

**Question for written answer E-004576/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)

Subject: Cabotage service between Italy and Switzerland

Italy's proximity to Switzerland presents big opportunities, especially to Lombardy, but also leads to undeniable problems.

Regarding 'hire with driver' as a service category, the bilateral agreement of 21 June 1999 between the Swiss Confederation and the European Union on Overland Transport allows Italian and Swiss carriers to run services across borders, as well as within their respective countries.

Unfortunately, Italian carriers have recently faced practices of dumping, unfair and distorted competition, violation of the principle of the free movement of persons, and disparities in rules and penalties between the two countries. In fact growing numbers of Swiss carriers are offering their services not only within Switzerland or across borders, but entirely within Italy's borders. All this can be documented from the many advertisements on the main international search engines, and elsewhere.

In reality, many Swiss carrier firms belong to Italian citizens (or to Swiss figureheads) who have commenced trading in Switzerland to profit from lower taxation, exemption of billable services from VAT, and lower operating costs. In Switzerland, there is no need for a licence: permits are sufficient. Among carriers already in difficulty through the present economic climate, this situation is creating alarming social tensions and a widespread atmosphere of confrontation.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state what action it intends to take to ensure compliance with the bilateral agreements and thereby reinstate the principle of reciprocity?