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Brussels News

'LOGISTICS FOR EUROPE'-INITIATIVE BECOMES EUROPEAN



Following the launch of the website '[Logistics for Europe](#)' in August last year by the German Freight Forwarders' Association DSLV, on 21 May the baton was passed to CLECAT, the European Freight Forwarders' Association. The initiative has received the full support of the wider European freight forwarders' community. Since the launch of the website last year, more than 130 companies and associations in Germany gave their support to the industry campaign which emphasises the importance of the European Union for society and economy, while advocating the need of a border-free Europe.

Commenting on the initiative, CLECAT's Director General Nicolette van der Jagt said: 'Those who believe that the solution to social and economic challenges in Europe would entail turning away from the common European idea and returning to nation-state protectionism must not be left to their own devices. Instead, business needs a stronger Europe through further opening of markets and harmonisation, as well as removing barriers instead of creating new ones. Creating a fully integrated transport sector will translate into improved logistics chains, greater environmental sustainability, enhanced internal cohesion and increased competitiveness of the EU on the global stage. Europe is the world's most globally connected region and a leader in trade flows and the movement of people. The EU should continue to lead the way by remaining a world champion of open and free trade, as well as an engine for growth.'

DSLVL's Director General Frank Huster added: 'Our members feel strongly about the need for a Single Market without import restrictions, customs formalities and border controls. Before the establishment of the European Union, the logistics sector was faced with countless hours of waiting time at the borders due to the significant amount of formalities that had to be taken care of. Through the free movement of goods and the freedom of establishment in the EU, transport companies and their clients can avoid high administrative burdens and expensive waiting times, which ultimately results in a benefit for the consumer.'

Companies and associations supporting the cause and setting a sign for an open Europe are invited to provide their logo to the initiative through [this link](#).

TOWARDS EFFICIENT, SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT



Miglė Blusevičiūtė, CLECAT's Policy Manager, joined a panel at the ITF Summit earlier this week in Leipzig, discussing sustainable growth in road freight transport and the prospect of High

Capacity Transport.

Road freight transport is forecasted to continue to grow substantially in most countries. The anticipated increase in infrastructure capacity will not, on its own, be sufficient to accommodate projected traffic levels at a socially acceptable cost. Approaches that relate to both the vehicle fleet and the infrastructure are needed.

According to CLECAT, using high capacity vehicles (HCVs) is one of the most efficient measures to absorb some of this growth, as well as reduce CO2 emissions. CLECAT emphasised nevertheless that much of these gains are lost if larger and/or heavier trucks are only allowed on national roads, without the possibility of international transit.



This session was based on recently published ITF reports summarising the results of two working group studies: "Policies to Extend the Life of Road Assets" [by mitigating deterioration caused by trucks] (PELRA) and "High Capacity Transport: Towards Efficient, Safe and Sustainable Road Freight."

THE FUTURE OF CUSTOMS IN THE EU 2040

On 13-14 May, Dominique Willems, CLECAT's Senior Manager, joined the first workshop of the DG TAXUD project entitled 'The Future of Customs in the EU 2040'. Mr Willems was selected as expert of the 'Future of Customs' Group which aims to identify and understand the key drivers of change for customs in the EU and generate a vision for customs in the EU in 2040.



According to the EU Commission, global trade is evolving fast and the EU is one of the world's most important trading partners. New regulations, technologies, products and trade flows continue to create risks and opportunities that challenge customs in the EU. The scale and speed of these changes create challenges which are unprecedented in the 50 years of history of EU customs policy. In this context, DG TAXUD recognises the importance to ensure that the EU Customs System remains relevant and effective in the long-term.

Other experts in the group include Member State's experts, the WTO, the WCO and academia and several CLECAT Members. This project is performed on behalf of DG TAXUD by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) foresight team, part of the EU Policy Lab. This foresight process started in January 2019 and is planned to end in March 2020.



