should be consistent with the Commission's objectives of simplifying regulation and reducing the administrative burden on businesses.

Katja Miettinen
Senior Legal Adviser, Labour Law and Industrial Relations
katja.miettinen@ek.fi, +358 40 839 4839

Waste Framework Directive

1. Definition of Producer
2. End-of-Waste Criteria
3. Free Riders and Collection Point Networks
4. Obligations for Textiles and Food Waste
5. Waste Transfer Note Obligation
6. Reporting and Guarantee Systems
7. Authorised Representative

Definition of Producer

EU Legislation

Article 3, Definitions: The definition of ‘producer’ is unclear and open to interpretation. The term should be defined unambiguously so that the producer can be clearly identified in every Member State and in every situation.

Burden description

Due to ambiguities and multiple interpretations, authorities in different Member States have already interpreted the definition in various ways. For example, there are differing views on when a product is considered to be made directly available to the end-user.

If definitions are interpreted differently across Member States, this results in additional reporting challenges as well as administrative and financial burdens for companies making products available in several Member States.

Suggested measures

To ensure the functioning of the EU internal market, the definition of ‘producer’ should be harmonised across all Member States. In addition, producers should be given sufficient time to prepare for the changes.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

End-of-Waste Criteria

EU Legislation

Article 6, End-of-Waste Status and Construction Products Regulation Regulation 305/2011: Recycled materials are products, not second-class substitutes. EU rules must ensure that the shift from linear to circular economy is not blocked by unnecessary restrictions that hinder recycling.

A clear and fair framework for recycled materials will stimulate investment, innovation, and the use of secondary raw materials across Europe.

Burden description

The transition from a linear to a circular economy requires that recycled materials can compete on equal terms with virgin raw materials.

At present, recycled aggregates and other secondary raw materials risk being subject to additional restrictions or costs to which virgin materials are not subject.

Suggested measures

The End-of-Waste (EoW) criteria should be based on the technical and environmental quality of the material itself, not on arbitrary limitations relating to size, input, or intended use.

Once a material meets the EoW criteria, it should be recognised as a product, with the same applications as equivalent virgin materials.

Innovation should be encouraged: new uses for recycled fines, asphalt, or other mineral fractions should be possible where they meet applicable product standards. The regulatory framework should avoid creating additional administrative or technical hurdles for recycled materials that do not exist for virgin ones.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Free Riders and Collection Point Networks

EU Legislation

Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) sets general EU-level requirements for EPR schemes including reporting, transparency obligations, and cost coverage principles (Article 8 and 8a).

The reporting obligations for EPR vary significantly between Member States. Differences in the formats required by producer organizations prevent automation and keep administrative costs high.

For companies with EU-wide sales and EPR obligations across several product categories (e.g. electrical and electronic equipment, batteries, packaging), the current system is overly complex and may prevent registration in all relevant Member States.

Burden description

Responsibility of Registered Producers for Free Riders' Market Shares: The competitiveness of companies that have fulfilled their statutory EPR obligations must not be undermined by requiring them to cover the EPR costs of products placed on the market by free riders. EPR should be limited within each product group so that a registered producer is responsible only for the products they themselves place on the EU market. It is the responsibility of the competent authority in each Member State to identify and address free riders.

Coverage of Producers' Collection Point Networks: It is important to consider local conditions in each Member State to ensure the efficiency (including cost-effectiveness) of the system. For example, Finland's large geographical area, sparse population, and long distances can unreasonably increase EPR costs compared with more densely populated and/or smaller EU Member States.

Suggested measures

Firstly, requirements related to EPR are also present in other EU legislation, which should be harmonised. Secondly, the obligation to cover free riders should be removed. Producers should be responsible only for the EPR costs of the products they themselves place on the market in each Member State.

In addition, the collection point network should not be harmonised at the EU level but should be proportionate to the population size and density of each Member State.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Obligations for Textiles and Food Waste

EU Legislation

Revised Waste Framework Directive aims to boost the circularity of textiles and footwear, as well as to reduce food waste.

Under the Directive, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) would cover textiles (Article 22a) and the food industry would have its own food-waste reduction target of 10% while consumers, retailers, and the restaurant sector would have a joint reduction target of 30% (Article 9a).

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Burden description

Textiles are increasingly sold into the EU from outside the EU via platform operators, making effective supervision by national authorities nearly impossible. Customs authorities in some Member States have also acknowledged that they are unable to control the growing influx of parcels from outside the EU.

Regarding food waste, Member States do not currently have a harmonised method, or even the means, to measure food-waste quantities. The measurement of overall food waste should thus be removed and instead a definition for edible food waste should be created and measured.

In practice, the reduction targets could mean that coffee might in the future be ordered as ready-brewed concentrate, so that coffee grounds would be generated under the food industry's 10 percent target instead of the restaurant sector's 30 percent target. This would achieve no real benefit and would merely be an artificial workaround.

Suggested measures

To ensure the competitiveness of companies operating within the EU, their Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) should be limited to the products they themselves place on the EU market in each Member State.

In addition, an EU-level instrument is needed to monitor EPR at the EU border. The producers should not be liable for the EPR costs of products (such as textiles and footwear) crossing the EU border when the importer is a private individual rather than a producer.

Regarding food waste, Member States should be given the opportunity to exclude inedible parts from the reduction target and focus on reducing edible food waste. A target should be set for the amount of food waste in kilograms per capita per year, which would treat Member States equally regardless of their differing starting points. Each operator should only be responsible for reducing the food waste they themselves generate. Additionally, all operators should have the same reduction target.

Waste Transfer Note Obligation

EU Legislation

Article 35, Record Keeping: to support investment in recycling and ensure a level playing field, waste transfer note obligations must be harmonised across the EU.

Responsibility should be clearly placed on the producer, not shifted downstream. This would reduce unnecessary administrative burden for recyclers, improve traceability, and make compliance consistent in all Member States.

Burden description

Waste transfer notes are required when waste is moved from the producer to a treatment facility. In practice, implementation varies across Member States.

In some cases, recycling operators are obliged not only to retain transfer documentation but also to create it themselves if the waste producer has failed to provide it. This creates several problems:

a) Recycling companies end up performing an administrative duty that does not belong to them

b) The obligation brings no added environmental benefit, as the waste has already reached an authorised facility

c) Producers' responsibility is blurred, weakening traceability to the waste origin

d) Different practices across Member States create an uneven playing field and unnecessary barriers for investment

Suggested measures

On the EU level, it should be clarified that the obligation to prepare and retain waste transfer notes lies solely with the waste producer i.e. the waste holder at the point of generation, who has the best knowledge of the material. The treatment facility would still be required to verify the suitability of the load, but not to generate or keep documentation on behalf of the producer.

