

EU action needed as new Brenner squeeze threatens European trade

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A single-lane restriction could disrupt millions of annual freight deliveries via the Brenner motorway, a key artery for European trade across the Alps. Leading transport and logistics associations urge the European Commission to act now and work with affected countries to find solutions.

The Lueg Bridge on the Brenner motorway will be restricted to a single lane each way starting 1 January 2025.

Austria's highway authority announced that the restriction is due to severe structural issues.

In a [letter](#) addressed to European Commissioners Wopke Hoekstra and Thierry Breton, IRU, together with leading transport and logistics associations, calls for dialogue between the affected Member States to guarantee the continuity of Alpine transit, including easing night driving restrictions and creating alternative routes.

IRU Secretary General Umberto de Pretto said, "The Brenner motorway, a key artery for trade across the Alps, is vital for Europe's economic health.

"We are committed to working with all parties to find practical solutions that ensure the free movement of goods through the Alps and support the transport sector during this challenging period."

"We look to the European Commission to lead and guide dialogue between the affected Member States. Additional traffic bans for heavy goods vehicles are not the solution," he added.

The Brenner motorway, which sees approximately 14.3 million cars and 2.5 million trucks annually, connects Northern and Southern Europe. The reduction in capacity could have significant economic repercussions.

While recognising the importance of road safety, the letter stresses the necessity of balancing safety measures with the economic imperative of maintaining free-flowing trade routes.

The coalition is prepared to engage in further discussions with the European Commission, Austria, the affected Member States and other stakeholders to develop and implement effective measures.

(IRU)