

## AGREED MINUTES

of the Latvian - Bulgarian Joint Committee meeting on International Road  
Transport held in Riga, 30<sup>th</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2015

The following agenda was agreed by the delegations:

1. Exchange of information regarding the development of trade and road transport between the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Bulgaria.
2. Transport of goods by road and establishment of the quota of international road transport permits for the year 2015 and preliminary for 2016.
3. Exchange of views regarding the development of the ECMT multilateral quota.
4. International passenger transport, including passenger rights in bus transport.
5. Miscellaneous ( road user charges, control of road transport operations and functioning of ERRU, etc.).

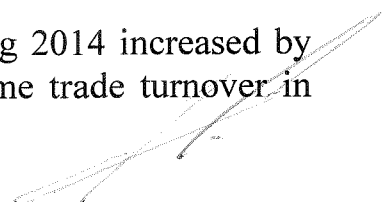
The composition of both delegations is annexed to the protocol (Annex 1).

### **1. Exchange of information regarding the development of trade and road transport between the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Bulgaria.**

The delegations informed each other about trade relations between both countries and about the organization of the road transport sectors in each of them. The Latvian delegation presented information on passenger and goods transport by road in Latvia, as well as information on international trade between Latvia and Bulgaria.

The Latvian side noted that during the year 2014 in comparison with the previous year the export volume in EUR to Bulgaria increased by 29.3% and the import volume from Bulgaria decreased by 5.2%. Conversely in tons export volume decreased by 42.9%, but import volume decreased by 15.6%.

Total trade turnover in EUR between both countries during 2014 increased by 9.4% and constituted 48.08 million EUR. At the same time trade turnover in tons decreased by 30.7%.



In EUR the export of goods from Latvia to Bulgaria is practically identical with import from Bulgaria to Latvia but in tons import from Bulgaria exceeds export of goods from Latvia 1.2 times. It means that more valuable goods are exported from Latvia to Bulgaria.

The Latvian side informed that main types of goods imported from Bulgaria are products of the chemical or allied industries (30.3%), machinery and mechanical appliances and electrical equipment (26.7%), textiles and textile articles (9.6%). Main types of goods exported to Bulgaria are machinery and mechanical appliances and electrical equipment (63.5%), animals and animal products (9%), products of the chemical or allied industries (6.8%).

The Bulgarian delegation informed about their statistical data and noted that it is quite similar.

The Latvian delegation informed about the structure of the heavy goods vehicle fleet and noted that in 2014, in comparison with the previous year, the fleet involved in international carriage of goods has decreased by 1,4% and reached 14309 units. The number of Latvian companies involved in international goods transport operations decrease by 3.5% and at the end of the year there were 3949 such companies.

The Bulgarian delegation outlined the recent general tendencies in their international goods transport market and fleet. The number of hauliers possessing Community licences for international transport of goods at the end of 2014 in Bulgaria was around 11 000 and the fleet involved in international carriage of goods constituted approximately 62 000 units.

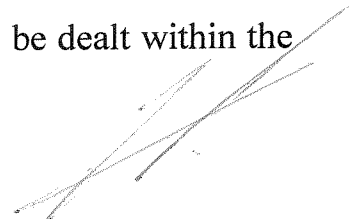
Both sides expressed hope that the trade turnover and the number of international goods transport operations between Latvia and Bulgaria will increase in the nearest future.

## **2. Transport of goods by road and establishment of the quota of international road transport permits for the year 2015 and preliminary for 2016.**

It was noted that in 2015 the countries have exchanged 150 permits valid for the third country transport operations. The usage of this type of permits in 2014 and the current year was discussed by the delegations.

The delegations agreed that the final quota for the year 2015 and the preliminary quota for the year 2016 shall be established in amount of 150 permits valid for to/from third countries goods transport operations.

The sides agreed that any demand for additional permits will be dealt within the framework of good intentions.



All permits of the current year shall be valid till 31st of January of the following year.

