



Brexit aside... Europe debates mobility

ECG president Wolfgang Göbel

“ The talk in Brussels right now, if you exclude Brexit, is all about the Mobility Package. This is actually a series of road transport initiatives which comes in three separate parts, but in total it represents potentially the largest block of legislation ever to affect the transport sector, and it will certainly impact on almost everyone in our industry to a greater or lesser degree.

Some of the most relevant, and most contentious, parts are those relating to the ‘posting of workers’, which covers the application of national minimum wages, the proposed changes to the cabotage rules and the prohibition of drivers sleeping in their cabs – but there is much more as well.

Naturally, some of it is sensible and widely supported. For example, we are very pleased to see that the European

of this issue over the last two years. In particular, getting Germany to ratify the e-CMR protocol remains key to having a European solution, but maybe – just maybe – the days of printing millions of pieces of paper to deliver our loads will soon be over.

Whether any of this passes through the legislative process before the 2019 European elections is a matter of conjecture, but anything that does could in theory become law quite quickly. However, the total lack of consensus between the member states on many of the issues makes me think that it will be picked up after the elections and most parts of the proposal that do eventually become law are likely to be several years away.

However, among our members who operate road transport today, it is the

countries reporting a deficit in the tens of thousands and, as we know all too well, persuading what drivers there are to work on car transporters rather than in general haulage is even tougher.

So, with this as the background, we chose to make the Mobility Package the subject of our Dinner Debate at the European Parliament in March. Our focus was very much on the drivers and those issues that concern them in their working lives – and indeed the factors that determine whether they become drivers in the first place, and whether they continue to drive thereafter.

We decided to bring a number of drivers with us to the Parliament so that our audience could hear directly from them and ask for their views. We felt this was an important part of educating some of the decision-makers in Brussels who may otherwise be somewhat out of touch with the realities of the transport industry. Of course, all of this helps, as well, to keep the ECG known in Brussels and to build long-term relationships with both policy-makers and other stakeholders.

- The next course of the ECG Academy will start in October; register soon to avoid disappointment. In addition, due to high demand, two more courses have been introduced in Q4 for the new negotiation management course. Furthermore, a new compliance course, run by ECG lawyers in Brussels who specialise in EU competition law, is set to launch soon.

- The ECG Spring Congress & General Assembly, including the ECG Academy graduation ceremony, will take place on May 24-25 in Madrid. Registrations are now open.



The European Commission is currently debating the Mobility Package, a series of road transport initiatives with implications for employee payment, rules on cabotage and working hours

Commission has finally taken the opportunity to get squarely behind e-CMR. They had previously shrugged their shoulders and left this to the individual member states and the ECG has had to work hard to raise the profile

driver shortage that is increasingly becoming the key issue in the immediate future. For many, it is rapidly developing from a serious problem to a crisis. The road haulage sector across Europe is desperately short of drivers, with many