



Safe & Secure Parking Areas ETF policy recommendations

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) has long been advocating for more and better-quality parking areas across Europe. They are essential in enabling professional drivers to take their breaks, essential in improving the drivers' quality of rest when on long-haul trips.

Availability of high-quality parking areas must be regarded as part of the implementation of the Road Mobility Package, and should never become a reason to step back on drivers' rights, notably the right to spend the weekly rest outside the vehicle and the right to return home.

To this regard, we remind that the European institutions have been committed to put an end to the weekly rest in the cabin.

Over the years, visiting parking areas and talking with truck and bus drivers has become common practice for the ETF and its member organisations. Without a doubt, parking areas offer the best glimpse into drivers' living and working conditions. Sadly however, instead of offering a safe space, they remain to the day a cradle of social dumping and abuse on display.

The ETF believes all actors have to contribute to put an end to this immediately. This is why our call for more and better parking areas is a call for more and better enforcement of the Road Mobility Package. The ETF calls for:

- **The European Commission** to guarantee the integrity of the Road Mobility Package. To this point, we stress once again that the recent study signed off by the Commission, and hinting at the possibility to lift the ban of rest in the vehicle, is unacceptable. This legal provision, as well as the so-called "driver return home", were part of the initial European Commission Mobility Package proposal and constitute a key element to address market disbalances and social dumping.
- **The European Commission and Member States** to deploy all resources needed for its enforcement and control, particularly the enforcement of the ban on taking the regular weekly rest in the cabin, and the driver return home, both part of the provisions of the driving and rest time rules. To this regard, we invite the European Commission to consider the setting up of a European Road Transport Agency to complement and support the work of the European Labour Authority whose mandate is limited to labour aspects of road legislation.
- **Member States and policy makers** to invest in expanding the availability of secure parking areas for heavy-duty vehicles. Funds should be allocated to develop new rest areas for professional drivers, and upgrade the existing ones, in line with the European Commission standards for Safe and Secure Truck Parking Areas aimed at improving safety, comfort, and working conditions for professional drivers across the EU.
- **Member States and public authorities, including the police and border authorities,**



to monitor the safety of drivers in critical parking locations, to prevent exposure to human trafficking, cargo theft, and other criminal activities.

- **The European Commission and public authorities** to ensure that clear, up-to-date, and easily accessible information on the availability of parking areas is provided to drivers and transport operators. This should be accompanied by clear information about the employer responsibilities to cover access fees.
- **Road operators** to ensure drivers have access to parking areas by covering access fees, including those for premium areas such as Platinum and Gold, as part of standard operating expenses.
- According to the driving and rest time rules road operators have the obligation to organise the drivers' activities in such a way as to ensure full compliance with the EU legislation. **We therefore call for road operators** to ensure that drivers take their weekly rest periods outside the cabin, that they regularly return home or to the company base where they can start their weekly rest. In addition, to guarantee the drivers' wellbeing, work schedules must be reasonable, realistic and transparent to avoid or limit night driving, unpredictable work and stress, in compliance with all the provisions of the rules on driving times and rest periods. Road operators should, in line with EU legal requirements, inform their drivers in advance regarding the EU rules on driving time, breaks and weekly rest.
- **Road operators** to ensure that working time is properly recorded and remunerated thereof. Work-related activities, such as finding parking spaces, loading and unloading goods or luggage, interacting with dispatchers or clients, and studying the route must be recorded as work time and not as break time.
- **Road operators** to invest in well-equipped vehicles with proper air-conditioning systems, to guarantee driver-wellbeing in drastic weather conditions.
- **Member States, the European Commission and the European Labour Authority** to step up efforts to eradicate letter-box companies. The Road Mobility Package includes an EU regulation that sets key provisions in this respect. Clamping down on this toxic business model plays also a significant role in mitigating the low parking area capacity across Europe. These road operators have no base for their fleet as they operate from a fictive head office, and their trucks roam Europe endlessly. Their trucks are also itinerary homes to their drivers, many of them coming from non-EU countries and having no fixed address. It is exactly this that makes parking areas unpopular to invest in. Regrettably, one of the key measures of the Road Mobility Package having the potential to curve this trend, namely the return of the vehicle to the company base, was annulled last year following a ruling by the European Court of Justice (EUCJ).

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