

ROAD TRANSPORT



Europe on the move

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The Directorate-General for Energy and Transport of the European Commission prepares and implements the European Union's policy in these two closely interwoven areas. The White Paper entitled 'European transport policy for 2010: time to decide' of 2001 specifies 60 practical measures to substantially improve the quality and efficiency of transport in Europe by 2010 and break the link between economic growth and transport growth. A major aim of the White Paper is to bring about a sustainable transport policy by improving the balance between various modes of transport.

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FOREWORD

The role of the European Union

One thing is clear: there can be no market without transport! This is why, when the foundations were laid for the 'common market', European competence in this field was enshrined in the very first Community treaties. Over the years, the Union's responsibilities in the road haulage sector — and also in public passenger transport by road — have been built up in successive stages. It was found that progress had to be made on specific points within national rules and regulations governing this sector. The aim has been to ensure common development and improvements.

As in all fields, the Union's role is not to replace the competences of the Member States but, **through subsidiarity**, to ensure that they are exercised in a convergent manner, removing contradictory distortions in the light of political and strategic objectives jointly worked out. There are two aims: first, to strive for optimum and uniform conditions to make the provision of services in this sector secure, efficient and of high quality in the interests of users, transport operators and suppliers of services; and, second, to seek to establish a European area, competitive and integrated, for the transport of goods and passengers by road. Since 1 May 2004, this movement towards integration encompasses, of course, the new Member States that have joined the Union.

However, the future of the road haulage sector can no longer be envisaged without a medium-term **global view** of the Union's transport policy as analysed in the White Paper published on the subject in 2001. With the environmental and energy challenges facing Europe today, the pursuit of a policy mainly focused on lorries — and cars — cannot be viable either for the community or for the sector itself, as sooner or later the whole system would grind to a halt.

Any strategy to enhance the efficiency of road transport must therefore be viewed in the context of restoring the balance between the various modes of transport: road transport, railways, internal waterways and maritime transport. Such an approach means that there is more at stake than the road transport sector alone, as it raises the problem of ensuring the best possible allocation of financial resources among all the transport infrastructures. This aspect is at the heart of the debate on road tolls and user charges.

This, in brief, is the background against which the regulatory considerations summed up in this brochure must be examined.



INTRODUCTION

Road: the lifeline of the European single market

Day and night, hundreds of thousands of lorries travel across Europe's main arteries. This mode of transport has two major and blatantly obvious advantages: its flexibility and its ability to carry goods and passengers door to door. This is the reason why European companies clearly prefer the road network to distribute their products throughout the Union.

From 1991 to 2001, the volume in terms of millions of tonne-kilometres of goods carried by road among the Fifteen rose by 3.5 % a year, i.e. a 38 % increase over the decade. Gaining three points, the road network accounts for 45 % of goods transported in the Union in 2001 — mainly to the detriment of the railways, whose 'modal' share diminished by the same proportion and accounted for only 8 % (compared with 20 % in 1970).

