

**First Meeting of the Joint Committee established by the Agreement between the European Union
and the Republic of Moldova on the carriage of freight by road**

Online meeting, 15 December 2022

Minutes

Participants

From the European Commission:

- Kristian Schmidt, Director DG MOVE.C., chairman of the meeting, head of the EU delegation
- Jean-Louis Colson, Head of Unit DG MOVE.C.1
- Thomas Kaufmann, DG MOVE.C.1.
- Jean Blatz, DG TRADE.F.2.
- Mattijs Kempynck, DG TRADE.F.2.
- Daniela Nicorici , DG NEAR.C.1.
- Ivor Šutalo, EEAS.EURCA.5

From the Republic of Moldova

- Mr. Mircea Păscăluță - Secretary of State on Transport, head of the Moldovan delegation
- Mr. Andrei Slanină - Head of the road transport Unit, Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- Ms. Tatiana Nirca - Head of the Naval Transport Unit, Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- Ms. Dorina Cucoș - Consultant, Transport Cooperation Unit, Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- Ms. Ina Angheliuc - Deputy Director of the National Agency for Road Transport
- Ms. Valentina Stratan - Head of international cooperation Unit, National Agency for Road Transport
- Mr. Ghenadie Marian – First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration
- Ms. Zinaida Negara – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration

Representatives from EU Member States :

- Eda Rembel (Estonia)
- Maija Mansikkaniemi (Finland)
- Lukas Kroll (Germany)
- Annamária Toth Szaboné (Hungary)
- Vincent Casserly (Ireland)
- Igors Jagodins (Latvia)
- Guy Staus (Luxembourg)
- Krzysztof Lewczak (Poland)
- Sławomir Piwowar (Poland)
- Michał Lewandowski (Poland)
- Robert Żabiński (Poland)
- Michał Kwiatkowski (Poland)
- Marek Hudec (Slovakia)
- Sara Malqvist (Sweden)
- Mattias Andersson (Sweden)

1. *Opening statements*

The EU co-chair welcomed the participants and stated that the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova on the carriage of freight by road must be considered a full success. Although only relatively little time has elapsed since the signature of the Agreement on 29 June, there are already clear statistical data showing that the Agreement has successfully supported the Moldovan economy by substantially increasing the exports from Moldova to the EU. The available data also show that the Agreement has greatly helped Moldovan road transport operators to find alternative markets in the EU, in order to compensate the loss of economic perspectives, which has been a consequence of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. However, the Agreement has also been very beneficial for the EU. EU exports to Moldova in the third quarter of 2022 have increased by 41% when compared to the third quarter of 2021 and EU transport operators go much more frequently to Moldova. The EU co-chair expressed his satisfaction that the parties are able to decide on the continuation of this Agreement at this meeting of the Joint Committee, and that the Committee will also take a decision on its rules of procedure. He introduced his colleagues from DG MOVE, and welcomed colleagues from other Commission departments, but also, and in particular the representatives of Member States who participate as observers.

The Moldovan co-chair stated that the Agreement demonstrates that the EU is standing side by side with Moldova. In his view, the Agreement brings benefits to Moldovan, but also EU transporters. He mentioned that Moldova went further and together with Ukrainian colleagues, following the same principle, liberalised road freight transport between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova which is an important segment in achieving the objectives of the Agreement on the Liberalisation of freight transport. He communicated about Moldova's recent observer status in the Transport Community and expressed hope that this important step will facilitate the adjustment of the national legislation to the *acquis communautaire*. He also expressed his satisfaction on the fact that it will be possible to extend the duration of the Agreement. He mentioned that by signing the Agreement, Moldova committed to the responsibility regarding the transposition of European legislation. He considers that the Agreement will pave the way for Moldovan membership in the EU. He introduced his colleagues from MIRD.

2. *Adoption of the agenda*

The Agenda was adopted.

3. *Adoption of the Rules of Procedure*

The two co-chairs declared that they agree on the rules of procedures, as they were exchanged before the meeting, and both signed a copy of Decision 1/2022 of the Joint Committee, by which these rules of procedure are adopted. These copies will then be exchanged.

4. *Adoption of the Decision on the continuation of the Agreement*

The EU co-chair stated that the adoption of Decision 2/2022, by which the duration of the Agreement is extended until 30 June 2024, is in accordance with Art. 5 of the Agreement. With the adoption at the meeting of 15 December, the Agreement is extended more than 3 months before the end of the initial duration, which is the 31 March 2023.

The Moldovan co-chair stated his agreement on Decision 2/2022 of the Committee, and expressed the hope that further prolongations of the Agreement will be possible, or even a different type of agreement can be concluded in the future. He thanked the Commission for the support on this issue.

Both co-chairs adopted Decision 2/2022 by signing a copy of the Decision, which will then be exchanged.

5. Closing remarks

The Moldovan co-chair stated that the Agreement strongly increases the efficiency of trade between Moldova and the EU. He considers that the sector has very well adapted to the Agreement, and no major problems have been observed in its application.

The EU co-chair concluded the meeting. He announced that the Commission will draw up the report of the meeting.

Kristian Schmidt, Head of the EU delegation
Mircea Păscăluță, Head of the Moldovan delegation