National guarantees: By ensuring efficient and consistent rules, the EU can accelerate the transition to a resource-efficient circular economy while maintaining high environmental standards.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Reporting and Guarantee Systems

EU Legislation

Article 35, Record Keeping: streamlining reporting and guarantee systems would reduce administrative burden, release capital for investments and strengthen the level playing field for recycling companies across the EU.

By ensuring efficient and consistent rules, the EU can accelerate the transition to a resource-efficient circular economy while maintaining high environmental standards.

Burden description

Companies face overlapping reporting requirements and multiple financial guarantee schemes across Member States.

In reporting, the same data on waste transport, treatment and utilization must often be submitted to several different systems in different formats.

In financial guarantees, companies handling several waste streams may need to provide separate guarantees for each permit and contribute to additional national guarantee funds.

These overlaps create unnecessary administrative burdens, tie up capital that could otherwise be invested in new recycling facilities, and weaken the global competitiveness of the EU.

Suggested measures

A one-stop-shop principle for circular economy reporting should be introduced at the EU level, ensuring interoperability between different reporting systems.

Financial guarantees should be simplified by promoting a risk-based and harmonized approach across Member States, avoiding overlapping schemes. This could include centralized guarantees or the mutual recognition of equivalent systems.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Authorised Representative

EU Legislation

According to Article 8a: Each Member State shall allow the producers of products established in another Member State and placing products on its territory to appoint a legal or natural person *established on its territory* as an authorised representative for the purposes of fulfilling the obligations of a producer related to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes on its territory.

Burden description

In practise, fulfilling EPR should not be made any more difficult for distance sellers than for producers established in Member States.

Making EPR more difficult for distance sellers than for domestic producers creates unequal compliance burdens. Distance sellers may face complex registration, reporting, and fee-payment requirements across multiple Member States. This increases administrative workload, legal uncertainty, and the risk of unintentional non-compliance.

Suggested measures

The appointment of an authorized representative should be made voluntary if the Member State allows distance sellers to join the producer responsibility organization directly.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Single-Use Plastics (SUP)

1. Reducing the Single-Use Plastic Packaging
2. Turtle Label
3. Responsibility for Cleaning Public Areas

Reducing the Single-Use Plastic Packaging

EU Legislation

Article 4, Consumption Reduction:

“Member States shall take the necessary measures to achieve an ambitious and sustained reduction in the consumption of the single-use plastic products listed in Part A of the Annex [...]

Those measures shall achieve a measurable quantitative reduction in the consumption of the single-use plastic products listed in Part A of the Annex on the territory of the Member State by 2026 compared to 2022.”

Burden description

The consumer trend has long been towards services (take away) and easily consumable snacks. EU legislation should not restrict the development of markets and the business activities of European companies.

In addition, the new regulation on packaging and packaging waste introduces new requirements for reducing the overall amount of packaging waste.

Suggested measures

Remove the requirement to reduce the amount of single-use plastic packaging.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Turtle Label

EU Legislation

Article 7, Marking Requirements and Implementing Regulation EU 2020/2151:

Member States must ensure that certain single-use plastic products placed on their market have a marking on the packaging or on the product itself.

The Annexes concerning harmonised marking specifications for single-use plastic products (SUPs) set out the requirements for the use of the so-called Turtle Label on SUPs.

Burden description

The current Turtle Label, which is part of the Directive's harmonised marking requirements, has proven to be misleading and unclear. It should be removed and replaced with harmonised, packaging-material-specific markings under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), which support correct sorting, recycling, and consumer communication.

Suggested measures

The requirement for a separate littering label should be removed. The marking unnecessarily takes up space on packaging and does not provide useful information to end users. A material-specific sorting label is sufficient to guide packaging to recycling.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Responsibility for Cleaning Public Areas

EU Legislation

Article 8, Extended producer responsibility (EPR): The cost responsibility imposed on producers under the Single-use Plastics Directive for littering in certain public areas does not follow the polluter pays principle but shifts responsibility from consumers to producers, even though littering occurs after use.

Burden description

The municipal cost data on which single-use plastics fees are based are not available in a transparent, reliable, or consistent manner, which hampers the fairness and predictability of cost responsibility.

The clear responsibilities of society should not be shifted to businesses: cost responsibility should be directed to the actual polluters. This is especially relevant when the supervisory authority cannot identify companies selling via distance sales from outside the EU.

Suggested measures

The producers' cost responsibility under the Directive for littering in certain public areas should be removed, and the Directive should comply with the polluter-pays principle set out in Article 191(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU):

"Union policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the Union. It shall be based on the precautionary principle and on the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source and that *the polluter should pay*."

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Packaging and Packaging Waste (PPWR)

1. General Concerns
2. Certain Definitions and Implementation
3. PFAS ban
4. Chemical Recycling
5. Minimum Recycled Materials and Exemptions
6. Labelling Priorities
7. Requirements on Heavy Documentation
8. Single-use Plastic Packaging
9. Refill Stations
10. Deposit and Return Systems
11. Plastic Carrier Bags

General Concerns

EU Legislation

Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on Packaging and Packaging Waste (PPWR) entered into force in February 2025 and will apply from August 2026 according to the Article 71.

The PPWR regulates which types of packaging may be placed on the EU market, as well as packaging waste management and prevention measures.

Burden description

The PPWR imposes significant administrative costs on companies. In particular, the reuse obligations entail substantial costs without corresponding environmental benefits.

Furthermore, the fact that the PPWR's definitions will begin to apply in mid-2026 creates significant challenges for packaging data reporting in those Member States where companies already report packaging data according to national practices. In many cases, the identity of the packaging producer would change mid-year when the PPWR's definitions begin to apply.

Suggested measures

The entry into application of the PPWR should be postponed so that it would begin on 1 January 2027, ensuring that its application does not start in the middle of a calendar year.

However, producers would have sufficient preparation time only if the date of application were set one year later, on 1 January 2028.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Certain Definitions and Implementation

EU Legislation

The Article 3(1) contains definitions for transport packaging (7), manufacturer (13), producer (15), and end-user (23).

The definition of ‘producer’ (15) is unclear and open to interpretation. In many situations, it is not possible to determine the producer based on the PPWR’s wording.

