



*December 2020*

### **Message from the President**



Dear readers,

As 2020 is nearing its end, I think that many of us can't wait to put this year behind us. We have all been exposed, both professionally and personally, to a very trying period. Jobs have been lost, families have been unable to meet for months on end, and we had and still have to deal with an economic crisis of unprecedented severity. At the same time, I think that this exceptional situation has also offered us a great opportunity to rethink our lives – and the way we do things.

On a personal level, when dealing with the disruption the pandemic brought to my life, I can now see that I went through the five stages of grief. I have hugely missed traveling, both privately and professionally. I still miss it. Yet, once I reached the stage of acceptance, I have seen this as an opportunity to do all those things that I had always postponed. A year after his passing, I finally faced the painful but unavoidable task of going through my late father's possessions. This has triggered a major home decluttering and reorganizing project, followed by a few renovation projects. I spent my summer vacation and every free hour this fall covered in dust and paint, but at the end, what I will remember of 2020 instead of the trips not taken, and the time not spent with family and friends far away, will be all the home improvement projects that my husband and I completed.

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Valentina Serra-Holm

President

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### Technical and Competition Committees

The Technical and Competition Committees' Chairs and their members are keeping up the good work on the 21 cases currently open.

On the advocacy side, the Committees just participated in an online survey, commissioned by the European Commission and carried out by TRL and fka GmbH, which looked at updating the requirements on repair and maintenance information.

The Committees have also started to prepare UEIL's response to a second public consultation launched by the European Commission on the evaluation of the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation. The consultation, which opened on 12th October, will close on 25th January 2021.

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### Health, Safety & Environment Committee

The UEIL HSE committee meeting will probably take place again as a web conference in January, which does not make things easier, as a lot is due to happen at EU level, which must be discussed.

The chemicals legislation REACH and CLP is about to be comprehensively revised. There is the clear tendency that nearly all chemicals become subject to a kind of restriction and only "essential uses" (whatever this means) are allowed.

Some substances are only classified on the basis of their persistence without evaluating their toxicity, the so-called "P" criterium. The working group will discuss what this means for our industry, as well as where and how we will bring in our expertise.

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### **Taxation Task Force**

The European Commission is currently reviewing the Energy Taxation Directive that was withdrawn by the European Commission in 2015 (as the file was blocked in Council) and will publish a revised Energy Taxation Directive, probably in June 2021.

Related to UEIL's objective to prevent the inclusion of lubes under EMCS, certain EU Member States are concerned about increased fraud with lubes in Europe and are once again increasing the pressure to include lubes under EMCS. UEIL will continue its outreach to the EU Member States in the coming weeks to express its concern and will discuss with the European Commission the option of a definition of 'light lubes' that might be included under EMCS.

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### **GEIR Update**

The last quarter of 2020 brought a lot of changes to GEIR: its members first welcomed a new President, Marco Codognola from Itelyum, then GEIR's first technical secretary, Valentina Lucchini, and eventually the creation of five area groups to coordinate the association's activities. Led by members of the steering committee, these groups will focus on the following: 1) product safety, 2) environment and technology, 3) market, regulations and relationships, 4) sustainability, and 5) general matters. These structural improvements will ensure that GEIR delivers high quality material, works more efficiently, positions itself on a wider range of topics, and subsequently engages more successfully at EU level.

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### **UEIL 2020 Virtual Networking Event**

On Thursday 29 October, UEIL hosted its (first ever) virtual networking event which gathered 140+ participants from across the world!

Entitled "*UEIL: Our contribution to Europe's sustainable future*", the event was the opportunity to discuss key questions for the lubricants industry, such as the challenges and opportunities posed by COVID-19 as well as upcoming EU legislation that is likely to impact the lubricant industry.

Industry experts actively engaged with UEIL's activities and provided updates on key initiatives around:

- Circular Economy
- Energy Taxation
- Access to Technical Information and the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation
- Health & Safety

[Read more](#)

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### **EU Heads of State agree on 2021-2027 budget and European Recovery Plan**

On 10 December, the European Council found an [agreement](#) on the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027 and the Recovery Plan. Member States can now proceed with the ratification of the Own Resources Decision, which allows the Commission to borrow on the markets under the €750-billion Recovery Plan.

### **European Council finds consensus on updated 2030 emissions reduction target**

On 11 December, the European Council [endorsed](#) a binding collective EU target of a reduction of at least 55% in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, as proposed by the European Commission in its Climate Target Plan in September 2020. Negotiations on the reduction target had been stalling over the past months, mainly over disagreements regarding the enabling framework of how to help EU countries, especially the poorer and more fossil-fuel-dependent Member States, in their energy transition.

### **European Commission publishes EU Strategy for sustainable and smart mobility**

On 9 December, the European Commission published a comprehensive '[Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy](#)' together with an action plan of 82 legislative and non-legislative initiatives that will be taken over the next four years. The strategy outlines the plan for the EU transport system to achieve its green and digital transition.

### **Brexit update**

Despite months of intense negotiations, the political differences between the EU and UK on issues such as level playing field provisions, governance and fishery, could still not be overcome.

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### **Call for sponsorship of the UEIL Newsletters**

Dear Members and Partners of UEIL,

We would like to put out a call for interest for any members who are interested in sponsoring the 2021 editions of the UEIL newsletter.

As you know, this is our association's showcase publication and therefore represents an excellent opportunity for regular exposure and profiling your organisation.

Sponsorship of the newsletter includes your logo featured prominently on the newsletter, with a hyperlink taking the reader to your organisation's homepage.

If you'd like to find out more about this opportunity, please do let us know by sending an email to [secretariat@ueil.org](mailto:secretariat@ueil.org)

Thank you and best regards,  
UEIL Secretariat

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