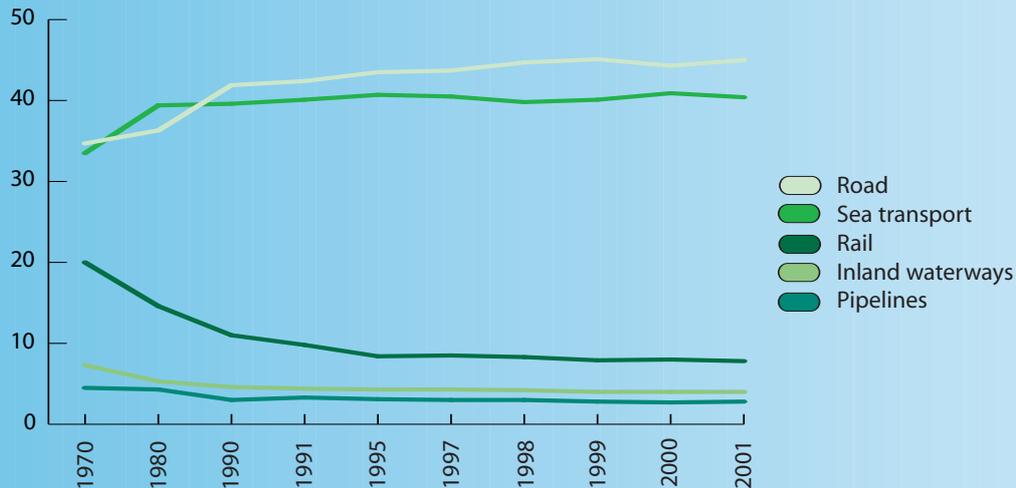
Boom in cross-border transport

The figures are even more significant if one differentiates between domestic goods transport within the Member States and the growth in intra-Community trade. In 2001, the latter, at Union level, represented over one fifth of the 1 400 million tonne-kilometres carried by road. Goods carried in this way across borders show an 18 % increase compared with 1998, i.e. an average growth twice that of 'domestic' road transport within each Member State.

These figures show the important role which the road network plays as a lifeline of the European single market. It is clear that the actual use made of this mode of transport for intra-Community trade varies from one country to another. In some small Member States — Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and to a lesser extent Denmark — the tonne-kilometres transported to the rest of the Union by nationally registered lorries substantially exceed the tonne-kilometres covered within their borders. The share of this cross-border traffic of lorries registered in the four biggest countries of the continent — Spain (40 %), France (25 %), Germany (23 %) and Italy (20 %) — though smaller, because of the size of their own markets, is nevertheless proportionally very significant.

From 1998 to 2001, cross-border freight transport by road rose by 18 % in relation to 1998, i.e. an average growth twice as high as that of 'domestic' goods transport by lorry in each Member State.



Freight transport: breakdown by mode of transport (EU-15) (%)

Source: EU energy and transport in figures: Statistical pocketbook 2003, European Commission.

A single road haulage market

Road transport is thus clearly an important factor underpinning the development of the European internal market. The more this market opens up and becomes unified, the more the sector benefits in terms of its own growth. The road freight market as such is also a pillar of this 'single market' in its own right. Through a long process, the basis for the sector's Europeanisation has been laid since 1998. Every operator in the sector has the right to settle and freely exercise his activities throughout the Union.

Formally opening up the road freight market to competition calls for major efforts towards harmonisation and simplification of many factors determining the balanced and effective economic development of the sector. The specific rules governing European road transport, in particular with regard to taxation and charges, tolls and levies for the use of infrastructure, are made up by distinct national legislations. This regulatory mosaic is composed of numerous elements with unequal costs, distorting competition. It prevents the optimum allocation of resources and hampers competitiveness in this area of economic activity.

The overall aim of the EU rules worked out in this sector has been to strive for clarity and open up the market in a balanced manner to the benefit of a large number of transport operators.

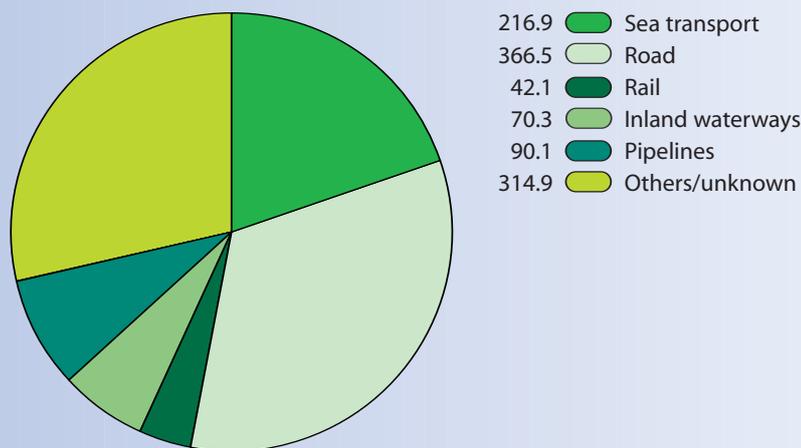
The basic aim of all EU rules in this sector is to clarify the situation and open up the market in a balanced manner under appropriate conditions of competition. A very large number of operators and suppliers of road freight services have benefited from this.