In addition, other terms essential for defining the packaging producer are unclear, particularly the terms ‘end-user’, ‘manufacturer’, and ‘transport packaging’.

According to the PPWR, the same requirements apply to the producer as to the manufacturer, which is inconsistent with the approach taken in other EU product legislation.

Burden description

Due to ambiguities, authorities in different Member States have already interpreted the definitions of the PPWR in various ways, which results in additional reporting challenges as well as administrative burdens for companies. For example, there are differing views on when a product is considered to be made directly available to the end-user. In practice, documentation requirements for multiple responsible parties (both the manufacturer and the producer) add administrative burdens for both operators and authorities without improving the quality of compliance assurance.

In addition, communication about changes to producers is challenging if those changes occur mid-year. This creates administrative burdens for companies, as it is difficult for producers to coordinate the transfer of reporting responsibility in the middle of the year. The reporting of packaging data for 2026 would need to be instructed in two different ways: at the beginning of the year according to current national practices, and at the end of the year according to the regulation’s definitions.

Suggested measures

To ensure the functioning of the EU internal market, the definition of ‘producer’, as well as the other definitions, should be harmonised across all Member States. The manufacturer-level documentation requirements should be removed from the obligations of the producer.

In addition, producers must have sufficient time to prepare for upcoming changes. For this reason, the application date of the PPWR should be postponed at least until 1 January 2027, in order to avoid implementation in the middle of a calendar year.

However, producers would have sufficient preparation time only if the date of application were set one year later, on 1 January 2028.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

PFAS Ban

EU Legislation

Article 5(5), PFAS ban: From 12 August 2026, food-contact packaging shall not be placed on the market if it contains per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) in a concentration equal to or above the limit values.

In Finland, the phase-out of the intentional use of PFAS is being undertaken as rapidly as possible without creating risks to food safety, food security, or product quality. Manufacturers in Finland are well prepared for this transition.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Burden description

The current state of available analytical testing capability does not provide legal certainty for companies. To ensure legal certainty and maintain the supply of pre-packaged food and beverages to citizens, accredited and harmonised analytical methods are needed.

To demonstrate compliance with restrictions on intentional PFAS use, companies could adopt a system of compliance statements throughout the value chain. Suppliers would provide signed declarations confirming that PFAS are not intentionally added to materials or used during production processes. This would enhance traceability and accountability at each stage of the value chain.

Suggested measures

Until accredited and harmonised analytical methods are generally available, the PPWR's restriction should focus on intentionally added PFAS. In addition, certain types of packaging will require a longer transition period than 18 months to develop PFAS-free packaging alternatives.

The possibility to exhaust non-compliant food contact packaging that is manufactured before 12 August 2026 ~~until 3 years after the date of application of Article 5~~ should be clarified as soon as possible.

If no changes to Article 5(5) are achieved before it is applied, the Nordic governments and authorities should agree on a common compliance approach that acknowledges the lack of harmonised analytical methods and instead focuses on supply-chain traceability and ensuring that no PFAS has been intentionally added to the packaging.

Chemical Recycling

EU Legislation

Article 6(5), Recyclable packaging: Food contact materials and packaging are subject to specific requirements, which make compliance with new requirements particularly challenging.

Burden description

There is a risk of limited availability of compliant packaging materials, increased packaging material costs, and an increase in food waste.

In the absence of recycling technologies, there is a risk of limited availability of compliant packaging materials, increased packaging material costs, and compromised food safety.

To include chemical recycling as an acceptable and economically viable solution for companies to meet their recycling targets. Chemical recycling, through methods such as pyrolysis, gasification, and depolymerization, allows plastics to be recycled multiple times without degrading their properties.

It will also contribute to improving plastic circularity in the near future, as noted by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in 2023.

Suggested measures

Chemical recycling methods should be recognised as valid and economically viable solutions for meeting recycling targets. The Commission should rapidly adopt decisions enabling the mass balance methodology and the use of chemical recycling alongside other technologies under Article 6(5).

Add the following exemption to the Article 6:

“Food packaging that does not comply with the requirements of paragraph 2 may be placed on the market from 1 January 2030 for a maximum period of three years.”

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Minimum Recycled Materials and Exemptions

EU Legislation

Article 7, Minimum recycled content in plastic packaging: Food contact materials and packaging are subject to specific requirements, which make the use of recycled material particularly challenging.

Currently, there are not enough EFSA-approved recycling processes that demonstrate the suitability of recycled materials for food contact for plastic materials other than PET (polyethylene terephthalate). Hence, reaching the Article 7 targets for the use of recycled plastic content without compromising food safety is impossible.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Burden description

Polyamide (PA) is often used as an ingredient in advanced packaging applications together with polyethylene (PE) or polypropylene (PP), where its high-performance qualities are required: high puncture resistance, strong thermoforming abilities, wide temperature tolerance, and high food-preservation properties, all while maintaining the minimum amount of packaging material.

The role of PA (Category No 18, Annex II Table 1) as a packaging material enables the highest performance for a package with the least amounts of materials, its use also helps reduce food waste through its advanced protection to valuable perishables, and it is recyclable in the PE waste stream.

Suggested measures

Article 6(4): The scope of safe food-contact recycled materials beyond PET, including polyamide (PA), should be expanded in the design for recycling and recyclability performance grades delegated act, ensuring that the criteria and grades allow companies to maintain PA use at reasonable levels.

Article 7(13): Clarification is needed on how exemptions from the minimum recycled-content percentages should apply when the criteria remain insufficiently defined. The delegated act on minimum recycled-content percentages should include flexibility for exceptional situations, such as supply or demand shocks or other disruptions, that would permit temporary increases in the use of virgin plastic under clearly defined conditions.

Remove from point 1(b): “contact material packaging made from plastics other than PET, except for single-use plastic beverage bottles: 10 percent”.

Remove from point 2(b): “contact material packaging made from plastics other than PET, except for single-use plastic beverage bottles: 25 percent”.

Labelling Priorities

EU Legislation

Article 12(1), Labelling of packaging: “Packaging placed on the market shall be marked with a harmonised label containing information on its material composition in order to facilitate consumer sorting.”

In the PPWR there is no requirement that the pictogram should be in colour or include text. Hence, there is no legal basis for proposals conerning that the pictogram should be in colour and include text as standard (See: JRC Publications Repository 2024, Setting the scene for harmonised waste-sorting labels in the European Union).

Burden description

Flexibility should be given to companies when it comes to the use of text and colour with the label, as well as the placement of the label on the package.

