

Competitive and harmonised abnormal transport in Europe

ESTA Manifesto and priorities for 2024- 2029 - a summary

ESTA¹, the European Association of Abnormal Road Transport and Mobile Cranes, is the leading European association for the abnormal road transport and mobile crane rental industry. ESTA's mission is to improve safety and efficiency in the heavy transport industry. **We want Europe to be a place with clear and harmonised, sector-specific rules governing abnormal transport.**

With this Manifesto for the 2024-2029 legislature, we call on all EU decision makers to endorse our values and priorities in order to **build a competitive, green and safe abnormal road transport sector in the EU.**

ESTA also has members that are outside the European Union. We hope and expect that the adoption of a sensible and efficient regulatory regime within the EU will lead to similar reforms and alignment within the wider European community and beyond.

Priority 1: HARMONISED RULES FOR ABNORMAL ROAD TRANSPORT

Abnormal transport companies are crucial for the prosperity of the European economy. Unfortunately, they face a huge number of different national provisions which make abnormal transport less safe and less efficient. This is why **ESTA is supporting the ongoing revision of the Weights and Dimensions Directive with the overarching aim to harmonise rules with regard to abnormal transport.** ESTA is advocating for the adoption of the standard Special European Registration for Trucks and Trailers (SERT) documentation for abnormal road vehicle registration; creation of a 'one stop shop' per country to issue permits, harmonisation of permit application forms and digitalisation of permits; harmonisation of escorting rules and vehicle signalling and marking; a ban on language requirements for drivers as well as introduction of 'weighing in motion' systems and their interoperability with national permit and fine systems.

Priority 2: ACCESS TO SAFE AND SECURE PARKING PLACES

In Europe we are still confronted with an insufficient number of parking facilities for professional transport operators. Even if there have been some improvements in the past, the situation is still far from being satisfactory and it is even worse for abnormal transport operators. The existing safe and secure parking places are very often not accessible for trucks transporting indivisible loads due to congestion or infrastructural barriers. **ESTA is therefore advocating to make parking places in Europe accessible for abnormal transport.** This would require conducting an analysis of parking capacity for abnormal transport operators as well as **revision of eligibility criteria for projects funded** via the Connecting Europe Facility, so that safe and secure parking places are adapted to the specific needs of abnormal transport.

Priority 3: SECTOR-SPECIFIC RULES AND ELIMINATION OF COUNTRY-SPECIFIC BARRIERS

As abnormal transport has its specificities, it cannot be adequately governed by the standard rules on road transport in Europe. **Therefore, ESTA is calling on EU decision makers to take into account specific features of abnormal road transport and introduce sector-specific rules, whenever existing EU road transport legislation is being revised or new legislative instruments are being proposed and adopted.** In order to tackle existing problems with enforcement of rules on weights and dimension limits as well as driving and resting time, ESTA is calling on national authorities and road transport enforcers to come up with sector-specific guidance notes offering reasonable flexibility when controlling abnormal transport. In order to improve safety on European roads, ESTA is also advocating for **harmonisation of marking and signalling rules** at EU level, ideally via the current revision of the Weights and Dimensions Directive and following comitology procedure.

Abnormal road transport operators are also confronted with a set of **country-specific measures**, that do not improve safety, but rather affect badly competitiveness and effectiveness of the sector. Some of these measures include country-specific rules on "angle mort", language requirements for abnormal transport drivers, licencing of drivers of EMS vehicle combinations, marking of escort vehicles and training of the escort vehicle drivers as well as country-specific provisions on insurance and bank guarantees. **ESTA is calling for all these measures to be evaluated at the European level and, where necessary, to be harmonised or abolished.**

PRIORITY 4: ESTABLISHMENT OF ABNORMAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

Given the growing importance of abnormal road transport between various European industrial areas, ESTA is calling for the **introduction of "Abnormal Transport Corridors"**, within the trans-European road network. These corridors shall be accessible to abnormal transport operators and cover roads with a high economic relevance, harbours and container terminals as well as specific road infrastructures. This would allow abnormal transport to run smoothly and avoid potential damage of infrastructure, that is not adapted to abnormal road transport weights and dimensions.

In case of any further questions or comments you are kindly invited to contact ESTA Director Ton Klijn via e-mail: director@estaeurope.eu or call +31 6 515 02 069. If you would like to discuss ESTA recommendations in more details and support us in their implementation, we would be very happy to work together with you