

Ms Ursula von der Leyen  
President  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200  
1049 - Brussels  
Belgium



**By email**

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Geneva, 18 november 2022

**Urgent measures to give priority to trucks under the TIR system at borders with Ukraine in order to reduce waiting times.**

Dear President von der Leyen,

The IRU, the world road transport organisation, together with its national member associations from Ukraine, its neighbouring countries and those most impacted by the war in Ukraine, is writing you on a matter of great urgency.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, road transport operators have stepped up to ensure the continuous movement of goods, including essentials such as medicine and food, across the borders. However, the war in Ukraine and the alarming situation at the border crossing points between Ukraine and the EU member states is increasingly putting global logistics and secure trade, hence economic development and jobs, at great risk.

Current queues at the borders between Ukraine and its neighbouring countries of over 40km are exacerbating these risks and are putting enormous pressure on the road transport operators we represent as well as on our drivers who remain stuck at borders not for hours, but for days, and often without basic facilities! This unacceptable situation is also pushing to the limit all border agencies.

The latest information on the truck queues at some of the border crossing points at the beginning of November 2022 show the extent of the problem:

- Romania-Ukraine border crossing point (Siret-Porubne) is witnessing queues of commercial vehicles of more than 40km on the Ukrainian side and 20km on Romanian side
- More than 25km queues are reported at Ukrainian – Hungarian border
- 12km queues are observed on Ukrainian side at Slovakian border Uzhhorod – Vyšné Nemecké
- Situation at Polish – Ukrainian border was improved to some extent thanks to joint actions both from public and private sector, but despite these efforts trucks still have to wait for over ten hours in queues when entering Ukraine at Korczowa – Dorohusk border

In light of the current military conflict, it is clear that security and risk prevention have been raised to the top of the competent authorities' agenda. In this connection we would like to remind you of the extremely high level of security and facilitation provided by the UN TIR system. Amongst the many security elements which have allowed TIR to function for close to 75 years without a major security breach, TIR transports are inspected and security sealed by customs at point of departure and only reinspected by

customs at final destination. Together with electronic TIR information sent in advance, this allows TIR trucks to pass borders without the need for additional inspections while at the same time enhancing border authorities' risk and resource management. It is important to note that all EU member states, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, are Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention and the transport operators of these countries are confident users of the TIR system.

While we acknowledge the efforts made at the EU and national level by each country, especially through soft administrative measures that have helped to increase the processing capacity of commercial vehicles, the situation calls for further efforts to streamline the cross-border trade. To effectively alleviate the growing border crossing problem with Ukraine, we urge you to set up as soon as possible priority border crossing lanes for secure TIR trucks and equip these lanes with the necessary resources to handle sanitary, phyto-sanitary and other controls. Through such a prioritisation of TIR traffic, the number of trucks that can pass through the borders with Ukraine can be increased 2-3-fold in 24 hours.

We therefore call on the European Commission to implement coordinated measures between the EU member states and Ukraine in order to give priority to TIR trucks with electronic pre-declarations sent in advance to customs authorities.

The undersigned stand ready to assist customs authorities to implement, without delay, the much-needed priority TIR lanes to ensure the secure and fluid flow of trade during these particularly challenging times.

Expressing our trust in your support, we thank you and assure you of our highest consideration.

Signatories:

**IRU**

International Road Transport Union, Geneva Headquarters



Radu Dinescu  
President



Umberto de Pretto  
Secretary General

**AITA (Moldova)**

International Association of Road Hauliers of Moldova



Mihail Usatii  
President

**ASMAP Ukraine**  
Association of International Road Carriers of Ukraine



Leonid Mikhailovich Kostiuchenko  
President

**CCIS-AT (Serbia)**

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia



Marko Čadež  
President

**CESMAD Slovakia**

Association of Road Hauliers of the Slovak Republic



Pavol Piešťanský  
President

**LINAVA (Lithuania)**  
Lithuanian National Road Carriers  
Associations in Lithuania



Zenonas Buivydas  
Secretary General

**MKFE (Hungary)**  
Hungarian Road Transport Association



Zsolt Barna  
President

**UNTRR (Romania)**  
The National Union of Road Hauliers from  
Romania



Constantin Isac  
President

**ZMPD (Poland)**  
Association of International Road  
Transport Carriers in Poland



Jan BUCZEK  
President

**cc:** Ms Adina Vălean, Transport Commissioner, European Commission  
Mr Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy, European Commission