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Press release | 15.03.2024

Member States save, but significantly weaken the Due Diligence Directive at last minute

Today, the Coreper adopted the agreement on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

Heidi Hautala, Greens/EFA MEP, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Shadow rapporteur in the Legal Affairs committee, comments:

“Finally, the EU Member States got their act together and reached an agreement on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. The price of the agreement was a significant dilution of the level of ambition of the legislation. The scope of the directive will be limited to companies with over one thousand employees instead of five hundred. High-risks sectors were deleted entirely and the legislation's entry into force will be further delayed.

“The behaviour of the Council and Member States in recent months has been reprehensible and damaging to the credibility of EU decision-making. Instead of respecting the December trilogue agreement, already a balanced compromise, Member States engaged in endless rounds of horse-trading and last-minute attempts to water down the legislation.

“Despite this sabotage by the FDP party in the German government, Italy, France, Finland, and others, the core of the directive remains intact. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights will be, for the first time, codified in EU law, and businesses will be obliged to conduct environmental and human rights due diligence in their value chains.

“Beneficiaries of CSDDD will be the millions of people in modern slavery and other victims of corporate negligence and abuse. Responsible companies will also benefit from a level playing field and businesses will finally get more engaged in the fight against climate change.”

More:

The Council will formally adopt the agreement, after which it will be voted in the Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament with a final vote in the plenary in April.

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Responsible MEPs



Heidi Hautala

EP Vice-President, Member

Contact person



Helena Hellstrom

Harassment Prevention and Response Officer

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