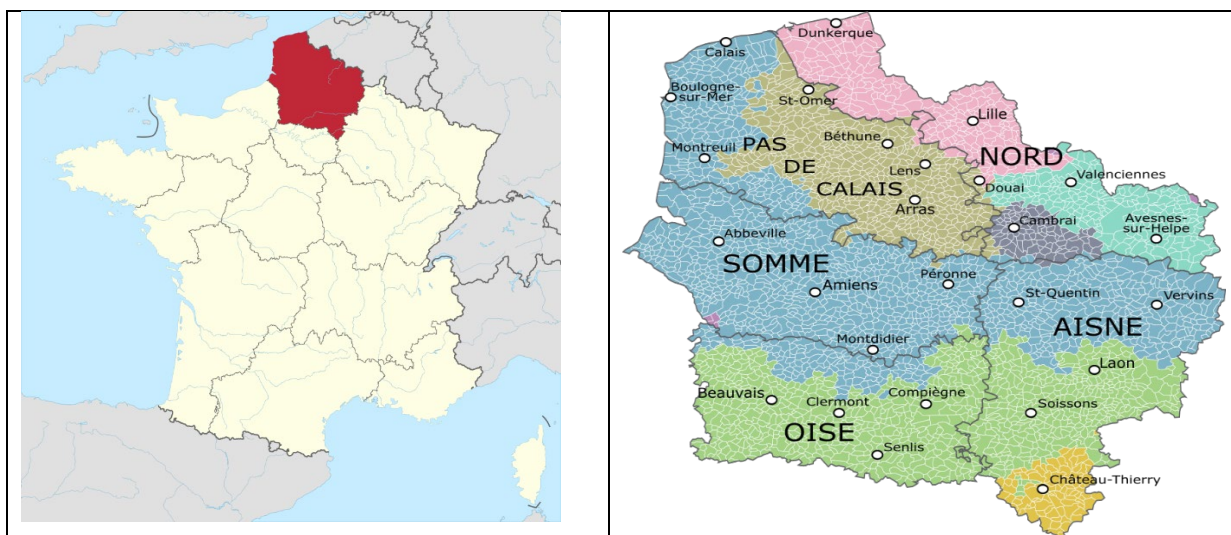


PETI Fact-finding visit to Hauts-de France

23 - 25 May 2022

SAFE AND SECURE PARKING AREAS IN THE EU

Hauts-de-France is the northernmost region of France, created by the territorial reform of French regions in 2014, from a merger of Nord-Pas-de-Calais and Picardy. Its prefecture is Lille. The new region came into existence on 1 January 2016, after regional elections in December 2015.



Source: Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hauts-de-France>

With 6,009,976 inhabitants (1 January 2015) and a population density of 189 inhabitants/km², Hauts-de-France is the third most populous region in France. The region covers an area of more than 31,813 km². It borders Belgium (Flanders and Wallonia) to the northeast, the North Sea to the north, the English Channel to the west, as well as the French regions of Grand Est to the east-southeast, Île-de-France to the south, and Normandy to the west-southwest. It is connected to the United Kingdom (England) via the Channel Tunnel.





Petition on the poor safety conditions in car parks for trucks and commercial vehicles on the European road network

The reason underlying the PETI Committee's decision to organise a fact-finding visit (FFV) to the French region of Hauts-de France was its discussion of petition No 0549/2021 by Adriana Muresan (Romanian), on behalf of Asociația civică Voluntari în Europa. This petition, signed by 22,735 persons, draws attention to the poor safety conditions in car parks for trucks and commercial vehicles on the European road network. One of the direct triggers for the petition was the fact that on 17 May 2021 one of the petitioners' colleagues was stabbed to death at a rest area on the A28 motorway in the Somme region of Hauts-de-France.

In an official press release the Amiens prosecutor's office stated¹:

"A road driver of Romanian nationality, aged 39, was killed on the night of Saturday to Sunday on the A28 in the Somme. From the first elements of the investigation, it appears that the victim was absent from the vehicle a few moments after hearing a noise. On his return, he was seriously injured. Despite the first aid provided by the SAMU [emergency services], he quickly succumbed [to his injuries]."

The news of this tragedy has hit the Romanian trucking community particularly hard. Povești de prin parcuri, a Romanian truck blogger with over 143,000 followers, was one of those who on social media expressed his deep sadness and frustration. Not only regarding the death of his fellow countryman and trucker, but also regarding the current climate that lorry drivers have to work in. The blogger also commented on the difficulties faced by truckers:

"Unfortunately, this is the reality in parking areas. Regardless of the country – France, Germany or Spain, nobody gives a damn about the safety of truck drivers. Stealing occurs night after night – diesel, merchandise, cut tarpaulins and cabin thefts. Who is responsible for our safety? When you call them, they come after 2 or 3 hours, and that's in case they come as they often don't even bother to come, they fill out a report and that's it."

