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Brussels news

TRILOGUES ON COMBINED TRANSPORT DIRECTIVE STARTED

This week the trilogue negotiations on the Revised Combined Transport Directive started between the European Commission, Parliament and Council.

CLECAT is worried about the [position that was adopted by the Council in December 2018](#), which moves away from a harmonised European approach in favour of national regulations. This abandons some of the important elements proposed by the European Commission, which would make combined transport operations more interesting for freight forwarders.

To create a successful review of the Combined Transport Directive and achieve the goal of promoting cross-border combined transport operations, CLECAT stresses that the discussions in trilogue should follow largely the Commission proposal as amended by the European Parliament TRAN Committee's report. Should the Council's approach prevail, a very restrictive Directive would be created with regards to the road leg. As a result, logistics companies would abandon combined transport and make use of road freight transport operations, due to the risks of non-compliance and sanctions created by the multitude of national rules and interpretations. If that were to be the case, we would urge the Commission to avoid the weakening of combined transport and withdraw its proposal.

In reaction to the initiation of trilogues, the German Freight Forwarders Association (DSLV), jointly with the German National Association of Public Inland Ports (BÖB) and the Association of German Transport Companies (VDV) have noted in a [joint press release](#) that the international combined transport in Europe is severely hindered by national provisions. The associations also stress that if the national interests that were manifested in Council would prevail, international transports would be increasingly carried out by road freight transport. To prevent such a scenario, the associations call for

the creation of a harmonised EU definition of ‘nearest suitable terminal’. In negotiations on this, it must be taken into account that a definition that would be based solely on the existence of a terminal without considering its suitability for a combined transport operation would make any combined transport unpredictable and unprofitable. Moreover, the definition of cross-border combined transport should continue to include pre- and post-carriage to avoid hindering road transport over the last mile.

CLECAT urges the Institutions to consider the consequences of a restrictive Directive with regards to the road leg, which is that logistics companies will abandon combined transport and simply make use of road freight transport operations. The aim of the revision, namely the promotion of combined transport operations to pave the way for efficient intermodal and multimodal freight services, should be considered at all times.

You can find CLECAT’s position paper on the revision of the Combined Transport Directive [here](#).

Brexit

ELP DINNER DEBATE: BREXIT – HOW BUSINESS GETS READY



**European
Logistics
Platform**

On 29 January, the European Logistics Platform is organising a dinner debate on Brexit hosted by MEP Caroline Nagtegaal (ALDE, Netherlands) during which business will present how they prepare themselves for a (no-deal) Brexit and what MEPs could do to support logistics’ efforts to address the challenges of a hard Brexit.

While the draft withdrawal agreement provides the basis for a 21-month transition period, during which the current trading and transport rules would essentially remain the same, such a transition will not happen if the withdrawal agreement is not ratified. Considering the ongoing political uncertainty in the UK, companies have to be prepared for all outcomes, including a no-deal or ‘cliff-edge scenario’ in March 2019.

A ‘no deal’ Brexit would have important consequences in terms of market access conditions for transport operators, but also on the fluidity of traffic and robustness of supply chains. The contingency measures proposed by the European Commission to alleviate some of the negative consequences of a ‘no deal’ Brexit would help when adopted, but industry will still face significant challenges. All players in the supply chain, from importers and exporters, to forwarders, customs agents and transport operators, will need to collaborate and put in place robust plans to mitigate the impact of a ‘no deal’ Brexit on the transit of goods. The event will allow industry representatives to present what they are doing to rise to the challenge and what MEPs could do to support their efforts.

During the event, representatives from the industry will share their insights on how they prepare for Brexit. Mr Sebastiaan Scholte, CEO of Jan de Rijk Logistics, will share insights from a logistics point of view regarding the preparations for a no-deal Brexit. Ian Howells, Senior Vice President of Honda Motor Europe, will present the shipper’s perspective, and Marty van Pelt, Manager Business Relations & Communications at Portbase, will provide insights on the joint stakeholder initiative to get ready for Brexit in the Netherlands. Finally, Martin Jones, Deputy Director EU at the United Kingdom’s Department for Transport will provide the UK Government’s perspective.



Members from across the European Parliament's committees and political groups, the European Commission and stakeholders are invited to join the debate on the 29th of January at 18.00h at the Renaissance Hotel in Brussels.

There are a few places available, but registration ends on Monday 28th January EOB. Registration is possible [here](#).

Air

EC PUBLISHES REVISED LEGISLATION ON AVIATION SECURITY

On 23 January, the European Commission adopted the legislative package of small amendments to the implementing legislation on aviation security measures, which was voted during the 99th Regulatory Committee (AVSEC) on 21 November 2018.

On 24 January, this was published as the [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) No 2019/103 amending Regulation \(EU\) No 2015/1998](#) in the EU's Official Journal (OJ).

