Introduction of the major UNECE Transport Agreements and Conventions

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Facilitating international transport: the UNECE process

• Since 1947 UNECE member states engaged in a cooperative policy-making process to facilitate international transport and trade

• Resulting harmonized regulations kept up to date by specialized intergovernmental bodies, with participation of the IRU and other NGOs

• Each year some 3,000 government officials and independent experts participate in the meetings organized by the UNECE Transport Division in Geneva

• The UNECE provides an unbiased forum for the ongoing process of international transport facilitation
Facilitating international transport: the outcomes

• Results of the UNECE process include 56 transport agreements and conventions

• They are governed by well-established UN legal procedures

• Most conventions open to all UN Members

• Sixteen of them facilitate international transport in a major way
Acceptance of major UNECE transport agreements and conventions in EATL countries

• Acceptance varies across and within EATL sub-regions (Asia, EECCA, SEE)

• Two EATL countries ratified 15 major conventions (Bulgaria, Romania)

• Accession status averages almost 14 conventions in SEE, 12 in the EECCA countries bordering the EU, about 7 in Central Asia and 3 outside the ECE region

• Acceptance tends to rise with the proximity to the EU
Acceptance of major UNECE transport agreements and conventions (cont’d)

Number of the major UNECE transport agreements and conventions ratified
As of 16 October 2006

- Iran
- China
- Afghanistan
- Uzbekistan
- Ukraine
- Turkmenistan
- Tajikistan
- Russian Federation
- Republic of Moldova
- Kyrgyzstan
- Kazakhstan
- Georgia
- Belarus
- Azerbaijan
- Armenia
- Turkey
- Romania
- Bulgaria

Bar chart showing the number of agreements ratified by each country.
## Acceptance of major UNECE transport agreements and conventions (cont’d)

**Ratified as of 16 October 2006**

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Source: UNECE.
Transport facilitation and economic development

![Graph showing the relationship between major UNECE transport conventions (ratified) and GDP per capita (PPP, US = 100).]
Accession can contribute to economic development

- The implementation of a new transport convention increases initially government spending: $\text{IMP} \rightarrow \text{G} \uparrow$

- If effective, it also increases productivity, economic growth and government revenues: $\text{IMP} \rightarrow \text{P} \uparrow \rightarrow \text{GDP} \uparrow \rightarrow \text{R} \uparrow\uparrow$ (e.g. border-crossing facilitation conventions)

- Alternatively, implementation reduces significantly public spending: $\text{IMP} \rightarrow \text{G} \downarrow\downarrow$ (e.g. road-safety conventions)

- Good implementation not always cheap, but benefits should exceed costs
Effective implementation matters

Number of days required for imports, the highest and lowest 10 countries, UNECE region (www.doingbusiness.org)

Number of days required for import

- Uzbekistan: 139
- Kyrgyzstan: 127
- Kazakhstan: 127
- Azerbaijan: 79
- Georgia: 87
- Ukraine: 52
- Armenia: 46
- Belarus: 44
- Spain: 38
- Austria: 37
- United States: 37
- Belgium: 37
- Netherlands: 37
- Finland: 38
- Norway: 46
- Germany: 52
- Sweden: 79
- Denmark: 87
- United States: 10
- Austria: 9
- Bulgaria: 8
- Finland: 7
- Norway: 7
- Germany: 6
- Sweden: 6
- Denmark: 5

UNECE Transport Division
Effective implementation matters (cont’d)

Road fatalities per million passenger cars in eight EECCA countries and Latvia

Source: UNECE Transport Division, Eurostat, CIS Statistical Committee.
1. The E road network agreement (AGR), 1975

- Minimum infrastructure standards for E roads in 36 countries

- A numbering system for E roads

- The E road network extends to the Caucasus and Central Asia up to the Chinese border

- Density and quality of E roads and motorways remains uneven
2. The E rail network agreement (AGC), 1985

