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## Brussels News

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### INDUSTRY CALLS FOR MORE FLEXIBILITY ON MP1

In view of further trilogues on the social and market access pillars of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mobility Package, CLECAT, EEA and FIATA have issued a joint statement to the co-legislators, emphasising that the ongoing trilogues offer the final opportunity to find working solutions and make vital corrections for more flexibility, which is necessary to ensure a well-functioning internal market for road transport without creating additional red tape for the industry nor complex rules for the enforcement authorities.



The associations have therefore called on the co-legislators to take into account the outstanding concerns of the industry. These include the posting rules, the mandatory return of vehicles, the restrictions on cabotage and the introduction of a 'cooling-off' period, as well as the prohibition on the regular and reduced weekly rest in the vehicle, without a sufficient number of safe and secure truck parking areas in the EU.

Ultimately, the associations have urged the co-legislators to consider that EU customers and consumers will only benefit from a well-functioning EU road transport market if the posting rules are flexible but enforceable, the return of the vehicle is not mandatory, less restrictive cabotage rules facilitate the reduction of empty runs, and safe and secure parking areas are created prior to forcing truck drivers outside of the cabin for regular and reduced weekly rests.

The third round of trilogues will take place on 25-26 November during the European Parliament's Plenary session in Strasbourg, with expectations to start discussing the above-mentioned issues.

## CLECAT DISAPPOINTED BY COM PROPOSAL TO EXTEND CBER

Earlier this week, the European Commission has published its [proposal](#) to prolong the Consortia Block Exemption Regulation (BER) for another 4 years without modification.

According to the Commission, the findings of the evaluation demonstrate that the objectives and justifications for the Consortia BER remain valid and that the market conditions of the liner shipping sector still appear to necessitate the existence of a sector-specific BER.

CLECAT expresses its disappointment with the fact that the Commission has dismissed the position of the users of liner shipping services. In its [position paper as well as the reply to a stakeholder consultation](#), CLECAT has called for a repeal of the BER as the current framework is obsolete given the increased market concentration. At the same time, an important condition for the exemption, which is to provide benefits to the customers, is no longer met, as neither service quality nor productivity have improved over the years. Instead, users of liner shipping services and their service providers have suffered from an increasingly unbalanced market situation since carriers entered into major cooperation agreements.

In its [evaluation paper](#), the Commission itself recognises that there is no accurate data regarding the Consortia BER and that it is therefore difficult to assess whether some consortia are below 30% in terms of their market share. According to the Commission's assessment, only one fifth of consortia falls within the scope of the Consortia BER given that it could be said with certainty that their market shares are below 30%. Yet, the Commission has proposed to prolong the Consortia BER without any amendments, clearly dismissing the arguments of an important range of stakeholders in the maritime supply chain, all of them having serious problems with the current BER.

CLECAT will prepare a more detailed response in reply to the [public consultation](#) on the Roadmap and the draft regulation, opened by the Commission on 20 November.

## FREIGHT FORWARDERS FORUM 2019 'LOGISTICS FOR EUROPE'



On 14 November 2019, CLECAT's Freight Forwarders' Forum was held at the Residence Palace in Brussels, gathering more than 120 industry experts, policy makers and stakeholders in a constructive dialogue under the theme 'Logistics for Europe'.

The Forum was opened with a keynote speech by Mr **Sandro Santamato, Head of Unit D1 Maritime Transport & Logistics at the European Commission's DG MOVE**, who noted that it was essential to understand the benefit of sharing information with others in a trusted environment and introduced



the legislative proposal on the Electronic Freight Transport Information Regulation (eFTI), as well as the work of the Digital Transport and Logistics Forum (DTLF) in that regard.

