

Position
paper

14/07/2026

A workable IED: keeping clean production in Europe

Why the foundry industry is asking for a practical, feasible implementation of the Industrial Emissions Directive - without lowering environmental ambition

The industry behind the file

Foundries are the often-invisible backbone of European industry. They cast the engine blocks, brake and transmission parts of every vehicle — combustion and electric — the components for wind, hydrogen and grid that the energy transition depends on, the material behind European defence, and the pumps, valves and rail parts that keep manufacturing running. EFF represents more than 2,330 foundries, 138,000 workers and €31 billion in annual turnover, making the EU the world's third-largest producer. But the sector is under real strain: between 2019 and 2024, European foundry production fell 25%, employment 32% and the number of companies 13%. Once these capabilities are lost, they take decades to rebuild — if ever.

What this is about

The IED was revised in 2024, followed by a new sector BREF in December. Together they set emission limits far stricter than before — limits that require heavy investment on timelines that do not match real industrial cycles. Foundries remain fully committed to reducing their environmental footprint; the difficulty is feasibility, not ambition. The Commission's Omnibus VIII simplification package (COM(2025) 986) opens the door to a more workable framework, and EFF welcomes it — but it does not yet go far enough.

"We are not asking Europe to lower its environmental ambition. We are asking for rules a strategic — and currently fragile — industry can actually meet. The test is simple: do the rules help us produce cleanly in Europe, or push production to be done dirtily elsewhere?"

Ainhoa Ondarzal, Secretary General, European Foundry Federation

What we are asking for

EFF has put forward a package of amendments to Members of the ENVI Committee, built around three priorities:

1. **Realistic, proportionate implementation.** Keep the full BAT emission range instead of forcing every installation to the single strictest value, and align legal deadlines — the BREF review cycle, permit updates and derogations — with the real time that industrial investment takes.
2. **Permitting focused on what matters.** Keep monitoring and emission limits to the substances actually relevant to foundries, as defined in the sector BREF, rather than extending them to more than 90 substances and 80 restrictions from non-sector legislation, with no demonstrated environmental benefit.

Contact info:
secretarygeneral@eff-eu.org
www.eff-eu.org

- 3. Proportionate administration.** Keep environmental management systems as the practical internal tools they are, and performance levels indicative, instead of adding reporting and publication layers that deliver no environmental gain.

And, with the IED having entered into force on 1 July 2026 while Omnibus VIII is still under discussion, EFF supports a temporary “stop-the-clock” — so companies are not asked to implement obligations that may change within months.

Making headway

The direction is already being heard. The first published draft report reflects several of EFF’s core points — moving away from the systematic strictest limit value, making water-related levels partly indicative, and supporting the stop-the-clock. This is only a first draft, before negotiation, and EFF continues to work so that the remaining priorities — sector-based permitting and realistic timelines — are taken on board.

EFF stands ready to provide technical support and will keep its members informed as the file advances.

About the European Foundry Federation

EFF is the voice of the European foundry industry, bringing together 20 national foundry associations across Europe (16 from EU Member States and 4 from non-EU countries). It represents around 2,330 foundries, employing nearly 138,000 people and generating an annual turnover of approximately €31 billion. Foundries supply essential cast components to virtually every manufacturing sector, including automotive, mechanical engineering, construction and electrical engineering, making them a cornerstone of Europe's industrial value chains.

Further information at eff-eu.org/ and [LinkedIn EFF](#).

Contact info:

secretarygeneral@eff-eu.org
www.eff-eu.org