Common challenges

The road haulage sector is also the victim of its own success. Its steady growth — together, of course, with that of car traffic — contributes to the increasingly frequent saturation of the capacity of Europe's roads. The need to share infrastructure with other road users also raises the important question of road safety.

Another consequence of fundamental importance for the community is the impact on the environment, in particular in connection with greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. It is not that freight carried by road, using diesel, which is not the most polluting fuel, is the central element of this problem, but the ever-growing number of vehicles operating in European road transport, now over 20 million, is undeniably a contributing factor.

Intra-Community trade by mode of transport in 2002 (EU-15) (millions of tonnes)



Source: Eurostat.

In connection with the indispensable services which road haulage renders to the efficient operation of the European internal market, account must be taken of the environmental and energy challenges set out in the White Paper on transport policy.

The ecosystems of the alpine regions — where dense lorry traffic transiting between the south, east and north of the continent is necessarily concentrated on a limited number of routes (tunnels or passes) — are suffering critical environmental decline. Similarly, in urban areas with high population density, lorry traffic (overlapping with other traffic) causes serious noise and air pollution problems, in particular in the form of ozone peaks.

In the context of the indispensable services which freight transport by road renders to the efficient functioning of the European internal market, these various challenges provide a framework for evaluating its 'external costs' and thus its actual costs for the community.

Buses

The sector of passenger transport by road shares with the road haulage sector a number of identical rights and obligations: freedom of establishment, access to the market, compliance with conditions of competition, vehicle safety and safe driving. Consequently, many EU rules applying to lorries also concern buses and coaches.

The scope and economic implications pertaining to each of these markets are nevertheless quite different. Just over half a million passenger transport vehicles are registered in the Union. From 1991 to 2001 their activity, measured in millions of passenger-kilometres, rose by about 10 %. Their modal share is limited to approximately 9 % of overall passenger transport (including cars, railways and air traffic).

A significant percentage of these is made up of vehicles used for urban or inter-urban transport that are operated by transport companies under the supervision of the public authorities, which in practice does not exclude the operation of competing services (accessible to all transport operators in the Union). However, the commercial market concerns, above all, specific services (provided by companies for school and personnel transport) and occasional services, in particular in the tourism sector.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Opening up the market

The transport of goods and passengers is an essential constituent element of the European internal market.

Free access to the profession

Any freight or passenger transport operator originating from the Union has the right, if he meets certain conditions, to settle and supply services in every Member State on a par with the country's nationals. In view of the high level of responsibilities in this occupation — in terms of safety and of quality of commercial service rendered to others — these conditions require compliance with three criteria:

- **good repute**, in order to exclude transport operators who in the past have failed to comply with the rules in force;
- **financial capacity**, in order to guarantee the business viability of the haulier or the passenger transport operator;



- **professional competence**, in order to ensure a minimum common level of knowledge, examination conditions, checks, etc.; in agreement with the European Commission, Member States should harmonise the mutual recognition of professional competence certificates, to ensure recognition of qualifications, and carry out a minimum number of checks.

