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Brussels News

CLECAT ADDRESSES POST-BREXIT CHALLENGES AT EP



On 26 May, at a public hearing of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) Committee of the European Parliament, Mr Dimitri Sérafimoff, Chair of the Customs and Indirect Taxation Institute of CLECAT, spoke about the challenges of the implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

'The conclusion of the trade deal came as good news for businesses on both sides. However, only a swift and effective implementation of the agreement will provide the necessary certainty and predictability and allow industry to reap the benefits of the new deal to keep goods flowing across the EU-UK borders. It is absolutely vital that the implementation of the TCA is supported by proper and pragmatic application of the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland of the Withdrawal Agreement', said Mr Sérafimoff.

'The TCA did not remove the need for businesses to make extensive preparations and adjust their operations. Today, almost five months into the 'new normal', we see that many traders are still not fully prepared.' The industry experienced the changes brought about by the reality of the new trade agreement with new red tape and barriers to the flow of goods, including additional paperwork, customs controls, veterinary/phytosanitary (SPS) checks on food and agricultural products, additional costs and delays. *'The implementation of these new formalities and procedures brought about*

numerous practical challenges for supply chains which will certainly take time to overcome. But seamless trade across the Channel is a thing of the past.'

As the UK has not yet fully rolled out its border controls on EU imports, with EU goods entering Great Britain with minimum controls, there will be more challenges upcoming with pre-notification requirements on EU imports of certain goods subject to SPS controls in Great Britain, and full customs declarations at the time of import for all goods. CLECAT continues to stress the need for governments and businesses to make preparations in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delays and operational chaos.

CLECAT further identified a number of areas where further discussions or guidance are needed from the EU and the UK to improve bilateral trade and provide the much-needed ease for businesses. This relates to the need for common SPS standards which will support agri-food supply chains, cooperation on customs security to facilitate legitimate trade, as well as a more pragmatic approach to rules of origin and associated procedures.

CLECAT's briefing paper for the European Parliament is available [here](#).

Maritime

OCEAN FREIGHT RATES AND BLANK SAILINGS STILL VERY HIGH

In an [article](#) published in Lloyd's Loading List yesterday, Will Water writes that a further 9% surge this month means average contract prices are up by more than one third since this time last year and the start of 2021. All major trade corridors have seen rates growth, 'and much of it spectacular' across the first five months, with Far East export and European imports leading the way – both up by over 50%, he highlighted.



reduced retail inventories, it's difficult to see the prospect of any immediate rates relief on the horizon'.

Xeneta CEO Patrik Berglund explained that 'A lack of equipment and the ongoing ramifications of coronavirus, added to unforeseen factors such as the blocking of the Suez Canal, have squeezed supply chains, pushing capacity to bursting point. 'This leaves stressed shippers facing increasingly one-sided negotiations and, even when contracts are signed, the potential of rolled cargos and broken agreements as operators take advantage of massively lucrative spot rates. With carriers blanking sailings to manage capacity, added to continuing high demand and

Earlier this week Will Waters [reported](#) that analysis by logistics visibility specialist project44 of container line sailing cancellations from late April to mid-June show that carriers are cancelling sailings well into the summer. Among the three major alliances, it reports that there is a significant variance in blank sailing rates, with 'certain carriers like HMM skipping ports more often than not, with an average rate of 67%' in the period under analysis. On the other end of the spectrum, CMA CGM posted a 20% average blank sailing rate for the same period, leading Ocean Alliance to achieve the best schedule reliability, in terms of blank sailings. For the 2M alliance, both Maersk and MSC posted a



weekly blank sailing average of 45%, earning the lowest overall performance for any of the major alliances, project44 reported.

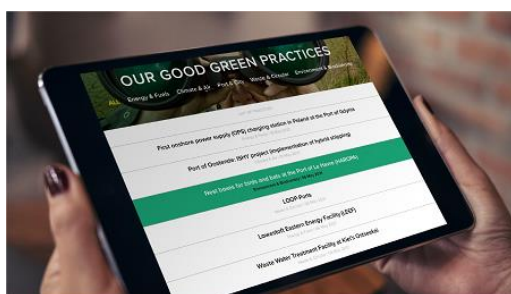
The recent figures are still affected by shipping lines' attempts to recover from the Suez Canal blockage in late March. However, 'one bright spot for shippers is a general reduction in blank sailing rates as schedules move closer towards late June', the analysis reports. With 'maxed-out vessels skipping more ports', project44 is warning shippers 'to adopt proactive supply chain strategies that anticipate delays.' Josh Brazil, Vice-President for ocean markets at project44, commented: 'Not only do blank sailings reduce the number of containers that shippers want to ship out from the affected ports, but they also disproportionately affect lower-paying shippers, with carriers favouring cargo from higher-paying customers. This dynamic could drive up shipping prices further, as competition heats up for limited preferential space on ships.'