The first workshop ended with a discussion about the pertinence of the two key uncertainties (*Geopolitical conflicts*" and "*EU economic development*") that emerged from the process. Overall, participants supported the selection, arguing that they represent the two spheres (internal and external to the EU) at the interface of which customs operate, and that there is enough independence between the two to make a meaningful analysis. The next workshop will be held on 24 and 25 June and will focus on scenario development.

Maritime

GLOBAL MARITIME LOGISTICS DIALOGUE MEETS IN LEIPZIG

Delegates from across the maritime logistics chain and governments met today in a Roundtable discussion in Leipzig, in conjunction with the International Transport Summit, to discuss some of the challenges in the maritime logistics supply chain.

Maritime logistics is essential for trade: obstacles in the maritime logistics chain have immediate repercussions on trade. The maritime logistics chain consists of many different actors with different roles that are highly interdependent. This means that the performance of the individual actors is to an important extent determined by the behaviour of other actors. There are currently no comprehensive performance indicators for the maritime logistics chain. What exist are indicators on logistics in general and on parts of the maritime logistics chain. As a result, there is a lack of visibility on the performance of maritime logistics chain: performance information is fragmented and often not publicly available.



Both CLECAT and FIATA were represented at the Roundtable and expressed support for further work on the topic of key performance indicators (KPIs). CLECAT emphasised that the advanced notice of arrival is one of the most significant KPIs for freight forwarders and logistics service providers so that they can organise the rest of the transport services well in advance. Another possible KPI, as suggested by FIATA, could be empty moves/miles – if one wants to be considered environmentally friendly, s/he does not move empty containers around. It would be helpful if the shipping lines were transparent in terms of where the empty containers are located so that they could be used efficiently.

The Global Maritime Logistics Dialogue brings together stakeholders from the maritime logistics chain, including representatives from the shipping sector, shippers, ports, terminals and freight forwarders.

GERMANY PRESENTS 'MASTERPLAN' FOR INLAND WATERWAYS

On 14 May, the German Federal Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Andreas Scheuer, presented [the Masterplan for Inland Waterways](#) to the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (BMVI) in Berlin. This should serve as the basis for making inland navigation sustainable and more attractive. Therefore, the Masterplan was developed together with associations, industry and other stakeholders, including DSLV, the Federal Association for Freight Forwarding and Logistics Germany, which is a member of CLECAT.

The Masterplan for Inland Waterways comprises five main areas: infrastructure, environmental friendliness and fleet structure, digitisation, strengthening the multimodal transport chain and increasing skilled workforce.

In a press release following the publication of the Masterplan, DSLV commented that the implementation of the measures anchored in the Masterplan will be decisive to strengthen inland navigation in the multimodal transport chain. "The target share of 12 percent in the modal split is very ambitious. However, inland navigation still has considerable potential, which can above all also be exploited by freight forwarders. In order to relieve the burden on the road infrastructure and meet growing climate protection requirements, the constantly increasing volume of freight traffic must be increasingly directed to inland waterways in addition to rail." said DSLV President Axel Plaß.

"As in the 'Rail Freight Transport Master Plan', logistics service providers and their customers must ultimately also benefit financially from the support measures of the 'Inland Waterway Transport Master Plan'. Otherwise the market will not react, and the measures of the masterplan will not achieve their desired goal.", Mr. Plaß added.

Source: [DSLVL Federal Association for Freight Forwarding and Logistics Germany](#)

Air

COMMISSION SIGNS AVIATION AGREEMENTS WITH CHINA

On 20 May, the European Union and China signed an agreement on civil aviation safety and a horizontal aviation agreement to strengthen their aviation cooperation. The agreements follow up on



the EU-China Summit of 9 April and aim at increasing the competitiveness of the EU's aeronautical sector and enhancing overall EU-China aviation relations.

The main objective of the bilateral civil aviation safety agreement (BASA) is to support worldwide trade in aircraft and related products by removing the duplication of evaluation and certification activities for aeronautical products by the civil aviation authorities, as well as promoting cooperation between the EU and China towards a high level of civil aviation safety and environmental compatibility.