Tonnage threshold

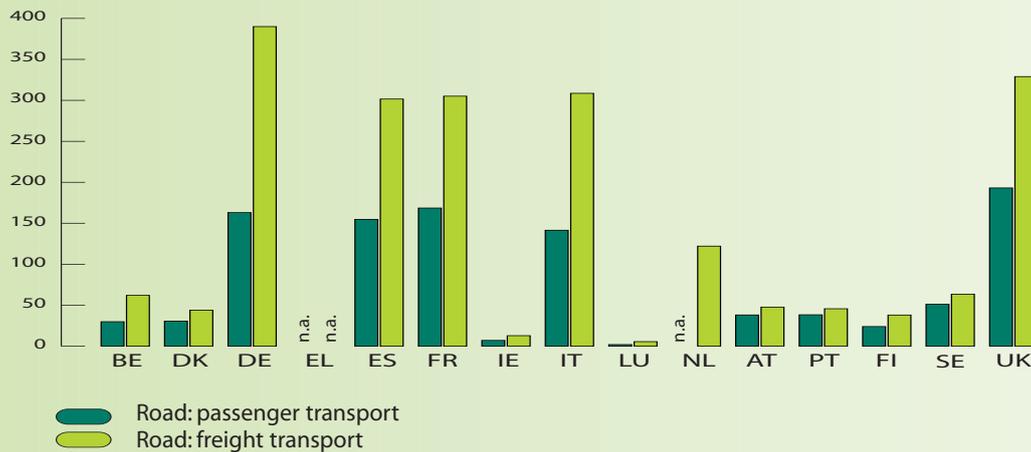
Since 1998, authorisation has been required for all vehicles exceeding the maximum permitted weight of 3.5 tonnes (compared with 6 tonnes previously).

Specific clause for hired vehicles

In order to optimise the allocation of their investment and ensure the necessary flexibility in the way freight transport operations are organised, cross-border hauliers may use hired vehicles registered in the Member State where they are established provided that these vehicles are driven by their own personnel.



Road transport: number of persons employed in 2000 (EU-15) (1 000 persons)



Source: Eurostat (jobs according to NACE classification), national statistics.
n.a.: data not available.

Freedom of movement

The right to freedom of movement in the transport of goods and passengers is fully established throughout the Union without any discrimination as to nationality or place of establishment. All an operator needs to benefit from this is to have a Community licence issued by his Member State; the licence can be renewed every five years.

This standard document, a certified copy of which must be kept in every vehicle, is proof of compliance with the national traffic requirements in his country in accordance with those laid down in EU directives and regulations, in particular those concerning access to the profession.

Driver attestation

This is required from every lorry driver originating from a non-member country and is to be kept in every EU lorry carrying out a cross-border haulage operation. It certifies that the driver is legally employed by the transport operator who owns the vehicle and meets all the professional conditions required by the Member State in which the operator is established (specifically requirements under social legislation, see page 7).

Buses and coaches

In a sector where safety is of crucial importance, the Union has codified and simplified the common administration procedures relating to various passenger transport scenarios: national authorisation for regular services, possession of a contract for specific regular services (school transport, personnel transport, etc.), holding a road map for occasional services and a certificate for own-account services.

Through the administrative authorisations introduced, cabotage (see opposite) also covers international passenger transport services.

Cabotage moves ahead

Since 1994, an important step forward has been the opening-up of the freight market through **road cabotage**. This measure has been implemented through a careful system of increasing annual quotas in the form of cabotage licences granted to companies in the Member States for each transport operation concerned.

Since 1998, the formula has been free of all restrictions. An EU transport operator recognised by a Member State may not only carry goods to or from any country of the Union but also within the borders of any of these countries. For instance, a German company has the right to offer its services for operations between Paris and Lyon or Rome and Milan provided that these operations are not performed on a regular basis.

For the new Member States, however, the application of the right of cabotage is still subject to transitional periods, except for Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta ⁽¹⁾.

In the road transport sector, this liberalisation has led to concern about adverse effects in terms of a worsening of social conditions and the rules governing safety and the environment. Under the annually increased quota system, cabotage has not seriously disrupted national markets (licences have remained underused).

The economic interest of this formula has been perceived in particular by the most serious and reliable companies, guaranteeing quality of service and compliance with market regulations.

(1) Transitional period between three and five years for Poland and Hungary and between two and five years for the other countries.

SAFETY AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

The job of driver — a highly responsible occupation

As vital arteries, roads increasingly present a huge safety challenge because of the constant growth in traffic. In the European Union, road accidents in 2001 led to nearly 40 000 deaths and 1.7 million injured. To remedy this unacceptable situation, improving safety on the road has become one of the Union's priorities. Lorry drivers, who are among the key actors on the scene which is at the same time their place of work, are an essential occupational category likely to make a major contribution to reducing the number of accidents which concern them first and foremost.