- Minimum infrastructure standards for E railway lines in 25 countries
- A numbering system for E rail lines
- Extends to the Caucasus and Central Asia up to the Chinese border
- Density and quality of E rail lines remains uneven
3. The E combined transport network agreement (AGTC), 1991

- Minimum infrastructure standards for E combined road/rail services in 28 countries
- Identifies relevant terminals, border-crossing points, ferry links and other installations
- Extends to the Caucasus and Central Asia up to the Chinese border
- Density and quality of the AGTC network lines and facilities remains uneven
4. The Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (1968)

- Facilitates international road traffic in 65 countries (incl. Kyrgyzstan)
- And enhances road safety
- Through uniform rules for drivers and other road users
- And for road vehicles
5. The Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)

- Improves road safety: over 200 internationally agreed road signs & signals in 54 countries (incl. Kyrgyzstan)

- 3 categories of signs: danger warning, regulatory, informative

- Norms concerning shapes, dimensions, colours

- Norms for traffic lights, road markings, road works and level-crossings signs
6. European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR), 1970

- Ratified by 46 countries, AETR enhances road safety and aims at fair competition
- By providing uniform rules for crews of trucks engaged in international transport
- Regulates rest stops, working time, etc.
- Monitors compliance (digital tachograph compulsory on new trucks from May 2006 in the EU, by 2010 on all trucks subject to AETR rules)

- Ratified by 50 countries to date (incl. Kyrgyzstan)

- Defines the uniform waybill for international road shipments

- Thus simplifies considerably border-crossing formalities

- A comparable contract for rail shipments introduced in July 2006, still at trial stage
8. **Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, 1954**

- Supports international touring in 77 countries
- By facilitating the temporary duty-free admission of the personal effects imported by tourists
- Rationalizes border controls of tourists
- Increasing international tourism receipts
9. Customs Convention on Temporary Import of Private Road Vehicles (1954)

- Streamlined procedures for temporary importation of private vehicles
- Carnet de Passage en Douane guarantees vehicle import taxes (if it is not re-exported)
- Reduces border-crossing times
- 78 contracting parties to date (incl. EU)
10. Customs Convention on Temporary Import of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)

- Streamlined procedures for temporary importation of commercial vehicles
- Carnet de Passage en Douane guarantees vehicle import taxes (if it is not re-exported)
- Reduces border-crossing times
- Contracting parties include the EU and 39 countries (incl. Kyrgyzstan)
11. The TIR Convention (1975)

• Ratified by the EU and 65 countries (incl. Kyrgyzstan), TIR facilitates effectively international road transport

• Simple and secure international transit transport of goods

• No controls at intermediate borders, no financial guarantee at each border

• Implemented by customs authorities in co-operation with transport operators

- Facilitates the passage of goods at frontiers

- Ratified by the EU and 47 countries (incl. Kyrgyzstan)

- Co-ordination among the responsible border services within each country

- Co-ordination between controls on each side of the border, including joint controls
13. **Customs Container Convention (1972)**

- Ratified by 34 countries
- Done jointly with IMO
- Temporary admission procedures for containers
- Conditions of use of containers granted temporary admission

• Ratified by 14 parties, incl. the EU

• Enhances the efficient use of containers in international transport

• By simplifying administrative procedures to reduce transport of empty units

• Pool containers exempt from import duties and taxes
15. Agreement on the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1957

- Ratified by 41 countries
- Assures safe transport of dangerous cargoes by road
- Uniform rules for vehicle equipment and signs
- Also uniform operator training rules
16. Agreement on the Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs (A.T.P.), 1970

- Harmonized standards for preserving the quality of food
- Refrigerating equipment must be certified
- Reciprocal recognition of national certificates
- Facilitates international trade in perishable foodstuffs
Conclusions

• Kyrgyzstan is a CP to only 6 major UNECE transport conventions
• The country would benefit from acceding to the remaining 10 major conventions
• Effective implementation is key
• There are net benefits to accession
Thank you for your attention!

Detailed information (incl. English, French and Russian versions of international transport agreements and conventions) is available on the UNECE Transport Division website: www.unece.org/trans