The second agreement that was signed is the horizontal aviation agreement. This agreement marks China's recognition of the principle of EU designation, whereby all EU airlines will be able to fly to China from any EU Member State with a bilateral air services agreement with China under which unused traffic rights are available. Up until now, only airlines owned and controlled by a given Member State or its nationals could fly between that Member State and China. The conclusion of a horizontal agreement will thereby bring bilateral air services agreements between China and EU Member States into conformity with EU law - a renewed legal certainty which will be beneficial to airlines on both sides. Both the European Commission and the Chinese transport administration will now proceed with their respective internal procedures to put the conclusion of the agreement in place.

Source: [European Commission](#)

TAXATION ON JET FUEL

On 13 May, a [leaked report](#) that was prepared for the European Commission indicated that any new aviation tax would have a significant negative effect on the aviation industry, but its impact on the overall employment within a Member State, on fiscal revenue and GDP would be close to zero. Additionally, with the changes in air movement, the environmental load would change. When taking the example of a fuel excise duty, the calculated impacts on ticket prices average at 10%. As a result, the demand for aviation is reduced, leading to a 9-11% lower demand. As the traffic decreases, the CO2 emission and number of people affected by noise would decrease, too. Therefore, the report concludes that any changes in tax regimes must be carefully analysed.

On 14 May, the Dutch Government announced that it intends to introduce a flight tax in 2021 to make the aviation sector more sustainable if the EU does not set up a pan-European tax. The Ministry of Finance is now implementing this in a bill by means of a tax on passengers and cargo airplane (full freighters) departing from Amsterdam Schiphol Airport. For cargo aircraft, the rate is based on the weight of the airplane, i.e. the maximum take-off weight, and the noise class. According to the draft rules, which are yet to be debated by Parliament, cargo planes departing from the Netherlands should be charged at a rate of €1.92 for quiet and €3.85 for noisy airplanes. Through the income received from the introduction of the new tax, the government wants to reduce taxes on business and finance climate measures. However, the government expressed its preference for a European aviation tax, arguing that should a tax be introduced on European level until 2020, the national legislation would be abandoned. Additionally, the Dutch government is also looking into the feasibility of a kerosene levy.

In response, the Dutch Air Freight Industry Association ACN argued in [a press release](#) that with the introduction of such a tax, it sees an accumulation of various (global, European and national) taxes and surcharges that is detrimental to the competitive position of air freight in the Netherlands. ACN further argues that should the tax on cargo airplanes be introduced in the Netherlands and not on European level, it would lead to an uneven playing field within Europe.



Moreover, it points towards the position of air freight already being under pressure because there is a shortage of capacity (i.e. slots) at Schiphol Airport.

Source: [ACN Air Cargo Netherlands](#), [Euractiv](#)

Rail

MARKET PLACE SEMINAR FIATA-UIC



CLECAT will be present at the Market Place Seminar jointly organised by UIC and FIATA during the Transport Logistics Fair in Munich on the 4th June.

The 9th edition of the seminar is entitled "Interaction between Rail Operators and Freight Forwarders on Rail Transport". It will be organised around two thematic sessions:

- New rail logistics concepts in multimodal transportation
- How to make the best use of rail freight corridor services

The UIC-FIATA Market Place Seminars offer a business-oriented platform for all stakeholders of the logistics chain and foster interactive and lively exchanges on transport solutions and business opportunities. The full programme is available [here](#).

SINGLE EUROPEAN RAILWAY AREA

On 16 May, the European Commission adopted a set of rules addressing rail interoperability, train accessibility for persons with reduced mobility and rail noise. This series of measures completes the preparations for the 'technical pillar' of the [Fourth Railway Package](#), which was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in April 2016, which will become applicable on 16 June 2019. The Package, which is part of the Commission's agenda of [a fairer and deeper internal market](#), will help to complete the Single European Railway Area – the so-called Single Market for rail services.