Source: Lloyd's Loading List

ESPO PRESENTS THE 2021 GREEN GUIDE

During the last day of the ESPO Conference Regatta 2021, which was joined by CLECAT, the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO) presented the key components of the forthcoming 2021 Green Guide. The Guide comes as ports are increasingly undertaking greening efforts and provides hands-on guidance and advice for ports involved in greening their own activities, whilst outlining how port authorities can help facilitate greening in the wider port area and the local community.

Ports will increasingly be asked to address unfamiliar and novel issues as part of the transition to a greener future. Exchanging experiences, identifying good practices, and learning from each other is more important to ports than it has ever before. The ESPO 2021 Green Guide was created to help address these issues, and provides a handbook developed by ports, for ports towards a green future. Even if the main and primary goal of the Green Guide is to assist Europe's port authorities in realising their environmental and climate agendas and ambitions, the Guide also gives policymakers, local communities and stakeholders unique insight into the ambitions of ports. In addition to the guide, a dedicated database of good green practices in European ports has been developed and is available [here](#).



The ESPO Green Guide is divided into three parts. Part I explains the approach of the ESPO Green Guide 2021 by outlining the competences of port authorities and the scope of the greening activities. Understanding the governance and competence of port managing bodies is essential for ports when preparing their pathway to a green future, and when assessing which tools to use. It also helps other port stakeholders and policy makers better understand the port's greening pathway.

Part II provides a "manual" for greening the port. This Guide comes with an extensive dedicated database of green practices provided by European ports.

Part III showcases how ports engage not only in the mitigation of pollution, but also strive to positively contribute to greening the European economy, acting as an important partner in achieving the energy and green transition.

For more information: [Our good green practices \(espo.be\)](https://www.espo.be/our-good-green-practices)



Rail

HOW CAN RAIL FREIGHT ACHIEVE GREEN DEAL AMBITIONS?

On 20 May, the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) published its [second report](#) on fostering the railway sector through the European Green Deal. The report focuses on freight.

In this contribution, ERA advances six clusters of measures to promote rail freight and to develop reliable and seamless connections which should eventually help reaching the ambitious European policy goals. These are:

- to attract more private investments by ensuring a level playing field for all transport modes;
- to take full advantage of technological developments;
- to develop a green logistic chain through a multimodal strategy;
- to be more market-oriented by facilitating the access to the rail offer;
- to put the customer as the central focus; and
- to increase leadership by building a global vision of the logistics' chain impact.

Source: [ERA](#)

ONE BELT, ONE ROAD 2021

TIMCONSULT, a Transporeon Company has published a report on rail transport on the Eurasian Land Bridge. The report seeks to address how China's One Belt, One Road project has been influenced by the massive shifts in global shipping over the last year. It also explores the impact of the recent global disruptions on the trade imbalance between China and Europe, particularly on the different shipping modalities.

Overall, while sea transport continues to dominate China-Europe trade, rail transit has shown massive growth in recent years. Despite the recent economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the modal shift to rail has boosted the volume of rail transport. However, in the past year, the Eastbound-Westbound imbalance worsened, leading to a container shortage in China and border congestions in central Asia. An overall decrease in worldwide investments in the One Belt, One Road initiative has led to a decline in Chinese subsidies. Despite numerous benefits, shippers are frustrated by a variety of limitations including the low quality of infrastructure, high idling time and delays, and problems with customs procedures and tariff systems.

For the full report: [Eurasian Land Bridge eBook by Transporeon](#)

EC APPROVES MODIFICATION OF GERMAN RAIL SUPPORT SCHEME

On 25 May, the European Commission approved, under EU State aid rules, the modification of an existing German aid scheme to support rail freight operators in Germany by partially compensating track access charges. The amended scheme, which includes a budget increase, and a further reduction of the track access charges due by rail freight operators, shall contribute to reducing road congestion and CO₂ emissions. At the same time, it shall mitigate the effects of the coronavirus outbreak on the German rail freight sector.



In [December 2018](#), the Commission approved a scheme to promote the shift of freight traffic from road to rail. On 7 May 2021, Germany notified the following modifications to the scheme: (i) an increase in budget for the year 2021, from €350 million to €567 million; and (ii) an increase in the maximum compensation that rail freight operators can receive which, depending on the distance covered, could go up to an estimated 98% of their track access charges (compared to 45% under the current scheme). The other elements of the existing scheme, including its overall duration, will remain unchanged.

