

Commission launches process to revise the CT Directive

19 August 2021, Brussels: The European Commission unveiled the Inception Impact Assessment (IIA)¹ that sets out the scope within which the long-awaited proposal to amend the Combined Transport Directive² is to be developed. The IIA reflects on the European Climate Law objectives and the Strategy for Smart and Sustainable Mobility (SSSM), while it must also take note of the 6th Global Climate Change Report of the IPCC³.

In order to meet the European Climate Law's decarbonisation objectives, *a significant uptake of more sustainable transport options is needed*. Due to the wide range of transport externalities not reflected in the prices of road haulage today, *the market currently does not provide sufficient incentives* – argues the Commission. *An EU-level framework of uniform conditions and support measures* are needed to fulfill the targets contained in the SSSM for market share growth of rail freight, shortsea shipping and inland waterway transport.

Several measures are outlined in the IIA to be scrutinized over the coming months:

- Extend the scope of the Directive to all intermodal or multimodal transport operations that promise to *save on externalities beyond a certain threshold when evaluating against road-only transport using a common calculation method*. Terminals should be categorized to orient their development and a *labelling system developed for all freight transport operations*.
- The previous option plus a requirement of *regular transport system analysis* to assess the efficiency of the support measures chosen by the Member States.
- The two previous options plus a *range of mandatory support measures*.
- Under all three scenarios consideration will be given to *keeping the benefits only for combined transport operations* contained in the present Directive.

Whether the policymaker legislates a definition of Combined Transport or replaces it with an externality calculator – created to determine which road-alternative transport solutions are to be supported – it does not alter the need for inland freight transport services that are energy-efficient, zero-carbon, low-pollution, safe, do not contribute to congestion and offer high value-added jobs with a healthy work/life balance. What matters is the workability of the regulatory conditions in real life: does it simplify an anyway complicated regulatory framework? Does it make enforcement easier?

The intermodal transshipment technique is the most efficient to shift cargo by the truckload and half-a-truckload from road to rail freight and other sustainable means of freight transport. The most effective and least risky solution to decarbonising inland freight transport - through shifting cargo presently carried end-to-end by trucks - is Zero-Carbon Combined Transport⁵. UIRR will actively participate in the process to develop the proposal for the revision of the Combined Transport Directive under these premises.



Ralf-Charley Schultze

"UIRR is eager to learn more about the details of the concepts outlined in the Commission document. Attention will be paid to ensure that these regulatory innovations do not increase the complexity of an already complicated regulatory framework, but rather that they support the fulfillment of the objectives defined by the policymakers for Combined Transport. CT must triple its market share if longer-distance inland freight transport is to become carbon-free in Europe by 2050." – pointed out UIRR President Ralf-Charley Schultze.

Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the **International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport (UIRR)** represents the interests of European road-rail Combined Transport Operators and Transshipment Terminal Managers.

Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding which is based on efficiently and economically inserting electric rail into long-distance (road) transport-chains through the use of intermodal loading units (ILU).

31, rue Montoyer - bte 11 | B-1000 | Brussels
www.uirr.com | headoffice.brussels@uirr.com
Tel. : +32 (0)2 548 78 90

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13010-Sustainable-transport-revision-of-Combined-Transport-Directive_en

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31992L0106&from=EN>

³ <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/>

⁴ Combined Transport: the form of intermodal transport with the shortest possible road legs on either end

⁵ <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2021/mediacentre1891-press-release-historic-from-several-aspects-the-2020-business-year-of-ct.html>