



European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels
Brussels, 2 September 2026

Dear President von der Leyen,

Subject: Request for a strategic dialogue on the decarbonisation of heavy-duty vehicles

Europe's road transport sector is under growing pressure. The energy and geopolitical crisis triggered by the wars in Iran and Ukraine have pushed diesel prices sharply higher and has reinforced concerns over Europe's energy security. At the same time, climate change is increasingly affecting communities and livelihoods through extreme weather events, such as heatwaves and droughts, also disrupting transport operations and putting infrastructure under growing strain.

In light of these challenges, a well-supported decarbonisation of road transport through the rapid scale-up of zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles is paramount for the resilience, competitiveness and strategic autonomy of European logistics and mobility.

Heavy-duty vehicles are a critical part of Europe's economy and transport system. They are also central to the decarbonisation challenge — and its solution. Around 7 million heavy-duty vehicles operate on EU roads, together accounting for close to 30% of EU road transport greenhouse gas emissions. Their transition therefore deserves dedicated political attention at the highest level.

Following the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of the European Automotive Industry, which, under your leadership, has placed political attention on the challenges facing the automotive sector and in particular passenger cars, we believe the time has come to place a similar focus on heavy-duty road transport. These vehicles face very different operational, economic and infrastructure realities, which calls for a dedicated discussion.

Our request comes at a pivotal moment for EU transport policy. The upcoming reviews of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) and the Heavy-Duty Vehicle CO₂ Standards will shape the conditions for road transport decarbonisation over the next decade. Getting these frameworks right is essential, while grids, financing, electricity prices, toll and the support of transport service buyers will also be decisive factors.



We believe the time has come for a dedicated strategic dialogue on the transition of heavy-duty road transport, launched under your direct leadership and bringing together transport operators as vehicle buyers and users, civil society representatives, vehicle manufacturers and infrastructure providers. Such a high-level exchange would provide the political direction needed to identify the key conditions for accelerating the deployment of zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles and address the bottlenecks that continue to hold back the transition.

Given the timeline of these files, we believe an initial exchange in the coming weeks would be valuable.

Yours sincerely,

Signature

William Todts, Executive Director T&E

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Raluca Marian, Director EU Advocacy /
General Delegate of the Permanent
Delegation to the EU

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