A lorry driver's job is tough. The long distances they have to cover — in particular in international trucking — often requires long hours behind the wheel, raising important questions of safety. The long hours they have to work also affect their social life.

Taking account of these aspects, the Union has from 1969 progressively built up a set of rules and standards for control. In 2002, these were, once again, adapted in the light of research and recent technological developments.

Driving time, working hours and rest periods

While making allowances for the flexibility indispensable in an occupation which has to be pursued under uncertain circumstances, the European rules and regulations lay down the requirements to be complied with as regards the following:

- the employment status of drivers (mobile employees or self-employed persons);
- breaks (45 minutes, divisible into three periods, every four and a half hours);
- daily driving time (maximum 9 to 10 hours), weekly driving frequency (six periods) and total driving time per fortnight (90 hours);



- length and division of daily rest periods (minimum 11 hours) and weekly rest periods (45 consecutive hours, which may be reduced through compensation);
- average weekly number of working hours (48 hours with authorised peaks of 60 hours) and limited work at night (10 hours per 24-hour period).

Limit conditions

According to a study covering Austria, Germany, France and Italy, 23 % of lorry drivers admit that they had dozed off when working 40 to 50 hours a week and 45 % when this duration was between 50 and 60 hours. As many as 74 % admit to having dozed off more than six times over the previous year when driving during four consecutive nights. It is an established fact that most lorry accidents occur early in the morning.

Common standards require strict and harmonised checks

Every lorry, bus and coach must be fitted with a tachograph — the 'spy in the cab' — which records driving time and breaks (for rests, loading and unloading, and mechanical work). The first tachographs were purely **analogue**, with data printed out as graphs. The common standards they had to meet were first laid down in 1985.

However, legislation was adapted with the appearance, at the end of the 1990s, of **digital** tachographs, with hard discs which, with greater precision, could store far more data (time, distance covered, speed, driver identification). These sophisticated and more reliable devices will soon be compulsory in all new vehicles.

The Union has also laid down responsibilities for the harmonised application of checks to be carried out by the Member State to enforce social legislation and safety requirements. Each year, these verifications must cover at least 1 % of the number of days worked by drivers and be carried out by at least 15 % on the road and 25 % at company premises. As many evaluations have highlighted the inadequacy of the current level of checks, the European Commission proposed at the end of 2003:

- increasing the number of checks (raising the previous percentages to 3 %, 30 % and 50 % respectively) and enhancing their effectiveness;
- improving the exchange of information on violation between Member States;
- streamlining the system of fines;
- improving enforcement officer training.

Non-compliance with social legislation

Intensification of checks on the road shows that violation is frequent, affecting 50 % of overall driving time and rest periods.

Training: the occupation of driver

Driving a lorry or bus is not child's play. The weight and power of the vehicles require special skills and a thorough knowledge of vehicle response under sometimes extreme traffic conditions. The professional driver's responsibility not only includes his lorry but also the often dangerous nature of the freight he carries, knowledge about proper stowage and, in the case of coaches and buses, the lives of his passengers.

Is it sufficient to simply hold a basic driver's licence for heavy vehicles, even though acquired after proper training and a final test? It is clear that professional drivers need more continuous training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date so that they can properly cope with the ever-changing conditions in which they have to work. These changes concern, in particular, technological developments in vehicles and infrastructure, implementation of new legislation on working conditions and increased respect for the environment, coping in emergencies, etc.

All these aspects and common standards regarding initial qualification and continuous training are provided for in the Union's new directive adopted in September 2003.

Driving restrictions

During periods of busy traffic (weekends and start of the holiday season), the Member States take a wide variety of measures to limit lorry traffic, in particular for safety reasons. While it is the national authorities that are responsible for taking such decisions to ensure optimum management of national and local traffic flows, the fact that there are so many and that there is no harmonisation between them has a markedly negative impact on international traffic.

In order to attenuate this problem and ensure the proper functioning of the internal market, the European Commission has presented a proposal for a directive establishing a transparent system of harmonised rules applicable to transport restrictions on lorries on Europe's main arteries which are of strategic importance in the trans-European network.