In Finland, we have well performing Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) systems, and it is important to preserve the integrity and functioning of those systems hence it is essential that any new labelling requirement does not compromise the functioning of existing DRS systems.

Suggested measures

The black-and-white pictograms should be allowed as standard, and there should be flexibility regarding text, colour, and placement.

There should be no requirement for EU symbols on packaging included in national DRS systems, and only national symbols should be required.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Requirements on Heavy Documentation

EU Legislation

According to the Article 15(3), Obligations of manufactures: Manufacturers shall keep the technical documentation referred to in Annex VII (conformity assessment procedure) and the EU declaration of conformity (Annex VIII).

Burden description

The PPWR's contains heavy documentation requirements that cause unnecessary administrative burden and costs for European companies.

Suggested measures

Amend Article 15(3) point (a) as follows:

n the case of single-use packaging: for one year from the date the packaging was placed on the market;

Amend Article 15(3) point (b) as follows:

in the case of reusable packaging: for three years from the date the packaging was placed on the market

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Single-use Plastic Packaging

EU Legislation

Article 25, Restrictions on use of certain packaging formats refers to Annex V that concerns restrictions on use of packaging formats from 1 January 2030 onwards.

Annex V, point (1): Single-use plastic grouped packaging: According to the Article 25, from 1 January 2030, economic operators shall not place on the market packaging in the formats and for the uses listed in Annex V.

Annex V, point (2): Single-use plastic packaging for unprocessed fresh fruit and vegetables: Single-use plastic packaging for less than 1,5 kg pre-packed fresh fruit and vegetables.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Burden description

Annex V, point (1)

Single-use plastic packaging used at the point of sale refers to packaging intended to facilitate the handling of goods sold in bottles, cans, tins, pots, tubs, and packets, and thereby enable or encourage consumers to purchase more than one item. It does not apply to group packaging that is necessary to facilitate handling of these products.

Annex V, point (2)

The purpose of packaging is to protect fruit and vegetables from damage and to preserve their freshness for a longer period. Removing the possibility to package them will lead to a significant increase in food waste.

Suggested measures

Article 25: It should be clarified that the restrictions will apply exclusively to packaging used only for temporary promotional offers to consumers, as mentioned by the Commission to several stakeholders.

Point (1): It should be clarified that 'facilitates handling' refers to packaging characteristics designed to improve consumer grip of the grouped packaging, improve stability on shelves and during transport in both B2B settings and consumer use, ensure storage optimisation, and minimise the risks of accidental dropping, breakage, product damage, or injury by retailers or consumers.

Point (1) should be amended as follows:

Single-use plastic packaging used at the point of sale, intended to facilitate the handling of goods sold in bottles, cans, jars, or packages in groups.

However, to facilitate handling, combination packs weighing one kilogram or more (≥1kg) are permitted.

Point (2) should be removed.

Refill Stations

EU Legislation

Article 28(5), Obligations related to refill: “From 1 January 2030, final distributors with a sales area of more than 400 m^2 shall endeavour to dedicate 10 % of that sales area to refill stations for both food and non-food products.”

Burden description

There is no evidence of environmental benefits from the use of such refill stations. Instead, refill stations create significant food-safety and hygiene risks and also increase food waste.

Suggested measures

Article 28(5) concerning refill stations should be removed.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Deposit and Return Systems

EU Legislation

Article 29(1) and 29(2): Re-use targets do not acknowledge Deposit and Return Systems (DRS) as a complementary method for reusable beverage packaging. This omission results in disproportionately negative impacts on Finnish companies operating in the retail and beverage sector.

The re-use obligation for beverage packaging in Member States that already have a functioning DRS does not contribute to achieving the PPWR's objective of reducing packaging waste set out in Article 1. Instead, it undermines business competitiveness by forcing companies to invest in a parallel re-use system alongside the existing deposit and return infrastructure. Maintaining such a parallel system also increases the administrative burden.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Burden description

In Finland, the costs for retail stores (including the additional space and labour required for sorting and handling bottles) were estimated at approximately 40 million euros per year, and the investment cost for modifying the use of existing retail space was estimated at hundreds of millions of euros.

For the beverage manufacturing industry, investment needs exceed 500 million euros, and the additional cost of return transport is about 80 million euros annually. These estimates do not yet include the investment costs for small breweries.

In addition to the costs, the transition required by the PPWR brings significant environmental disadvantages for Finland due to increased transport, energy, water, detergent, and space usage.

According to the Joint Research Centre's (JRC) life-cycle assessments comparing single-use and multiple-use packaging, single-use packaging formats can demonstrate better environmental performance than reusable formats in some scenarios. However, the JRC's analysis also concluded that reusable packaging is not the appropriate environmental solution for all packaging in all circumstances.

Suggested measures

Single-use packaging with high circularity and environmental performance (such as via DRS) should receive an exemption from re-use targets or be defined as equivalent. Also, a clear definition of 'used packaging' should be included.

Section (1): The reuse targets for transport packaging between operators should be reconsidered. Amend the text of as follows: "... at least 25% of transport packaging shall be part of a reuse system."

Section (2): The reuse targets for transport packaging between affiliated companies or companies with ownership links should be reconsidered: "Between sites of affiliated companies or companies with ownership links, it must be ensured that, from 1 January 2030, at least 25 percent of such packaging in total is reusable packaging that is part of a reuse system."

Section (7): The following text should be added: "Beverages whose single-use packaging achieves a high (over 90%) recycling rate are not subject to reuse targets.".

An alternative solution is to define re-use and high-quality recycling as equivalent in a delegated act when carried out within a well-functioning DRS, and to include a definition of used packaging: "USED PACKAGING - Packaging being returned after use by the final user and is still in circulation in a deposit-return system, organized and managed by economic operators and intended for reuse or high-quality recycling in a closed loop. Such packaging contributes to prevention and is not considered to be waste."

Plastic Carrier Bags

EU Legislation

Article 34(1), Plastic carrier bags: “ Member States shall take measures to achieve a sustained reduction in the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags on their territory.

A sustained reduction is considered to be achieved if the annual consumption does not exceed 40 lightweight plastic carrier bags per capita, or the equivalent target in weight, by 31 December 2025 and subsequently by 31 December each year thereafter.”

Burden description

The schedule for the sustainable reduction of the consumption of plastic carrier bags, which binds Member States to a maximum of 40 bags per capita by the end of 2025, is too strict, especially considering that the PPWR was adopted on 19 December 2024.

