



ADINA VĂLEAN
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Rue de la Loi, 200
B-1049 Brussels
adina.valean@ec.europa.eu

Brussels, 19.02.2021

To the Ministers of Transport of the Member States

Dear Ministers,

Mobility Package I was adopted by the Council and European Parliament on 15 July 2020. It brings major improvements both to the functioning of the road transport sector and the working conditions of drivers.

During the course of the negotiations of the Package, the Commission adopted a Declaration¹ concerning two elements of the Package that were not part of the Commission's proposals: the compulsory return of the vehicle to the Member State of establishment every 8 weeks and the application of cabotage quotas on road legs of international combined transport operations that do not cross a border on road².

The Commission regretted the adoption of these provisions as they run counter to the ambitions of the European Green Deal and the European Council's endorsement of the objective of achieving a climate-neutral EU by 2050. The concern was that the obligation of return of the truck would lead to inefficiencies in the transport system and an increase in unnecessary emissions and congestion; while introducing restrictions on international combined transport that do not apply to international road transport would diminish the competitiveness of intermodal freight operations.

These provisions have not been the subject of an impact assessment. The Commission therefore committed to proceed with a close assessment of their climate, environmental, and single market functioning impact. For this purpose, two studies were undertaken by independent consultants. These two studies have now been finalised and are attached together with their executive summary.

According to the study on the return of the truck to the Member State of establishment, the most likely scenario is that in the short term operators will not fundamentally change the way they conduct their operations and relocate. As a result, the obligation to return

¹ Declaration of 12 December 2020, OJEU 2020/C 252/01.

² Regulation (EU) 2020/1055 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2020 amending Regulations (EC) No 1071/2009, (EC) No 1072/2009 and (EU) No 1024/2012 with a view to adapting them to developments in the road transport sector (OJ L 249, 31.7.2020, p. 17.), Article 1, paragraph 3 and Article 2, paragraph 5(b).

every 8 weeks could in 2023 lead to up to 1.9 million new journeys representing an increase in vehicle kilometres of 2,528 million kilometres. These additional journeys would result in up to 2.9 million additional tonnes of CO₂ emissions: an increase of international road freight emissions by 4.6%. It would also lead to an increase of 619 tonnes of NO_x and 221 tonnes of PM_{2.5} emissions annually. The study also shows that the provision will have a negative impact on the functioning of the market and could lead to congestion at non-Schengen borders which could even more than double the current already high waiting time at some borders.

According to the study on combined transport operations, as a result of cabotage restrictions on combined transport road legs, 8% of rail-road combined transport operations would fully shift back to road-only transport, contrary to our stated modal shift objectives. In the combined transport sector, revenues would fall around 8% and jobs by 5%. 3% of combined transport operators and 1% of terminal operators may close of business. In total this means 346 million additional road vehicle kilometres and reduction of 13.7 million train-km. This would bring along additional 397 thousand tonnes of CO₂ emissions, 85 tonnes of NO_x and 30 tonnes of PM_{2.5} annually.

If one compares the sum of the additional CO₂ emissions from these two studies to the estimated total international road freight emissions within the EU, this amounts to more than 5%. While all estimates have certain limitations that I acknowledge, the studies clearly show that these provisions would result in significant additional CO₂ emissions. The impact of the two provisions as evidenced by the two studies therefore is clearly not compatible with the ambition of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy adopted on 9 December 2020³ to significantly reduce emissions in the transport sector and to make the transport system as a whole sustainable.

In its Declaration the Commission indicated that following the assessment of the impact of the two provisions, it will if necessary exercise its right to come forward with a targeted legislative proposal before the two provisions enter into force on 21 February 2022.

In the light of the results of these two studies, I now call on Member States and the European Parliament to reflect on the projected negative impacts of these two amendments and share with the Commission their views. I thank you for your support in this process and I look forward to our continued cooperation on these matters.

Yours faithfully,



На основание §1, т.1 от ДР на ЗЗЛД

Adina VĂLEAN

³ Communication from the Commission of 9 December 2020 to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Region, COM(2020) 789 final.