



**UNION EUROPÉENNE DES TRANSPORTEURS ROUTIERS**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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*(begin press release)*

### **NEW WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORT: UETR WELCOMES THE ROADMAP BUT REMINDS THAT SMALL HAULERS DO NOT WANT TO GET LOST**

UETR welcomes the new White Paper on Transport and its goal of a competitive and sustainable transport sector, capable of addressing current and future challenges of global markets: anyway, the new strategy must not lose sight of SMEs, which make up 99% of businesses in the internal market and represent "the backbone of the real economy."

UETR fears that the measures that will be imposed on businesses will have a significant financial and operational impact on transport SMEs.

More in particular, UETR warns that the total costs of transport in terms of charging for infrastructure and externalities (the so-called internalisation) will undeniably go beyond the actual taxation levels and charges. The financial position of many enterprises has even deteriorated since the economic crisis of 2009 and – given very small to non-existing margins – allows no further financial effort. Without any adapted support transport companies will be hit very hard by the proposed strategy. Therefore UETR pleads the earmarking of the revenues of the charges for investments in additional infrastructure and innovation from which the road hauliers will benefit.

The reference in the White Paper to revenues for the funding of public transport and transport infrastructure does not include explicitly the private sector. This will be an issue absolutely to tackle in the future.

UETR hopes also that the internalization of all modes of transportation will be effectively implemented, and not only for trucks.

Decoupling transport from economic growth, moreover, has not been achieved and this must be taken into account for future policy.

*"We are under the impression that policymakers are trying to balance the lack of competition in the railway sector with a fast-and-boostered competition in road transport: we hope that is not the case, and remind that the goal of moving goods by other modes must have as its first condition the capacity to receive them"* said UETR President Francesco De Boca.

UETR is for the integration of markets of Western and Eastern parts of the European Union but draws attention to the fact that this must be seen as a two way channel: a change in the entrepreneurial culture of small carriers must be done not by a single party. In particular, as regards the opening of



cabotage "beyond the tone of the statements contained in the White Paper, in accordance with EU regulation n. 1072/2009 it is clearly subject to an analysis of the market, which includes an assessment of the effectiveness of controls and the evolution of conditions of employment in the sector, as well as an assessment as to whether harmonisation of the rules in the field of social and safety legislation has progressed" continues Del Boca.

UETR welcomes the harmonization of sanctions and controls for road safety and fair competition (UETR has co-signed just one week ago a Memorandum of Understanding at the European Parliament) and the revision of the rules on the digital tachograph which is essential to reconcile the legislation with the practical needs of transporters, "but a real Single European Transport Area will also have to rely on the harmonization of driving bans, a big worry for operators" added Del Boca.

UETR remarks that companies it represents are "on a human scale " par excellence. A social code for mobile road transport workers does not seem enough: UETR highlights that the phenomenon of the "false" self-employed drivers needs to be further addressed.

New technologies are strategic not only for environmental sustainability and road safety and security but also for competitiveness, therefore a market oriented approach will be fundamental for their deployment, as well as being simple and user friendly.

As for the urban distribution of goods, UETR note that in order to eliminate inefficiencies solutions will be needed not only for vehicles but also for city infrastructure and above all pointing to a policy of rewarding rather than prohibitions and restrictions.

We also remind the Commission that much of the congestion in the city is caused by companies doing transport on their own account with a much larger number of vehicles than on third account: in addition, as for forwarders, their profession is substantially not regulated.

UETR welcomes the emphasis on port facilities by the Commission, which is essential for intermodal freight transport and their effective connection with the road.

The reference to refuelling stations for alternative fuels goes in the right direction, "showing full understanding of the fact that alternative energies have not yet taken off not because of the unwillingness of road haulers but due to the lack of infrastructure" says Del Boca.

Finally, UETR welcomes the approach of the White Paper to the international dimension: in particular, extending EU market rules means harmonization of social rules and technical standards for neighbouring countries: it is a very critical issue, and UETR has some concerns about recent trends in some International fora that UE hopefully will discuss according to what is in the roadmap.

(end press release)

