Secretary-General
EUROPEN

The European Organisation for
Packaging and the Environment
Brussels

europen
SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR PACKAGING

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About EUROPEN

EUROPEN - the European Organisation for Packaging and the Environment - is the leading European cross-sectoral industry association dedicated to packaging and the environment.

Based in Brussels, EUROPEN brings together companies and organisations from across the packaging value chain, including producers of packaging materials, converters, brand owners and national packaging organisations, covering all major packaging materials.

EUROPEN's purpose is to help shape a European policy and regulatory environment that enables packaging to perform its essential functions while supporting Europe's transition towards a circular, resource-efficient and competitive economy.

EUROPEN advocates for coherent, proportionate and workable European policies, a well-functioning Single Market for packaging and packaged goods, and an approach to packaging policy that considers environmental performance, product protection, innovation, competitiveness and resource efficiency across the full value chain.

EUROPEN is an international non-profit organisation (aisbl) registered under Belgian law and headquartered in Brussels.



What You'll Do

EUROPEN is seeking an outstanding Secretary-General to lead the organisation through the next phase of its development.

Reporting to the Board of Directors and working closely with its Chair, the Secretary-General has overall responsibility for the strategy, leadership, external representation and day-to-day management of EUROPEN.

The Secretary-General will be the principal external representative of EUROPEN towards the EU institutions and a broad range of political, business and societal stakeholders. At the same time, he or she will lead the Secretariat, ensure strong engagement and alignment among EUROPEN's diverse membership, and translate the organisation's strategic priorities into effective advocacy and tangible results.

This is therefore both an external leadership role and an association CEO role.

The successful candidate will combine political judgement and EU public affairs expertise with leadership, strategic thinking, strong business understanding and the ability to build consensus across a diverse membership spanning different sectors, materials and positions within the packaging value chain.

EUROPEN is entering an important new phase. European packaging policy is moving increasingly from major framework legislation towards implementation, secondary legislation and enforcement, while new initiatives relating to circularity, competitiveness, the Single Market, resource efficiency and sustainability will continue to emerge. The Secretary-General will be expected both to protect and strengthen EUROPEN's position as a leading authority on European packaging policy and to anticipate the next generation of issues affecting its members.







What You'll Do

Your responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership

The Secretary-General will:

- Work with the Board and membership to define and continuously develop EUROPEN's strategic direction and priorities.
- Translate EU and wider political, economic and societal developments into clear implications and strategic choices for the organisation and its members.
- Anticipate emerging policy and regulatory issues rather than focusing solely on the management of existing files.
- Ensure that EUROPEN concentrates its resources on issues and opportunities where it can make a distinctive and material difference.
- Position packaging policy within the broader European debates around competitiveness, the Single Market, circularity, industrial policy, innovation, resource security and sustainability.
- Regularly advise the Board on political developments, strategic risks and opportunities.

2. EU Public Affairs and Advocacy

The Secretary-General will act as EUROPEN's senior political representative and lead its advocacy towards:

- the European Commission;
- the European Parliament;
- Member State governments and Permanent Representations;
- the Council and its relevant structures;
- other EU institutions and advisory bodies;
- relevant industry organisations and value-chain partners;
- NGOs, think tanks, academics and other civil-society stakeholders.

The Secretary-General will:

- Develop effective advocacy strategies around EUROPEN's priority issues.
- Maintain and expand a strong senior-level network within the Brussels policy community.
- Ensure that EUROPEN is viewed by policymakers as credible, constructive, technically authoritative and solution oriented.
- Identify opportunities to build broader coalitions around EUROPEN's objectives.
- Represent EUROPEN at senior-level meetings, conferences, hearings, roundtables and other external engagements.

What You'll Do

3. Policy Leadership

Together with the EUROPEN policy team and membership, the Secretary-General will ensure high-quality policy development and advocacy in areas including:

- implementation and further development of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation;
- circular economy policy;
- Extended Producer Responsibility;
- recyclability and recycling;
- reuse and waste prevention;
- recycled content and secondary raw-material markets;
- packaging design and innovation;
- environmental and sustainability policy affecting packaging;
- Single Market and regulatory harmonization;
- implementation and enforcement at Member State level; and
- emerging EU initiatives affecting packaging and packaged goods.

