

## Road transportation

### The need for higher capacity and longer trucks

#### The paper industry: still growing in Europe

The production of paper and board in Europe has increased remarkably over the last 10 years and the European paper and board industry is one of the world leaders. Trade within the internal market has developed dramatically as well as the exports outside the EU.

The paper industry transports around 250 million tonnes of raw materials and finished products across Europe each year. These volumes have gradually increased along with the economic growth, the production, consumption and trade of paper & board. External logistics costs average 10% of turnover and further cost increases are expected in the coming years due to stricter minimum safety standards and factors such as road-pricing, Eurovignette and fuel taxation.

#### The challenge of road transport

As with many industry sectors, road is the main mode of transport for European distribution and this will continue to be the case. Alternative modes of transport, e.g. rail offer low cost-efficiency, often low quality of services and a fragmented network.

Recognising the problems caused to society and industry by traffic congestion, the European pulp & paper industry, is looking closely at increasing incrementally the maximum dimensions and payload of trucks. This has proven to provide a successful solution in the Nordic region. Adaptation of the number of axles should be corollary to that progressive increase. The European pulp and paper industry considers this as an opportunity to reach a 'win-win' situation for European society and the industry, due to the potential reduction of fuel consumption and pollution, the lower transport cost, the reduced number of transports and finally the increased overall sustainability. Smart solutions and rationalisation in the transport field can therefore have a great impact on competitiveness and sustainability and should be promoted, contributing in a sustainable way to the Lisbon objective and EU long-term goals of more growth and jobs.

#### Dimensions: the European Modular System<sup>1</sup> is the solution

The European pulp & paper industry supports the European Shippers Council, in calling for a wider use of the European Modular System for road transport. This system can contribute substantially to accommodate the growth of high volume cargoes. The use of longer trucks, which has been

<sup>1</sup> More information can be obtained about the European Modular System on request.



common practice and successful for years in Sweden and Finland, simultaneously decreases traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, road wear and transport costs, without compromising road safety. These results have been confirmed with extensive trials in the Netherlands and in Germany.

The concept is also good for developing intermodal transport since it is built on using standard ISO 20 and 40 feet containers common also on rail freight and in maritime transport. It is however lacking national implementation, thereby preventing many European countries from getting the benefits of the modular concept.

CEPI supports the European Modular System for the main following reasons:

- It offers a cost effective solution for European shippers and European competitiveness also outside Sweden and Finland;
- It is excellent from a transport efficiency angle but it offers also other advantages, e.g. environmental and intermodal benefits;
- It does not require major investments in equipment and could be introduced fast;
- It will give stability to future EU demands on vehicle weight and dimensions.

#### **About weight limits: the need for increase**

Maximum gross weight limits for truck and trailers in Member States range from 40 tonnes to 60 tonnes and most countries allow 44 tonnes for intermodal container transport – even 60 tonnes in Finland and Sweden. Low weight limits lead to additional costs and hinder smooth transport of goods throughout the European Union and constitute an obstacle to the well-functioning and the completion of the Single Market.

The paper industry as well as other industry sectors would benefit from increased weight limits throughout the European Union. Heavier loading contributes to road safety since it means fewer trucks on the road, less congestion and also less pollution.

**It is essential that the legislation in the area of road transport supports the European Modular System - a cost-effective and sustainable solution - and encourages increased weight limits, thus contributing to the competitiveness of the European pulp & paper industry, the achievement of the ambitious Lisbon objective and the overall sustainability targets.**

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#### **The European pulp and paper industry key figures:**

- It is composed of 850 companies and 1,250 mills
- It has a turnover of 75 billion Euro and a value added of 25 billion Euro
- It employs some 275,000 people directly and provides indirect employment to some 1.8 million people
- It produces some 100 million tonnes of paper and 45 million tonnes of pulp
- It represents 29% of the world production
- It exports 15 million tonnes of paper, around 15% of its production
- Some 54% of the paper and board consumed is recycled
- It is part of the Forest-Based Industries, which has a turnover of 375 billion euros, i.e. 6.5% of the European manufacturing industry's turnover