



# Better Regulation Watchdog

---

## Who we are

We are a group of organisations of European consumer, environmental, development, citizen and public health organisations, trade unions and organisations advancing social justice. We work to promote and defend the rights of citizens to high social, labour, environmental, consumer and public health standards.

## What brings us together

We are united by a mission to improve social, environmental, labour, consumer, economic and public health standards for citizens and to continue building an inclusive and competitive Europe founded on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

We are united in our concern that European legislation is increasingly presented by the European institutions and some member states as a burden when the vast majority of regulatory measures are essential for guaranteeing the rights of citizens, workers and the environment as well as the EU's four freedoms.

We are united in our concern that the European Commission's "Better Regulation" agenda does not further public interest, but rather aims to weaken or neglect essential regulations protecting workers, consumers, citizens and the environment<sup>1</sup>. The focus of EU decision making should be on improving regulation, not deregulation.

We are united in our concern that the appointment of Edmund Stoiber to the post of Special Adviser for Better Regulation sends a wrongly conceived and ill-considered policy on "Better Regulation". We are particularly concerned about a number of recommendations from the High Level Group on Administrative Burdens, chaired by Mr. Stoiber, that do not serve the public interest: introducing a system of offsetting new burdens on businesses stemming from EU legislation by removing existing burdens (the 'one in - one out' proposal); setting a net target for reducing regulatory costs; and exempting SMEs and micro-businesses from EU obligations as far as this is possible.

We are united in our concern that, in its one-sided drive to "reduce regulatory burdens" and under increasing pressure from a large number of major business groups, the European Commission might undermine essential regulations and subordinate the public good to corporate interests.

---

<sup>1</sup> These include, for example, future initiatives on information and consultation of workers, revising food law, maternity leave, musculoskeletal disorders and carcinogens, consumer over-indebtedness and air quality.



## Our aims

- To closely follow the developments on Better Regulation and the initiatives and actions from the European Commission, the Parliament and Member States in this area;
- To increase understanding among civil society, media and decision makers about the risks and potential negative impacts of the Better Regulation agenda on social, environmental, labour, consumer and public health standards for citizens and the public interest;
- To provide input into the Better Regulation processes and debates, such as REFIT and the European Commission's Work Programme, in order to ensure that it does not lead to the weakening, or withdrawing of public interest standards and safeguards;
- To challenge the widely-held belief that regulation is a burden for society;
- To ensure that public interest representatives are adequately involved in the debate and decision-making process.

## How we operate

Through knowledge-sharing our network adds value to the member organisations' monitoring, evaluation and advocacy work in relation to the Better Regulation agenda. The network's aims can also be achieved by:

- Sharing information and expertise about Better Regulation initiatives and their impacts on public interest standards;
- Organising public debates on the impacts of Better Regulation;
- Promoting research exposing the interests behind and the impacts of Better Regulation;
- Advocating our positions to decision makers;
- Informing our networks reaching out to tens of millions of European citizens about the consequences of the Better Regulation agenda on their daily lives;
- Campaigning to put public pressure on decision makers;
- Conducting media outreach, through press releases, press conferences, social media;
- Hosting Working Groups that focus on Better Regulation in relation to specific areas of interest to our members (e.g. public health, labour, consumer, environment, development etc);
- Arguing for the benefits of legislation.