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National policy measures to promote intermodal transport

Status report of 2012

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1. In accordance with a decision made by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC), the Working Party is continuing the work carried out by the former European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in (a) monitoring and analysing national measures to promote intermodal transport and (b) monitoring enforcement and review of the ECMT Consolidated Resolution on Combined Transport (ECE/TRANS/192, para. 90).
2. As decided by the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, para. 20), the secretariat has reproduced the following information updated by Bulgaria.
3. Following the review of the 2012 information at the present session of the Working Party, the secretariat will upload this information onto the WP.24 website: <http://apps.unece.org/NatPolWP249>.

II. Questionnaire on national policy measures to promote intermodal transport

	<i>Objectives and issues¹</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
1	Importance of intermodal transport in national transport policy	One of the main priorities in the Bulgarian transport sector is the development of an intermodal transport system and achieving higher quality freight transport services in compliance with EU policy. Currently, our efforts are concentrated on the construction of a modern infrastructure network for combined transport that overlaps European transport corridors. The development of intermodal transport is an immediate, as well as a long term priority of the Ministry of Transport and we realize that in the future, the successful implementation of this goal will depend not only on the existence of a reliable transport infrastructure but also on the establishment of good interconnections between transport companies.
2	National and international bodies	
	2.1 Take measures to improve national policy coordination (environment, land use, transport)	Bulgarian experts from the Ministry of Transport actively participate in different working groups aiming at improving the national policy coordination in the field of environment, land use and transport. These are e.g. the ongoing works for elaboration of the Bulgarian Sustainable Development Strategy, the current activities for preparation of the national Master Plan for Transport and the elaboration of mid- and long-term infrastructure concepts considering all transport modes.
	2.2 Take measures to improve international policy coordination (environment, land use, transport)	In relation to the answer above, the Bulgarian experts consider participation in the international policy coordination bodies to be a very important task, as well as sharing their vision on the development of combined transport. These are e.g. ongoing works in the different Transport and Environment expert groups in the European Commission, the further elaboration of the EU SD Strategy, etc.
3	Costs and prices	
	3.1 Establish fair competition between modes	A new methodology for defining railway infrastructure charges which aims at improving the financial status of the railways is currently being developed. The new infrastructure charges will contribute to the increasing competitiveness of railway transport in comparison with the road transport.
	3.2 Develop cheaper and more efficient interfaces between modes of transport	Nothing to report.
4	Networks, terminals and logistics centres	
	4.1 Implement international standards (e.g. AGTC Agreement and its Protocol on inland waterways)	Generally speaking, Bulgaria has implemented international standards. Bulgaria has ratified and implemented the AGTC Agreement (10 August 1994) and the AGTC Protocol on inland waterways (20 May 1999). According to Art. 25 of the Bulgarian Railway Transport Law, the Republic of Bulgaria gives financial support for the design, maintenance and construction of rail infrastructure.

¹ For a detailed description of the issues and objectives stipulated in the ECMT Consolidated Resolution refer to ECMT document CEMT/CM(2002)3/FINAL. The objectives and issues contained in the Resolution have been consolidated by the secretariat (for example, the issues of “fair competition” and “transparent and competitive pricing” is mentioned in several indents in the ECMT Resolution).

<i>Objectives and issues¹</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
4.2 Integrate terminal planning into national, regional or cross-border transport and land-use planning	A good example of integrated terminal planning is the construction of the intermodal terminal in Sofia. This project should be implemented under Operational Programme Transport, with the financial support of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The terminal will provide excellent connections to rail and road transport and will turn into an important regional node for the IV, VIII and X transport corridors.
4.3 Take administrative measures to improve terminal access	There is a free access to the Bulgarian terminals.
4.4 Take administrative measures to improve terminal operations and facilities	Nothing to report.
5 Interoperability	
5.1 Ensure compatibility of railway information and signalling systems	The Republic of Bulgaria has taken measures to ensure the compatibility of railway information and signalling systems. Requirements for the application of the existing Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) is introduced in all projects concerning the construction of terminals on the Bulgarian territory.
5.2 Introduce electronic information systems	<p>The Republic of Bulgaria has introduced a Vessel Traffic Management and Information System (VTMIS) which improves transport effectiveness by developing a sea traffic database, provision of different navigational information, identification allowance and ship tracking and other navigational objects in coastal areas, as well as ship planning in coastal waters.</p> <p>The project "Establishment of River Information Services System in Bulgarian Part of Danube River" will be implemented under Operational Programme Transport. The project will start in May 2009.</p>
5.3 Other measures	Nothing to report.
6 Financial and fiscal support measures	
6.1 Financial support for investments (installations, rolling stock, systems, etc.)	<p>The modernization of the transport infrastructure of the Republic of Bulgaria is one of the main priorities of the Ministry of Transport. Its realization follows the principles laid down in two basic documents, elaborated by the ministry: Strategy for the development of transport infrastructure of the Republic of Bulgaria till 2015 and Operational Programme Transport 2007–2013.</p> <p>The implementation of these documents is a precondition for enhancing the capacity of the network, achieving the necessary interoperability with the Trans European Transport Network, as well as the elimination of bottlenecks along the main axes and facilitation of combined transport. In this respect, ensuring the provision of the necessary funds for implementation of the above mentioned strategic documents is a governmental priority.</p>
6.2 Financial support for operations (specific, initial operations, etc.)	Currently, railway infrastructure charges for combined transport in Bulgaria, in case of equal conditions, are approximately 30 per cent lower than the charges for other conventional transportation.
6.3 Fiscal support measures (vehicle tax, road user fee exemptions, etc.)	Nothing to report.

