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EUROPEAN COMMISSION - EC
Mrs. Violeta BULC - COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT

Ref. request for urgent measures against German law introducing the ban on the regular weekly rest in the cabin and concrete actions to stop the escalation of protectionism in European road transport

Dear Mrs. Bulc,

The National Union of Road Hauliers from Romania – UNTRR is the professional and employers' association of Romanian road transport industry and we have assumed the mission to be its main representative in the dialogue with the relevant authorities for our field of activity. UNTRR has been established in 1990 and we have registered as members more than 14 000 Romanian companies performing national and international road transport of goods and passengers.

UNTRR is seriously concerned with the increasing protectionism of Germany, a founding Member State of the EU and also as an important commercial partner of Romania. Our association protests hereby against the recent German law prohibiting professional drivers to spend the regular weekly rest in the cabin of commercial transport vehicles, which entered into force this week. We have asked the German authorities to immediately withdraw this protectionist law, which is against the provisions of the EU rules and highly affects the activity of our members, Romanian road transport companies.

We are against such abusive national interpretations of European Regulation no. 561/2006 whose aim is, actually, the harmonization of certain social legislation relating to road transport. Considering that the European Commission is currently analyzing the similar divergent measures taken by France and Belgium with a view to propose an European common solution, it is unacceptable that in the meantime, Germany adopts the same protectionist measure, promoted with the single purpose to become a tool used against European competition in the field of transport. **This situation is also due to the lack of any concrete action from the European Commission against the similar laws applied by France and Belgium since 2014. Such national initiatives should be more strongly condemned by the European Commission and stopped by immediate measures and not through complex and lengthy procedures, as they are against the spirit of the European Union and its aim for a single transport market.**



The law recently enforced by Germany, following Belgium and France, is very restrictive, inadequate and definitely discriminatory as it is not applicable to the German resident transport operators, which obviously are not spending their weekly rest in the cabin of the vehicle, but at home.

This measure is clearly directed against foreign road hauliers and drivers performing international road transport, which is, by its nature, a highly mobile activity. Germany is asking foreign drivers to sleep at the hotel, although it is well known that in Germany and across the EU, there is an acute lack of secure parking facilities that could offer appropriate accommodation to foreign drivers while being safe for the drivers and their freight.

The measure to ban professional drivers spending the regular weekly rest in the cabin does not affect only road transport operators, but also their clients and the goods of billions of Euros transported every day in EU. In this respect, may we recall hereby the numerous attacks against Romanian and other Eastern European trucks in parking areas across Western EU during the last years.

Moreover, it is unacceptable to immediately apply such a measure, shortly after the adoption of the respective German law, without any proper information of our industry in advance, having allowed transport operators to prepare. Instead, our hauliers are facing increased uncertainty, being forced to reorganize the activities of their drivers overnight and to find urgent solutions to rather impossible problems like booking accommodation for drivers and safe parking for their vehicles during this weekend.

Romanian road transport industry is revolted and seriously concerned with these protectionist measures, which affect the fundamental values of the EU single market, such as the free movement of services and goods. In this moment of crossroads for the future of the EU, European countries are stronger if united and this can only be achieved by enforcing common, and not diverging EU rules in order to build a competitive Europe.

UNTRR calls on the European Commission to act more firmly and to undertake concrete measures against the new law adopted by Germany, as well as against all the other Member States' national interpretations of EU legislation in order to stop the escalation of protectionism in European road transport.

Yours faithfully,


Secretary General

Radu DINESCU