The Bulgarian delegation proposed to discuss the issue of liberalization of third country transport operations. The delegations agreed to discuss this proposal at the next Joint Committee meeting.

### **3. Exchange of views regarding the development of the ECMT multilateral quota.**

The delegations noted with satisfaction the approval of the Quality Charter for International Road Haulage Operations under the ECMT Multilateral Quota System at the Council of Ministers held on 28 May, 2015 in Leipzig which can be regarded as a major step in the development of the qualitative aspects of the Multilateral quota and elimination of existing territorial restrictions. It was stressed that the further functioning of the quota is of high importance.

The Latvian delegation informed about the problems related to interpretation of point 3.16 of the ECMT Multilateral Quota User Guide by the Belarus controlling authorities and gave an example of the case when the ECMT licence was regarded as not valid only because there was missing an entry at a logbook stating that a journey prior the journey under control had been from the country of registration of a vehicle. Georgian and Moldavian carriers have faced the similar problem when using the ECMT licences at the territory of Belarus. Taking into consideration that it is a wider scale problem Latvia intends to raise this issue for discussion at the next ITF Road Transport Group meeting. The Bulgarian delegation expressed its support in including the issue of interpretation of point 3.16 of the ECMT Multilateral Quota User Guide at the agenda of the next Group meeting.

The viewpoints on the latest proposal by the Russian Federation to introduce on-line system for providing information on issued, lost, damaged and replaced ECMT licences by Member countries were exchanged.

### **4. International passenger transport, including passenger rights in bus transport.**

The Latvian delegation informed that the competent authority for regular bus permits is the Latvian Road Transport Administration, Valnu street 30, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia, e-mail: [daiga.ancane@atd.lv](mailto:daiga.ancane@atd.lv), phone: +37167686493, fax: +37167686490.

The Bulgarian delegation informed that the competent authority for regular international bus services is Executive Agency Road Transport Administration, Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Gen

Gurko street 5, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: [avto\\_a@rta.government.bg](mailto:avto_a@rta.government.bg), phone: +359 2 930 88 40.

The Latvian delegation noted there is one regular bus line Riga – Sofia between the countries and it is operated by the Lithuanian company UAB “Transinesta” in co-operation with a number of companies from the ECOLINES Group, including Latvian and Bulgarian ones.

With regard to the implementation of Regulation 181/2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 (further – Regulation 181/2011) the Latvian delegation informed that responsible for the enforcement of this Regulation is the Road Transport Administration and it is also dealing with personal claims of bus passengers. Latvia has opted to implement exceptions for domestic regular services and bus lines to third countries by March 2017. At present only the Riga international bus station has been designated as a terminal where assistance for disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility can be provided. Carriers in Latvia already have special trainings regarding assistance provided to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility and disability.

The Bulgarian delegation informed that the competent authority for passenger rights in Bulgaria is Executive Agency Road Transport Administration, Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Gen Gurko street 5, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: [avto\\_a@rta.government.bg](mailto:avto_a@rta.government.bg), phone: +359 2 930 88 40.

The Bulgarian delegation informed that the control functions regarding the obligations of tour operators concerning the application of Regulation 181/2011 are within the competence of Commission of Consumer Protection.

The Bulgarian delegation informed that Bulgaria has designated two bus stations providing information and assistance in compliance with Regulation 181/2011, namely, the Sofia Central Bus Terminal and the Rodopi Bus Terminal in Plovdiv. The Bulgarian side noted that they have not opted for any transitional periods regarding implementation of Regulation 181/2011.

## **5. Miscellaneous (road user charges, control of road transport operations and functioning of ERRU, etc.).**

Both delegations exchanged information on the existing systems for access to the profession according to the Regulation 1071/2009 in their countries.

The Latvian side informed that according to the European Union Road Transport Package provisions in Latvia the Community licences are issued for the period of up to 10 years, but the validity of the certified copies of Community licences is one year and issued only for vehicles registered in

Latvia. A certified copy contains the registration number of the particular vehicle. A transport manager is allowed to manage the transport activities in not more than two of related undertakings with a total fleet of no more than 50 vehicles. The necessity of periodic training for transport managers is not specified.