Suggested measures

Section (1) should be amended as follows:

“Consumption shall be considered to have been sustainably reduced when the annual consumption level does not exceed 40 lightweight plastic carrier bags per capita, or an equivalent target expressed by weight, by 31 December 2030 and thereafter by 31 December of each subsequent year.”

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Deforestation-free Products (EUDR)

1. Due Diligence Statement
2. Acceptance of Mass Balance Calculation
3. Simplified Due Diligence Procedure
4. Role of the Commission’s FAQ

Due Diligence Statement

EU Legislation

Article 4 of the EUDR (2023/1115) sets obligations for operators concerning the Due Diligence Statement (DDS).

Burden description

Extending responsibilities throughout the entire supply chain under the EUDR, and the requirement for multiple DDSs, creates ambiguities and leads to over-interpretation of requirements. Especially from the perspective of SMEs, the demands placed on companies are unreasonable.

Suggested measures

The DDS should only be required when a product or raw material within the scope of the EUDR is placed on the market for the first time or exported from the EU.

The new proposal shifts the obligation to submit DDS reference numbers only to the first operator placing the product on the EU market, but downstream operators must still ensure traceability cause technical and operational issues. The preferred solution is to remove the obligation for downstream operators to forward DDS reference numbers, focusing instead on registration in TRACES and ensuring suppliers are registered.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Acceptance of Mass Balance Calculation

EU Legislation

Under the Article 9, operators must demonstrate that the production did not involve deforestation, which requires e.g. data of “the geolocation of all plots of land where the relevant commodities that the relevant product contains, or has been made using”.

Burden description

In practice, some commodities within the scope of the EUDR become mixed during the manufacturing process. In practice, batch-level traceability is impossible to implement.

Suggested measures

The mass balance calculation should be accepted as part of the Due Diligence Statement (DDS), as some commodities within the scope of the EUDR typically become mixed during the manufacturing process.

The use of mass balance does not change the requirement that all areas supplying raw materials must meet the requirements of the EUDR.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Simplified Due Diligence Procedure

EU Legislation

Article 13 of the EUDR concerns simplified due diligence procedure for relevant commodities and products that have been produced in countries or parts thereof that were classified as low risk in accordance with Article 29 of the Regulation.

Burden description

The requirement to trace the locations of cattle throughout their entire lifecycle creates unnecessary administrative burden and costs in countries where the actual risk of deforestation is low.

Suggested measures

The definition of the Article 13 should be amended so that, for cattle, information on the animal's last place of residence is sufficient to meet the information requirements of Article 9, provided that all relevant commodities and products are produced in a low-risk country.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Role of the Commission’s FAQ

EU Legislation

The Commission has published FAQ documents to support the implementation of the Regulation. These documents clarify interpretations related to the EUDR.

Burden description

For example, in version 4 of the Commission’s FAQ, the answer to question 3.4 (What are the obligations of downstream non-SME operators and non-SME traders?) regarding the obligations of large operators and traders is recorded in the EUDR, instead of them having the same obligations as operators.

Suggested measures

The clarifications in the Commission’s FAQ should be incorporated into the EUDR. This would ensure equal treatment of operators and harmonized application of the Regulation across the EU.

Fanny Larsen
Legal Adviser, Circular Economy
fanny.larsen@ek.fi, +358 40 778 2683

Energy Performance of Buildings

1. General Remarks
2. Charging Points and Cabling
3. Bicycle Parking Spaces

General Remarks

EU Legislation

Revised Directive (EU) 2024/1275: is a highly detailed and continually evolving Directive. According to current trends in Finland, as the energy system becomes increasingly decarbonised, the need for reporting under the Regulation (2018/1999) diminishes.

Burden description

Before introducing new revisions to the Directive and its text, there is an urgent need to allow time to adapt to the current changes and to find ways to meet the latest obligations within the Member States.

Currently, excessive detail and rigid requirements fail to take account of national building codes, climatic conditions, and national calculation methods.

Suggested measures

The Directive is highly detailed and constantly evolving, creating challenges for both companies and the public sector. A five-year pause before introducing further revisions would allow time for adaptation in Member States.

If the EPBD is revised, the level of detail should be reduced and the Directive should allow Member States greater flexibility to apply its requirements in line with national building codes, climate, and calculation and construction methods.

In the years ahead, retroactive obligations should be avoided and cost-effectiveness principles should be applied. Instead of building-specific energy-efficiency requirements, broader targets covering the entire building stock should be established.

Arttu Karila
Adviser, Energy and Climate
arttu.karila@ek.fi, +358 40 829 7072

Charging Points and Cabling

EU Legislation

Article 14(1), new non-residential buildings: concerns the installation of charging points and of cabling that enables the later installation of charging points in new and extensively renovated non-residential buildings, as well as in parking areas physically connected to them.

Article 14(2), all non-residential buildings: concerns the construction of charging points and ducting in all existing non-residential buildings with more than 20 parking spaces. The Article sets fixed requirements for charging points and cabling based on the number of parking spaces.

The obligations require the retroactive installation of basic charging points or cabling in existing non-residential buildings with more than 20 parking spaces.

Arttu Karila
Adviser, Energy and Climate
arttu.karila@ek.fi, +358 40 829 7072

Burden description

For example, in Lapland's ski resorts there are large parking lots, some located directly next to the ski-lift base station and others much farther away. Because of the very large size of the plot on which the ski-lift base station is situated, all of the parking lots may be interpreted as being 'physically adjacent' to the building, even though in practice some of them are nowhere near any buildings.

Considering the large number of non-residential buildings and the parking spaces associated with them, this would lead in Finland alone, to massive costs and result in a vast number of unnecessary slow-charging points and/or cabling.

The obligation to install charging points and cabling in new and extensively renovated buildings is too excessive in view of current electric-vehicle technology and charging needs. The obligation would create substantial sunk costs without delivering real benefits in terms of energy efficiency or reducing GHG emissions. The current EV range (300–500 km) makes slow or basic charging largely irrelevant outside residential contexts.

Suggested measures

Article 14 should be reconsidered and revised to improve cost-effectiveness, prevent unnecessary investments, and to better reflect the principle of subsidiarity. The requirement to equip all parking lots located farther away of buildings is unreasonable. The definitions in Article 14 should be clarified and should allow exemptions for large plots: "The car park is physically adjacent to the building and, for major renovations, the renovation measures include the car park or the electrical infrastructure of the car park."

