



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES TRANSPORTEURS ROUTIER

Brussels, 17 March 2020

Mrs. Adina Ioana Vălean
Commissioner for Transport
European Commission

Dear Commissioner,

As President of UETR the European association of Micro, Small and Medium-sized transport companies I would like to bring to your attention the work currently done with passion, courage and determination by thousands of haulers in the EU.

European citizens can be sure that, where and when it is necessary to deliver or distribute food, clothes, medicines, there will be a carrier willing to transport them to its final destination, facing any adversity because that is our duty and our obligation, our way to work and we have always been doing so.

The restrictive measures put in place in these difficult times are necessary to face the COVID 19 pandemic. At the same time, today more than ever it is of paramount importance to ensure that goods are available to EU citizens where and when they are needed – starting from hospitals, supermarkets, pharmacies. The flow must not be interrupted.

As haulers are working near their performance ceiling to meet the needs that society is demanding, we trust the EU Institutions will make every effort to provide them with all the means they need to guarantee their health at work and to keep working. Safety of drivers at loading and unloading locations, with access to protective equipment, must be ensured. A constant communication flow between authorities and sectoral associations is key. We need to avoid unilateral measures that cause blockages in transportation. Clarifications about the treatment to which the vehicle and cargo must be subjected are also needed, if the driver is placed in quarantine.

Several Member States have reintroduced checks at their internal borders within the Schengen area, and we understand the European Union is set to shut down all Schengen Area Borders. In some countries, special measures for those transport companies entering their territory have been put in place. Our drivers and entrepreneurs are facing enormous practical difficulties these days- despite their almost essential function.

On driving times and rest periods, various countries have notified the European Commission the activation of the measure at national level as per article 14 paragraph 2 of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006.

This will certainly allow operators to benefit from the minimum of flexibility requested by exceptional conditions. However, the time frame of the measure varies among Member States. In this regard, we would consider useful the introduction of a generalized exemption from Articles 6 to 9 of the



Regulation, in order to give certainty to carriers as to the time frame and the extension throughout the whole territory of the European Union.

We are proud of our role under the current crisis, but we cannot deal with uncertainty. In this regard, a generalized derogation from the application of provisions on driving times, breaks and rest periods with a single reference timeframe at the EU level, would be very useful.

Another concern for us is the renewal of Driver Qualification Card and Driver CPC. In various countries the Coronavirus outbreak is preventing drivers from taking periodic training courses for the renewal of Driver Qualification Card and from making the examinations. We understand some MS have extended the validity of certificates due to COVID 19. This is another positive measure but valid at the national level only. Even if these national measures would be adopted, they would have no application in other European countries. Again, we have an issue in terms of lack of level playing field at the EU level.

This is why, in light of the importance of transport activity in these days of crisis, we consider very helpful the adoption at the EU level of extraordinary and temporary measures that allow drivers who are unable to renew their certificate, to continue their activity at the international level until everything returns to normal.

Our truck drivers and entrepreneurs are men and women who love their job and who will continue to work despite the crisis. We are proud of the role we play and the support to people we can give, and we will do our best to continue to do so. However, our companies and drivers must be given the best possible chances to operate and continue to carry out transport services in the best possible way.

We believe in a coordinated and harmonized approach at the EU level as the best way forward to address the challenge of COVID 19. We count on your support in order to keep the mobility sector going on and ensure economic continuity at one of the most difficult moments for all of us.

Yours sincerely,



Julio Villaescusa
President

