

EETC - European Ethical Transport Charter v3.2

Commitment Edition - Public baseline 4.2.0

TRANSPORT IS HUMAN. KEEP IT FAIR.

Transport moves goods, but people make transport possible. Every operation depends on time, work, equipment, investment, judgement and responsibility. Competition, commercial pressure and operational risk are legitimate parts of transport. What should not become normal is the systematic transfer of uncertainty, cost or consequences to the party with the least control and the least capacity to absorb them.

Transport services can be competitively procured. The people, time and capacity behind them should not be treated as endlessly replaceable.

1. Law is the floor

No commercial arrangement puts anyone above mandatory applicable law. Contracts, tenders, transport orders, platform rules and internal procedures must operate within the law applicable to the relationship. Safety, lawful working conditions, mandatory payment obligations, driving and rest rules and other mandatory protections are not commercial variables that can simply be negotiated away.

Nobody is above the law.

2. The chain must not run on permanent tension

Transport sometimes requires night work, relays, late deliveries, weekends, public holidays, exceptional schedules and short-notice changes. But exceptional human availability should not become the invisible default on which the business model depends. Where an operation structurally requires unusual availability or repeated exceptional effort, that reality should be recognised, planned and treated as part of the service. Transport can be bought competitively; people, time and human availability should not be treated as endlessly replaceable.

Exceptional effort should remain exceptional.

3. Responsibility follows control

Consequences should follow the ability to control, prevent or mitigate their cause. A participant should not automatically transfer financial or operational consequences to another party that did not reasonably control the decision, event or change that created them. Responsibility does not disappear because another intermediary enters the chain.

Pressure should stop where control stops.

4. Performance starts the payment clock

Once the agreed transport has been properly performed, the economic payment clock has started. The delivery or completion date, supported by the evidence reasonably necessary to demonstrate performance, should be the operational reference point. Internal approval chains, pre-billing, portal validation, unnecessary originals or administrative formalities should not create artificial additional weeks before invoicing or payment. Undisputed transport revenue should not be blocked by another dispute.

The transport should not have to be completed twice: once on the road and again in the paperwork.

5. Waiting is capacity

Waiting consumes time, equipment and human capacity. Waiting caused outside the carrier's reasonable control should be visible, attributable and treated under a clear and predictable rule. It should not become unlimited free capacity simply because another participant failed to recover or price it upstream.

A waiting truck is a waiting person.

6. Penalties must be known before delivery

A material commercial penalty must not appear by surprise after the transport has been performed. It should be communicated and agreed before delivery - preferably before the load is accepted - and require a defined trigger, attribution, evidence, proportionality and a real right to challenge. No penalty should be invented retroactively. An upstream penalty should not automatically become a downstream debt. A disputed claim should be separate from undisputed transport revenue. Ordinary commercial penalties should not be designed to wipe out the economics of an otherwise properly performed transport.

No retroactive penalties. No penalty without cause.

7. Long-term capacity needs long-term commitment

A company cannot reasonably be expected to build long-term capacity on permanently short-term certainty. Where recurring capacity, dedicated equipment, investment, personnel, specific organisation, exclusivity or structural availability are required, the relationship should recognise the time and risk needed to build and sustain that capacity. Repeated short tender cycles should not systematically transfer all continuity risk to the transport provider.

Competition should select capability, not create permanent disposability.

8. The chain must remain visible

Subcontracting must not make the physical transport or responsibility disappear. Subcontracting and intermediation are legitimate when they add capability, flexibility, coordination or managed risk. Further subcontracting should operate under a previously agreed, controlled and traceable mechanism, and the physical executor should remain reasonably identifiable.

A load must never disappear into the chain.

9. The right to say no must be real

A participant must be able to reject an unlawful, unsafe or materially changed operation without automatic retaliation. Formal acceptance does not always prove genuine freedom of choice. Where refusal predictably threatens unrelated future work, dependency and bargaining power matter. Clearly agreed and lawful contractual commitments remain relevant.

If saying no means losing tomorrow's work, was it really a choice?

10. Sustainable transport must sustain those who perform it

Environmental transition should not depend on systematically transferring its additional cost, investment burden or operational risk to the participant least able to absorb it. Where greener transport requires dedicated assets, multimodal organisation, additional complexity or long-term investment, the commercial relationship should recognise that exposure. Infrastructure matters. Actual modal shift matters too.

No sustainable transport without sustainable relationships.

THE SIGNATORY COMMITMENT

By signing the EETC Charter, our organisation commits to:

1. Respect the law

Not knowingly require or incentivise practices incompatible with mandatory applicable law.

2. Review what actually happens

Examine our real transport practices, not only what contracts and policies say should happen.

3. Recognise the human reality of transport

Take into account night work, weekends, relays, short notice, exceptional schedules and repeated human availability.

4. Follow responsibility to control

Avoid automatically transferring costs, penalties, delays or consequences to parties that did not reasonably control their cause.

5. Start from performance

Avoid unnecessary administrative or documentary processes that artificially delay invoice eligibility or payment once transport has been properly completed.

6. Make penalties foreseeable and contestable

Seek to ensure that material penalties are known before delivery, attributable, evidenced, proportionate and subject to a real right of reply.

7. Match structural commitment with reasonable stability

Where we require dedicated resources, recurring capacity or long-term investment, consider proportionate protection against abrupt under-utilisation, repeated short-term retendering or sudden withdrawal.

8. Keep the chain visible

Maintain reasonable visibility and control over material subcontracting under our responsibility.

9. Address material gaps in good faith

Where credible evidence identifies a material inconsistency with the Charter, review it and consider proportionate corrective action.

10. Represent our status honestly

Never present EETC Signatory or MOVETHICS Member status as certification, verification or proof of compliance.

THE SIGNATURE

WE SIGN BECAUSE THESE PRINCIPLES SHOULD GOVERN HOW TRANSPORT RELATIONSHIPS WORK.

We do not declare that our organisation is perfect. We publicly commit to examine our own practices

against these principles, respond in good faith when material gaps are identified and take responsibility for the conditions we control.

WHAT SIGNING MEANS - AND DOES NOT MEAN

A signature is a commitment, not proof. Signing is not certification, verification, legal advice, completed assessment or proof of perfect conduct. MOVETHICS may review public status under its published evidence, right-of-reply and reasoned-decision process.