



THE MALTA CHAMBER

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **The Malta Chamber welcomes Advocate General stand on the EU Mobility Package 1**

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry welcomes the Opinion by the Advocate General on the EU Mobility Package 1 earlier this week, proposing to the European Court of Justice to strike off the provision of the compulsory return of heavy goods vehicles to the member state of establishment every 8 weeks. The Malta Chamber has for long cooperated with its network of business organizations at EU level and argued that this provision introduced during the EU legislative process clearly goes against the principles of the European Green Deal. It was inexplicable how returning trucks to the Member State of establishment is compatible with the general principles of the economy, operational efficiency, and climate protection goals.

This would result in a dramatic impact on the increase in transport emissions in the EU, thus impeding the EU in its long-term goals of achieving a 90 percent reduction in transport emissions and climate-neutrality by 2050. Road transport operators had warned EU legislators that most vehicles required to return to their Member State of establishment would travel empty, which would result in unnecessary additional traffic on the continent's road network.

Moreover, this measure is also excessively restrictive and discriminatory against peripheral countries, including island states such as Malta, and will put Maltese road haulage companies at a disadvantage, given that they would be required to board a ferry compared to other operators that would only be required to cross a land border. As a result, this would add disproportionate additional costs to the road transport operators and consequently to business clients and end consumers.

The Malta Chamber thanks the Maltese Government for its efforts in the case before the European Court of Justice and looks forward to a favourable sentence next year. Looking ahead The Malta Chamber reiterates its call for the European Commission to introduce criteria for a 'Territorial Proofing' or 'Insularity Test' to complement the Competitiveness Check as part of the overall impact assessment process to identify provisions that would negatively impact specific member states for conditions derived by their geographic location. Furthermore, it emphasizes the need for impact assessments to take place on significant changes introduced by the EU Council and the European Parliament during the legislative process, which in cases such as the Mobility Package I would have identified the inconsistency of such a provision with the EU Treaties and the overall EU climate policy.

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