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REPORT

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

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Subject: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
on electronic freight transport information
– Progress report

I. INTRODUCTION

On 17 May 2018, the Commission presented the above-mentioned proposal to the European Parliament and the Council, as part of the third 'Europe on the Move' Package, which is aimed to make European mobility safer, cleaner, more efficient and more accessible for the benefit of all EU citizens.

The general objective of the proposal is to establish a uniform legal framework for the use of digital freight transport information transmission and thereby contributing to greater efficiency of the transport sector. More specific objectives of the proposal are:

- the mandatory acceptance of electronic freight transport information by all relevant public authorities,
- a uniform implementation of that obligation by authorities, and
- interoperability of the different IT systems and solutions used for the exchange of freight transport information.

II. WORK IN OTHER INSTITUTIONS

At the European Parliament, the Committee on Transport and Tourism has been designated as the responsible committee for this file and Ms Claudia SCHMIDT (EPP, AT) as the rapporteur. The draft report is available and is expected to be adopted by the EP Plenary in early 2019.

The European Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion at the plenary session on 17 October 2018. The Committee of the Regions decided not to issue an opinion on the proposal.

III. WORK AT THE COUNCIL PREPARATORY BODIES

The proposal was presented at the meeting of the Intermodal Transport Working Party on 25 June 2018. The impact assessment and the articles of the proposal were examined under the Austrian Presidency on 4 and 11 July 2018 by the same Working Party.

IV. OBSERVATIONS OF THE FIRST EXAMINATION

The examination of the impact assessment and of the articles of the proposal gave an opportunity to Member States to express their initial views and ask clarification questions. While seven Member States have also submitted written comments, most Member States' delegations have so far retained scrutiny reservations.

Given that no amendments have been introduced to the articles, the Commission proposal remains the main reference document and will constitute the basis for further work (doc. 9060/1/18 REV 1 + ADD 1).

The main points raised by Member States during the first examination can be summarized as follows:

- There was overall support for the proposal and its main objective to establish a uniform legal framework for the use of digital freight transport information transmission.
- During the examination of the impact assessment several Member States commented on the costs that would have to be incurred by Member States for the adaptation to paperless transport, in particular for the certification process for eFTI platforms and service providers, the cost for implementing new IT infrastructure, training for personnel, etc. In this regard Member States asked if the Commission could provide a more precise cost-estimate, which took into account also the expected financial impact of the delegated and implemented acts under the proposal. They emphasized that a positive cost-benefit ratio had to be maintained in order to promote digitalization in the transport sector.

- Some Member States said that further clarity is needed on the articulation of this proposal with the Excise Movement and Control System and with EU customs and fiscal legislation in general, and considered it important to maintain and further build upon already existing processes, systems and standards and those being developed which aim to promote the digitalization of freight transport (e.g. by ICAO, IMO, EMSW or eCMR) so as to avoid that authorities and businesses were burdened with high investment costs or obliged to maintain duplicate structures. The desire to share data based on decentralised systems was also raised.
- Several Member States were concerned about the significant role that would be played by delegated and implementing acts to be adopted by the Commission under the proposal. They considered the scope of the provisions as being too wide and were in favour of more clearly framing it through the introduction of a number of essential and basic rules in order to better enable Member States to judge the overall impact, including the financial impact, of the proposal.

V. CONCLUSION

In the light of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee and Council are invited to take note of the progress made on the examination of the proposed Regulation.