TAXES AND CHARGES: TRANSPARENCY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

A mosaic to be simplified

Taxes on heavy vehicles, their fuel and charges for the use of road infrastructure make up a complex mosaic at Union level which sometimes causes distortions of competition and a lack of transparency in the allocation of costs incurred or arising in the sector.

For the past decade, the European Union has set itself the task of establishing a common — fair, simplified and competitive — framework for charges applied to road haulage. Implementation of a first overall directive adopted in 1993 had to be interrupted three years later because of a judgment of the European Court of Justice. New provisions were adopted in 1999 in the Eurovignette ⁽²⁾ directive, which contains provisions on annual vehicle tax and charges to be paid for the use of infrastructure (distance-based tolls or time-related user charges).

(2) This term in fact only refers to time-related user rights which concern only one type of charge levied for the use of infrastructure.

Vehicle tax and fuel tax (excise duty)

In order to avoid 'fiscal dumping' between Member States, their schemes of annual vehicle tax on lorries (over 12 tonnes) have been harmonised to fix minimum rates applicable throughout the Union.

Fuel constitutes an essential item of expenditure for road haulage companies (15 to 20 % of their operating costs). Rates of excise duty (reaching up to 60 % of the price of diesel) vary considerably from one country to another. So, since 1 January 2004, a minimum rate of EUR 302 per 1 000 litres is applicable in principle but considerable differences remain, entailing inequality of competition which is harmful to the sector.

In 2002, the Commission therefore proposed to set up a special tax scheme for fuel used for commercial purposes which could thus benefit from a tax rate different from that on diesel for private use. The Member States would increasingly approximate their tax rates to this tax on commercial diesel fuel on the basis of a central EU rate, eventually moving towards full harmonisation.

Eurovignette and tolls

The 1999 directive on charges for the use of infrastructure, still in force in 2004, contains two major stipulations.

- The charges can be levied only for motorways or multi-lane roads of similar quality and for crossing bridges, tunnels or passes.
- Distance-based tolls and time-based user rights may not overlap (except when crossing urban areas).

In this framework, six Member States (Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany ⁽³⁾, Denmark and Sweden) have reached agreement to introduce the Eurovignette system in the form of common user charges for the use of their motorways (per day, week, month or year and differentiated according to pollutant emission category) applicable to lorries over 12 tonnes.

However, this regulatory framework is due to change following decisions to be taken on the basis of new proposals presented by the Commission (see box).

(3) Since 2003, however, Germany has opted out of the system following its decision to introduce a toll linked to distance covered on its motorway network.



Towards more equitable charging

*The principle of fair pricing in the road sector, which began being implemented with the adoption of the **Eurovignette** directive, is an essential component of an overall long-term EU transport policy. It meets several requirements: better functioning of the internal market, taking account of real costs in view of the need for sustainable development, and fair competition among transport operators.*

The Union's regulatory approach is evolutionary and in July 2003 the Commission adopted a proposal to increase tolls in particularly sensitive zones. It thereby opened the debate on the use of revenue supplements thus levied in the transport sector, inviting the Member States to accept that this revenue should be allocated in a transparent manner to fund alternative transport infrastructure.

The proposed directive also seeks to improve the consistency of national toll and user charge systems and ensure their coherence. Without increasing the overall burden on the road sector, the primary aim is to bring charges for the use of infrastructure closer to real costs by taking account of the damage caused to it.

Including alternative routes

The Commission's proposal on tolls and user charges not only concerns the trans-European network of motorways and multi-lane roads but also all alternative roads which are in competition with them and constitute important components of road traffic.



THE SPECIFIC CASE OF TRANSIT AGREEMENTS

Crossing the Swiss Alps

The large number of lorries transiting to and from Italy and the Balkans ⁽⁴⁾, crossing the Swiss Alps through a very limited number of tunnels and passes, poses a very specific problem to the highly fragile Alpine ecosystem and places a heavy burden on the main traffic arteries of Switzerland. This is why Switzerland has traditionally imposed traffic restrictions on lorries (banning all lorries weighing over 28 tonnes).

