



# European Perspectives and the EU-wide HGV driver shortage

16 June 2021



WE ARE THE VOICE  
OF MORE THAN

**3.5**  
**MILLION**  
COMPANIES WORLDWIDE

# The world's road transport organisation

IRU is the global voice of companies providing commercial road transport, mobility and logistics services.

From safety to innovation, environmental standards to trade policy, urban access to driver shortages, IRU works on issues at the very heart of the industry.

# Content

1. *IRU*
2. *Impact of COVID-19 on EU road freight transport and recovery*
3. *COVID-19 and Brexit*
4. *The EU Green Deal and digitalisation*
5. *The Mobility Packages and Fitfor55*
6. *Greening and Road Safety*
7. *The professional driver – ensuring an adequate and trained workforce*
8. *Conclusions*

# COVID-19

## Impact on road freight transport

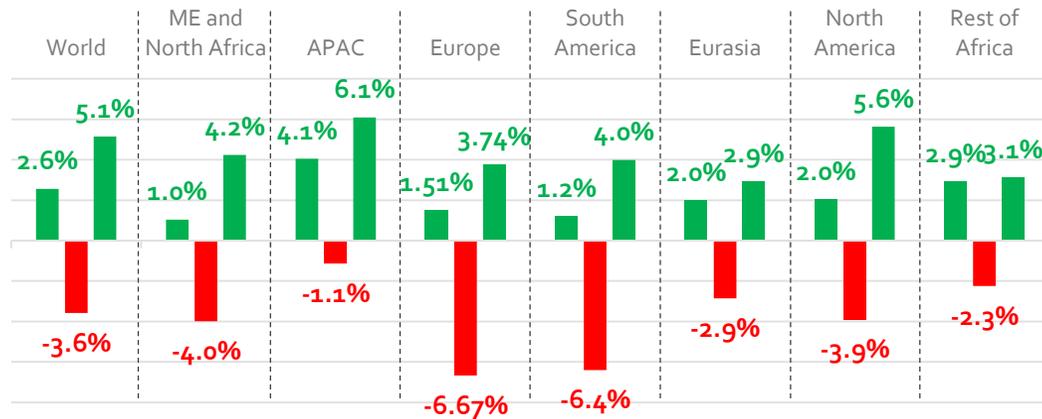
GDP drop

Revenue losses of 13%

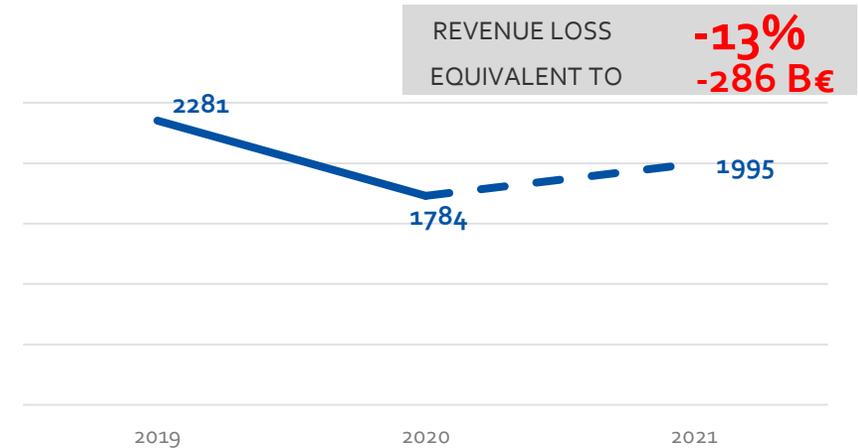
Road versus air freight

Not all Member States have helped their road haulage industry

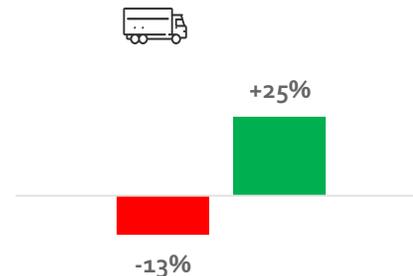
Real GDP change – by region – 2019-2021  
Annual (year-on-year change, %)



