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EU truck size rules/monster trucks

Red light for proposals to allow cross-border transport of gigaliners

The European Parliament today voted on proposals to revise EU rules on truck dimensions (Directive 96/53/EC). MEPs voted to postpone a decision on proposals to legalise the cross-border use of excessively long 'gigaliner' trucks, until the Commission carries out a thorough impact assessment on the possible consequences. Commenting after the vote, Green transport spokesperson **Eva Lichtenberger** stated:

"MEPs have today voted to put the brakes on this proposal to give the go-ahead to the cross-border transport of gigaliners. This legislative review should never have been used to legalise the cross-border use of gigaliners and MEPs have today confirmed this. However, it only buys a little time for ensuring a more responsible approach to this revision of EU rules on trucks. According to today's vote, the European Commission is tasked to deliver the missing impact assessment of cross-border trips from these controversial monster trucks before retabling any such proposal.

"We cannot push blindly ahead with such a complete change of European law, without assessing the potentially dramatic consequences. This assessment must take account of the impact allowing cross-border transport of these gigaliners would have on the environment, road safety and public finances. In particular, this implies assessing the potential impact of a change in the rules on the shift of freight away from rail, which is clearly safer, more efficient and better for the environment. Studies highlight the risk that more than 35% of single-wagon load could be shifted from rail to road (and up to 13% of combined transport). Only a few companies would profit from this, with potentially major costs for society.

"The Greens will now use this time to advocate a different approach to these rules at all levels. There is no public support for these monster trucks and the Commission cannot simply tailor EU legislation to the interests of an extremely narrow lobby at the expense of the public.

"The general rules adopted today also include a number of welcome improvements, which will help improve road safety. The provisions on lorry cab designs (extra mirrors and overrun protection on the front and sides) will help improve the safety of these vehicles, notably for pedestrians and cyclists."

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