

Joint declaration of the associations of road transport operators of the Visegrad Group Countries

CESMAD BOHEMIA (Czech Republic), CESMAD Slovakia (Slovakia), MKFE (Hungary), ZMPD (Poland)

We, the leaders of the largest associations of road transport operators of the Visegrad Group Countries (V4) express our disagreement with the national measures that are derogatory to the fundamental values of the European Union namely free movement of goods, services that mean a burden on our industry. We are following with concern the efforts of some countries to change the common market and to implement protectionist measures. We are afraid that these measures and the possible countermeasures taken by single EU countries will lead to more and more fragmented internal market.

On behalf of the most prestigious associations of our countries, owning and using a total number of 172 500 vehicles of 9800 member companies, we see that the expanding practice of applying the posting of workers directives in the road transport sector aims to protect the markets of the old member states by reducing the competitiveness and artificially increasing the expenditures of the later accessed member states. The V4 have lost their markets in several sectors after the EU accession; however, they managed to increase their share in international road transport in a fair competition. As we see it, by unilaterally modifying the regulations the member states of the EU are trying to deprive transport companies of the V4 (and others), who play a significant role in the European transport market, of these results mentioned above.

We are ready to take part in a constructive dialogue to find common solutions with the players of the European road transport market, however such a dialogue cannot be conducted under pressure of fines or threats from our partners. The European Commission is going to propose legislative solutions for a harmonised road transport sector specific application of the posting soon. The coming EU decision making process will open wide room for the needed dialogue, which hopefully will provide a meaningful, clear and simple, non-discriminatory regulatory framework which would secure the effective functioning of the road transport market. However, it can last for years while the problems we are facing today will remain unsolved. We have no time to wait, our operators are required to comply with the different national provisions in the present.

We repeatedly call on the European Commission to finalize its decision making process in order to get a legal assessment of the situation created by the protectionist countries. We also demand that EC, as a protector of the community law, to bring immediately the issues resulted by the application of the posting provisions that lead to legal disputes and the infringement procedures related to Western European minimum wages to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

During normal international road transport activity, each national version of the application of posting creates huge financial and administrative burdens.

In Germany, France, and Austria, transport tasks are hindered by such a high level of unnecessary administrative burden, that they have become a technical obstacle to the principle of free movement of goods and services. All these burdens are unacceptable for us.

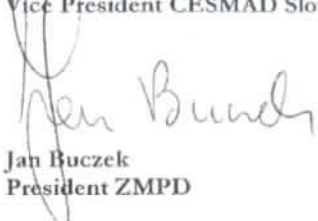
Therefore we strongly request the German, French and Austrian authorities to introduce an immediate moratorium on the application of their minimum wage/posting regulations regarding international road transport operations until a new EU-wide legislation on the social and internal market challenges in the international road transport comes into effect in the framework of the EC's 'road package'.

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