Mr **Steve Parker, President of CLECAT**, introduced and handed over the memorandum for CLECAT's "Logistics for Europe" initiative to Ms Rautavirta, representing the Finnish Presidency of the Council. The "Logistics for Europe" initiative illustrates that Logistics companies and their customers from industry and commerce highly value the borderless Single Market, which ensures the free movement of goods. It further highlights that business needs a stronger Europe through further opening of markets and harmonisation, rather than protectionism, as well as removing barriers instead of creating new ones. CLECAT and its members are convinced that 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.



The first panel, which was introduced and moderated by Mr **Dominique Willems, Senior Manager at CLECAT**, focused on harmonisation, standardisation and cooperation in IT, which are key to make digitalisation in logistics a success. The panel revolved around the lessons that can be learned from national, European, private sector and research initiatives, as well what is needed from the EU to improve, accelerate or even enforce harmonisation. During the panel, industry speakers, including Mr **Thomas Bagge, Managing Director & CEO at the Digital Container**

**Shipping Association (DCSA)**, Mr **Roderick de la Houssaye, CEO at Nedcargo**, and Mr **Matjaž Auflič, representative of EurTrade Net/TRINET Informatika**, highlighted the importance of standardisation of data elements and interfaces for the efficient and successful digitalisation in transport and subsequently shared their user-perspective. The public sector perspective was provided by Ms **Maria Rautavirta, Director of Data Business Unit at the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications**, and Ms **Lia Potec, Policy Officer at the European Commission's DG MOVE**, who explained the legislative proposal on the eFTI Regulation and its state of play more in detail.

The second panel, which was introduced and moderated by Ms **Nicolette van der Jagt, Director General at CLECAT**, focused on gearing up the EU internal market for sustainable logistics. The panel addressed how global, European, national or even local smart initiatives can support efficient and cleaner freight transport mobility, as well as how digitalisation can support emissions accounting to decarbonise freight and how the EU can guarantee workable legislation in road transport, whilst supporting increased efficiencies. Delivering a key introduction to the panel, Mr **Edgar Uribe Casillas, the Global Head of Environment and Sustainability at Kuehne + Nagel**, presented the K+N's commitment to achieve the CO2 neutrality by 2030, according to which K+N is planning to be fully carbon neutral worldwide for all direct and indirect emissions in its own sphere of influence as of 2020. Subsequently, Mr **Erkki Valtonen, Managing Director Finland at Blue Water Shipping**, provided an SME point of view, arguing that the best way to be sustainable



for SMEs was to be as cost-efficient as possible. Conveying the shippers' perspective, Mr **Sergio Barbarino, Research Fellow at Procter & Gamble**, spoke about the role of innovation in ensuring sustainable logistics in the future. Mr **Philippe Mangeard, President at TK'Blue Agency**, argued that there was a lot of costs to be saved by reducing the sources of poor-quality transport and introduced his company's work on creating support tools accessible for all freight forwarders. Introducing the European Commission's perspective, Mr **Alexandre Paquot, Head of Unit for Road Transport at DG CLIMA**, declared that transport was the only sector where emissions were on the rise. The way to address this challenge was through an integrated approach, which included provisions to decarbonise fuels and make all types of vehicles more fuel-efficient. Mr Paquot welcomed CLECAT's support on the recently agreed CO2 emission standards for new heavy-duty vehicles, stating that logistics operations were being made cleaner by introducing more efficient vehicles through new standards.

More information on the event is available on the [CLECAT webpage](#), as well as at the [CLECAT conference webpage](#).

## EP HEARING OF EU COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE FOR TRANSPORT

On 14 November, Ms Adina-Ioana Vălean, a new Commissioner-designate for Transport from Romania, convinced the Members of the EP's Transport Committee of her suitability for the role. During a parliamentary hearing, she outlined her strategy for the upcoming 5-year term in office and struck a pragmatic approach, indicating that she will not be afraid to champion the transport industry.

During her introductory speech, Ms Vălean stated that transport is a priority because it enables the free movement in the EU, both for people and for goods. It should therefore not be overly constrained. Declaring that the European Green Deal is a key priority, the Commissioner-designate indicated that transport must be at its core. While additional efforts are needed to reach carbon neutrality targets, this has to be economically feasible, she added.