The overarching goal is to make European railways more innovative and competitive vis-à-vis other modes of transport. Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc said: *"The Commission has now finalised all preparatory works of the Fourth Railway Package. Member States must now act swiftly and implement the new rules to create a real interoperable rail network that will make rail more attractive, more reliable and competitive and at the same time reduce costs for Europe-wide railway services."*

The rules which were adopted include measures aimed at boosting the deployment of interoperable train operations and in particular the [European rail traffic management system \(ERTMS\)](#), the basis for digitalising railways and launching automated services. Moreover, it is supposed to significantly reduce the costs and administrative burden by granting the [European Railways Agency \(ERA\)](#) the responsibility for issuing EU vehicle authorisations and certification for operations.

Source: [European Commission](#)



PRIME BENCHMARKING REPORT

On 14 May, the [European Network of Rail Infrastructure Managers PRIME](#), published its [second internal benchmarking report](#) based on 2012-2017 data from 15 organisations. The purpose of the report, which has been compiled with the support of the European Commission, is to illustrate the current performance of rail infrastructure and identify areas for further analysis. To that end, it includes 49 selected key performance indicators (KPIs) in various performance dimensions, including punctuality, costs, resilience, sustainable development and safety. Moreover, it provides also first assessment of KPI correlations, qualitative relationships between KPIs and potential performance drivers in the different dimensions.

The report states that while 91% of their passenger trains were on time, the same indicator for freight trains was much lower at 68%. The average of delay caused by Infrastructure Managers was 6 minutes per thousand train-kilometres.

Moreover, in relation to growth, the report stated that the development of freight traffic over the years is different. While some countries face a slight increase, others remain stable or even run less trains per day. To understand these developments the report suggests that the drivers, as well as the activities that IMs have undertaken to increase the attractiveness of rail freight, should be analysed.

The report also concludes that there is a strong correlation between the degree of network electrification and the share of electric trains. However, it is noticeable that similar degrees of electrification do not lead to similar shares of electrically produced train services in all cases. For instance, one IM reached a share of 99% while other IMs achieved less than 90% although their degree of electrification is higher. In that regard, the report concludes that it should be further explored why this is the case and if there are opportunities to more extensively use the electrified infrastructure by reducing the share of diesel trains.

Source: [European Commission](#)

2018: GOOD YEAR FOR COMBINED TRANSPORT

According to the [results of intermodal performance statistics](#) gathered by the European Association for Intermodal Transport (UIRR) amongst its 39 members across 18 European countries, the number of consignments transported using Combined Transport reached a high of 8.6 million TEU in 2018. This represents an increase of 5% compared to the preceding year. The growth was partly attributable to one-off sectoral consolidation and partly to organic growth of the members.

Customs and Trade

HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON THE EU SINGLE WINDOW FOR CUSTOMS

On 16-17 May, CLECAT attended a high-level seminar, hosted by the Romanian EU Council Presidency in Bucharest, on the initiative related to the establishment of an EU Single Window environment for customs. This initiative represents the next step towards modernising customs in the EU for the actors involved in the international trade in goods. The seminar was jointly organised with DG TAXUD with the participation of senior management officials from national customs administrations, candidate



countries, representatives of trade associations and keynote speakers from the US Customs and Border Protection, UNECE, the World Bank and the EC DIGIT.



The seminar assessed the progress of the ongoing work dedicated to the initiative and held a series of workshops addressing the relevance of the policy options in the government-to-government (G2G) and business-to-government (B2G) context. Strong support was expressed for the establishment of a legal framework to govern the exchange of information between customs and partner competent authorities, particularly as it relates to the verification of supporting documents to the customs declaration, hosted in EU databases. Participants also supported the development of a legal framework to allow the interoperability between customs and national certification systems for EU supporting documents to the customs declaration.

With respect to the B2G interaction, it was concluded that the possibility of establishing harmonised access points at national level to fulfil customs and non-customs formalities should remain voluntary. Data harmonisation and standardisation were viewed as a fundamental precondition for providing increased benefits for trade before considering the mandatory application of this option.

JOINT POSITION ON OFFICIAL CONTROLS REGULATION

In the context of the ongoing work of the European Commission and EU Member States on the delegated and implementing acts to the new [Official Controls Regulation \(OCR\)](#), CLECAT joined forces with other European trade associations in a coordinated action towards the Commission services in order to have a better influence on the decision-making process.