Revenue road freight transport industry (B€)  
2019-2021



Trend revenue road freight transport vs air freight transport (%)  
2019-2021



# Decarbonisation

## A wide menu of solutions required

- Zero-emission vehicles do not exist – there will always be emissions somewhere in the process – well-to-wheel to measure.
- Diesel is not easy to replace in all road goods transport operations.
- Immediate, Intermediate and long term actions are needed.
- A wide variety of solutions should be made available – tailor-made approach should be encouraged.
  - vehicle technology and aerodynamics
  - vehicle maintenance
  - fuels – what is possible now and in the future?
  - load factor and capacity
  - Advanced Driver Assistance Systems – training to use them
- Positive incentivisation encourages companies to take action.

# UK Departure from the EU

## An agreement with many remaining challenges

- The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement very positive
- In February: imports from UK = -47%; exports to the UK = -15%
- TCA does not look at multimodality and unaccompanied transports.
- Transport companies not well prepared – often left out on trade-related issues: customs clearance, sanitary & phytosanitary procedures.
- Cost increases over 10% - Reduced operational flexibility.
- Increased waiting times at borders – uncoordinated controls.
- Increased security concerns relating to illegal immigration.
- Drivers unwilling to work on routes to the UK – companies stopped doing these routes.
- Brexit Adjustment Reserve could also be deployed to support affected companies.
- Further facilitation is absolutely required – Ireland key role to play.



# Mobility Packages

## Implementation and application

- **The Mobility Package** rules are not perfect.
  - Greater differences between the Center and the Periphery.
  - Harmonised implementation and application are fundamental.
  - Clarification of the new rules – action on-going
  - The obligatory return home of the vehicle will have an impact on those companies using business cycles away from the country of establishment which are longer than 8 weeks.
  - Enforcement to encourage compliant companies – cooperation with industry.
  - Encourage Digitalisation.
- **Road User Charging:**
  - Willingness to pay for a good road network and multimodal connectivity, not for other modes.
  - No overall tax increases – consider compensations.
  - The introduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emission rate variations is problematic. It will lead to different approaches across the EU. This is certainly not the right way to address decarbonisation.