<i>Objectives and issues¹</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
7 Regulatory support measures	
7.1 Exemption from restrictions and traffic bans	Currently there are no restrictions or traffic bans in road transport, applied in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.
7.2 Liberalization of initial and terminal hauls	The private interest in the construction of terminals in Bulgaria has always been welcomed by the Bulgarian transport authorities, and particularly by the Ministry of Transport. We are interested in the development of a modern terminal network, regardless of the ownership of the terminals, since this is a precondition for a better haulages and more developed intermodal system, as well.
7.3 Higher weight limits for road vehicles transporting intermodal loading units	The Republic of Bulgaria is a Contracting Party to several bilateral agreements for the combined international transport of goods. For countries which are not members of the European Union, these agreements state that the both Parties will take all necessary measures to create conditions for easy passage of road vehicles with total weight up to 44 tons in the initial and final legs of the combined transport journey.
7.4 Facilitation of documentary controls	Adequate documents must be provided as proof that combined transport is carried out.
7.5 Bonus systems for using intermodal transport	According to the above mentioned bilateral agreements for the combined international transport of goods, the Contracting Parties have agreed to undertake a number of actions to support the combined transport of goods, keeping in mind the advantages which combined transport provides.
7.6 Strict enforcement of road haulage regulations	There is a strict control on the enforcement of road haulage regulations.
7.7 Other regulatory support measures	Implementation of different projects in the field of the development of the intermodal transport. For example, the project "Development of Strategy for Integration of the Bulgarian Railway Infrastructure into the European Intermodal Transport Network" was completed in 2006, with the financial support of the Phase 2000 Programme. The overall objective of the project was the future development of an efficient intermodal transport system and the delivery of higher quality freight transport services in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.
8 Transport operations	
8.1 Liberalize access to the rail networks	There is free access for transit freight traffic to the rail network in Bulgaria.
8.2 Liberalize access to inland water transport	The Republic of Bulgaria has liberalised access to inland water transport according to the Belgrade Convention.
9 Market monitoring	
9.1 Ensure availability of coherent and reliable data	According to Regulation 91/2003 of the EU concerning the statistics, full data coordination is being carried out.
	All projects related to intermodal transport are publicly presented and the achieved results are periodically the subject of public discussions, organized with the participation of transport operators, forwarders, other administrations, etc.
9.2 Establish inventories of bottlenecks	Currently, Bulgaria has not established an inventory of bottlenecks, but it is represented in the European-level working groups for identification of the operational, administrative and infrastructure bottlenecks in freight transport logistic.

<i>Objectives and issues¹</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
9.3 Establish short sea shipping information offices	Bulgaria is interested in the development of the “motorways of the sea” concept, which was originally proposed in the European Commission Transport White Paper in 2001 as a “real competitive alternative to land transport” and was re-affirmed in its midterm review in 2006. At present, Bulgaria has an Intermodal and Short Sea Promotion Centre, located in Varna.
10 Foster innovations covering all components of the transport chain	Nothing to report.
11 Operators in intermodal transport chains	The Bulgarian State Railways (BDZ EAD) has contracts for the execution of intermodal transportation with the following operators: Intercontainer, Transfesa, Maersk, Adria combi.
11.1 Promote cooperation and partnership agreements	A training course for consultants in the field of safety in the road and railway transport of dangerous goods has been started.
11.2 Promote use of intermodal transport for the transport of dangerous goods	Nothing to report.
11.3 Promote use of international pools of rail wagons	BDZ EAD executes intermodal transportation using block-trains (transit, import/export and inland).
11.4 Promote operation of rail block trains between terminals	There is a national “system for the management of the rolling stock park”.
11.5 Promote use of effective and compatible EDI systems (e.g. tracking and tracing, etc.)	