Following the conclusion of the overland transport agreement (including road and rail), which the Union signed with Switzerland in 1999, the Swiss Confederation has reviewed its policy on authorising lorry transport in order to gradually bring its rules in line with EU standards on the maximum weight of lorries admitted on its territory.

Since 2001, Switzerland accepts loads of up to 34 tonnes (on a basis of reciprocity with the Union) and increasing quotas (400 000 authorisations in 2004). From 2004, loads of up to 40 tonnes are allowed and no quotas will apply from 2005.

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra 		Kontingent / Genehmigung Contingent / Autorisation Contingenti / Autorizzazione Quota / Authorization EUR-N°: A/2003 143301		Lunghezza totale Statura per Motoscafo da trasporto
Validità, prescrizioni generali ed indicazioni Validité, prescriptions générales et indications Validità, prescrizioni generali e indicazioni Validaty, general regulations and instructions		No. of Origin (only when given with an Authorization) N° de l'origine (seulement avec l'autorisation) N° de l'origine (solo con l'autorizzazione) N° de l'origine (solo con l'autorizzazione) Only valid in the original form, unless otherwise authorised		Vehicle Type Tractor Trailer
Ad der Autorisation Quota de l'autorisation Quota di autorizzazione Type of transport		Overweight (max. 40 t) Sovrappeso (mass. 40 t)		Surcharge (max. 40 t) Overweight (max. 40 metric t)
Fahrzeugart Categorie de véhicule Categorie di veicolo Type of vehicle		<input type="checkbox"/> Autovehicolo Type: autocar Autobus Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Autovehicolo Type: autocar Autobus Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Fuori Autovehicolo Type: altro veicolo Fuori Autovehicolo Type: altro veicolo
Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire		Landeskennung Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire		Landeskennung Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire Indirizzo del destinatario / Destinataire
Vogelschutzgebiet / Starača prijava / Elencato postale / Intended itinerary				

Charges

The general opening-up of Swiss territory to transit traffic is, by way of compensation, combined with a progressive adjustment of the average charges payable for vehicles of less than 40 tonnes. The weighted level (linked to load carried and anti-pollutant properties of the engine) can go up to CHF 325 from 2005.

⁽⁴⁾ The same problem exists in relation to Austria, which between 1991 and the end of 2003 benefited from a special 'ecopoints' system limiting transit traffic.



Interbus: a Europe open to its neighbouring citizens

The Interbus agreement is a key instrument for liberalising the important passenger road transport market between the Union and the countries of central and eastern Europe. Repealing all earlier authorisation schemes for occasional services in the EU and the territory of the contracting States, it was signed in 2001 by 13 countries, including a number of new Member States which are no longer affected since 1 May 2004, as Interbus applies only to countries that are not members of the European Union. Accordingly, the agreement applies to Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and Turkey have still not ratified it.

Transit to and from Greece

As Greece lacks a common land border with other members of the Union, it recently concluded reciprocal transit agreements on freight carried by road to and from Greece with three east European countries: Bulgaria, Hungary⁽⁵⁾ and Romania. Authorisations granted to the Union for transit through Bulgaria and Romania are redistributed to the 25 Member States, with Greece receiving the lion's share. In exchange, Bulgaria and Romania receive freight authorisations for return journeys throughout the territory of the (enlarged) Union.

Interbus

The agreement also comprises social, fiscal and technical measures based on non-discrimination among the various contracting parties. It governs not only traffic between the EU and non-member countries but also among the non-member countries themselves. As such, it is a major step towards harmonising, within the Europe of 25 and beyond, the rules and procedures which transport operators have to comply with.

(5) For Hungary, the agreement ended when it joined the Union on 1 May 2004.