Ms Vălean then described her commitment to work on the reduction of the environmental footprint of transportation activities. She said she would work on improving road safety and would push for the completion of the Single European Sky to reduce airspace congestion and emissions. She would make efforts to boost the uptake of clean vehicles and the deployment of publicly available refuelling and recharging points. Whereas the EU has a solid passenger rights framework, this also needs to be taken further, she said. On infrastructure investment, she would defend the Connecting Europe Facility budget for the next Multiannual Financial Framework as the transport sector needs as much money as possible to deliver sustainable and smart transport. She finalised her speech by saying that digitalisation and automation entail positive changes for the sector, but this cannot come at a human cost and therefore a greater focus is needed on training and retraining on skills the future jobs will require.

MEPs of several groups questioned Ms Vălean on specific measures and initiatives she intends to bring forward in the context of the Green Deal and on how to improve transport connections in remote regions. Whereas some MEPs stressed the importance of completing the Single European Sky to cut emissions, others asked whether she intends to support other measures such as the kerosene tax for the aviation sector and whether she intends to support climate-proofing projects financed by the EU. Some MEPs wanted to know how the Commission will support SMEs in the context of the Green Deal,



to which Ms Vălean replied that supporting business is essential for EU's economy and that there is a need for a level playing field for companies and those accessing the European market.

Eventually, the EP's Transport Committee recommended that Ms Vălean's appointment should proceed. As a next step, the EP's Plenary will vote on whether or not to elect the Commission as a whole on 27 November, in Strasbourg. If approved, the new College of Commissioners can start work on 1 December.

## ELP LUNCH DEBATE ON CEF II



### European Logistics Platform

investments in infrastructure – supporting smart, sustainable and safe mobility.

On 4 December, the European Logistics Platform (ELP) is organising a lunch debate to discuss how the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), as a financial instrument, adds value and can be instrumental in the decarbonisation of the transport sector. The purpose of the event will be to demonstrate the importance of the next generation CEF programme, which provides

The speakers include Herald Ruijters, Director at DG MOVE's Directorate B Investment, Innovative & Sustainable Transport, Isabelle Ryckbost, Secretary General at the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO), Libor Lochman, Executive Director at the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), and Mats Rosenqvist, Director External Research Collaboration at Volvo Group.

Members from across the European Parliament's committees and political groups, the European Commission and industry stakeholders are invited to join the debate that is taking place on 4 December at 12.30-14.30 at the Renaissance Hotel in Brussels.

Online registration is open [here](#).

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## Rail

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### DUTCH IM PRORAIL FINED FOR DELAYED TARIFF REPORT

Last week, the Dutch Infrastructure Manager ProRail was charged a €25.000 fine for failing to timely communicate the tariff for the use of the shunting hill Kijfhoek. According to the Dutch Authority for Consumers & Markets (ACM), which issued the fine, rail operators faced a long period of uncertainty about the tariff which affected business operations.

ProRail manages the Kijfhoek marshalling yard, including its shunting hill. This shunting hill is used for sorting freight wagons that arrive at the marshalling yard according to their destination. According to the ACM, ProRail should have communicated information about the tariffs in the Network Statement 2020. The fact that rail transport operators were uncertain about the rate for the shunting hill for a longer period of time meant that they were hindered in their business operations.

The network statement must contain all the information that railway undertakings need in order to exercise the right of access to the railways. They need complete and correct information in order to make the right choices.



The amount of the fine imposed by the ACM shall act as a warning to ProRail that such a violation may not occur again. On the other hand, the ACM declared that it has taken into account that ProRail had published all its other rates in a timely manner. It further indicates that ProRail published the tariff “before the capacity for the shunting hill at Kijfhoek was divided and the tariff came into effect”.

