

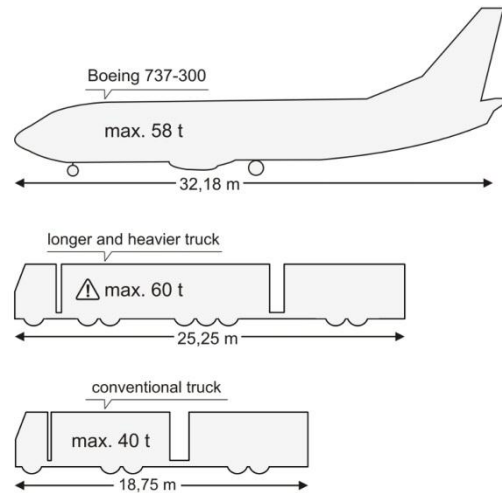


Photo: Allianz pro Schiene/Kraufmann

Mega trucks: dangerous and expensive climate killers

Should the EU allow longer and heavier trucks?

They are over 25 metres long and weigh 60 tonnes – and HGV manufacturer lobbyists and several large road hauliers say these ‘road monsters’ should be allowed on Europe’s roads. This would amount to 6.50 metres and 20 tonnes more than is currently permitted in the EU. Supporters of these LHVs have even come up with several harmless sounding names for them: European Modular System (EMS), Gigaliner, EuroCombi, Ecoliner, innovative commercial vehicle. Sounds reassuring, but a simple comparison shows: a mega truck is heavier than a fully-tanked Boeing 737-300 with its maximum load of 127 passengers.



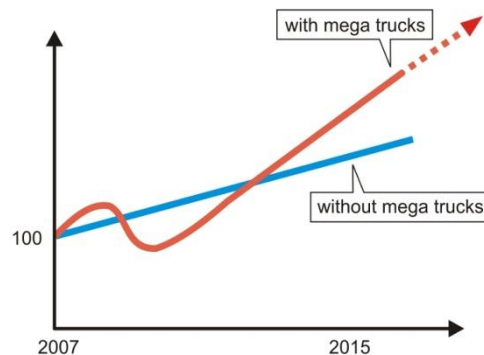
Mega trucks are a threat to the safety of all road users. They will damage the environment because they will lead to more truck journeys. This will result in costs amounting to billions for the taxpayer, because Europe’s roads were not constructed for such colossal trucks.

Negative impact on the environment

Supporters of LHVs promise that 3 conventional HGVs will be replaced by 2 mega trucks, reducing the load on the roads and benefiting the environment. What they deliberately do not tell us is that mega trucks will make road transport cheaper, which will lead to a massive shift to the roads from environmentally friendly transport modes such as inland waterways and the railways. In fact, mega trucks will mean more traffic on the roads, resulting in a greater burden on the environment including, critically, increased levels of CO₂. Environmental organisations from across Europe therefore oppose longer and heavier vehicles.

Fact: Permitting mega trucks would lead to more traffic on the roads – with all the negative consequences for people and the environment.

Absolute CO₂ emissions in transport schematic representation



Source: Fraunhofer 2008

Negative impact on road safety

Permitting mega trucks will make Europe's roads considerably more dangerous. Longer HGVs will lead to longer clearance times at road junctions and railway crossings, longer overtaking times and less visibility for car drivers.

Accidents involving heavier HGVs will have more devastating consequences, particularly collisions with other vehicles and when crashing into queueing traffic.

Current roadside crash barriers will not withstand mega trucks. The safety risks already posed by HGVs will be intensified if they are permitted. Mega trucks are a threat to all other road users – pedestrians, cyclists and car drivers. Road safety organisations and automobile clubs from across Europe therefore oppose longer and heavier vehicles.

Fact: freight loads of this magnitude belong on the environmentally friendly and safe railways – and not on HGVs.

Negative impact on road infrastructure

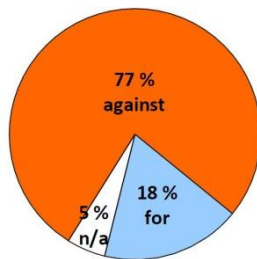
Europe's road infrastructure was not designed for the deployment of mega trucks. Bridges will have to be strengthened or replaced for vehicles of 60 tonnes. Reconstruction costs will be immense: the European commission has calculated that it will cost 46 billion Euros just for motorway bridges.

However, even just the extra length of mega trucks will require expensive upgrades to road junctions, roundabouts, railway crossings, parking areas and service facilities. All these costs will have to be paid for out of the public purse.

Fact: the immense additional cost for road infrastructure will have to be paid for by society – in other words, by the taxpayer.

The public oppose mega trucks

The great majority of citizens oppose the introduction of mega trucks. This has been demonstrated by representative opinion polls in important EU member countries.



Representative opinion poll carried out in Germany by the research institute forsa (March 2011).

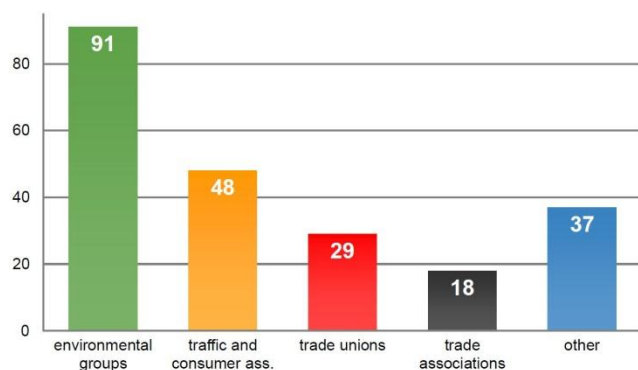
The results

- An overwhelming majority – 77 % - of Germans oppose the introduction of mega trucks.
- In France 81% of people are against allowing longer and heavier vehicles.
- Citizens in the UK also expressed similar sentiments. In an opinion poll, 75% of people voiced their opposition to mega trucks.

Fact: the vast majority of citizens oppose the introduction of mega trucks.

Which organisations are opposed to mega trucks?

Organisations from across Europe, and from all sectors of society, are opposed to mega trucks. The information website www.nomegatrucks.eu lists more than 200 organisations from 24 countries that have currently registered their opposition to mega trucks. These 200 organisations include environmental groups, transport unions, automobile clubs and associations from the transport and railway sectors. In total, these organisations represent more than 13 million individual members.



The campaign NO MEGA TRUCKS provides information on mega trucks and gives organisations from across Europe the opportunity to take a stand and take action in their own countries. After all, each country's transport secretary and its MEPs are able to directly influence decisions taken on the European level. The NO MEGA TRUCKS campaign was initiated by the organisations Friends of the Earth Europe, European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), European Automobile Clubs (EAC) and the German Pro-Rail Alliance. Additional information can be found at www.nomegatrucks.eu

NO MEGA TRUCKS