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Brussels News

PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT ON HDV CO2 EMISSION STANDARDS

CLECAT has welcomed the provisional political agreement reached by the European Parliament and the Council on 18 February on the Commission's [proposal for a Regulation on CO2 emission reduction targets for new heavy-duty vehicles \(HDVs\)](#). The proposal was issued as part of the 3rd Mobility Package in May 2018.

Under the agreement, new HDVs must emit on average 15% less CO2 between 2025 and 2029, compared to 2019 emission levels. From 2030 onwards, subject to a review in 2022, they will be required to emit on average 30% less CO2. These targets are binding, meaning that truck manufacturers, missing their emission reduction goals, will have to pay a financial penalty in the form of an excess emissions premium. As such, penalties of €4,250 for every gram of CO2 per ton-kilometre over the limit between 2025 and 2029 will be introduced, rising to €6,800 as of 2030.

In addition to the new targets, the co-legislators agreed to strengthen the incentive system for zero- and low-emission vehicles (ZLEVs). Up until 2025, truck manufacturers will be able to use the 'supercredits' mechanism, under which the sales of zero-emission trucks would be counted multiple times towards meeting the individual manufacturers' CO2 targets. However, the Parliament managed to get its way with a non-binding sales target that will replace the supercredits as of 2025. This means that those manufacturers, whose new truck sales include more than 2% of clean vehicles, will be rewarded with a less stringent CO2 emissions target. This strengthens the original proposal backed by the Commission and the Council, which pushed for keeping the supercredits system until 2030. Furthermore, the agreement includes a 2-tonne additional weight allowance for zero-emission trucks.

Eventually, specific measures, which will ensure the availability of robust and reliable data, have also been agreed by the co-legislators. Under the agreement, data will be obtained through on-board devices, which monitor the actual fuel and energy consumption of HDVs.

The text of the Regulation will still have to be formally approved by the Parliament and the Council. Once endorsed by both co-legislators, which is expected to happen by the end of May, the Regulation will be published in the Official Journal of the EU and will enter into force shortly.

Brexit

BREXIT & CUSTOMS UPDATE EU

On 18 February, the European Commission has prepared [a dedicated webpage with a list of practical tips and recommendations, a “Brexit Checklist for traders” and a “Brexit Customs guide for businesses”](#) to ensure that the private sector can be informed as good as possible to mitigate the negative effects of a possible no-deal Brexit on 29 March 2019. However, as the competency to provide simplifications and ensure the relevant practical preparations remains largely with Member States, the information published by the Commission is generic. At the same time, it is up to trade and its service providers themselves to analyse their own processes and based on that apply for the available simplifications. To support this process, the Commission has provided financial support to Member States to be prepared for example to increase staff or ensure capacity of the IT systems. Member States can support trade with these funds.

The Brexit preparedness websites from the Member States surrounding the UK can be found through the following links: [Belgium](#), [France](#), [Ireland](#) and [The Netherlands](#).

Next week, CLECAT will organise a Brexit Preparedness meeting to inform its Members about the various procedures of customs, other border authorities and the procedures in the main ports, terminals, hubs and corridors surrounding and in the UK. By doing so, CLECAT wants to provide its Members from across Europe with an overview of the various (local) preparedness measures which are taken to soften the blow of a possible no-deal Brexit on 29 March. During the meeting, organised at the World Customs Organization in Brussels, Members will exchange views and best practices. Presentations will be provided by CLECAT Members and the national customs administrations of Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

BREXIT & CUSTOMS UPDATE UK

Over the past two weeks, the UK has published or updated a large number of [no-deal preparation notices](#) and briefings about no-deal Brexit preparedness.

With the various publications of the UK, it has become clear that the UK is already diverting in several ways from the (customs) procedures companies in the EU have become accustomed with over the past 50 years of the EU Customs Union. In general, the measures should ease the effects of a possible no-deal Brexit for the UK, but it may also complicate as the procedures might not be fully compatible with those of the EU-27. Despite the large amount of notices for many aspects, more detailed information for practical application is not available yet. For customs and trade, the two most notable publications concern:



- **Transitional simplified procedures** - HMRC (UK Customs) has put in [place transitional simplified procedures](#) which should make it easier for companies to import goods from the EU using [roll on roll off locations](#) like Dover or the Channel Tunnel. The transitional procedure will be reviewed 3 to 6 months after they're introduced on 29 March 2019. Unfortunately, much remains unclear about these temporary procedures (and on this CLECAT has asked for clarification). There might also be substantial risks involved in these procedures. For example, relating to (non) closure of transit procedures, mis-classification or undervaluation.
- **Phased approach for Entry Summary Declarations** (Customs security declarations) – on Tuesday 19 February 2019, the UK Government announced [plans to phase in for EU imports the pre-arrival declarations](#) known as Entry Summary Declarations, if the UK leaves the EU without a deal. It was confirmed that from 29 March, the status quo will be temporarily maintained as it will not be needed to submit Entry Summary Declarations on imports for a period of six months.

