

Brussels, 20 April 2005

## Italy: Commission encourages transfer of goods from road to sea

***The Commission authorised today a € 240 Million aid scheme for the next 3 years to encourage the transfer of heavy goods vehicles from road to sea. Subsidies will be granted to road haulage companies which make use of existing or new maritime routes instead of roads.***

The notified scheme will be applicable to regular maritime routes between two or more European ports. Transferring road traffic to maritime transport is one of the measures to combat road congestion proposed by Commission's 2001 White Paper on European Transport Policy. The scheme approved today will cover both accompanied and unaccompanied transport.

In addition, subsidies will be granted to complementary measures destined to encourage forms of associations between SMEs companies with the specific aim of using alternatives to road transport. Training measures to promote the access and use of the maritime lines can be subsidised as well as the acquisition of electronic equipment (both hardware and software) designed to optimise the transport chain in conditions of maximum safety.

The scheme will be in force for three years and its budget will amount to € 240 million. The beneficiaries will have to commit themselves to use the maritime services during three years after the extinction of the scheme.

The Commission considers this scheme to be compatible with the Treaty<sup>1</sup>. It will contribute to the development of the sector of combined transport and is in line with the objectives of the Commission's White Paper on European Transport Policy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> By virtue of Article 87 (3) (c) of the EC Treaty

<sup>2</sup> *European transport policy for 2010: time to decide*. COM (2001) 370