Member States should be allowed to set minimum charging point numbers for existing buildings ~~per 2018 directive (EU 2018/844)~~ in accordance with the basic level set in the 2018 Directive (2018/844) ~~considering market trends, the technology and cost-efficiency~~. Member States should have more room consider relevant factors such as the market-driven increase in charging points, the number and development of electric cars, charging methods and technologies, climate conditions, and cost efficiency. This would enhance the principle of subsidiarity and respect the property rights of building owners protected by Article 17 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Bicycle Parking Spaces

EU Legislation

Article 14, Infrastructure for sustainable mobility: Walking and cycling are low-cost and zero-emission forms of mobility, and it is in the interest of all Member States to promote them. However, the Directive should regulate only matters directly related to the energy efficiency of buildings. There is no connection between promoting cycling and the energy efficiency of buildings.

Burden description

Traffic conditions, location (urban or rural), and the purpose of a building affect the extent to which it can be accessed by bicycle. Due to climate conditions, cycling is not possible year-round in all Member States, such as Finland.

Suggested measures

The requirements for bicycle parking spaces should be removed because they fall outside the scope of the EPBD. Bicycle parking spaces have no impact on the energy efficiency of buildings.

Bicycle parking spaces should be regulated nationally and regionally in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Therefore, the obligations in Article 14 concerning bicycle parking in buildings should be removed from the Directive.

Arttu Karila
Adviser, Energy and Climate
arttu.karila@ek.fi, +358 40 829 7072

Industrial Emissions and Environmental Impact Assessments

1. Overlapping Transformation Plan
2. Environmental Management System
3. Overlapping Chemicals Inventory
4. Review Cycles of BREFs and BAT Derogations
5. Wastewater Treatment Plants
6. Overlaps between EIA, SEA and Permitting
7. Emission Limit Values (MCPD)

Overlapping Transformation Plan

EU Legislation

Article 27d, Transformation towards a clean, circular and climate-neutral industry: The transformation plan should contain information on how the operator will transform the installation during the 2030-2050 period to contribute to the emergence of a sustainable, clean, circular, resource-efficient and climate-neutral economy by 2050.

The long-term strategic transition plan is not suitable for the context of environmental permitting at all; The environmental permit must primarily set clear and supervisable conditions for the operations. The plan cannot be drawn up in a way that is binding for several decades. Many known activities may also be confidential.

Burden description

The Transformation Plan under the Article 27d of IED, the Climate Neutrality Plan under the Article 10a(1) and 10b(4) of the EU ETS Directive, and the Transition Plan at company level under the ESRS E1-1 are overlapping.

In addition to the Climate Neutrality Plan requirement, the Article 10a(1) of the ETS Directive also sets energy efficiency requirements which overlap with the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED).

Suggested measures

The obligation for the Transition Plan under the IED should be removed, as it overlaps with Climate Neutrality Plan under EU ETS Directive and the Transition Plan at company level required by ESRS.

Also, overlapping requirements regarding ETS Directive and EED should be removed to reduce administrative burden.

Overall, the Transformation Plan under the IED and the Climate Neutrality Plan under EU ETS Directive should be aligned with the transition plan at company level required by ESRS and CS3D.

Minna Ojanperä
Chief Policy Adviser, Environmental Policy
minna.ojanperä@ek.fi, +358 50 521 8152

Environmental Management System

EU Legislation

Article 14a, Environmental Management System: "Member States shall require the operator to prepare and implement, for each installation falling within the scope of this Chapter, an environmental management system ('EMS'). The EMS shall include the elements listed in paragraph 2 and shall comply with relevant BAT conclusions that determine aspects to be covered in the EMS."

The updated IED (Article 14a) requires the creation and implementation of an EMS. In addition, the Directive contains numerous content requirements for EMS.

Burden description

The added value of new requirements on scope and auditing of the IED's Environmental Management System, as compared to existing ISO standards, is unclear and risks only adding to administrative burden.

Likewise, the IED's requirement to publish information required by the EMS risks adding to administrative burden and making available business-sensitive information without benefiting the environment.

Suggested measures

It must be sufficient that the EMS meets the requirements of a known standard (e.g. ISO 14001 on Environmental Management Systems) and the IED should not impose any additional requirements.

Minna Ojanperä
Chief Policy Adviser, Environmental Policy
minna.ojanperä@ek.fi, +358 50 521 8152

Overlapping Chemicals Inventory

EU Legislation

Article 14a(2) point (d): The current provisions concerning chemical inventories target not only potential industrial emissions but also the presence of hazardous substances on site, including items such as hand soaps and cleaning products.

Also, the implementability of as well as the links to the IED and the permitting of new raw materials and their limit values in Industrial Emission Portal Annex II (pollutans) are unclear: the same applies to making information on raw materials publicly available, which entails significant risks of business-sensitive data becoming public.

Burden description

The presence of hazardous substances on site is already covered by the Article 2(4) of the REACH and by existing occupational health and safety (OSH) rules. Furthermore, the mere presence of a substance does not necessarily imply that it will be emitted. Companies maintain their own chemical inventories, which are integrated into their safety management systems.

Building a 'parallel' IED-linked system to list hazardous substances and to carry out risk assessments regarding their impacts on human health and the environment for SVHCs and authorised and restricted substances under REACH constitutes a substantial data-assembly exercise. In practice, this overlapping regulatory requirement would involve copying existing data in a new system (likely in a different format) and increase administrative burden without improving environmental or health protection, since these matters are already addressed under REACH and OSH rules.

Suggested measures

The requirement to include the chemical inventory in the EMS under the IED should be reassessed from the perspective of its added value.

At present, it appears to constitute an unnecessary overlapping reporting requirements, which are already regulated under REACH and OSH rules.

Minna Ojanperä
Chief Policy Adviser, Environmental Policy
minna.ojanperä@ek.fi, +358 50 521 8152

Review Cycles of BREFs and BAT Derogations

EU Legislation

Article 13(1), BAT reference documents (BREFs) and exchange of information: provides for an 8-year update cycle of BREFs.

Article 15(5), emission limit values, environmental performance limit values, equivalent parameters and technical measures: provides for a review of BAT derogations every four years: “The competent authority shall re-assess whether derogations granted in accordance with this paragraph are justified, every four years or as part of each reconsideration of the permit conditions pursuant to Article 21, where such reconsideration occurs earlier than four years after the derogation was granted.”

Burden description

Article 13(1): The development of technology is not as fast as the Article 13(1) anticipates. The collection of data and the updating of permits create a significant administrative burden for companies. As a general rule, the appropriate BAT cycle is approximately twice as long (about 16 years). In any case, permits can be reviewed on a plant-by-plant basis when necessary.