The Secretary-General is not expected personally to be the technical expert on every aspect of packaging policy. However, they must be able to understand complex regulatory and technical issues rapidly, identify their strategic and business implications and translate them into compelling policy propositions.

4. Member Leadership and Consensus Building

EUROPEN's breadth is one of its principal strengths. Its membership also inevitably encompasses different commercial interests, packaging materials and positions within the value chain.

A central responsibility of the Secretary-General will therefore be to:

- maintain the confidence and active engagement of EUROPEN's members;
- understand members' different business realities and strategic priorities;
- identify areas of common interest across the packaging value chain;
- facilitate constructive discussion where interests differ;
- build consensus around clear and credible EUROPEN positions;
- ensure transparent and effective communication between the Secretariat, Board and wider membership;
- engage appropriately with senior executives of member companies; and
- ensure that members perceive clear strategic value from their participation in EUROPEN.
- The ability to find common ground without reducing positions to the lowest common denominator will be particularly important.

What You'll Do

5. External Profile and Communications

The Secretary-General will be the principal public face of EUROPEN.

The Secretary-General will:

- Articulate a strong and forward-looking narrative for EUROPEN and the European packaging value chain;
- act as spokesperson with policymakers, media and other external audiences;
- communicate complex issues clearly and persuasively;
- help shape EUROPEN's external positioning and communications strategy;
- ensure consistency between technical policy expertise, political advocacy and public communications; and
- strengthen EUROPEN's visibility, reputation and thought leadership.

6. Leadership of the Secretariat

The Secretary-General has overall responsibility for the EUROPEN Secretariat and will:

- provide clear leadership, direction and priorities to the team;
- create a high-performing, collaborative and supportive working environment;
- empower staff and support their professional development;
- ensure effective allocation of resources and responsibilities;
- attract and retain strong talent;
- encourage initiative while maintaining clear accountability; and
- ensure that EUROPEN's culture reflects professionalism, trust, openness and high standards.
- The role requires a leader who is comfortable both setting strategic direction and managing a relatively small organisation in which hands-on involvement will at times be necessary.

7. Governance and Association Management

Working closely with the Chair and Board of Directors, the Secretary-General will:

- ensure high-quality preparation and follow-up of Board and General Assembly meetings;
- implement decisions of the Board;
- provide the Board with timely and candid strategic advice;
- manage EUROPEN's annual planning and priority-setting processes;
- oversee the organisation's budget and financial management;
- ensure compliance with relevant Belgian legal and governance requirements;
- oversee contracts, external advisers and service providers where appropriate; and
- ensure effective administration of the association.

8. Membership and Organizational Development

The Secretary-General will ensure the continued strength and relevance of EUROPEN by:

- maintaining strong relationships with existing members;
- understanding and responding to evolving member expectations;
- identifying opportunities to broaden or strengthen the membership where strategically appropriate;
- developing EUROPEN's services, activities and external partnerships;
- safeguarding the long-term financial health of the organisation; and
- continuously assessing how EUROPEN can increase its relevance and impact.

Candidate Profile

EUROPEN is looking for a senior leader with significant experience operating at the intersection of business, politics and European public policy.

Essential Experience and Capabilities

Candidates should demonstrate:

- substantial senior-level experience in European public affairs, government affairs, industry representation, EU policymaking or a closely related environment;
- an excellent understanding of EU institutions, legislative processes and Brussels political dynamics;
- a demonstrable track record of developing and executing successful advocacy strategies;
- experience engaging credibly with senior policymakers and business leaders;
- strong strategic judgement and the ability to distinguish political priorities from technical detail;
- demonstrated leadership and people-management capability;
- experience managing complex stakeholder environments and building consensus between parties with different interests;
- strong business understanding and the ability to relate regulatory developments to their commercial and operational implications;
- excellent communication, presentation and public-speaking skills;
- the ability to operate effectively in a multinational and multicultural environment; and
- excellent command of English.



