

Frans Timmermans  
Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal  
European Commission  
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1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Adina Vălean  
Commissioner for Transport  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels  
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Brussels, 17 January 2023

**Subject: Joint industry letter on the revision of the Weights and Dimensions Directive (96/53/EC)**

Dear Executive Vice-President Timmermans,  
Dear Commissioner Vălean,

The undersigned associations jointly support the revision of the EU Weights and Dimensions Directive (“the Directive”) to address the market fragmentation across the EU which limits the further uptake of longer and heavier oversized and overweight vehicles, known as European Modular Systems (EMS) in international road freight transport.

Currently, the maximum length of lorries for cross-border use in the EU is limited to 16,5m for articulated vehicles and 18,75m for combination lorries and a weight limit up to 40t. However, Member States may allow heavier and longer dimensions on their territory and in cross-border transport when bilaterally agreed. The existing patchwork of national rules in place for heavy duty vehicles causes legal uncertainty and a lack of flexibility to the sector at a time of growing demand, rising driver shortages and increasing supply chain instability. It also restricts the opportunity to reduce emissions through the use of EMS vehicles in international road freight transport.

Therefore, the undersigned call for a revision of the Directive that:

- Raises the EU-wide maximum weight and length threshold of HDV to at least 44t while continuing to allow countries to go beyond these minimum criteria where they seek to do so;
- Allows EMS throughout the EU27;
- Harmonises technical criteria and procedures for all types of EMS and all types of road operations, including combined transport; and
- Ensures coherence with other EU initiatives to decarbonise road transport such as the revision of the CO2 standards for heavy-duty vehicles.

Use of heavier trucks allows for more efficient loading which helps to address Europe’s accelerating driver shortage crisis, reduce GHG emissions and other environmental impacts, and reduce congestion. Importantly, these benefits can be realised without compromising road safety or road wear, as demonstrated by the 2019 International Transport Forum/OECD [study](#) on high-capacity transport.

The undersigned stand ready to work with the European Commission and other policy makers to deliver a revision of the Directive that addresses the needs of businesses and citizens in an effective and sustainable way, while improving the functioning of the Single Market.

Yours sincerely,



The European Express Association (EEA) represents the interests of the express industry in Europe. The express industry provides door-to-door transport and delivery of next-day or time-definite shipments, throughout Europe and the world. The European express industry directly supports approximately 330,000 jobs and an estimated 1.1 million indirect jobs in the EU, while generating €24 billion in tax revenues for EU Member States' governments.

Annette Meijer  
Chair, European Express Association



CLECAT represents the interests of more than 19.000 companies employing in excess of 1.000.000 staff in logistics, freight forwarding and customs services. Multinational, medium and small freight forwarders and Customs agents are all within its membership, making the organisation the most representative of its kind.

Nicolette van der Jagt  
Director General, CLECAT



The European Shippers' Council is a non-profit European organisation representing cargo owners i.e. freight transport interests of around 100.000 companies throughout Europe, whether manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers (import and export, intercontinental). Collectively they are referred to as 'shippers' as neutral user of transport (all modes: air; road, rail, waterborne). ESC was established in 1963.

Godfried Smit  
Secretary General,  
European Shipper's Council



The European Transport Board (ETB) consists of decision makers from the most significant European transportation & logistics companies who, together, control over 300,000 units in road transport.

Rogier Laan  
Chair, European Transport Board