The realities of industrial transformation should be acknowledged and supported in the BREF process and in the BAT conclusions. The revised IED risks creating overlapping and potentially contradictory procedures between the BREF processes and the practical implementation of profound industrial transformation.

Article 15(5): It is not necessary to review the exemptions granted every four years. It is likely that the criteria for granting exemptions will be long term. A reassessment of BAT derogations is appropriate when an authorisation is revised from the perspective of new BAT conclusions or otherwise revised from a BAT-derogation perspective.

Suggested measures

Article 13(1): The 8-year update cycle should be extended to match with the realities of industrial transformation.

Article 15(5): A reassessment of BAT derogations should be considered as appropriate when an authorisation is revised for new BAT conclusions or otherwise revised from a BAT derogation perspective. Not categorically every four years.

Minna Ojanperä
Chief Policy Adviser, Environmental Policy
minna.ojanperä@ek.fi, +358 50 521 8152

Wastewater Treatment Plants

EU Legislation

Article 15(1), Emission limit values, environmental performance limit values, equivalent parameters and technical measures: requires setting emission limits for indirect wastewater so that the operation and emissions of the wastewater treatment plant are taken into account in detail.

Burden description

Article 15(1) requires the operator to provide information about a wastewater treatment plant controlled by another operator in its permit application. This requirement significantly increases the administrative workload associated with preparing permit applications due to the need to consult and share information with an external party. Also, the Article introduces uncertainty, as permits may rely on data outside the operator's responsibility and control.

Suggested measures

Article 15(1) should be amended so that each operator is responsible for the emissions of its own operations and for compliance with the permit conditions. It must be sufficient that the characteristics of the wastewater discharged to an external wastewater treatment plant are approved by the wastewater treatment plant operator.

Minna Ojanperä
Chief Policy Adviser, Environmental Policy
minna.ojanperä@ek.fi, +358 50 521 8152

Overlaps between EIA, SEA and Permitting

EU Legislation

Overlaps

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive: requires an Environmental Impact Assessment for certain plans and programmes led by the authorities (Article 3).

The Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EIA), on the other hand, requires an Environmental Impact Assessment for certain operator's projects (Article 3).

Permitting

Several articles of the EIA (8, 9 and 11) state that the permit decision following the EIA procedure is appealable and includes possible conditions.

Burden description

Overlaps: In most cases, the operator’s project is also subject to an official plan, such as a project plan (or decision-in-principle) prepared for the project, which creates possible overlaps.

Permitting: The actual permit decision is not appropriate in all projects, but the reasoned conclusion drawn up in the EIA will be taken into account in other ways, such as zoning.

In some cases, the Directive has led to the creation of an inappropriate permitting procedure for some types of projects.

Suggested measures

Overlaps: the overlapping assessment of the SEA Directive and the EIA Directive must be removed. The EIA Directive should be amended so that an assessment in accordance with the Directive is not necessary in a situation where the assessment has been carried out with sufficient accuracy in connection with the SEA.

Permitting: The requirement of the EIA Directive for a permit decision after the EIA procedure must be made more flexible. The EIA Directive should only provide for ensuring that a reasoned conclusion is taken into account.

Minna Ojanperä
Chief Policy Adviser, Environmental Policy
minna.ojanperä@ek.fi, +358 50 521 8152

Emission Limit Values (MCPD)

EU Legislation

Article 6(2), emission limit values: According to the Directive, the emission limits for existing units of up to 5 MW must be complied with from the beginning of 2030.

In principle, the emission limits for existing units larger than this (5–50 MW) entered into force at the beginning of 2025, but the flexibility allowed by the Directive for district heating plants and units using biomass postpones the entry into force of the limits until the beginning of 2030.

Burden description

The use of combustion plants will decrease as energy production shifts to non-combustion technologies. This means that more and more incineration plants are used as peak or backup plants.

The use of such plants is irregular and varies from year to year, and therefore investments in these plants are not cost-effective.

The particle limits that will enter into force at the beginning of 2030 would require significant investments, especially in small-scale units.

After 2030, the particle limit for the small size class (1–20 MW) must be the above-mentioned limit. i.e. 150 mg/Nm3.

Suggested measures

The Directive must allow flexibility for the smallest units.

Sector-specific: Finnish Energy
EK has no expertise in this matter.

Renewable Energy Directive (RED III)

1. The Concept of Energy Communities
2. Principle of Cascading Use of Biomass

The Concept of Energy Communities

EU Legislation

The Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Article 2 (definitions) has definition concerning ‘renewable energy community’, while the Directive (2019/944), Article 2 and Article 16 defines what is meant by ‘citizen energy communities’.

Burden description

The concept of energy communities is defined differently across various directives (such EMD and RED III), which leads to interpretative ambiguities and added complexity in implementation and the administrative burden.

Suggested measures

Harmonising the requirements and eliminating overlapping definitions concerning energy communities would streamline implementation and enhance legal clarity.

It should be assessed whether there is a need for specific definition of Renewable Energy Communities (RECs) in RED III, given that the EMD already provides sufficient regulation for Citizen Energy Communities (CECs)

Sector-specific: Finnish Energy
EK has no expertise in this matter.

Principle of Cascading Use of Biomass

EU Legislation

Article 3(3), Binding overall Union target for 2030: introduces the principle of cascading use of biomass, ensuring that high-quality wood is not used for energy purposes.

Article 3(3) point (c) further prohibits Member States from granting financial support for industrial grade roundwood used for energy:

“Member States shall not grant direct financial support for:

(a) the use of saw logs, veneer logs, industrial grade roundwood, stumps and roots to produce energy;

(b) the production of renewable energy from the incineration of waste, unless the separate collection obligations laid down in Directive 2008/98/EC have been complied with.”

Burden description

Since the cascading principle already excludes industrial grade roundwood from energy use, we consider the prohibition duplicative.

Suggested measures

For clarity, we recommend considering the prohibition fulfilled through proper implementation of the cascading principle.

Sector-specific: Finnish Energy
EK has no expertise in this matter.

Chemical Legislation

1. Guidelines on Waste and Recovered Substances
2. Substances of Concern
3. SCIP Database and ESPR
4. Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive

Guidelines on Waste and Recovered Substances

EU Legislation

REACH 1907/2006: The interpretation of legislation and the guidance provided on it have a significant impact on the operating conditions and competitiveness of European companies.