The measures introduced include changes to background checks for aviation personnel which aim at contributing towards the prevention of insider-threats.

2ND AVIATION ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT PUBLISHED

On 24 January, the 2nd European Aviation Environmental Report was published by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), who created it in close cooperation with the European Environmental Agency (EEA) and EUROCONTROL.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of the environmental challenges and the performance of the aviation sector. According to the analysis, the solutions currently deployed at EU level are enabling improvements to the sustainability of aviation in Europe, including improvements in terms of noise per flight through the utilisation of modern aircrafts. However, considering that air traffic is set to further increase in the coming years, the report points out that the environmental footprint of the sector in Europe will continue to increase and thus the sector should invest in solutions towards the decarbonisation of aviation, working towards the EU's 2050 decarbonisation vision. In that regard, it also argues that there is a need for global measures in international aviation, where the EU is already strongly engaged, to implement these to contribute towards the temperature goals agreed under the Paris Agreement.

Moreover, the report includes key performance indicators (KPIs), showing the evolution of noise, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and air pollution from aviation over several years. Furthermore, it provides an indication of future levels of noise and emissions, according to different scenarios, and depending on the progress achieved through technology deployment.

The report is available [here](#).



Customs and Trade

WTO COUNTRIES LAUNCH TALKS ON E-COMMERCE

On 25 January, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the European Union and 47 other members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) decided to start negotiations to put in place global rules on e-commerce.

The WTO rules on e-commerce will aim to enhance opportunities and address challenges of e-commerce in both developed and developing countries. The negotiations should result in a multilateral legal framework that consumers and businesses, especially smaller ones, could rely on to make it easier and safer to buy, sell and do business online. The new rules would, for instance, aim to tackle barriers that prevent cross-border sales, guarantee validity of e-contracts and e-signatures and permanently ban customs duties on electronic transmissions.

The negotiating process is planned to start in March 2019. Other WTO members can still join the initiative.

Source: [European Commission](#)

EP TRADE COMMITTEE APPROVES EU-SINGAPORE TRADE DEAL

On 24 January, the European Parliament's International Trade (INTA) Committee adopted the draft reports and recommendations for consent on the [EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement](#) and the [EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement](#).

The European Parliament is set to vote on the trade deal and the investment protection agreement on 12 February in Strasbourg. Once the EU Council agrees on the trade agreement, it can enter into force. The Investment Protection Agreement needs to be ratified by the parliaments of all EU countries before it can enter into force. Once ratified, it will replace the existing bilateral investment agreements (BITs) between EU Member States and Singapore.

On 22 January, the Foreign Affairs (AFET) Committee of the European Parliament also endorsed the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) which will provide a legal framework for the long-standing EU-Singapore relations and boost the political and economic cooperation between the parties.

Source: [European Parliament](#)

UPDATE ON COUNTRIES APPLYING THE REX SYSTEM

On 23 January, the European Commission published [an update on the list of countries applying the Registered Exporter System \(REX\)](#). The transition period for Ivory Coast has been extended until 30 June 2019.

The REX system is the system of certification of origin of goods that applies in the Generalised System of Preference (GSP) of the EU since 1 January 2017. It is based on a principle of self-certification by



economic operators who will make out themselves so-called statements on origin. To be entitled to make out a statement on origin, an economic operator will have to be registered in a database by his competent authorities. The economic operator will become a 'registered exporter'.

The REX system will progressively and completely replace the current system of origin certification based on certificates of origin issued by governmental authorities and on invoice declarations. The global transition period from the current system of origin certification to the REX system started on 1 January 2017 and will last until 30 June 2020 at the latest. In case a beneficiary country does not apply the REX before the end of its transition period or has not requested an extension to the transition period, the preferential origin will not be established, and duties will have to be paid.

Source: [European Commission](#)

INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY 2019

In the context of the International Customs Day, held annually on 26 January, the WCO Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya announced "SMART borders for seamless Trade, Travel and Transport" as WCO's chosen theme for 2019, that is pertinent to the challenges facing the global Customs community.

Under that slogan, 2019 will be dedicated to the "swift and smooth cross-border movement of goods, people and means of transport." Given that Customs, working with other agencies at the border, plays a pivotal role in facilitating trade and travel, it is crucial that Customs take the lead in consolidating and further amplifying the ongoing efforts to ease the flow of goods and people across borders. To that end, the WCO commits to promote the transformation of frontiers into "SMART borders" with Customs acting as the central connecting and coordinating hub.



The SMART borders concept is aimed at encouraging WCO Members to delve into the realm of technology in order to find solutions to facilitate the flow of people, goods and conveyances at borders, while following the guiding principles for SMART borders, namely: Secure, Measurable, Automated, Risk Management-based and Technology-driven.

