



# Manifesto for the new EU term 2024-2029

European  
Road Hauliers  
Association



# FOREWORD

UETR aims to engage with the newly appointed EU policy-makers, members of the European Parliament, EU Commissioners, Commission officials, representatives of Member States and relevant stakeholders in a constructive dialogue on progressive priorities for road transport.

**Road transport is the lifeblood of the European economy, connecting cities, towns and regions, facilitating trade. It is everywhere: our food, our clothes, our medicines and our devices.**

Yet, they are also at the heart of some of our most pressing challenges: climate change, workforce, fair competition, compliance.

This manifesto represents a vision for the future of road transport in the EU—one that balances economic vitality with environmental and social sustainability, security and compliance.

As we chart a course toward a greener and more connected Europe, this document seeks to inspire policymakers, industry leaders and citizens alike to embrace change and work collaboratively on shared goals. It is a call to action to prioritize support the green transition for road transport SMEs, enhance compliance with EU social legislation and ensure that all EU citizens can benefit from fair, safe, reliable and efficient road haulage sector.

This manifesto is not just a plan - it is a commitment to a better future. Let it guide us as we strive to build a road transport system that not only meets the needs of today but also paves the way for generations to come.



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*President, UETR*



**Marco Digiola**  
*Secretary General, UETR*

# UETR's priorities and proposals for a Fair, Competitive and Sustainable road haulage sector in the EU

**Put SMEs at the centre of the EU agenda and help them grow their businesses - with fair prices and fair competition for a healthy and sustainable transport ecosystem.**

The market of goods transport by road is a market in which predominantly Micro Small and Medium Companies are active. Their vulnerability, as well as business model changes, must be considered in future actions from EU policy makers.

Ensuring a balanced business environment where both small and large companies can thrive is essential to fostering ongoing innovation, economic growth and the spirit of entrepreneurship.

Small companies are often characterized by agility close-knit organizational structures and personalized services to the market. However, they do not generally have extensive resources, networks and economies of scale. A lack of adequate support to SMEs implies the risk of the stifling of entrepreneurial spirit, and a move to mere execution of transport assignments.

The EU Road Haulage market sees today an unbalance between covering operational costs and maintaining profitability for SMEs. Ensuring fair prices in the transport sector is key. With hauliers being able to price their services in a manner that reflects the expenses incurred in providing safe and efficient operations and well paid drivers, allowing for reasonable profit margins.

The EU's added value lies in avoiding predatory pricing practices that undermine the sustainability of the industry or compromise service quality. Transparent pricing policies are crucial for building trust and ensuring fairness. This transparency in the supply chain will foster a mutually beneficial relationship between road hauliers and customers, contributing to a healthy and sustainable transport ecosystem.

## What we propose

- An effective and fully enforced legislation on payment delays.



- An EU road haulage market observatory to monitor and share transport prices level in all EU MS as a reference point per country, all supply/transport chain operators to take into account e. g. fuel costs, maintenance expenses, drivers wages, insurance, regulatory compliance and investment needs in green technology and vehicles.

# Prioritize workforce for fostering a sustainable and thriving transportation industry.

The road haulage sector plays a pivotal role in facilitating trade and commerce across borders. It is imperative to focus on EU strategies and policies that empower and support transport workforce.

Ensuring fair and favorable working conditions is paramount. This involves addressing issues such as driver fatigue, training and adequate rest areas. Implementing regulations and standards that safeguard the health, safety, and well-being of transport workers is essential for fostering a supportive and conducive environment.

Shortage of drivers is one of the main challenges the industry is facing. The European Union can build a resilient, sustainable and future-ready transportation industry that delivers economic prosperity, social equity and environmental stewardship for all stakeholders.

## What we propose

- Wide EU communication of the importance of the profession.
- Establishment of a European driver's day.
- Increasing the EU financial instruments like the CEF (Connecting Europe Facility) to contribute to enhancing the role of transport as an enabler of economic growth and job creation in an efficient and sustainable manner. This with reference e. g. to safe and secure parking areas and TEN T.
- Ban for drivers from taking part in loading and unloading operations, with limited exceptions.
- Strengthen the role of the European Labour Authority (ELA) to facilitate access for drivers and employers to information needed for compliance with social legislation and initiate concerted and joint inspections.
- Provide Vocational Education and Training (VET) and upskilling opportunities to equip workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to meet evolving industry demands. Emphasis should be placed on areas such as logistics, digital technologies, safety regulations and environmental sustainability practices.
- Foster technology and innovation to enhance efficiency and productivity in the road haulage sector. Embracing digital solutions such as route optimization software, telematics systems and smart logistics platforms can streamline operations, reduce costs and improve overall service quality.
- Fostering collaboration and dialogue between stakeholders, including industry associations, government agencies, employers and workers' representatives is key to addressing challenges and driving positive change in the road haulage sector.

# Successful Green Transition for SMEs.

The EU plays a crucial role in supporting SMEs in their green transition journey. As our fleets will be less competitive than those of largest companies, a successful green transition implies providing financial incentives and scrappage programs, tax deduction and breaks, and subsidies for investments in green technologies and infrastructure as well as developing supportive regulatory frameworks that encourage and enable sustainable practices.

## What we propose

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- SMEs having access to energy products at affordable and predictable prices.
  - The CEF budget to be significantly increased and its procedures simplified.
  - Completion of the Alternative Fuels infrastructure.
  - CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction legislation to allow technology neutrality and energy mix for decarbonization.
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# Make transport ecosystem effective, secure and balanced.

Creating an effective, secure and balanced transport ecosystem in the EU is paramount for fostering economic growth, enhancing mobility and ensuring of citizens. Achieving this goal requires a holistic approach that addresses various dimensions of the transport sector while balancing the needs of different stakeholders including road transport SMEs and promoting sustainability and resilience, and tackling cybersecurity, cross border threats, privacy of data, infrastructure and supply chain security.

## What we propose

- Leverage and generalize the weight limit for all trucks, including diesel, to be 44 tonnes between EU national borders.
- Adopt a balanced combined transport legislation based on cooperation and fair competition among modes of transport, with no measures to support one mode to one another's detriment when unduly justified.
- Safeguard land transport security through EU Financial support; collaboration among EU Member States, industry stakeholders, law enforcement agencies, experts; training programs, workshops, and initiatives to road hauliers and drivers when needed; a resilience Planning and Emergency Response with harmonized and compulsory measures to be put in place by all EU MS.

## Full legality and compliance in the Road Haulage Market.

The EU Mobility Package stands as a pivotal legal and operational framework for road transport.

By establishing common rules governing cabotage, posting of workers and road transport operations, the package aims to prevent unfair competition, improve working conditions and enhance social standards within the transport industry.

The MP cannot be questioned and it needs to be fully enforced and implemented.

## What we propose

- Implement the recommendations stemming from stakeholders dialogue like the SODIAL Project.
- Leverage and implement widely the developed guidance and training materials for harmonized enforcement of EU transport rules.