

PROTOCOL

of the Latvian - Swiss Joint Committee meeting on international Road
Transport held on 24 - 25 April 2014 in Riga, Latvia

related to the

Agreement on International Road Transport for Goods and Passengers
(signed on 28 April 1998, in force since 13 December 1998)

The members of the delegations are listed in the Annex of the Protocol.

At the beginning of the meeting, the delegations agreed on the following agenda:

1. Exchange of information on road transport and trade volumes between Latvia and Switzerland.
2. New developments of transport policy in Latvia and Switzerland (implementation of the EU Road Transport Package, developing of ERRU, road transport user charges, etc.).
3. Passenger services and passenger rights in road transport.
4. Miscellaneous, including development of the ECMT multilateral quota system, giga liner concept, etc.

1. Exchange of information on road transport and trade volumes between Latvia and Switzerland

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 Switzerland.

The Latvian side noted that during the year 2013 in comparison with the previous year the export volume in EUR to Switzerland decreased by 6,7 % and the import volume from Switzerland decreased by 1,1%. Conversely in tons export volume increased by 13%, but import volume decreased by 13%.

Total trade turnover in EUR between both countries during 2013 decreased by 2,9% and constituted 128,4 million EUR. At the same time trade turnover in tons increased by 10,8%.



In EUR the import of goods from Switzerland to Latvia exceeds export from Latvia to Switzerland more than 2 times but in tons export from Latvia exceeds import of goods from Switzerland more than 12 times. That means more valuable goods are imported from Switzerland.

The Latvian side informed that main types of goods imported from Switzerland are products of the chemical and allied industries (66,7%), machinery and mechanical appliances and electrical equipment (5,2%) as well as optical instruments and apparatus, clocks, watches, musical instruments (3,8). Main types of goods exported to Switzerland are transport vehicles (12,3%), wood and articles of wood (4,3%), pulp of wood, paper and paperboard (3,2%).

The Swiss side noted that their statistical data is quite similar and informed that the main mode of transport of the carriage of goods between both countries is by road. In previous year 78,3% of export from Switzerland to Latvia and 99,6% of import from Latvia to Switzerland was performed by road transport.

The Swiss delegation stressed that there is significant potential for the further development of trade relations between both countries. Regarding the ecological standards of Latvian vehicles, the Swiss side noted the fact that 69% of total goods transport carriage between Switzerland and Latvia were performed by trucks which comply to EURO5 standard.

The Latvian side informed about the structure of the heavy goods vehicle fleet and noted that in 2013, in comparison with the previous year, the fleet involved in international carriage of goods has increased by 6,1% and reached 14518 units. At the same time the number of Latvian companies involved in international goods transport operations decreased not significantly and was 4094.

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

2. New developments of transport policy in Latvia and Switzerland (implementation of the EU Road Transport Package, developing of ERRU, road transport user charges, etc.)

It was noted that within the last year there have not been any serious problems in international goods transport operations which were performed in accordance with the agreement between Latvia and Switzerland on international road transport as well as the Land Transport Agreement between Switzerland and the EU.

The Latvian delegation informed that in accordance with Directive 2006/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 amending Directive 1999/62/EC on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures Latvia plans to introduce road vignette for trucks with permissible total weight over 3.5 tons starting as from July 1, 2014. The Latvian side noted that the vignette will be electronic. It is foreseen to organize purchasing of it by a fuel card, a credit card, by mobile phone or by internet. It

is planned that the payment will be fixed in the amount of 11 EUR per day and applied only on main roads. The carriers will be able to purchase a day, a week, a month and a year vignettes. An electronic database will be used for control of the vignette system. The vignettes will be issued taking into consideration ecological standards of the vehicles, number of axles, etc. The Latvian side will provide more detailed information concerning this matter before the introduction of the vignette system.

The Swiss delegation informed regarding heavy vehicle fee in Switzerland. It depends on the permissible total weight of a heavy goods vehicle and its trailers, emission class, and kilometres travelled. In line with the polluter-pays principle, this covers the so-called "external costs" of heavy goods traffic. Currently applied rates in Switzerland are as follows:

Fee categories	Euro classes	HVF rates per t-km from 1.7.2012		Cost for 300 km with a 40 t truck from 1.7. 2012	
		CHF	EUR	CHF	EUR
Category 1	EURO 0, I and II	3.10 cts	2.54 cts	372	304.90
	EURO II with DPF	2.79 cts	2.29 cts	334.80	274.40
Category 2	EURO III	2.69 cts	2.20 cts	322.80	264.60
	EURO III with DPF	2.42 cts	1.98 cts	290.40	238.00
Category 3	EURO IV et V	2.28 cts	1.87 cts	273.60	224.30
	EURO VI	2.05 cts	1.68 cts	246	201.60

(Exchange rate: 1 EUR = 1.22 CHF)

The Swiss delegation informed that in the nearest future it is not planned to review the current rates.

