

Brexit and the international road transport sector

The decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union will have many practical implications for international road transport. As the UK triggers Article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union, IRU urges a rapid resolution of the numerous issues that will need to be addressed.

The industry must have clarity in order to facilitate proper business planning for the transport operators we represent through our members. It is also essential that the industry's views are taken into account during the negotiating process.

A failure to address these practical issues within the two year negotiating period, laid out in the Treaty, could reduce trade, damage jobs and economic growth, significantly disrupt supply chains and bring confusion and uncertainty to journeys to and from the UK. Similarly there must be a sufficient transition period to allow all operators to plan and adapt to any newly negotiated regime. No deal is not an option.

Road freight transport is significant for both the UK and the EU

- More than 4.4 million driver-accompanied freight vehicles move between the UK and EU every year.
- Four million of these movements are through the Port of Dover alone¹.
- The UK is a net importer of goods from the EU.
- The UK exports 21,350,000 tonnes by road to the EU.
- The EU exports 26,816,000 tonnes to the UK ².



The UK exported 21,350,000 tonnes of cargo by road to the EU in 2015 alone.²

1 Figures from Road Haulage Association

2 Figures from Eurostat for 2015



The issues that the road transport industry must see addressed

- Access to the profession of road transport operator – training of company managers, financial standing, good repute of the company - all require harmonisation.
- Access to the road transport market – who can drive where, when and for how long, including whether Cabotage will be permitted by UK operators in the EU and vice versa.
- Social conditions and access to the labour market – for example, what driving and rest time rules, and minimum wage rules apply? A significant number of EU nationals are employed by UK road transport firms; driver shortage remains a pan-European issue.
- Customs procedures, supporting infrastructure and border issues. Secure parking and customs clearance facilities will be needed and must support rapid movement. Will the UK require TIR or other customs documents and processes, especially for Irish hauliers passing through UK territory? How will passengers be processed? Will there be a requirement for advance Passenger Name Records, for example?
- Traffic rules and enforcement – how will traffic fines be collected?
- Transport documents and mutual recognition. What documents will be accepted, will training courses be mutually recognised, can digital transport documents be used?
- Weights and dimensions of vehicles – will the current EU rules continue to apply in the UK or for UK vehicles in the EU?

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