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# New EU weight limits mean zero-emission trucking is here for the long haul

A proposal to increase weight limits will ensure electric trucks can serve long-haul routes without having to lighten their cargo load.



Weight limits for zero-emission trucks will increase under a new EU proposal that will help accelerate the uptake of electric and hydrogen trucks. The new limits will ensure trucks will not have to sacrifice cargo weight on long-haul routes, which require bigger batteries. After the law enters into force, electric or hydrogen trucks could weigh up to 2 tonnes more. Green group Transport & Environment (T&E) welcomed the decision to support greener trucking by increasing weight limits under the EU Weights and Dimensions Directive.

In 2019, zero-emissions trucks were already given an extra 2-tonne weight allowance to accommodate battery electric vehicles, but this was insufficient to avoid payload losses in long-haul trucks, using old designs. But T&E says truckmakers still have a responsibility to shift to new, so-called 'clean sheet' designs for electric trucks, ensuring resource efficiency and lighter vehicles. It calls for manufacturers to stop dragging their feet on this.

Bernardo Galantini, freight officer at T&E, said: *"Electric trucks with ranges of around 500 km are coming to the market in the next two years. The extra weight allowance will accelerate their roll-out by ensuring that no payload will be lost to accommodate batteries. This will make long-haul electric trucks more attractive to hauliers and shippers."*

The draft law also proposes new rules governing so-called mega trucks or giga liners – truck and trailer combinations 25.25 metres in length, which is almost 9 metres longer than the typical trucks on Europe's highways. Currently some member states allow giga liners to cross borders, but the legality of such bilateral agreements has long been in doubt. The Commission is now proposing to regulate these agreements. (The proposed law would not extend the use of giga liners to member states that do not allow them.)

T&E said safeguards are needed when the Commission is asked to approve such bilateral agreements. First, to ensure real climate emission reductions, the agreements must require all cross-border giga liners to be zero-emission by 2035, and half of large fleets to be zero-emission by 2030. Second, giga liners must not travel on roads where they endanger cyclists and pedestrians. Highway travel may present relatively few safety issues, but the same cannot be said where giga liners leave the highway to access logistics centres. Third, giga liners must not take freight traffic away from rail or waterways.

Bernardo Galantini said: *"Longer and heavier trucks can only be allowed to travel across borders if they are zero emission, avoid urban roads and don't compete with rail".*