

6 April 2021

*Dear Commissioner,*

We would like to thank you for your letter of 19 February 2021 and express our appreciation for your ongoing commitment to steer the European Union on the path towards sustainable, smart and resilient mobility system. A well-functioning transport system is the basis for achieving economic growth and seamless Single Market.

During the EU legislative process on the first Mobility Package we expressed deep concerns that some of the provisions not only contradict the basic freedom to provide services within the Single Market, but also undermine the credibility of crucial EU policies such as the climate policy.

In this context, we highly welcomed the Commission's initiative to assess the impact of some of the first Mobility Package provisions that were not part of the original Commission's proposals, namely the compulsory return of the vehicle to the Member State of establishment every eight weeks and the restrictions to road legs of international combined transport operations.

The assessment of the impact of the obligation of regular return of the vehicle to the Member state of establishment every eight weeks, clearly shows that this provision will result in up to 2,9 million tonnes of additional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2023, under the simple market compliance scenario, representing an increase of 4,6% on the international road freight emissions in 2023.

As you rightfully pointed out in your letter and as the study shows, the negative impact of the two provisions in question, is clearly not compatible with ambitions of European Green Deal and ambitions of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

This confirms the results of several analyses conducted at a national level by some of us, which clearly indicated that the 'return of the truck' provision will result in an increase of empty runs of lorries on the EU roads. Moreover, the study showed that these negative impacts are not compensated by any additional benefit from trade. We emphasize that the scenario indicated in the expert opinions should be considered as the most realistic one and therefore needs to be addressed seriously.

It is crucial to find a way how to avert the outcomes properly to avoid increase of emissions from road transport. Those emissions will not only go against the objectives of the European Green Deal, but will also result in a direct cost to EU citizens with increased noise and air pollution across Europe.

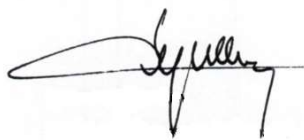
With this in mind and taking into account the objectives of the European Green Deal, proper solutions should be found to prevent the application of assessed provisions in February 2022. Constructive dialogue is needed among involved parties in order to fix the mistakes made.

As guardian of the Treaties, the Commission's efforts on this issue are highly appreciated so that the results of the Commission's study would be debated in the Council and in the European Parliament with the aim of revising and fixing the current EU provisions. Seizing this opportunity we would like to propose a meeting with you, Madame Commissioner, to discuss the situation and further actions.

We stand ready to support the Commission's efforts and we look forward to being engaged in a cooperative and constructive manner in any further discussion with the Commission, all Member States and other stakeholders to find sustainable solutions for the EU road transport sector and to avoid the application of provisions that go directly against the principles upheld by the European Union.

Yours sincerely,

**Rossen Jeliazkov**



Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria

**Yiannis Karousos**



Minister of Transport, Communications and Works, Cyprus

**Taavi Aas**



Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure, Estonia

**László Mosóczy**



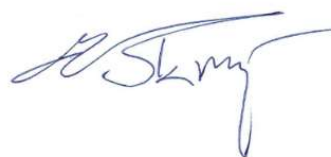
Minister of State for Transport, Hungary

**Tālis Linkaits**



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**Ian Borg**



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Minister of Infrastructure of the Republic of Poland

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Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Romania

**Cc:**

**Mr. Frans Timmermans**, Executive Vice-President, European Commission

**Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius**, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

**Mr. Pedro Nuno Santos**, Minister of Infrastructures and Housing, Presidency of the Council of the EU

**Mr. Jernej Vrtovec**, Minister of Infrastructure, upcoming Presidency of the Council of the EU