



EUROPEAN SHIPPERS' COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 29th of March 2019

Shippers call for repeal of Consortia Block Exemption Regulation unless revised legislation clarifying current BER is adopted

European Shippers' Council states that the Consortia Block Exemption Regulation (BER) that is currently under the revision of the European Commission has not contributed to better services in maritime transport for shippers as it aimed to. ESC is releasing a position paper outlining shippers' main arguments.

The objective of the Consortia BER, since its first adoption in 1995, has been, while allowing shipping lines to form consortia, to bring shared benefits to consortia's clients - shippers, the owners of cargo - in terms of better services and higher productivity.

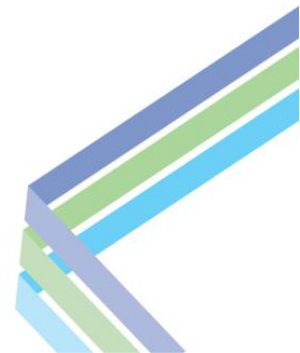
However, with the schedule unreliability, blank sailings, and a lack of transparency, shippers have not been experiencing any improvement in the service quality. No consortium is fully compliant with the BER criteria, exceeding the allowed market threshold, creating high concentration on main trade lanes, and bringing service uniformity.

Moreover, the present BER introduced an unbalanced legal treatment of consortia partners on the one hand and consortia customers, as well as the other stakeholders, on the other. The regulation in its current form accepts the lack of transparency in consortia compliance, but shippers have no legal footing to defend their interests vis-à-vis consortia.

Therefore, shippers would like to see a new BER that would clearly define a market share, make consortia partners accountable, and provide a transparent mechanism of compliance procedures. The present regulation in its current form does not respond to the new market situation, does not fulfil its own objective, and should be amended, if not - repealed.

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About the European Shippers' Council

European Shippers' Council represents the interests of more than 75.000 cargo owners in the European Union, both SMEs and large multinational companies. For all of them, transport is an indispensable link to their customers. Efficient and sustainable transport & logistics are, therefore, critical for the competitiveness of the European industry and the socio-economic welfare in Europe.

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