

ESTA Briefing Document



Who we are and what we do

ESTA is the **leading European association for abnormal transport and mobile crane hire**. At a European level, ESTA represents national trade associations whose members are crane hire or heavy transport companies. The key sectors in which they operate are heavy industry, oil and gas, onshore and offshore wind energy, and infrastructure.

In total, ESTA unites more than **100 member associations and companies from 27 countries**. Beside heavy transport and lifting companies and associations, ESTA also has affiliate members who comprise equipment manufacturers and other suppliers.

As a **vital knowledge hub**, ESTA fosters connections among stakeholders, striving to elevate safety and training standards across Europe while promoting the industry's interests.

Why we are important

Economically, we are a tiny sector but our members are a **crucial part of Europe's logistics supply chains**. We are often the 'canary in the coal mine' when political, regulatory or economic issues are causing distress.

Critical subjects

Currently, there are **two areas of primary concern**:

1) Europe's weak infrastructure

This has been a growing worry, causing difficulties in finding safe routes for transporting heavy loads. A side effect of the tragedy in Ukraine is that Europe's militaries have realised that our infrastructure must be strengthened if it is not to hamper both military and economic activities in future. There are good signs in Germany (courtesy of the [VI-GST](#) campaign) that the new Government is taking this issue seriously. ESTA's policy has been to call for the **creation of abnormal transport routes across Europe**, as a way of focusing investment in a coordinated and cost-effective way.

2) Bureaucracy and protectionism

For many of our members, the single market exists in name only, with national governments sometimes exploiting legal loopholes to discriminate against companies from outside their jurisdictions. The most obvious issue is the **difficulty in obtaining the necessary permits** to move heavy loads, but this form of bureaucratic protectionism finds expression in a plethora of local regulations governing language requirements, signage, escort vehicle rules, training and more. ESTA has long lobbied the European Union for the **harmonisation of such regulations** as a way to boost productivity and efficiency, and cut costs. There are positive signs in the proposed reforms of the EU's Weights and Dimensions Directive (96/53).

Other core issues are **safety, training and parking**. All are critical if we are to attract young people into the industry. We will fail to attract new entrants - and especially young women - if we do not provide them and their cargoes with **safe and secure parking areas**, and also with **good quality training and career paths**. To that end, ESTA has created the [European Crane Operators Licence](#) and is currently working on the [European Transport Operators Licence](#), initially for SPMTs.

For further information, go to the ESTA website at www.estaeurope.eu or contact Graham Anderson, ESTA Communications Manager on andersonmedia@btinternet.com or on +44 7711 650691.