ProRail is responsible for allocating the capacity on shunting sites that are used by freight carriers for parking and linking wagons. ProRail also provides access to services offered on marshalling grounds. Kijfhoek is the only shunting site in the Netherlands that has an automated wagon sorting system. The Railways Act stipulates, *inter alia*, that ProRail must ensure that carriers have access to marshalling grounds. The ACM supervises the correct implementation of the Railways Act.

Source: [Dutch Authority for Consumers and Markets](#)

## GERMANY APPROVES SERVICE AND FINANCING AGREEMENT FOR RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

On 13 November, the Transport Committee of the German Bundestag approved the draft for a Third Service and Financing Agreement (LuFV III) between the Federal Government and Deutsche Bahn AG for the maintenance of the railway infrastructure.

With the LuFV III, a total of €86.2 billion will be available for maintenance between 2020 and 2029. €62 billion of this are to be financed by the German federal government, representing an increase of 59% compared to the LuFV II, which expires in 2019. DB AG is to contribute own funds of 24.2 billion euros, 41% more than before. The LuFV III is, *inter alia*, intended to introduce various new, non-sanction-reinforced quality indicators for measuring success. In addition, money will be set aside for customer-friendly construction, to avoid entire sections of track from being closed. The agreement also contains the required quality indicators.

Sources: [German Bundestag](#)

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# Maritime

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## IMO DISCUSSES GHG EMISSIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING

On 11-15 November, the IMO Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships met at the IMO Headquarters in London. The working group agreed on the draft text of a resolution to be put forward to the next Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) for adoption at its 75<sup>th</sup> session on 30 March-3 April 2020. The text urges the Member States to develop and update their voluntary National Action Plans (NAP) with a view to contributing to reducing GHG emissions from international shipping.



According to the agreed text, the NAPs could include but are not limited to: (a) improving domestic institutional and legislative arrangements for the effective implementation of existing IMO



instruments, (b) developing activities to further enhance the energy efficiency of ships, (c) initiating research and advancing the uptake of alternative low-carbon and zero-carbon fuels, (d) accelerating port emission reduction activities, consistent with resolution MEPC.323(74), (e) fostering capacity-building, awareness-raising and regional cooperation and (f) facilitating the development of infrastructure for green shipping.

During the Working Group session, a number of proposals were discussed with regards to the short-term decarbonisation measures, including an Energy Efficiency Ship Index (EEXI), mandatory power limitation on ships, measures to optimise speed on a voyage and slow steaming. It was agreed that further discussions would be needed on both technical and operational measures at the next working group meeting on 23-27 March 2020 to develop such proposals further, although it was clear that there was no appetite for prescriptive speed reduction regulation.

With a longer-term perspective, and in order to encourage the uptake of alternative low- and zero-carbon fuels in the shipping sector, the Working Group also agreed on the establishment of a dedicated workstream for the development of lifecycle GHG/carbon intensity guidelines for all relevant types of fuels. This could include, for example, biofuels, electro-/synthetic fuels such as hydrogen or ammonia, etc. Many participants to the meeting highlighted the importance of undertaking this work as soon as possible, in order to pave the way for the decarbonisation of the shipping industry.

Source: [IMO](#)

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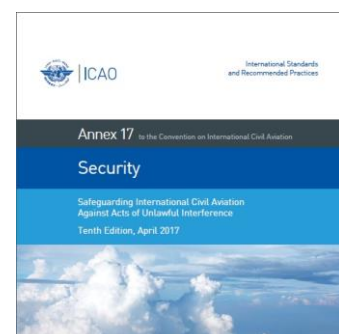
## Air

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### COUNCIL POSITION ON ICAO ANNEX 17 AMENDMENT

On 11 November, the Council published the Annex to the Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the EU in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), regarding the revision of Annex 17 (Security) (Amendment 17) to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (the 'Chicago Convention'). According to the [Council's decision of 19 November](#), the Member States, acting jointly in the interests of the Union, shall support the proposed Amendment 17 to Annex 17.