The Bulgarian side informed that the Community licences are issued for the same 10 year period and the validity of the certified copies of Community licences is also 10 years.

The Bulgarian delegation informed about driving restriction on Bulgarian roads. The detailed information is available at the following link: <http://www.api.bg/index.php/bg/patna-obstanovka/29-yuni-2015>.

The delegations exchanged information on road charges in both countries.

The Bulgarian delegation noted that the road charges for the use of road infrastructure applies to all road network and for all categories of vehicles. The various types of vignettes can be bought at special sales points. It is possible to purchase a day, a week, a month and a year vignettes. The vignette consists of two parts. The first one - called a vignette sticker - shall be placed at a visible place at the bottom right corner of the front window of a road vehicle and the second one shall be kept by the driver of the vehicle. Additional information is available at the link: <http://www.api.bg/index.php/en/vinetni-stikeri>.

The Latvian delegation handed over an informative leaflet on road user charges (vignette) introduced on 01.07.2014 in Latvia.

The delegations expressed their concerns about the extending of minimum wage law in Germany to foreign international road transport companies and administrative barriers related to that as well as about interpreting the Directive on posting of workers in a similar way by some other western countries. It was also noted that the ban introduced by Belgium and France to spend regular weekly 45-hour rest period in a vehicle and very high fines applied in case of non-compliance shall be regarded as social protectionism measures.

Both delegations shared the viewpoint that the outcome of the EU pilot case on minimum wage requirements in Germany is going to be of great importance for forming social policies in the EU countries. It was agreed to join efforts for stopping social protectionism practices in the EU area.

The Latvian delegation reminded that since Latvia joined the Schengen Agreement on 21st December, 2007 at the internal borders of Latvia with Lithuania and Estonia control authorities has been removed and, therefore, foreign drivers, when crossing the Latvian – EU internal border and performing transport operations for which the Latvian permits for international carriage of

goods are needed, should mark themselves in the column of a permit “date and stamp of the customs or border control authority” the place and date of border crossing. Without such records a permit is regarded as not valid.

The Latvian side pointed out that road transport control functions inside the country are executed by the State Police.

The Bulgarian delegation informed about the competent institutions performing control of road transport operations, namely Executive Agency Road Transport Administration, Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Gen Gurko street 5, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: [avto\\_a@rta.government.bg](mailto:avto_a@rta.government.bg), phone: +359 2 930 88 40.

It was noted that special authorizations for carriage of abnormal loads in Latvia are issued by the State Joint – Stock company “Latvian State Roads” (address: Gogoļa street 3, Riga, LV–1743; phone/fax: +371 67036412; email: [kadikis@lvceli.lv](mailto:kadikis@lvceli.lv) and [lvceli@lvceli.lv](mailto:lvceli@lvceli.lv)).

The competent authority issuing special authorizations for carriage of abnormal loads in the territory of Bulgaria is Agency „Road Infrastructure” 3 Makedonia Square, 1606 Sofia, e-mail: [info@api.bg](mailto:info@api.bg), phone.: (+3592)9173409.

The delegations exchanged information on their experience concerning exchange of messages using ERRU system.

It was noted that the work concerning categorization of infringements is being continued within the ERRU working group organized by the European Commission.

The meeting was held in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. Both delegations emphasized the usefulness of the meeting.

The Bulgarian delegation invited the Latvian delegation for the next Joint Committee meeting to Bulgaria in the year 2016. The exact dates of the meeting will be additionally agreed upon by correspondence.

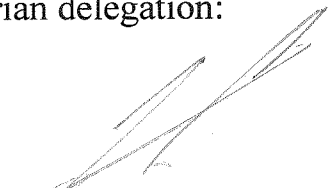
Done at Riga on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2015 in two originals in the English language.

For the Latvian delegation:



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For the Bulgarian delegation:



**Mr. Nikolay Karaivanov**