With regard to the latest developments in the road transport legislation of Switzerland it was emphasized that on the basis of the Land Transport Agreement between Switzerland and the EU the transposition of the EU Road Package Regulations No 1071/2009, 1072/2009 and 1073/2009 is in progress with the exception of national cabotage clauses. It has been discussed with the EU Commission that a two years transitional period should be foreseen for the introduction of licencing for small trucks from 3.5 up to 6 tons.

Upon the request of the Swiss delegation the Latvian side demonstrated the functioning of the ERRU system in Latvia stressing that the exchange of information is based on the HUB connection method and it will be fully operational when the all EU countries have joined the system. It was noted that the work concerning categorization of infringements is being continued within the ERRU working group organized by the European Commission.

At present the Swiss side is analysing the experience of the EU countries related to the developing of the ERRU system in order to choose the most suitable option.

Both delegations exchanged information on licensing systems in their countries.

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

3. Passenger services and passenger rights in road transport

It was noted that there is operating only one regular line Riga (LV) – Berne (CH) under the authorization SLV-084/D1 issued to the Latvian registered company SIA “Norma –A” in partnership with UAB “Transinesta” (Lithuania), “ECOLINES-POLSKA” Sp.zo.o (Poland) and ECOLINES ESTONIA OÜ (Estonia) and valid till June 4, 2014. For extending the above mentioned authorization the company has submitted the application which includes some changes in the frequency of the service and involvement of two new partners “ЕКОЛАЙНС БЪЛГАРИЯ” ЕООД (Bulgaria), SIA “BUS SERVISS” (Latvia). The said application has been approved by the Latvian side and sent for the examination to the Swiss side which is going to provide its opinion within two months as from the date of receiving.

The Latvian side informed about implementation of the Regulation No 181/2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004.

The Latvian delegation informed that responsible for the enforcement of this Regulation is the Road Transport Administration and it is also dealing with the personal claims of the bus passengers. Latvia has opted to implement exceptions for domestic regular services and bus lines to third countries. At present only the Riga international bus station could be designated as 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 Swiss delegation noted that they are analysing a possible transposition into their national legislation of the EU regulation concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport in a package together with the railway passenger regulation (Regulation No 1371/2007). A final decision hasn't been taken yet.

The delegations exchanged views on the necessity of harmonized international multilateral legal instrument on organizing regular passenger transport by buses and coaches. The Latvian delegation highlighted the urgent necessity of drafting regulatory framework for organizing regular passenger transport services by coach and bus which covers EU and non-EU countries. The possible options in this respect were discussed. Switzerland expressed its wish for a common approach on a pan-European level for regular passenger transport services and underlined its support for the OMNIBUS agreement.

4. Miscellaneous, including development of the ECMT multilateral quota system, gígaliner concept, etc.

The Latvian side informed that road transport control functions are executed by the State police Central Public Order Police Department Traffic Safety Department Traffic Surveillance and Coordination Bureau Road Haulage Supervision Unit (address: Stabu Street 89, Riga, LV – 1009, Latvia, phone: +371 67208113, +371 67208377; fax: +371 67274789; email: kanceleja.cpp@vp.gov.lv).

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: Gogola street 3, Riga, LV – 1743; phone/fax: +371 67036412; email: kadikis@lvceli.lv and lvceli@lvceli.lv).

The delegations exchanged information on the latest activities within the International Transport Forum and, in particular, concerning development of the ECMT Multilateral Quota System in 2015 and beyond. The Swiss delegation underlined that within the framework of implementation of the Quality Charter a bonus-malus system should be developed. The Latvian side emphasized that for the system to continue a transitional period should be set allowing the Member States to transpose the Quality Charter and the scenario for this period should be developed as soon as possible.

The delegations discussed the feasibility of introduction of gígaliners in the international road haulage market. The Swiss side noted that for their road infrastructure this concept is not acceptable. The Latvian delegation pointed out that regarding this concept the position of Latvia is neutral.

The delegations also discussed existing problems for foreign carriers regarding international transport operations between the Customs Union member countries, namely, RUS, BY, KZ.

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

The Swiss delegation proposed to organize the next Joint Committee meeting in Switzerland in 2016, the exact time of which will be agreed by correspondence.

Done in Riga, on 25th April, 2014, in two originals in the English language.

For the Latvian delegation:



Ms. Annija Novikova

For the Swiss delegation:



Mr. Jean – Claude Schneuwly

The list of participants**The Latvian delegation:**

Ms. Annija Novikova	Road Transport Department, Ministry of Transport, Head of the delegation
Ms. Indra Gromule	Head of International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration
Mr. Aivars Olants	Senior Expert, International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration
Mr. Igors Jagodins	Expert, International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration
Mr. Alvis Keziks	Senior Expert, International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration
Mr. Valdis Trēziņš	President of Road Carriers Association „Latvijas Auto”

The Swiss delegation:

Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly	Head of Section International Affairs, Federal Office of Transport, Head of the delegation
Mr. Markus Dutly	Ambassador, Embassy of Switzerland to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia
Mr. Roger Hafner	Section of Vehicles and Road Fees, Customs Directorate
Ms. Anna Lena Aeschlimann	Section of International Affairs, Federal Office of Transport