Amendment 17 to Annex 17 includes new or revised provisions on vulnerability assessments, information sharing between states and stakeholders, training programmes and certification systems, access control, staff screening and other editorial amendments. It was prepared by the ICAO Aviation Security Panel, in which experts of 8 EU Member States are active members and submitted for endorsement to the 217<sup>th</sup> session of the ICAO Council. Following the consultation of ICAO Member States, it is probable that Amendment 17 to Annex 17 will be adopted by the ICAO Council at its 218<sup>th</sup> session. Once adopted, the amended Annex 17 will be binding on all ICAO Member States, including all EU Member States, in accordance with and within the limits set out in the Chicago Convention.



According to the [Annex to the Council Decision](#), which sets the position to be taken by the EU Member States on behalf of the Union within ICAO, the EU Member States, acting jointly in the interests of the Union, shall support the proposed Amendment 17 to Annex 17.



Source: [Council of the EU](#)

## COALITION OF 9 MEMBER STATES REQUEST TAX ON AVIATION

On 7 November, a coalition comprised of Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden urged the next European Commission to propose new measures on aviation pricing.

The letter states that “more coordination on pricing of negative externalities of aviation could ensure that the polluter pays a fairer price for the use of aviation transport” and therefore call upon the incoming European Commission to bring the debate on aviation pricing, e.g. in the form of aviation taxation or similar policies a step further, while taking into consideration existing effective national systems and policies, the competitiveness of the sectors concerned, and the geographical position and the development of the transport infrastructure in Member States. Based on that, the signatories called upon the European Commission to create a proposal for an EU initiative on aviation pricing.

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## Customs & Trade

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### EU RECOGNITION FOR CUSTOMS ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES 2020

On 20 November, the European Commission launched the 2020 cycle of the EU Recognition for Customs academic programmes (Bachelor’s, Master’s, and modules within those programmes). The aim is to equip students with the optimal competencies to engage in – or further advance in – their



Customs career, both in public and in private sectors. Such recognised academic programmes are expected to significantly contribute to the rise of Customs performance and professionalism.

Recognised Customs academic programmes (or modules thereof) can make use of the official EU Customs Certificate of Recognition identification statement and will be included in the publicly available list of EU Recognised Customs Academic Programmes.

The European Commission is inviting academic institutions, interested in obtaining the EU Certificate of Recognition acknowledging the quality of their customs specific study programmes with a label of excellence awarded by the European Commission, to **submit their application by 31 December 2019**. The process to obtain the EU Certificate of Recognition is based on the [EU Competency Framework for Customs \(CustCompeu\)](#) and explained in the [Application Guide](#).

All further documentation on the EU Recognition process is available [online](#).

For more information you can contact the [EU Certificate of Recognition Secretariat](#).



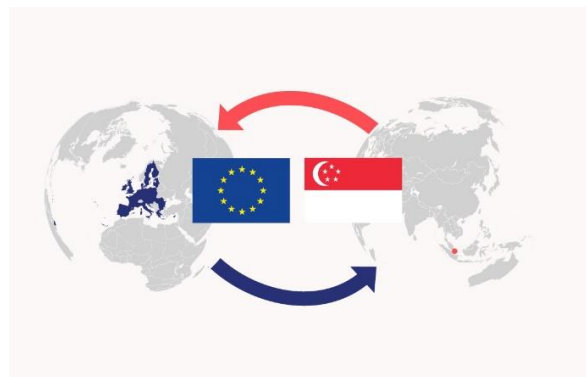


## EU-SINGAPORE FTA ENTERS INTO FORCE ON 21 NOVEMBER

On 8 November, the Council of the EU endorsed the free trade agreement (FTA) between the bloc and Singapore, which was signed last year. This paved the way for the agreement to enter into force on 21 November.

The EU-Singapore trade agreement is one of the first 'new generation' bilateral agreements. The agreement removes customs duties on both sides: Singapore will remove all remaining tariffs on certain EU products (like alcoholic beverages) and keep the current duty-free access for all other EU products unchanged, while the EU will open its market to over 80% of all imports from Singapore EU duty-free and remove all other tariffs within a few years.