The existing UK [customs procedures](#) and [simplifications](#) can continue to be used in the case of a no-deal Brexit.

In view of the large amount on notices issued by HMRC, CLECAT advises its Members to [subscribe to the UK government's websites](#) to receive updates by email to stay informed.

BASIC AIR CONNECTIVITY IN NO-DEAL BREXIT

On 19 February, a [provisional agreement](#) was reached between the Romanian Council Presidency and the European Parliament on measures to mitigate the severe disruption to air connectivity in a no-deal Brexit. It is important to note that the measures are exceptional in nature and strictly time-limited as they are not intended to replicate the status quo under EU law, but rather to preserve basic connectivity between the EU and the UK.

The provisional agreement enables UK-licensed carriers to provide basic air transport services between the UK and the EU-27. The rights will be conditional on equivalence and subject to conditions ensuring fair competition. Furthermore, it contains provisions on continuing scheduled flights and a framework for ensuring compliance with the necessary requirements of air carriers holding an operating license issued by an EU Member State, which would otherwise cease to comply with the EU ownership and control requirements due to Brexit.

The agreement will be submitted for approval by the Member States' ambassadors in the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) and needs to be formally adopted by both Parliament and the Council. The proposed Regulation would apply until an air transport agreement with the UK enters into force or until 30 March 2020, whichever comes first.

Road

NEW ITF REPORT ON HIGH CAPACITY ROAD TRANSPORT

On 19 February, the OECD/International Transport Forum (ITF) working group on High Capacity Transport met at the OECD headquarters in Paris to present the findings of its new report, entitled "High Capacity Transport: Towards Efficient, Safe and Sustainable Road Freight."



Aiming to address the anticipated growth in road freight traffic, the study explores the impact that the introduction of higher capacity vehicles (HCVs) would have on road freight transport. Furthermore, it investigates how appropriate regulation could be applied for relaxing the weight and dimension restrictions and allowing the use of these vehicles in specific geographical areas or on specific routes. It also examines approaches to implementing pilots and full-scale programmes to deploy HCVs, reviews potential impacts on road infrastructure and assesses consequences for other transport modes, industry and society.

The study found that HCVs can be designed to operate on existing roadways without any additional infrastructure investment to accommodate them. They can significantly improve the efficiency and safety of road transport operations and reduce transport costs and energy demand. Furthermore, HCVs contribute to decarbonising transport by lowering fuel consumption and emissions per unit of cargo transported and by reducing the number of trips required to move the same amount of freight. Another key finding is that advances in information and communication technologies (ICT) ease the introduction of HCVs by allowing better monitoring of vehicles and thus enforcement of conditions of access to the road network.

The study thus recommends using the potential of HCVs to increase transport efficiency, reduce transport volumes, lower emissions and achieve better safety outcomes. To introduce HCVs on a road network, well-monitored trials, coupled with an independent evaluation, should be used. Eventually, to ensure HCVs provide full societal value, they should be configured to provide maximum benefit for the region in which they will operate.

The report will be published shortly, with a possibility to access it [here](#). It will also be discussed at the High Capacity Transport workshop, organised by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) on 7 May in Brussels. CLECAT's Director General Nicolette van der Jagt, alongside the European Commission and the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure, will participate at the roundtable discussion on the high capacity vehicles as smarter mobility solutions for smarter policies.

Rail

RAIL FREIGHT FORWARD COALITION IN BRUSSELS

On 20 February, CLECAT attended the press conference of the Rail Freight Forward Coalition, a coalition of European rail freight operators aimed at reducing the negative impact of freight transport on the environment by increasing the modal share of rail freight to 30% by 2030. Currently, the share of rail in overall freight transport is 18%.