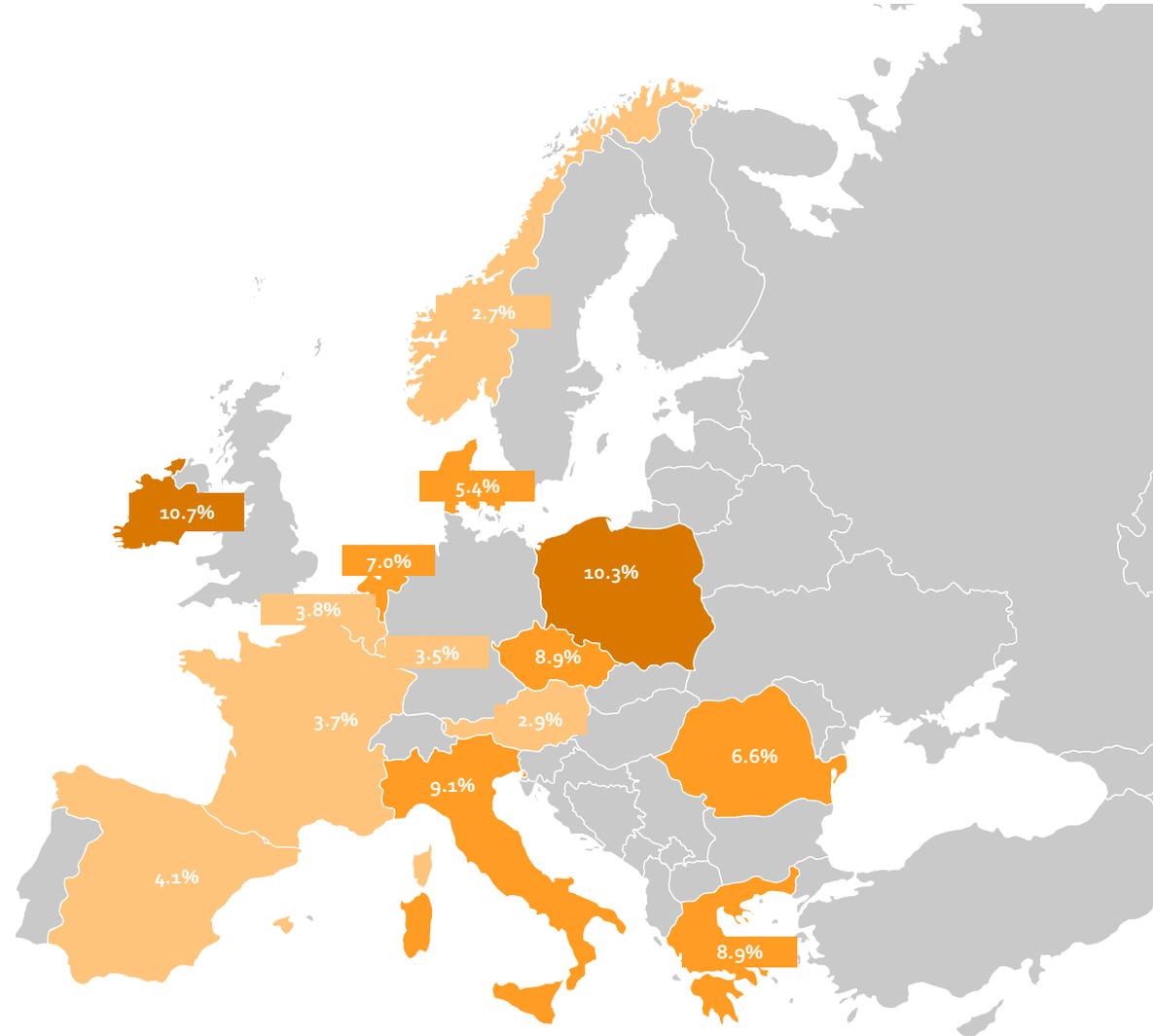
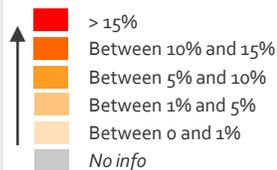
# Driver shortage in the EU

## Situation in 2020

The driver shortage challenge has only been temporarily alleviated in 2020

In 2021, driver shortage and skills shortage could create serious bottlenecks in terms of capacity

Driver shortage 2020



# Driver shortage

## EU Developments

- Driver shortages are expected to increase by over 25% in 2021.
- Skills gaps are becoming a key bottleneck.
- Most of the workforce over 55.
- Only 5% of the drivers in the EU are younger than 25.
- COVID-19 important factor:
  - Scare of contamination.
  - Difficult working conditions due to many restrictions and extra requirements to comply with.
  - Administrative prolongation of certificates – going back to normal could create bottlenecks in new recruitments and continuous training of drivers (CODE 95).
- Many drivers left the profession, will potentially not return. Companies are facing reduced capacity of 20-25% due to driver shortages.

# Driver shortage

## Recruiting and retaining

- In order to address the challenge, it has to be quantified and monitored.
- A professional driver today requires many more skills than his colleague 15 years ago.
- Bridge the gap between school leaving and entry into the profession.
- Partnerships can be established to ensure close the skills gaps.
- Incentivise training of drivers.
- Improve working conditions: facilities to take rest period, security, etc....
- Cooperation with other stakeholders in the logistics chain to improve the treatment of drivers such as in loading and unloading places.
- Recognise as a bottleneck profession.
- Monitor developments in the industry and anticipate change and its impact on the driver profession.

# Conclusions

- The road haulage industry is vital for the European and Irish economy and society.
- It is an overregulated sector with over 150 EU directives and regulations impacting the industry on a daily basis.
- It is a very flexible and customer-oriented industry.
- Important not only to look at tomorrow but look ahead, anticipate, foresee and avoid.
- This can best be done by a closer cooperation and continuous partnership between government and industry in all aspects of policy development, implementation and application of rules and regulations.