

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA
The United Kingdom

By email and post

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Brussels, 30 January 2020

Keeping Goods and People moving after Brexit

Dear Prime Minister,

IRU and ESC are asking your government to prioritise commercial land transport (road and combined freight transport as well as passenger transport by coach – occasional and regular services) market access in the forthcoming negotiations with the EU on the future relationship. Any deal applying to trade and tourism would have little effect without parallel market access arrangements.

IRU represents commercial road freight and passenger transport operators worldwide. ESC represents the European shippers. Both organisations have members in the UK and EU.

Land transport, including road freight and combined transport, is fundamental to international trade for almost all goods moving between the EU and the UK. The overland route through the UK is also the most efficient for road freight transport to connect with the Republic of Ireland. In addition, more than one million people are crossing the Channel by coach every year. Bus and coach are also regularly-used mobility means between the Republic of Ireland and the UK. It will be essential to keep goods moving and passengers travelling hassle-free whenever the transition period ends.

To work efficiently after the end of the transition period, EU27 and UK commercial road transport companies will need clear, practical and reciprocal rules around the operation of international transport. For road freight, this should cover accompanied and unaccompanied operations. For passenger transport, basic connectivity supporting mutual provisions on the right to enter and short stay in the territories of the EU and the UK should be assured. IRU and ESC recommend that these rules be agreed early in the negotiation process. Failure to address the needs of commercial road transport effectively will result in significant disruption across major parts of both the EU and UK economies.

IRU and ESC could support a market access agreement for freight and passenger land transport between the UK and the EU which could be inserted in or linked to a wider UK-EU future relationship agreement. Such a market access agreement should permit

- the mutual recognition of EU and UK licences, certificates and qualifications;
- the facilitation of quota-free international road freight, passenger and combined transport at least to, from and through the two contracting parties of the agreement;
- level playing conditions for EU and UK established road freight and passenger transport companies;
- a continuous smooth connection between the Republic of Ireland and the rest of the European Union.

Every possible opportunity should be used to introduce innovative digital solutions to reduce the administrative burden for the road freight transport and logistics industry, shippers as well as for the UK government.

IRU and ESC are prepared to assist in developing viable solutions and to meet with your competent services to further discuss options as well as the detailed technical aspects of the issues raised in this letter and on other issues related to road freight, passenger or combined transport which may be relevant in the upcoming negotiations. In case you or your competent services require additional information or have any questions pertaining to the above-stated, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Let us work together to assure the continuity of the mobility of people and goods in the post Brexit UK-EU framework. Please be informed that we also addressed these issues with the European Commission.

We look forward to hearing your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Raluca Marian
General Delegate
IRU Permanent Delegation to the EU



Godfried Smit
Secretary General
European Shippers' Council (ESC)

