



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

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'Mobility package 2' released by the European Commission - ETF strongly questions the need for a new wave of liberalisation in commercial road transport

Today the European Commission published the second part of its Mobility Package. Two of its elements - notably the access to the market for bus and coach services and the combined transport directive – have a high potential to impact on job quality and social sustainability of road transport sector.

In terms of bus and coach services, the European Commission goes for full liberalisation of interurban passenger transport with the view to encourage more car users to jump on buses when travelling between cities, with no prejudice to other transport modes. Different types of authorisations are envisaged for journeys above and below 100km, with independent regulators in each Member State to grant authorisations for the latter, on basis among others of an economic equilibrium test.

In what freight is concerned, no surprises. Under the new proposal, in the context of a journey combining road, rail, maritime or inland waterway transport, the initial or final road transport journey continues to be exempt from cabotage rules, thus totally liberalised. In other words, no matter in which country a haulier is established, it can operate on domestic markets of other Member States within a radius of 150 kms around their respective ports, on '*country of establishment*' conditions. Over the past years, this exemption has created pockets of legalised social dumping.

The European Transport Workers' Federation cannot disagree more with the Commission approach, simply because past experience gives it no credit at all.

"Germany liberalised the interurban bus and coach market in 2013 for journeys of more than 50 kms. This came with unsustainable pricing policies and thus a huge fall in prices, with job depreciation and with more law infringements than ever before! By way of example, in 2015 only approximately 60,000 free bus tickets were released for this type of service. The working time record was up to 280 hours per month, most of which undocumented, which led to soaring infringement rates! Is this the example the European Commission wants the whole EU to follow?" says Frank Moreels, ETF President.

Roberto Parrillo, ETF Road Transport President said, on combined transport: "In 2014 the European Commission ditched its intentions to liberalise road cabotage in the EU. The cause: labour costs differed too much across Europe. So, if a carrier registered outside of Belgium wants to operate on the Belgian domestic market it can, but only temporary, and in respect of some rules such as the Belgian minimum wage and conditions. However, the same carrier can do whatever it pleases within a radius of 150 kms around the Belgian ports, as that supposedly is 'combined transport' and thus subject to no rules and restrictions! That's what we call legalised social dumping."

"The European Commission failed once again to learn from past experiences and persists in their purely ideological approach of opening markets to competition, a process which so far, in transport, had a negative impact on job quality, safety of drivers and passengers and the quality of service. The ETF will engage, in the months to come, in all possible actions to influence the co-decision process in the spirit of building a Fair Transport in Europe." added Eduardo Chagas, ETF General Secretary.

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The ETF represents more than 3.5 million transport workers from more than 230 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.