As a result, a [joint position](#) was developed which focuses on two important issues: (1) the data elements in the new Common Health Entry Document (CHED) certificate; and (2) the rules on reinforced checks (intensified official controls). The joint position paper calls on the Commission to refrain from imposing unnecessary administrative burden on economic operators and retain a risk-based approach to imports.

On 20 May, the Commission published the draft Information Management System for Official Controls (IMSOC) Regulation for [public consultation](#). The act establishes the rules for the functioning of the IMSOC system which will allow the integration of existing systems for the handling and exchange of information on official controls. Notably, the Annex to the Implementing Regulation provides for the format and required data fields of the new model CHED certificate. Therefore, it remains crucial to provide your feedback on the draft act. The consultation will be open until 17 June 2019.

CLECAT has been following the work on the supplementing acts to the new legislation closely and will continue to do so. On 28 May, CLECAT will be attending DG SANTE's Advisory group meeting on the state of play of the delegated and implementing acts being developed under the OCR, where controls elsewhere than BCPs and intensified controls will be on the agenda for further discussion with trade representatives.

NEW EU SYSTEM TO COMBAT VAT FRAUD

On 15 May, the European Commission announced the launch of the Transaction Network Analysis tool (TNA), which will allow EU Member States to rapidly exchange and jointly process cross-border



transaction information aiming at quick detection of suspicious networks. The new system is part of the Commission's sustained effort to put in place a modern and fraud-proof VAT system.

The TNA was developed through close collaboration between Member States and the Commission and will allow much closer cooperation between the EU's network of anti-fraud experts ('Eurofisc') when it comes to jointly analysing information so that VAT carousel fraud can be detected and intercepted as fast and effectively as possible. The new system is intended to boost cooperation and information exchange between national tax officials, allowing them to cross-check information with criminal records, databases and to coordinate cross-border investigations.

Source: [European Commission](#)

COMMISSION STUDY ON VAT REFUNDS

The European Commission published a study that evaluates the implementation of the current regime by tax administrations and highlights potential problems and areas of difficulties encountered by taxable persons in making VAT refund claims.

The study consists of two parts. The [first part of the study](#) focuses on the conformity of national legislations both with the directive for cross-border intra-EU refunds (EC-2008/9) and with the CJEU case law related to domestic refund. The [second part](#) analyses the level of implementation of the law and tries to identify and quantify the consequences of such implementation highlighting problems and/or obstacles that taxable persons and VAT refund agents are facing while claiming refund of VAT both in the Member State of establishment and in another Member State. The study takes also into account the perspective and the difficulties of national tax administrations in administering and controlling such claims.

Based on the findings in the study, the Commission will carefully examine the results and, in close cooperation with the Member States, will put in place the best strategies and solutions for possible inconsistencies of legislation and for an effective implementation of the law.

Source: [European Commission](#)

Forthcoming events

CLECAT MEETINGS

Customs and Indirect Taxation Institute meeting

5 June, Brussels, Belgium

DIGIT Working Group meeting

6 June, Brussels, Belgium

Board/General Assembly

26 June, Paris, France

CLECAT FREIGHT FORWARDERS FORUM 2019

14 November, Brussels, Belgium



OTHER EVENTS WITH CLECAT PARTICIPATION

FENEX – Dutch Freight Forwarding and Logistics Services event

4 June, Rotterdam

Transport Logistic Munich

4-7 June, Munich

FIATA/UIC Market Place Seminar

4 June, Munich

CIS/CESAR 15-Year Anniversary – ELETA Project

5 June, Munich

WCO IT/TI Conference

12-15 June, Baku

2019 International Congress of Authorised Economic Operators / SIL

26-28 June, Barcelona

ELP XL-event on Logistics

25 September, Brussels

Digital Transport Days

7-9 October, Helsinki

EP/COUNCIL MEETINGS

EU Transport Council

6 June, Brussels

European Parliament TRAN Committee

24-25 July, Brussels

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