¹ Source: <https://trans.info/en/39-year-old-trucker-killed-after-stabbing-in-french-rest-area-237393>

Giving fines are the best but us? For us truck drivers, what do they do? What are the EU doing? Besides, you hear them complaining that the youth no longer choose this job. Well, what the hell should they choose it for? Wages are what they are like, you leave in a rush, stop in the evening and you don't know if you can find merchandise or diesel in the tank or worse, risk not getting to the next day.

Paid parking? There are thefts from there too. Parking with cameras? There are thefts from there too. There are thefts from everywhere. I have a colleague who was asleep and they stole everything from his cabin, in a paid parking lot in France. And what do the police do? Oh yes, they have work to give tickets to trucks. The EU? Oh yes, they have work to do with mobility packages.

In Calais it's the same story, immigrants climb over you, you risk dying on the highway because they throw objects at your windshield, block the streets and do what they want. Drivers die, and what do the authorities do? It's sad that if the English find an immigrant in the trailer, you, as a driver, have to pay 4,000 quid per immigrant. And you can't do anything about it, as a driver, you are sanctioned.

Every day this job gets more dangerous, more unattractive for young people and it's a pity."

General and legal background

Road transport is the dominant mode of transport in intra-European trade and logistics, accounting for almost 50% of all tonne kilometres, and 75% of inland freight. A large proportion of total road freight tonne kilometres are accounted for by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), with capacities of over 40 tonnes, travelling long distances and making cross-border trips.

In the road haulage sector, cargo, equipment and increasingly personnel are targets for criminals. Cargo theft and illegal boarding of trucks cause substantial financial and reputational losses to supply chain operators, as the European road freight transport sector continues to be an attractive target for cargo thieves and traffickers. Cargo thefts in the European Union alone result in direct losses estimated to exceed € 8.2 billion per year, with most thefts taking place when trucks are parked.

According to Eurostat data² on citizenship by country of birth, the two largest destination cities for non-EU born citizens are London and Paris, and there are long established immigration patterns towards these cities, including in recent years, greater volumes of illegal migration from the entry points along the Mediterranean. Trucks on these routes are increasingly being targeted by criminal organisations taking advantage of the migrants, as a way of moving people illegally across the Schengen borders. In recent years this had led to a particular problem between the UK (non-Schengen) and the nearby continental ports in France and Belgium, especially Calais. Although security measures to protect truck drivers and trucks have been implemented at the Channel ports, the threat of illegal boarding of vehicles has dispersed inland. Thus, the security risk faced by lorry drivers has intensified and become more widespread.

Currently, there is a significant shortage of safe and secure parking areas in the Union, where only 7,000 parking areas are available, while it is estimated that the total demand of overnight parking for heavy-duty vehicles was of 400,000 per night. Safe and secure parking areas remain too scarce, and the security and services provided by existing facilities are often insufficient and uncoordinated.

Establishing a denser network of safe and secure truck parking areas (SSTPAs) with a clear definition of security levels, will make it possible to tackle the parking problems. Drivers, transport companies, forwarders, shippers and insurers, and society as a whole will benefit from an adequate supply of these facilities via the protection of drivers, cargo and transport equipment.

² Source: Study on Safe and Secure Parking Places for Trucks - <https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-03/2019-study-on-safe-and-secure-parking-places-for-trucks.pdf>

As part of a 2018 study for the European Commission on "Safe and Secure Parking Places for Trucks"³ a survey was carried out to identify the needs and requirements of potential users of the safe and secure parking areas. The groups surveyed and interviewed included male and female drivers, transport operators, shippers, insurers and truck parking areas' operators. The main findings across the different stakeholder groups were:

- Methods for locating SSTPAs: 50% of drivers find information on parking locations via the internet; 46% of drivers would like to have access to a new (dedicated) SSTPA app, while 35% need a better information app.
- Availability of safe parking areas: A total of 83% of drivers say that there is an insufficient number of SSTPAs in Europe.
- Female drivers' views: 64% of female drivers have experienced unsafe situations at overnight parking areas. Sexual harassment was reported frequently. Additionally, there is a need for higher quality services and separate facilities (e.g. sanitary facilities) to be offered at parking areas.
- Transport operators: Transport operators usually reimburse truck drivers for overnight and weekly rests, while drivers pay for daily breaks themselves. For transport operators it is necessary that parking areas offer sanitary facilities, food and shopping, site surveillance by guards (or CCTV) and external fencing around the whole perimeter. A total of 86% of transport operators believe that there are not sufficient SSTPAs in Europe.
- Shippers: Amongst the shippers (cargo owners), 71% said there are not sufficient SSTPAs nor enough information sources to find (and book) available parking slots. Shippers need booking slots in parking areas with closed, dedicated truck slots. According to the shippers, it is necessary for parking areas to offer sanitary facilities, site surveillance by guards (or CCTV) and emergency contact points.
- Parking operators – pre-booking services: According to the parking operators, pre-payment services for booking parking slots do not exist in the majority of truck parking areas. In the survey, 40% of parking operators do operate a slot booking service.
- Parking operators – current utilisation rates: Operators reported that the average occupation rate of parking areas exceeds 60% for vehicles making overnight and weekly stops. A lorry stays, on average, 8-12 hours in a parking space. A total of 40% of parking operators in the survey were operating a slot booking service.
- Parking operators – certification: Out of the subset of parking operators with existing certification, 80% conducted a self-assessment of their service level and 47% conducted a self-assessment of their security level. They felt that there is an urgent need for a clear definition of SSTPAs in EU and for the establishment of an independent body to oversee truck parking area security standards.
- Insurers: Insurers require parking areas to have external fencing or alternative barriers, CCTV, and site surveillance through regular security checks. They also call for better information regarding parking availability and opening hours, to allow for better route planning.

