

CHECK-LIST: WHEN DOES TRUCKING MAKE MORE SENSE THAN SHIPPING GOODS BY AIR?

Many customers are making use of air freight if they wish to send goods on long journeys – for example, on the route from China to Europe. One of the greatest advantages of air transport is its speed. However, cross-border trucking is becoming increasingly popular too. Shipping goods by truck across borders is more efficient than air freight if these six conditions are considered:

- Air freight is fast, but also expensive. In contrast, sea freight involves low transport costs and long delivery times. Cross-border trucking represents the advantage of both modes of transport. It is cheaper than air freight and, with transit times of less than 20 days, faster than sea freight.
- The demand for rapid imports of pharmaceuticals, medical apparatus and IT equipment is huge because of the COVID-19 crisis. At the same time, capacity for sea and air traffic has been reduced. The long-standing, historical road corridor (“New Silk Road”) between Europe and China is therefore becoming increasingly important.
- Trucks can transport any kinds of products, even hazardous goods, cold chain goods and large-volume freight. Customers do not depend on airports, railway stations or seaports and can select the departure time with preadvice of two to three days. A shortage of space and container availability do not play a role either.
- Trucks can support multipoint pickup and multipoint delivery. One truck can finish a logistics supply chain demand. No need to load/unload cargo by different conveyances.
- When using the Less Than Truckload (LTL) method, partial loads share a trailer with the goods from other customers. This maximises the payload on the truck and reduces environmental pollution per shipment along the supply chain.
- When using cross-border trucking, customers obtain transparency about the status of their goods at any time. GPS and CCTV monitoring ensure that it is possible to track the trailer. A smart lock feature prevents any access from outside too.
- Thanks to the TIR Convention cross-border freight shipments are handled more efficiently. A truck with TIR plates only has to undergo customs procedures in the country of origin and of destination. The customs document or ‘carnet TIR’ minimises the administrative workload for customs checks and can reduce the delivery time.