Source: [World Customs Organization](#)

Rail

DEUTSCHE BAHN UNVEILED ITS 2019 PLAN

Last week, Deutsche Bahn (DB) unveiled its five-point plan for 2019, focusing on 'concrete improvements' through increased investment and capacity. Therefore, DB plans to improve



punctuality, increase investment, improve reliable information, extend its offer and restructure rail freight.

More specifically, DB envisages to improve the development of rail freight transport and aims for a 'greener network' by increasing the share of renewable energy used by 3% to 60%. Furthermore, DB intends to restructure rail freight and increase the share of goods transported by rail through investments in new locomotives and wagons, as well as the hiring of additional personnel.

Furthermore, to improve the network, DB plans to invest €10.7bn, marking an increase of €1.3bn compared to 2018.

Source: [Deutsche Bahn](#) (Please note that the plan is currently only available in German)

Sustainable Logistics

IRU/UNTRR EVENT ON DECARBONISING EU ROAD TRANSPORT

CLECAT's DG Nicolette van der Jagt will speak at the IRU/UNTRR event on decarbonising road transport on 19 February in Bucharest, Romania. The debate will first focus on the EU environmental policy framework, ongoing legislative proposals on CO2 emissions and taxation and their implications for the road sector. Carbon footprinting of logistics operations as a way to reduce operational costs will also be discussed, followed by the introduction of the GLEC Framework and the presentation of the outcomes of the European-funded LEARN project. Furthermore, road transport decarbonisation solutions pertaining to innovative technologies and alternative fuels will be addressed, as well as the increasing number of city access restrictions across Europe and their impact on road transport operators.

More information on the event, as well as the agenda, is available [here](#).

LEARN INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

On 6-7 February 2019, the Logistics Emissions Accounting and Reduction Network project (LEARN) partners are hosting a workshop, where project results and learnings will be presented and discussed. The workshop will demonstrate practical examples of companies that have tested emissions calculation, assurance and reporting in practice, and recognise their achievements. It will also be explored how to move forward and work with businesses beyond the LEARN project through policy, research, training and a growing network of programs and initiatives.

The Logistics Emissions Accounting and Reduction Network project (LEARN) mobilizes business to reduce their carbon footprint across their global logistics supply chains through improved emissions calculation, assurance and reporting.



How businesses can make emissions reporting consistent across green freight programs?

Over the past 2 years, LEARN partners – including CLECAT – have been working closely with related organizations, initiatives and already existing networks. This includes the Global Logistics Emissions



Council (GLEC), a voluntary partnership of companies, industry associations and programs, led by Smart Freight Centre. The LEARN project has built on and sought to improve the 'GLEC Framework for Logistics Emissions Methodologies' that combines existing methods and fills gaps, making carbon accounting work for industry.

The full two-day agenda and the registration form can be found [here](#).

General

OVER €1.2BN REQUESTED IN HORIZON 2020 TRANSPORT FUNDING

The European Commission's Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) has announced that it received 237 project proposals for [eight topics](#) in the area of waterborne transport, logistics, aviation, transport infrastructure and safety under the Mobility for Growth Call. The project requests amount to a total of €1.29bn and thereby significantly exceed the available €122mIn EU funding. These requests will now be assessed in a two-stage evaluation. Applicants will be informed within the next 3 months on whether they have qualified to the second stage of the process, upon which they will be invited to submit full projects proposals by September 2019. The final decision will be announced by April 2020 at the latest.

Source: [European Commission, INEA](#)

Forthcoming events

CLECAT MEETINGS

Customs and Indirect Taxation Institute meeting

31 January - 1 February, Brussels, Belgium

Sustainable Logistics Institute meeting

6 February, Brussels, Belgium

Maritime Institute meeting

11 April, Antwerp, Belgium

Air/Security Institute meeting

17 April, Schiphol Airport, The Netherlands

Board/General Assembly

26 June, Paris, France

OTHER EVENTS WITH CLECAT PARTICIPATION

ELP Dinner Debate: Brexit – How Business Gets Ready

29 January, Brussels



LEARN International Workshop

6-7 February, Brussels

IRU/UNTRR Event on Decarbonisation of EU Road Transport

19 February, Bucharest

EC Conference on the Future of Multimodal Transport

26 February, Brussels

SITL Conference – CLECAT session on Programmes to support forwarders and shippers to reduce their carbon footprint

26 March, Paris

Zolltag Spedlogswiss

28 March, Switzerland

FIATA HQ meeting

27 – 29 March, Zurich

EP/COUNCIL MEETINGS

European Parliament TRAN Committee

29 January, Brussels

European Parliament Plenary

30 January, Strasbourg

European Transport Council

7 March, Brussels

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