Moreover, technical and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods will be removed in sectors such as: electronics, motor vehicles and vehicle parts, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, renewable energy, and raw and processed products of animal and plant origin. The agreement also contains important provisions on intellectual property protection, investment liberalisation, public procurement, competition and sustainable development.



The EU and Singapore have also concluded an investment protection agreement, which can enter into force after it has been ratified by all EU Member States according to their own national procedures.

Source: [Council of the EU](#)

## UPDATE OF LIST OF COUNTRIES APPLYING REX

On 19 November, the European Commission published an update on the list of countries applying the Registered Exporter System (REX). Notably, the transition period for Indonesia and Lesotho has been extended until 30 June 2020.

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](#)



## EU-SERBIA AGREEMENT ON BORDER MANAGEMENT

On 19 November, the EU signed an agreement with Serbia on border management cooperation between Serbia and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

The agreement allows Frontex to assist Serbia in border management, carry out joint operations and deploy teams in the regions of Serbia that border the EU, subject to Serbia's agreement. These activities aim at tackling irregular migration and cross-border crime and can involve the provision of increased technical and operational assistance at the border.

The draft decision on the conclusion of the agreement will be sent to the European Parliament, which needs to give its consent for the agreement to be concluded.

Source: [Council of the EU](#)

## KICK-OFF MEETING OF THE WCO WORKING GROUP ON PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Between 14 – 15 November, the WCO held the first meeting of the newly established Working Group on Performance Measurement (WGPM). The WGPM will be setting the tone for a pivotal collective challenge aimed at the establishment of a comprehensive WCO Performance Measurement Mechanism incorporating all Customs competencies for assessing and improving Customs organisational performance. Part of the working body's mandate is also to measure the extent to which WCO tools and instruments are applied and effectively implemented.

During the meeting, the WO Members confirmed their interest in contributing to the establishment of an evidence-based, scored assessment mechanism that would enable strategic policy-making processes in Customs administrations, and assist the national economies in revenue mobilisation and the safe and smooth movement of goods. The WGPM reached a cohesive view around the objectives of the WCO Performance Measurement Mechanism that will guide the development of its technical aspects.

Source: [World Customs Organization](#)

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# *Sustainable Logistics*

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## EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL FOR TRANSPORT

On 12 November, the Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises organised an event in the European Parliament under the theme "How to make the Green Deal a great deal for transport?". Mr Mårten Sjölin, the Chair of the Sustainable Logistics Institute at CLECAT, took part at the panel discussion alongside the representatives of the European policy-maker and other industry representatives.

Mr Sjölin emphasised that the decarbonisation targets at the national, EU and international level are increasing, with a view to setting long-term goals towards CO2 neutrality. For instance, the incoming European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, as part of the European Green Deal, has



pledged to increase the EU 2030 decarbonisation target to 50% and to bump it up to 55% when appropriate. This means that transport needs to step up its efforts to deliver on its share even faster. Conveying the national level perspective, he presented the 2018 Swedish Climate Act, aiming for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 and 70% lower emissions from domestic transport by 2030.

He then introduced the incoming Commission's European Green Deal and the transport-related measures, stating that the key for success is to keep it simple as overly complex regulations will lead to loopholes and sub-optimisation. Ultimately, the Green Deal must focus on reducing emissions, not the transportation. It can indeed be a good deal for transport as long as it enables increased efficiency and provides support for biofuels as well as green financial investments and incentives, Mr Sjölin said.

During the panel discussion, which Mr Sjölin moderated, the participants agreed that transport deserves a great deal as it is an enabler of single market and trade. Growth, innovation, competitiveness and cost-efficiency must be taken into consideration by the Commission when implementing the Green Deal, with regards to all modes of transport. Furthermore, investments in infrastructure and sustainable transport projects must form an utmost part of the approach. The main message of the Commission was that the Green Deal offers plenty of new opportunities for EU business rather than attempts to curb mobility.

