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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
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Subject:	Directive amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles the maximum authorised dimensions and the maximum authorised weights - Progress report

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission submitted the above-mentioned proposal to the European Parliament and to the Council on 13 July 2023 as a part of the Greening Transport Package.
2. The proposal to amend Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic, hereafter the “Directive on Weights and Dimensions for certain road vehicles” has three objectives: (a) to better ensure the free and efficient movement of goods and fair competition, (b) to provide sufficient incentives for the sector to encourage investment in zero-emission technologies and (c) to ensure more efficient and consistent enforcement of the new and existing rules.

II. WORK AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS

3. The European Parliament designated the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) as the responsible committee on this proposal and Ms. Rosa SERRANO SIERRA (S&D, ES) as the rapporteur. The European Parliament adopted its report at its plenary session on 12 March 2024.
4. The European Economic and Social Committee adopted its opinion at the 582nd plenary session, on 26 October 2023. The Committee of the Regions adopted its opinion at the 159th plenary session, on 31 January 2024.

III. WORK WITHIN THE COUNCIL AND ITS PREPARATORY BODIES

5. The Working Party on Land Transport started its work on 24 July 2023 with a general presentation of the proposal and the examination of the impact assessment. On 4 and 19 September, on 6, 16 and 23 October and on 13 November the Working Party examined the proposal. The Spanish presidency presented a progress report to the Council (15668/23) on 4 December 2023. Under the Belgian presidency the Working Party continued the examination of presidency compromises on 23 April, 7 May, 21 May and 7 June 2024. The Belgian presidency presented a second progress report to the Council (10214/24) on 18 June 2024. The proposal was not discussed during the Hungarian presidency.
6. Under the Polish presidency the Working Party continued the examination of presidency compromises on 13 and 21 May 2025.

IV. WORK TOWARDS A COMPROMISE

7. The Polish presidency identified two main challenges. First, how to ensure the circulation of heavier heavy-duty vehicles, i.e. alternatively fuelled or zero-emission vehicles, especially in those Member States that still require work to upgrade the state of the road network. To that end, it continued the work on the concept of a positive network. Such a network would allow Member States, if they wish, to limit the circulation of the heaviest vehicles to a limited number of roads. This network would expand over time to cover the whole TEN-T road network by 2045. The main challenge has been to establish clear rules to allow the enforcement of this network, particularly in the context of the foreseen steps concerning a gradual increase in its coverage. More work will be required to allow for a system that would on the one hand allow for an easier enforcement, while tackling the problem of overloading of vehicles and protecting the state of infrastructure, and on the other hand would not impose too much burden on the road transport operators. The second challenge is related to the circulation of 44-ton vehicles equipped with a fossil-fuel combustion engine in intermodal and international transport operations. While the proposal contains a phasing-out of this type of transport, the phasing-out was considered not sufficient by several Member States. The presidency continued to work on the concept of a Commission authorisation to allow Member States to stop the circulation of this type of vehicles, based on evidence on the negative impact, at the same time providing safeguards ensuring equal treatment and a level playing field. However, the modalities for such a safeguard clause are still not developed to the level that could find sufficient support in the Council. More work will be required to further develop the concept of a safeguard clause.

V. CONCLUSION

8. In light of the above, Coreper and the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) are invited to take note of this progress report, at its meeting on 28 May and 5 June 2025, respectively.