In view of the situation regarding the SSTPAs, the EU co-legislators decided to empower the Commission to adopt a delegated act on the development of standards and certification procedures for safe and secure parking areas.

For this purpose, a new Article 8a was added - by Regulation (EU) 2020/1054 - to existing Regulation (EC) No 561/2006, according to which safe and secure parking areas in the Union have to comply with a number of requirements in order to be considered safe and secure. These requirements concern in particular: intrusion

³ Source: Study on Safe and Secure Parking Places for Trucks - <https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-03/2019-study-on-safe-and-secure-parking-places-for-trucks.pdf>

detection and prevention, lighting and visibility, emergency contact points and procedures, gender-friendly sanitary facilities, food and beverage purchasing options, communications connections and power supply.

The new Delegated Regulation⁴ was adopted by the Commission on 7 April 2022. It is structured around two main annexes:

- the first one details the minimum level of service and the four different levels of security (Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum level) with which safe and secure parking areas must comply in order to be certified as such;
- the second one provides the rules on the certification procedures for these parking areas.

The Delegated Regulation also includes a revision clause, according to which the Commission must assess the effects no later than four years after the adoption of the act.

In addition, in the context of the revision of the TEN-T Regulation, the Commission has proposed to set out an obligation for Member States to deploy safe and secure areas on the TEN-T network every given number of kilometres. The legislative proposal for the revision of Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 – Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T)⁵ was adopted on 14 December 2021.

The Commission is also supporting Member States and private operators in their efforts to build more safe and secure truck parking areas in the EU by providing funding for the development of this infrastructure under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

The Connecting Europe Facility is a key EU funding instrument to promote growth, jobs and competitiveness through targeted infrastructure investment at European level. It supports the development of high performing, sustainable and efficiently interconnected trans-European networks in the fields of transport, energy and digital services. CEF investments fill the missing links in Europe's energy, transport and digital backbone⁶.

The CEF instrument supports the building of new parking areas but also the upgrading of existing parking areas that do not have the necessary security and service facilities in order to be certified in accordance with the EU standards. During the last 2019 call for proposals on safe and secure infrastructure, 11 projects received funding for the development of 41 additional EU parking areas in Europe on the TEN-T network.

The Commission stressed that it will continue to support the development of parking areas for the years 2021-2023, where 750 million EUR are allocated for this purpose and the upgrading of existing parking areas to improve the security and services facilities.

The fact-finding visit

Members of the fact-finding visit (FFV) will visit secure parking areas for heavy duty vehicles in the Hauts-de-France region. In the region, frequent violence attacks and cargo thefts have been reported. One of the aspects of the fact-finding mission is to check how the relevant EU legislation is implemented as well as how the new certification methodology for truck parking is complied with.

Physically visiting truck parking areas and having exchanges of views with stakeholders and parties concerned, such as the petitioners, truckers, truckers' organisations, (political) authorities, road transport

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13257-Road-transport-EU-standards-for-safe-and-secure-parking-areas-for-trucks_en

⁵ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:7b299e69-5dc8-11ec-9c6c-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/inea/connecting-europe-facility/cef-transport>

organisations, the police, etc., will contribute to a better overview of the safety situation and the challenges associated with safe and secure parking areas.

The FFV also serves to formulate (policy) recommendations to help protect truck drivers and their cargo, and to promote policies to ensure that more safe and secure parking areas for truckers and their trucks are made available on the European road network.

.

Disclaimer and copyright. The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament. Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and the European Parliament is given prior notice and sent a copy. © European Union, 2022.
© Image on page 2 used under licence from Adobestock.com

Administrator responsible: Jos Heezen Editorial assistant: Sybille PECSTEEN de BUYTSWERVE
Contact: Poldep-citizens@ep.europa.eu

This document is available on the internet at: www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analyses