

Warsaw, 30th November 2021

**Ms Adina Vălean**  
Commissioner for Transport  
European Commission

**Mr Thierry Breton**  
Commissioner for Internal Market  
European Commission

**The risk of serious interruptions of supply chains in the Single Market due to divergent restrictions for professional drivers among Member States**

*Dear Commissioner,*

Transport and Logistics Poland (TLP) is a Polish employers' association, representing 70 leading road transport companies, active both on Polish and European market, hiring more than 40,000 employees in total. As a President of the TLP, I would like to draw your attention to new restrictions for professional drivers, which recently has been imposed by some of EU member states, mainly Germany, Italy and Austria.

In Germany, employees, owners and operators are only allowed into the workplace if they have been tested, recovered or vaccinated and if they do not currently show typical symptoms or signs of COVID-19 infection. The rules apply to professional truck drivers who arrive at factories or warehouses, where physical contact with other people cannot be excluded. However, what increasingly worries us is that there is no exception for short external contacts during loading/unloading activities, like eg. in Austria.

It goes without saying that Germany is the biggest road transport market in the EU. Every day hundreds of thousands truck drivers perform deliveries to/from Germany. There are also thousands of drivers from outside the EU among them. Very often they are vaccinated with other vaccines that are not officially recognised by the EU. Those drivers often have problems with their covid-19 certificates to be accepted at every loading/unloading place across the EU. Other thing is the fact that in some Member States entrepreneurs are not officially entitled to verify if their drivers are in possession of covid-19 certificates. National legislation simply do not allow them to even ask their employees about that, treating this issue as very sensitive data protection.

In Italy rules are similar, however, unfortunately they are formulated so imprecisely, that we do not have a clear answer, whether professional drivers performing international transport operations entering Italy only for the purpose of loading/unloading will have to present the digital covid passport.

In Austria, with akin restrictions put in place, there is an exception for professional drivers allowing a maximum of two physical contacts per day, which take place outdoors and do not last longer than 15 minutes each. Breaking those rules results in severe fines being imposed on drivers and hauliers at the same time.

In our opinion, restrictions mentioned above pose a serious threat for continuity of road transport cross-border operations, which may result in interruptions of supply chains in the Single Market. Furthermore, we are afraid that due to forthcoming Christmas time, bigger than usual demand for road transport services, in combination with new restrictions put in place by particular Member States, may cause an empty-shelf crisis in shops in all EU countries, similar to the most recent one in the United Kingdom. What is worth knowing, is that the EU is already short of 400,000 heavy goods vehicle drivers.

I would like to kindly ask you to address the issue of divergent rules for professional drivers among member states with no further delay, in order to preserve continuity of the EU supply chains and help the industry, which already suffered a lot from the pandemic. We firmly believe that the chaos caused by the patchwork of different regulations among the EU Member States can be avoided in the future. This is the reason why we strongly need the EU Transport Contingency Plan, which the Commission plans to announce in 2022. In our opinion, it should be an EU regulation, thereby a binding piece of legislation.

Therefore, we consider that abolishing requirements for tests, quarantine and any additional certificates, forms and documents for professional truck and bus drivers should be a crucial part of such Contingency Plan. We consider that all documentation for professional drivers required in pre-pandemic times is more than enough.

TLP is ready to cooperate on that issue and to provide all expertise, knowledge and data available.

I am looking forward to your reply,

*Yours sincerely,*

  
**Maciej Wroński**

President

Transport and Logistics Poland