The Commission assessed the modified scheme under EU State aid rules, in particular the 2008 Commission [Guidelines on State aid for railway undertakings](#). The Commission concluded that the amended measure will facilitate the shift of freight transport from road to rail without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. On this basis, the Commission approved the modified scheme under EU State aid rules.

Source: [European Commission](#)

Air

EASA SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN ON BELARUS AIRSPACE

On 26 May, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) issued a [Safety Information Bulletin \(SIB\)](#) with respect to operations in Belarus airspace, following the incident involving Ryanair flight FR4978 on May 23, 2021.

The SIB recommends that operators with their principal place of business in one of the EASA member states should avoid operations in FIR Minsk, unless such operations are deemed necessary for safe operations in unforeseen circumstances. Third Country Operators authorised by EASA are also advised, when conducting operations to, from and within the EU, to avoid operations in that airspace unless such operations are deemed necessary for safe operations in unforeseen circumstances.

EASA had contacted the national aviation authorities of the Member States on Sunday to raise awareness of the situation. The national authorities were recommended to pass this information on to their airlines, for inclusion in each airline's own risk assessment process.

Source: [EASA](#)

EASA COMPLETES FIRST CO₂ EMISSIONS CERTIFICATION

On 26 May, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has for the first time [certified an aircraft for CO₂ emissions](#), applying a new process and methodology which provides an assessment of an aircraft's fuel efficiency and therefore of the CO₂ it emits while in operation.

More precisely, the fuel efficiency in cruise flight is certified, which is influenced by the engines, but also by the aircraft's aerodynamic characteristics and weight. This certification represents a milestone on EASA's roadmap to establish an environmental label for aviation by 2022. Amongst other values, the label will use CO₂ emissions data to provide a comprehensive assessment of the environmental performance of an aircraft.



Aircraft manufacturer Airbus voluntarily applied for the CO₂ certification of the A330-900 following a call from EASA in late 2019. The CO₂ standard was finalised by ICAO CAEP in February 2016, adopted by the ICAO Council in March 2017 and implemented into the EASA Basic Regulation in July 2018. Airbus will be the first manufacturer to apply this certification requirement and its experience is expected to contribute to improving and further developing the standards set by ICAO. Based on various expressions of interest to date, EASA anticipates that more manufacturers will be seeking early CO₂ certification shortly.

Source: [EASA](#)

Customs and Trade

WCO GUIDANCE ON CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT OF VACCINES

On 28 May, the World Customs Organization (WCO) published the [2nd edition](#) of the Secretariat Note on the Role of Customs in facilitating and securing the cross-border movement of situationally critical medicines and vaccines that enhances the inaugural version launched on 25 February 2021.



The document contains further guidance on practical ways to implement the measures of the December 2020 [Resolution](#) of the Customs Co-operation Council on the Role of Customs in facilitating the cross-border movement of situationally critical medicines and vaccines, a greater number of Members' case studies, and operational guidelines. The guidance outlined in the Secretariat Note draws upon relevant WCO instruments and tools, Members' good practices and insights gathered as a result of the collaboration with other international organizations, the pharmaceutical industry, logistics providers and other relevant private sector entities.

The Secretariat Note is designed to be a living document that will be enhanced with more Members' practices and further practical guidance as WCO Members and the industry gain experience and share information with the WCO Secretariat on the Customs clearance of COVID-19 vaccines, related supplies, inputs and equipment.

Source: [World Customs Organization](#)

Road

ACEA PUBLISHES INTERACTIVE MAP ON TRUCK CHARGING POINTS

The European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) unveiled an [interactive map](#) that shows the number of charging points for electric trucks required in Europe (27 EU Member States + the UK) by 2025 and 2030 for each country. According to their estimates, already by 2025, approximately 40,000 battery electric medium- and heavy-duty vehicles will be in operation in Europe. By 2030 this figure will increase to approximately 270,000.





ACEA regrets that the infrastructure needed to charge these electric trucks is missing today and calls for a rapid infrastructure roll-out as part of the review of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (AFID). The organisation sets an EU-wide target of 10,000-15,000 (higher power) public and destination charging points no later than 2025, and 40,000-50,000 charging points no later than 2030. In addition, a target of at

least 40,000 lower power (100 kW) public overnight chargers at truck parking areas along motorways should be set for 2030.