According to the ECHA's Guidance on Waste and Recovered Substances, aggregate derived from construction and demolition waste is considered an article; particles are regarded as articles according to the definition provided in the REACH. The guideline was issued in 2008 and last amended in 2010. This long-standing guidance has supported the development of a market for unbound crushed concrete that replaces virgin natural aggregate. CE-marked crushed concrete complies with the harmonized product standards for aggregates, in which particle size and particle shape are mandatory properties

Burden description

The amendment of the guideline, under which crushed recycled concrete would no longer be considered an article, has been under CARACAL's review since last year. During the review, no safety deficiencies have emerged that would require revising the guideline or its interpretation. Changing the article-based interpretation that has been in force for more than 15 years would cause significant harm to the circular economy as well as the EU's internal markets.

Since REACH does not apply to waste, the change in interpretation would only impose an additional burden on crushed recycled concrete that is no longer considered waste. At the same time, crushed concrete that retains its waste status, known in Finland as 'MARA crushed concrete', could still be used without changes.

Suggested measures

The simplification of REACH and the guidelines provided by ECHA can strengthen the operating conditions of companies and support the circular economy of the EU, as well as the functioning of the internal market.

Existing guidelines should not be changed without strong justification and an impact assessment. The interpretation of crushed recycled concrete as an article in the Guidance for Waste and Recovered Substances should remain in force.

The phase-out of harmful substances should be based on risk as substances with same kind of intrinsic properties are used in various ways and their risk profile is not consistent.

Sector-specific: The Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries RT

EK has no expertise in this matter.

Substances of Concern

EU Legislation

The concept “substance of concern” has been introduced in the Ecodesign Regulation (ESPR), in Corporate Sustainability Reporting Standards (CSRD), in Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), in Batteries Regulation and in Biocidal Product Regulation. Similar concepts include “substances of emerging concern” in industrial emission directive annex II

Burden description

The definitions of “substance of concern” are not clear and vary between regulations. Extensive reporting or other actions is required in regulations, which creates significant uncertainty about what is actually required when substances of concern are mentioned or when similar terminology is used in legislation.

Suggested measures

The definitions concerning substances of concern should be harmonised in EU legislation. In practice, this would limit the regulatory burden and allow actions to focus on priority substances. For example, substances of concern could be defined as SVHC (substances of very high concern) and POPs (persistent organic pollutants).

Substances that hamper recycling should be addressed through a case-by-case analysis, always taking into account the characteristics of the specific business sector in question.

Sector-specific: The Chemical Industry Federation of Finland

EK has no expertise in this matter.

SCIP Database and ESPR

EU Legislation

The Waste Framework Directive sets an obligation that article suppliers need to provide information on SVHC content in the article to ECHA SCIP database.

At the same time in parallel the REACH regulation requires that article suppliers forward the information of SVHC content in articles to the recipient of the article.

Burden description

Mandatory use of the SCIP database creates additional technical and administrative complexity, often requiring dedicated personnel and new IT systems. Companies must continually update submissions whenever product designs, supply chains, or the SVHC change, turning SCIP into an ongoing compliance obligation rather than a periodic exercise.

The usefulness of SCIP database in informing recyclers about hazardous substances is questionable as the use of database is not practical in recycling operations.

In addition, maintaining SCIP in parallel with developing the DPP risks duplicative reporting obligations, misallocation of resources, and unnecessary administrative burden for both industry and authorities.

Suggested measures

The SCIP database should be abandoned and resources allocated to the development and preparation of the DPP under ESPR.

At present, SCIP is included in the omnibus package on environmental regulation: “the discontinuation of the SCIP (substances of concern in products) database under the Waste Framework Directive”

Sector-specific: The Chemical Industry Federation of Finland. EK has no expertise in this matter.

Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive

EU Legislation

Under the Extended Producer Responsibility (Article 8, 9, 10, Annex III) of the Directive, the pharmaceutical and cosmetics sectors have been assigned at least 80% of the costs related to the removal of micropollutants, even though micro-pollutants enter urban wastewater streams from other sources as well.

Burden description

The Directive threatens to impose significant costs on only two sectors, namely pharmaceutical and cosmetics producers, as these operators would be required to finance more advanced municipal wastewater treatment systems through an extended producer responsibility scheme.

European pharmaceutical and cosmetics companies call for a true polluter pays -principle, which currently is not the case. In the preparatory phase of the Directive the share of pharmaceutical and cosmetic products as sources of micropollutants has been overestimated and the costs of urban wastewater treatment upgrades have been underestimated. In its current format the Directive undermines the European pharmaceutical and cosmetics companies' competitiveness.

Investment costs for wastewater treatment plants range from EUR 283–816 million (estimate for Finland by VTT), with annual operating costs increasing by several million euros. This could have negative effects on the availability of medicines and cosmetic products in Finland.

Suggested measures

As part of its work to streamline regulation, the Commission should suspend the EPR provisions of the UWWTD pending a proper assessment of the envisaged EPR system for urban wastewater, including analysis of all micro-pollutant contributors and full impacts of the EPR requirement.

Sector-specific: The Chemical Industry Federation of Finland. EK has no expertise in this matter.

Batteries Regulation

1. Distributors’ Obligations
2. Battery Passport

Distributors’ Obligations

EU Legislation

Article 62(1), Obligations of distributors: Battery waste is inherently hazardous, and its reception and storage always involve varying degrees of risk.

Burden description

Typically, companies located in city centers do not have any yard area where they could temporarily store battery waste returned by customers in a secure, locked space outside the store.

Therefore, the organisation of battery-waste reception and storage in companies must allow for flexible solutions and should be based on case-by-case risk assessments.

Suggested measures

The reception obligation should be removed for companies that do not have access to outside areas.

Sector-specific: Finnish Commerce Federation
EK has no expertise in this matter.

Battery Passport

EU Legislation

According to the Article 77(2): “The battery passport shall contain information relating to the battery model and information specific to the individual battery, including resulting from the use of that battery, as set out in Annex XIII.”

Burden description

Article 77 contains numerous requirements for the Digital Battery Passport, the exact content of which is not yet known to companies.

Therefore, sufficient transition periods are needed to ensure compliance with the Article 77.

Suggested measures

The transition period for the entry into force of the Digital Battery Passport requirements should be postponed by two years, as has been done with the due-diligence requirements of the Regulation.

To ensure that companies operating in the EU can avoid unnecessary administrative burden and implement regulatory measures cost-effectively, the general principle should be that there is always at least a two-year period between the clarification of detailed requirements and the entry into force of the corresponding obligations.

Sector-specific: Finnish Commerce Federation
EK has no expertise in this matter.