

## UEAPME Transport Forum

UEAPME Transport Forum is a co-operation platform set up by UEAPME (The European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) and bringing together representatives of European branch confederations, SMEs from road transport, manufacturing and repair of road vehicles. It aims to gather different stakeholders and develop joint positions on all road transport-related issues such as sustainable transport, organization of the supply chain, road safety and infrastructure efficiency.

## Manifesto for the European Elections

Road transport is part of the lifeblood of the European economy and single market. It delivers goods across Europe fast, efficiently, flexibly and cheaply. About 44% of goods transported in the EU go by road. Road transport is a vital economic sector in its own right, employing about 5 million people across the EU and generating close to 2% of its GDP. In order to achieve a sustainable future for our sector we must look beyond the short term. That is the purpose of our four point Manifesto about road freight transport in the EU based on the Europe 2020 strategy (COM (2010)2020) for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth which sets mutually reinforcing priorities for all sectors of the economy, including the road transport sector.

### Access to the market – Access to the profession

**We need to keep the cabotage provisions (3 operations on 7 days) as long as our sector will remain concerned at the tensions that occurred because of diverging social protection and wage levels in the road haulage market.** Indeed, given that the sector is far from having reached this level of social and fiscal harmonization and enforcement, the Transport Forum advocated against a total liberalization of the market. A short term liberalization of cabotage could have accentuated these problems, creating additional uncertainty for hauliers in their daily operations. The European Commission must issue a report on the state of the EU road haulage market and we shall examine it very closely. The Commission also investigates on how the conditions of establishment are implemented by Member States. Illegal employment is often associated with cabotage, although it often has little to do with these operations. We believe a more dedicated initiative must be proposed concerning the high mobility of our sector; the DG Employment works currently on the social security coverage of highly mobile workers within the issue, we give all our support to this initiative for the future.

### Infrastructure charging

**We have to ensure that the internalization of external costs must be applied to all users.** The Eurovignette directive 1999/62 sets up a number of rules to make sure that national road charging schemes do not distort competition on the internal market or discriminate between hauliers. The text has evolved then twice in 2006 and 2011 but remains an enormously complex piece of legislation which provides exemptions and exceptions leading to a patchwork of inconsistent arrangements across the EU. In 2013, the European Commission made an alarming state of play regarding the public spending on transport infrastructure throughout the EU as the percentage of GDP fell by 50% in 30 years; this becoming a serious problem in road quality and increasing the problem of congestion. Current legislation does not apply to cars and vans which are

responsible for some 80% of traffic jams, an amendment to the Eurovignette text would be necessary to change this situation. In a long term vision, the Eurovignette could take the name of “Eurotoll” and will become a legislation dedicated to distance-based charges. Nevertheless, the Transport Forum will remain vigilant that revenues should be earmarked for road transport infrastructures and that any new charging system does not lead to increase the current existing fiscal burden for road freight sector which already pays for other duties on vehicles, insurance, petrol...

Moreover, the Transport Forum attaches importance, as a matter of facilitating the free movement of goods, to an adequate and efficient implementation of a European Road Charging System that avoids the multiplication of on-board units and contracts (as underlined in the provisions of Directive 2004/52 on the interoperability of electronic charging systems).

We need to ensure that road freight transport operators can get a city access 7/7, parking facilities and needs for storage locations as well as multimodal interchanges. Urban transport is outside the EU’s legislative mandate and as it is this limits the possibilities for policy measures. However, at least as far as freight is concerned, it might in fact be worth considering the extent to which urban last mile transport is linked to and relevant for the free movement of goods within the internal market. The Transport Forum suggests that the European Commission explores the possibility of introducing a mandatory EU policy measures in this filed.

### Weights and dimensions

**We believe that the rules on weights and dimensions should allow road freight transport operators to improve efficiency and safety but providing too enough flexibility to innovate.** Then, rules on installation of weight sensors in lorries must be considered with care because of the lack of reliability of the device. Finally, on the review of rules on weights and dimensions, the Transport Forum considers that cross boarder transport by higher, heavier and longer trucks including EMS between Member States that already permit them in national transport must be allowed. Otherwise it is a bottleneck which constitutes a barrier to the free movement of goods across borders and that is not consistent with the aim of enhancing transport efficiency and sustainability through a co-modal approach.

### Professional training for drivers

**We need more common standards and mutual recognition regarding the training of professional drivers. The objective is not only to improve road safety but to enhance the quality of the profession with a tailor-made training approach.** Directive 2003/59 introduces compulsory initial and continuous training for professional drivers. The directive came into force in 2009 and the objective is not only to improve road safety but also the enhancement of the quality of the profession with a positive impact on the attractiveness of the profession. However, all now depends on the Member State’s implementation of the directive. A public consultation was launched in July 2013 to collect stakeholder’s views on the various aspects of the Directive and their impact. The Transport Forum replied to questionnaire and pointed out first that many difficulties are in the mutual recognition of the training undergone in another MS. Then, the Transport Forum asked for better common standards regarding training programs, teaching methods, class size, use of technology and requirements for becoming an instructor or an approved training center.

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