## 2019 CEF CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

During the meeting of the EP's Transport Committee on 6 November, the European Commission presented the outcome of the 2019 CEF transport call for proposals, which focused on projects to improve cross-border connections in the TEN-T and reducing rail freight noise.

The presentation also outlined the state-of-play of the execution of the budget of the current CEF – allocated at 100%, with a share of 71% aimed at projects in sustainable transport modes, – and outlined the new 2019 multi-annual call and an upcoming call of the CEF transport blending facility. MEPs engaged in a lively debate, inquiring about the progress in reducing rail freight noise as well as aspects the programme's overall implementation, namely timely execution and re-use of funds by the end of the current programme.

Regarding political priorities for the future CEF 2021-2027, Members highlighted the need to ensure connectivity for all regions, meet citizens' daily needs in transport and properly maintain transport infrastructure. Several speakers stressed that CEF should concentrate on decarbonising the transport system. The Commission explained that the CEF II would still strengthen the focus on sustainable transport modes. For road transport, this would include infrastructure for alternative fuels but imply only limited scope for support in the area of (re-)building road infrastructure.

Source: [EP TRAN](#)

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## General

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### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR BIFA'S ROBERT KEEN

On 15 November, Robert Keen, Director General of the British International Freight Association (BIFA), has been presented with a lifetime achievement award at the Global Freight Awards.



Mr Keen has worked in the industry for some 50 years, at a number of freight forwarders. He joined BIFA in 1999, becoming executive director a decade later, and DG in 2014. "We are delighted that Robert has been presented with this prestigious award, which reflects his excellent record of achievement in a lifelong career in freight forwarding and logistics," said BIFA national chairman John Stubbings.

For more information, please visit the [BIFA website](#).

## MEETING OF THE EEA COUNCIL

The fifty-second meeting of the EEA (European Economic Area) Council took place in Brussels on 19 November 2019. The EEA Council discussed the overall functioning of the Agreement and held an orientation debate on the Single Market beyond 2019. On the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the entry into force of the EEA Agreement, the EEA Council recognised that the agreement has been a solid basis for a broad and strong relationship and that the agreement has promoted economic growth and ensured that a high level of social standards.

The EEA Council confirmed its support for the EEA Agreement as the continued basis for future relations between the EU and the EEA EFTA States. It also recognised the positive contributions made by the EEA EFTA States to the decision-shaping process of EEA-relevant EU legislation and programmes. However, The EEA Council expressed concerns regarding the current challenges in international trade and reconfirmed its commitment to open and fair trade and rule-based trade relations. In particular, the EEA Council underlined the importance of predictable trade conditions for economic operators.

With regard to the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the EEA Council underlined the importance of safeguarding the EEA Agreement, ensuring the continuation of a well-functioning, homogenous EEA and preserving the integrity of the Internal Market.

Other topics discussed during the meeting were the development of the Internal Market and especially the Digital Single Market, environmental protection, energy and climate change and agricultural trade.

Source: [European Council](#)

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## *Forthcoming Events*

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### CLECAT MEETINGS

CLECAT Customs and Indirect Taxation Institute

17-18 December 2019, Brussels

CLECAT Air / Security Institutes

3 March 2020, Brussels



## OTHER EVENTS WITH CLECAT PARTICIPATION

### FEPOR Annual Stakeholder Conference

28 November 2019, Brussels

### ELP Lunch Debate on CEF II: Supporting Smart, Sustainable and Safe Mobility

4 December 2019, Brussels

### ALICE TP Plenary

12 December 2019, Brussels

### Global Maritime Logistics Dialogue

16 December 2019, Brussels

## EP/COUNCIL MEETINGS

### European Parliament Plenary

25-28 November, Strasbourg

### European Parliament TRAN Committee

3 December, Brussels

### EU Transport Council

2 December, Brussels

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