Like CLECAT, ACEA calls for the inclusion of binding targets per Member States for the charging infrastructure roll-out in the revised AFID. In order to take account of the substantially higher power demands of heavy-duty vehicles, three power categories should be defined: below 350 kW, 350-500 kW and above 500 kW.

GSA, ITF AND IRU LAUNCH DRIVER CHARTER

On 20 May, the Global Shippers Alliance (GSA), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and IRU have launched the [Driver Charter](#), an initiative to improve how truck and van drivers are treated at collection and delivery sites. The three international organisations recognise the crucial role of road transport in the global economy, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and acknowledge the social, labour, and economic challenges faced by the sector, including an increasing driver shortage.

The initiative includes different commitments for all parties (shippers, transport operators and drivers), such as providing drivers with access to suitable, safe and appropriately equipped sanitary and welfare facilities, as well as necessary and appropriate trucks that are fit for purpose to facilitate loading and unloading tasks, in line with contractual obligations. The Charter also aims to address some of the barriers to recruitment in the industry, especially for women and young people, in order to equitably solve chronic driver shortages, and highlights the quality of the jobs available.

More information on the initiative is available [here](#).

It is possible to sign and join the Charter via this [link](#).

Sustainable Logistics

EP WORKSHOP ON THE EXTENSION OF EU ETS TO TRANSPORT

The European Parliament organised a [workshop](#) on 26 May to discuss the extension of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) to transport emissions. At the initiative of the ENVI Committee, the workshop was organised to prepare for the upcoming legislative package of proposals in July 2021. MEPs discussed with experts about the policy options and the effects of an ETS for road and maritime emissions, the revision of the ETS for the aviation, and the impacts of the inclusion of transport in the ETS on stationary installations. The relationship with global measures, such as CORSIA for aviation and upcoming IMO measures for maritime was also presented.



Experts explained that the main advantage of the extension of ETS to transport is that it can provide revenues to incentivise the shift away from fossil fuels, subject to ringfencing of the revenues. It was recognised that while demand for transport is relatively inelastic, other measures would be needed to reduce emissions from the sector, such as CO₂ standards for road vehicles or the development and uptake of renewable fuels for all modes. MEPs questioned the timing of implementation, as an ETS could not be put in place before 2025 which would undermine the objective of a 55% emission reduction by 2030. The social impact of putting a price on emissions was also discussed: the increase of the final price to end consumers can be significant which could have an impact for households and businesses.



A [background paper](#) provides details the current legal framework and the impacts of the inclusion of transport emissions in the EU ETS. This includes the option to include transport in the current ETS system or to build a separate ETS for transport. The recording of this workshop as well as the presentations of speakers are available via this [link](#).

General

ITF TRANSPORT OUTLOOK 2021



The International Transport Forum published on 17 May the [executive summary](#) of its Transport Outlook 2021. Presented during the ITF Summit 2021, the document provides scenarios for the development of transport

demand up to 2050. It also models transport decarbonisation scenarios and their impacts on climate change. This edition includes a special focus on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on transport systems, and models potential long-term changes with challenges and opportunities for decarbonisation. Based on this, the ITF Transport Outlook 2021 identifies decisions that policy makers will need to take to ensure a transition to sustainable mobility that is effective as well as equitable:

- Align COVID-19 recovery packages to revive the economy, combat climate change and strengthen equity
- Implement much more ambitious policies that will reverse the growth of transport CO₂ emissions
- Target different transport sectors with strategies that reflect their specific decarbonisation potential and challenges
- Support innovation to accelerate the technological breakthroughs needed to decarbonise transport
- Shift the priority to improving accessibility
- Intensify collaboration with non-transport sectors and between public and private actors

The executive summary is available in nine languages, as well as a 15-minute video explaining the main findings from the study via this [link](#).



Forthcoming Events

CLECAT MEETINGS

CLECAT Customs and Indirect Taxation Institute

31 May 2021, Online

CLECAT Air Logistics Institute

8 June 2021, Online

CLECAT Security Institute

8 June 2021, Online

CLECAT Maritime Logistics Institute

14 June 2021, Online

CLECAT Board

22 June 2021, Online

CLECAT General Assembly

22 June 2021, Online

CLECAT Rail Logistics Institute

23 June 2021, Online

CLECAT Road Logistics Institute

7 July 2021, Online

EU MEETINGS

Council of the European Union

Transport Council

3 June 2021, Luxembourg

Environment Council

21 June 2021, Luxembourg

European Parliament

European Parliament Transport Committee

16-17 June 2021, Brussels

European Parliament Plenary

7-10 June 2021, Brussels



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