



TRANSPORT Council **10 December 2015, Brussels**

The Council will hold a policy debate on **social aspects in road transport**. The presidency is seeking member states' views on the current legislation and the best ways to guarantee its harmonised interpretation and systematic enforcement. The Commission intends to introduce new initiatives in 2016.

The road transport debate will be followed by a number of information items under 'Any other business'.

Ministers will address the issue of **road safety** over their working lunch.

Under the items to be adopted without discussion ('A items'), the Council is due to adopt its position at first reading on the three legislative acts that make up the **technical pillar of the fourth railway package**. These are directives on railway safety and interoperability, and a regulation on the EU railway agency (ERA).

The meeting will start at 10.00. It will be chaired by François Bausch, Luxembourg's Minister for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure.

A press conference will be held at the end of the meeting, after the lunch debate (+/-14.40).

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Video streaming of press conferences and public events: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu>

Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery: www.eucouncil.tv

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the Press Office.

Social aspects in road transport

The Council will hold a policy debate on social aspects in road transport. The presidency is seeking member states' views on the current legislation and the best ways to guarantee its harmonised interpretation and systematic enforcement.

[Social aspects in road transport: background and questions for ministers](#)

Road transport - a major driver for the economy

The road transport sector is a crucial element in the European Union's society and economy. It accounts for almost three quarters (72%) of all inland freight activity. It carries more passengers than rail, tram and metro combined. The 5 million people working in the sector represent more than 2.2% of the total EU workforce.

Current EU measures to promote safe and socially responsible road transport services

The EU has adopted a number of laws to improve road safety, ensure drivers' good working conditions and promote fair competition in the EU road transport sector. Common rules on the driving time and rest periods of lorry and coach drivers cover both employees and the self-employed, engaged in international and/or national operations. These rules are supplemented by minimum requirements governing the working time of mobile workers.

To help to enforce the rules and monitor the driving times of professional drivers, vehicles have to be fitted with devices that record the driver's working time and rest periods (tachographs). Member states' authorities are required to carry out checks to ensure compliance with the rules.

International road transport services have been gradually liberalised in the EU. Any EU transport company in possession of a valid Community licence has free access to the whole EU market for road transport. Common rules also regulate admission to the occupation of road transport operator in respect of both goods and passengers.

EU rules governing temporary cabotage apply to both passenger services and freight haulage. Cabotage refers to a situation where a non-resident carrier transports a load in a host country rather than returning empty after an international trip.

Need to improve compliance

Despite a number of measures adopted to enhance compliance with the social rules, differences in national interpretations and enforcement of rules persist. In particular, the number of infringements against the rules on driving times and rest periods remains high: 3.9 million offences were detected in 2011-2012.

To remedy this situation, the Commission intends to introduce new initiatives on road transport in 2016. The aim is to ensure a better understanding of the rules and to improve the consistency and cost-effectiveness of enforcement by member states.

Improving drivers' working conditions while achieving a fair and environmentally responsible market is a key priority for the completion of the internal market in road transport.

[EU road transport - social provisions](#)

Any other business

Report on the state of the Energy Union

- *Information from the Commission*

An Aviation Strategy for Europe

- *Presentation by the Commission*

Outcome of the investigation into the crash of flight MH17

- *Information from the Netherlands delegation*

Election of the Council (2016-19) of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

- *Information from the Bulgarian, Cypriot, Czech, Greek, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Slovenian and Slovak delegations*

State of ratification of the Luxembourg Protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment on Matters specific to Railway Rolling Stock

- *Information from the presidency*

Rail transport security

- *Information from the Commission on the state of play*

Work programme of the incoming presidency

- *Information from the Netherlands delegation*