During the press conference, Belgian and European rail freight companies presented their commitment to a modal shift from road to rail, with the target of doubling rail freight volumes by 2030 to reduce the climate impact of the transport sector. More specifically, the action plan that was detailed by the Belgian Forum of Rail Freight Operators was explained. The plan highlights that an important preliminary step for rail freight operators is the continued focus on finding solutions to make the rail sector more competitive regarding frequency, reliability, flexibility, price and services. This implies the introduction of simplifications for running trains, making it easier for clients to put goods on trains, and making rail transport less expensive. Furthermore, a focus should be put on



systematically addressing the existing barriers, such as language requirements, (international) contingency management and train composition.

In their commitment each rail freight company will step up its efforts to offer competitive products that convince customers to choose rail for its quality, frequency, reliability, flexibility, price and service, they promised. At the same time, Rail Freight Forward calls upon policymakers and key stakeholders to work together in implementing the external conditions needed for a successful modal shift. For example, the development of a competitive rail offering goes hand in hand with that of a rail infrastructure which makes running a train through Europe as easy as running a truck. This requires a clear mandate for infrastructure managers to deploy a network that is easy to access, well-managed and reliable.

Secondly, national and EU authorities are called upon to provide a transparent and solid regulatory framework for infrastructure managers to realise this network. The coalition further asks that the authorities equalise taxes, administrative costs and infrastructure access charges for the different modes of transport, thereby levelling the playing field for trains and trucks. “Countries taking measures to provide a clear regulatory framework and fair competition, such as Austria (32%) and Switzerland (37%), clearly show a larger modal share of rail”, the coalition pointed out.



The event also involved the arrival of Noah’s train, the longest travelling work of art to promote the shift of road to rail, in Brussels. This container train departed in Katowice in December 2018 during the UN Climate Conference (COP24) and stopped in Vienna, Paris, Berlin and had its final stop in Brussels. While travelling through Europe, local street artists in each city spray-

Painted each two containers with animal motifs, to set a symbol for climate protection.

More information on the Rail Freight Forward Coalition and Noah’s Train is available [here](#).

Air

EVALUATION OF GROUNDHANDLING SERVICES

On 14 February, the European Commission published an evaluation and fitness check roadmap on groundhandling services at airports. The [roadmap](#) is open for feedback until 12 March 2019.

The evaluation, which covers the period from 2010 to 2018, shall assess whether the specific objectives of the Groundhandling Directive (improved quality and efficiency of services through market opening) have been achieved.



Considering the growing lack of capacity in the air and on the ground, the evaluation shall clarify whether the lack of capacity of groundhandling services themselves contributes to the lack of airport capacity or whether improved groundhandling services could contribute to unlock the capacity issues at congested airports.

The last attempt for revising the Groundhandling Directive through the 2011 proposal in the Airport Package was withdrawn by the European Commission in 2015 due to significant disagreement which made the adoption unlikely. Considering that there was primarily disagreement on social issues, the current evaluation will also assess these closely.

Sustainability

EC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP ON UVAR

Today, CLECAT participated in the third stakeholder workshop on Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UVAR). During the workshop, the various sub-working groups presented their input for the Commission's non-binding guidance document on UVARs. The document will be drafted with the support of the input from stakeholders and will subsequently be presented to the Expert Group on Urban Mobility (EGUM) for further action.

CLECAT is part of the working group which is responsible for the chapter on best practices for UVARs. Within the ambit of the work carried out in the group, the focus was put on the design and type of UVAR that is most effective to achieve the policy goal as well as on consultation procedures, information sharing and enforcement. In that regard, CLECAT collected and assessed information on existing and planned schemes, specifically focusing on common implementation and enforcement. A list of principles will be drafted which cities should consider when developing UVARs.

Customs and Trade

EXTENSION OF THE UCC TRANSITION PERIOD

CLECAT has recently been informed by the European Commission that an agreement has been reached over the extension of the UCC transitional period. As proposed by the Commission and supported by CLECAT, the transitional period will be extended until the end of 2025 for certain pan-EU systems and until the end of 2022 for certain national systems.

As Member States and businesses need on average two years to plan for each electronic system, the Commission has to provide legal certainty in time about the applicability of the transitional arrangements after 2020 up to 2025. On the basis of the feedback which DG TAXUD has received from Member States and trade, it became clear that achieving all projects by the end of 2020 was not feasible. Consequently, the deadline in the UCC will be extended. The trans-EU systems/processes which may be delayed until *31 December 2025* include the entry summary declaration (ICS), transit, goods taken out of the customs territory of the Union, centralised clearance, customs status of goods and guarantee for a potential or existing customs debt.