What You'll Do

Highly Desirable

Experience in one or more of the following would be advantageous:

- European sustainability, environmental or circular-economy policy;
- packaging or packaging-related regulation;
- FMCG, consumer goods, materials, manufacturing or the packaging value chain;
- leadership of a European trade or industry association;
- a senior corporate public affairs or sustainability role;
- management of a membership-based organisation;
- direct people and budget responsibility; and
- development of coalitions involving multiple sectors of industry.

Prior packaging experience is valuable but should not necessarily be considered a prerequisite. EUROPEN is seeking above all an outstanding association leader and advocate capable of rapidly mastering the substance and leading a highly knowledgeable Secretariat and membership.

Personal Leadership Profile

The successful candidate is likely to be:

Strategic – able to see beyond individual legislative files and position EUROPEN within broader European political and economic developments.

Politically astute – with excellent judgement of institutions, stakeholders, timing and the art of what is achievable.

Business-minded – able to understand what regulation means in practice for companies operating across different parts of the packaging value chain.

Diplomatic but decisive – capable of reconciling different member interests while providing leadership and direction.

Credible and authoritative – comfortable representing EUROPEN at the highest levels of the EU institutions and member companies.

Collaborative – able to build coalitions both within the membership and externally.

An excellent communicator – able to simplify complex issues without oversimplifying them.

A strong people leader – able to motivate, develop and retain a talented Secretariat.

Entrepreneurial and hands-on – comfortable leading a relatively small organisation with significant ambitions and influence.

High-integrity – capable of maintaining the trust of the Board, members, staff and external stakeholders.

Location

The position is based in Brussels and requires a strong and regular presence in the Brussels EU policy community.

Travel within Europe will be required.

Reporting

The Secretary-General is appointed by and reports to the EUROPEN Board of Directors, working particularly closely with the Chair of the Board. The Secretary-General has overall responsibility for the EUROPEN Secretariat.

Remuneration

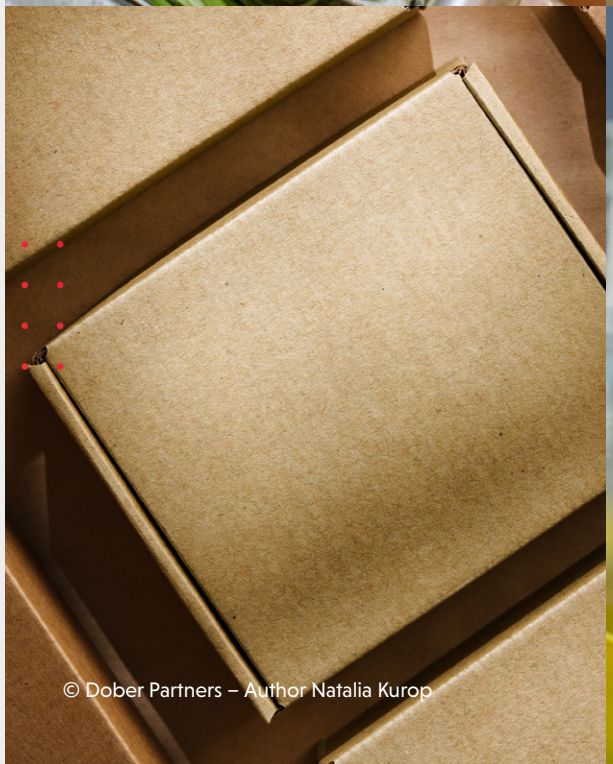
EUROPEN offers a competitive executive remuneration package commensurate with the seniority and responsibilities of the role.

Details will be discussed with shortlisted candidates.

Recruitment Process







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Dober Partners has been retained to draw up a shortlist of prospective candidates against the criteria set out in this document and, using their discretion and expertise, to help recruit the new SecretaryGeneral together with EUROPEN.
A first interview with Dober Partners will explore strategic and political judgement, motivation and fit, and subsequent interviews with EUROPEN's leadership will go into more depth on the areas needing further investigation.
All applications and approaches are treated in strict confidence. EUROPEN will use personal data only for the purposes of this recruitment, in line with its data privacy policy.

To apply, please send a motivation letter and a copy of your CV to:

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