Main legal references

Basic principles

Admission to the occupation

- Directive 96/26/EC (OJ L 124, 23.5.1996, pp. 1–10), as amended by Directive 98/76/EC (OJ L 277, 14.10.1998, pp. 17–25)

Road haulage

- Community authorisation: Regulation (EEC) No 881/92 (OJ L 95, 9.4.1992, pp. 1–7)
- Cabotage: Regulation (EEC) No 3118/93 (OJ L 279, 12.11.1993, pp. 1–16)
- Driver attestation: Regulation (EC) 484/2002 amending Regulations (EEC) No 881/92 and (EEC) No 3118/93 (OJ L 76, 19.3.2002, pp. 1–6)
- Hired vehicles: Directive 84/647/EEC (OJ L 335, 22.12.1984, pp. 72–73), as amended by Directive 90/398/EEC (OJ L 202, 31.7.1990, p. 46)

Passenger transport

- Community authorisation: Regulation (EEC) No 684/92 (OJ L 74, 20.3.1992, pp. 1–9), as amended by Regulation (EC) No 11/98 (OJ L 4, 8.1.1998, pp. 1–9)
- Cabotage: Regulation (EC) No 12/98 (OJ L 4, 8.1.1998, pp. 10–14)

Safety and social aspects

Driving time, working hours and rest periods

- Regulation (EEC) No 543/69 (OJ L 77, 29.3.1969, pp. 49–60), amended by Regulation (EEC) No 3820/85 (OJ L 370, 31.12.1985, pp. 1–7) and Commission proposal COM(2003) 490 final of 11 August 2003
- Directive 2002/15/EC (OJ L 80, 23.3.2002, pp. 35–39)

Standards and checks

- Analogue tachograph: Regulation (EEC) No 3821/85 (OJ L 370, 31.12.1985, pp. 8–21)
- Digital tachograph: Regulation (EC) No 2135/98 (OJ L 274, 9.10.1998, pp. 1–21) and Regulation (EC) No 1360/2002 (OJ L 207, 5.8.2002, pp. 1–252)
- Checks: Directive 88/599/EC (OJ L 325, 29.11.1988, pp. 55–57) and Commission proposal COM(2003) 628 final of 21 October 2003
- Driver training: Directive 2003/59/EC (OJ L 226, 10.9.2003, pp. 4–17)

Taxes and charges

Excise duty

- Excise duty on fuel: Directive 2003/96/EC (OJ L 283, 31.10.2003, pp. 51–70)
- Tax on energy products: Directive 2003/96/EC (OJ L 283, 31.10.2003, pp. 51–70)
- Excise duty on commercial diesel fuel: Commission proposal COM(2002) 410 final (OJ C 291 E, 26.11.2002, pp. 221–242)

Eurovignette and tolls

- Directive 99/62/EC (OJ L 187, 20.7.1999, pp. 42–50)
- Commission proposal: COM(2003) 448 final of 23 July 2003

Agreements with non-member countries

EC/Swiss Confederation agreement

- Agreement on the carriage of goods and passengers by rail and road (OJ L114, 30.4.2002, pp. 91–131)

Interbus agreement

- Council Decision 2002/917/EC (OJ L 321, 26.11.2002, pp. 11–12)

Transit agreements

- Bulgaria: Council Decision 2001/265/EC (OJ L 108, 18.4.2001, pp. 4–5)
- Romania: Council Decision 2002/409/EC (OJ L 142, 31.5.2002, p. 74)

Road transport enjoys two definite major advantages: its flexibility and its capacity for carrying goods door to door. It plays a direct role in developing the European internal market and the more this market opens up and becomes unified the more the road transport sector benefits from this development by opening up and unifying at the same time. Hence, there is a need for efforts towards harmonising the rules and regulations.

Moreover, road transport also has to meet challenges connected with its success: network safety and saturation, impact on the environment.

The future of road haulage should therefore be viewed in the framework of an overall medium-term vision of the Union's transport policy as analysed in the White Paper published on the subject in 2001.

For more information

Permanent information on transport policy

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/>

Road haulage (in English, partly also in French)

http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/road/index_en.htm

Consultation of legal texts (Europa EUR-Lex site)

<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>

European Conference of Ministers of Transport of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

In English:

<http://www1.oecd.org/cem/index.htm>

In French:

<http://www1.oecd.org/cem/indexfr.htm>

