

Question for written answer E-002618/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
Elena Kountoura (The Left)

Subject: The need to speed up development of safe and secure truck parking areas across the EU road network

Road transport is a driving force of the European economy, with trucks handling 75 % of the total volume of road freight and almost 90 % of the value of all freight Europe-wide.

Despite the EU's efforts to develop safe and secure truck parking areas (SSTPAs)¹, there is still a significant shortage of such infrastructure across the European road network and the few facilities that do exist offer very substandard services.

Not only does this lack of infrastructure worsen the working conditions of professional drivers who are deprived of safe rest areas, it also undermines road safety² as most accidents are caused by the human factor³, including fatigue resulting from bad working conditions. What is more, the lack of SSTPAs puts workers at risk of potential physical assault and increases the risk of cargo theft.

In view of the above:

1. Does it intend to boost European funding further to ramp up the construction of SSTPAs so as to improve the working conditions of drivers and make the profession more attractive to potential young drivers?
2. Does it plan to put together a European strategy or a targeted plan for the creation of an extensive connected network of parking areas that will cover the entire EU road network and will speed up the achievement of the set target of one SSTPA every 150 km?

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¹ Article 31(4) of the new TEN-T Regulation states that by 2040 Member States must ensure the development of SSTPAs along the roads of the core network and extended core network, or within 3 km driving distance from the nearest exit of the road of the trans-European network, with an average maximum distance of 150 km between two such areas (<https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-56-2024-REV-1/En/pdf>). Among other things, these areas make it possible to install modern infrastructure such as electric charging stations and alternative fuel facilities, necessary for the decarbonisation of the sector.

² In a survey carried out by the ETFA, 60 % of the professional drivers questioned said they regularly felt tired when driving due to a shortage of secure parking areas, among other things. See https://www.etf-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Fatigue_SUMMARY_EN_.pdf.

³ See <https://www.iru.org/what-we-do/being-trusted-voice-mobility-and-logistics/people/road-safety>