

Today is the last day of the four-days continental [workshop](#) in Johannesburg, South Africa, to examine the status of harmonisation of Africa's cross-border road transport regulatory frameworks. Organised by the African Union Commission (AUC) in partnership with the European Union (EU)-funded Tripartite Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme (TTTFP), the workshop analysed best practices on policies and standards on road transport regulation harmonisation in Africa, including proposals for developing a Vehicle Load Management (VLM) strategy aimed at ensuring harmonised vehicle overload controls over the roads within the entire continent.

Harmonising road transport regulatory instruments is crucial for increased regional integration in Africa and a key step for the effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

In August 2022, the African Development Bank published the [Final Report](#) of a study called “SMART (Sustainable Market Access for African Road Transport)” which analysed at continental level the main regulatory and non-physical barriers that impede a streamlined movement of vehicles and goods within and between the different Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa, formulating a series of recommendations in order to increase efficiency of cross-border road transport, reduce its costs, and maximize the economic benefits of the transport infrastructure, in view of reducing the cost of trading across borders. The report, among others, notes that the [Multilateral Cross Border Road Transport Agreement](#) (MCBRTA) developed within the TTTFP program is an important model to which the other RECs in Africa might well aspire, by creating similar inter-REC regulatory frameworks on cross-border road transport.

The report also notes that the qualitative criteria that the MCBRTA introduces for the access to the road transport profession should be adopted by all the African RECs by incorporating them in harmonised regional or multi-regional road transport regulations that should progressively replace the cage of bi-lateral agreements that are currently in force between African States to regulate access of foreign-registered trucks to their territories for conducting cross-border transport operations. The final step of such process should be a single continental framework on cross-border road transport to be adopted at continental level under the aegis of the African Union (AU).