On 2 March 2018, the European Commission proposed an [amendment to article 278 of the UCC](#), which enables customs authorities and economic operators to continue using, until 2025 at the latest, already existing systems for the completion of certain customs formalities. While most of the new or upgraded electronic systems that are necessary to apply the provisions of the UCC will be operational by 2020, some electronic systems may not be fully completed until 2025. Therefore, the proposal ensures that, already existing electronic systems or paper-based procedures can continue to be used until the new systems are ready. CLECAT fully agreed with and supported this amendment, because it provides a more realistic planning and having good systems is always better than having hastily implemented, faulty systems. Unfortunately, the European Parliament initially thought otherwise and wanted the systems to be implemented as fast as possible.

On 23 January, after a series of discussions in the European Parliament, to which [CLECAT contributed](#), and trialogue meetings between the Commission, Parliament and the Council, a provisional agreement on a compromise text was reached between the Council and the European Parliament on the proposal for extension of the UCC transition period. The [provisional deal was endorsed by the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee \(Coreper\)](#) on 14 February. [The European Parliament is scheduled to vote in the plenary meeting](#) on the final text on 13 March. The European Commission expressed its expectations that the new deadlines will become formally applicable in April. Additionally, an extension of the transitional period to *31 December 2022* regarding the national electronic systems was agreed. However, the European Commission should report annually to the Council and to the European Parliament on the progress made and on the attainment of interim objectives within the planned schedule. The Member States, in turn, should provide the appropriate information to the Commission twice a year.

CLECAT regrets that, due to extended discussions in the European Parliament, uncertainty and unclarity increased further and another year was lost which could have been used for work on preparations for the IT systems. Nonetheless, CLECAT is very pleased with the eventual outcome of the discussions, as this provides the most realistic approach for both the private sector and national authorities. Especially considering other major developments such as Brexit, changes for eCommerce and a new VAT system.

ANALYSIS CONFIRMS ECONOMIC GAINS FROM ELIMINATING EU-US INDUSTRIAL TARIFFS

The European Commission recently submitted an economic analysis confirming that the EU and the US would benefit considerably from a targeted bilateral agreement eliminating the remaining tariffs on industrial goods. The economic analysis predicts that exports of industrial products could grow significantly if industrial duties on both sides of the Atlantic were eliminated. EU27 exports to the US could increase by 8% and US exports to the EU by 9% by 2033, which corresponds to respectively €27 billion and €26 billion in EU and US exports. The analysis also indicates that businesses of all sizes will largely benefit from lower costs in integrated supply chains, thereby also supporting their capacity to compete globally. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) would gain the most from easier and cost-effective conformity assessments.

The economic analysis will be published following a discussion in the Council and will later be complemented with a Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) conducted by independent experts.

Source: [European Commission](#)



General

GERMAN FREIGHT FORWARDING ASSOCIATION OPERATES UNDER NEW NAME



The German Freight Forwarding Association DSLV has changed its name into 'DSLVLV Bundesverband Spedition und Logistik e. V.'. Through this change, the association that was formerly known as 'Deutscher Speditions- und Logistikverband e. V. (DSLVLV)' intends to underline the federal association structure in which it operates as an umbrella- and central association.

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Forthcoming events

CLECAT MEETINGS

Brexit Preparedness meeting

26 February, Brussels, Belgium

Road Institute meeting

27 February, Brussels, Belgium

Maritime Institute meeting

11 April, Antwerp, Belgium

Air/Security Institute meeting

17 April, Schiphol Airport, The Netherlands

Board/General Assembly

26 June, Paris, France

OTHER EVENTS WITH CLECAT PARTICIPATION

EC High-Level Conference on the Future of Multimodal Transport

26 February, Brussels

IRU European Road Transport Conference

6 March, Brussels

ESC Maritime Day 2019

20 March, Rotterdam

SITL Conference – LEARN Workshop for Freight Forwarders and Shippers

26 March, Paris



Zolltag Spedlogswiss
28 March, Switzerland

FIATA HQ meeting
27-29 March, Zurich

ACEA Workshop on High Capacity Road Transport
7 May, Brussels

EP/COUNCIL MEETINGS

European Parliament TRAN Committee
4 March, Brussels
18 March, Brussels

European Parliament Plenary
11-14 March, Strasbourg

European Transport Council
4 March, Brussels
7 March, Brussels

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