
**INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM
TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT BOARD**

Group on Road Transport

MAIN SUMMARY POINTS OF THE VIRTUAL DISCUSSION MEETING

held online on 4 September 2020 via ZOOM platform from 9.30 to 13.00

JT03465858

MAIN SUMMARY POINTS OF THE VIRTUAL DISCUSSION MEETING OF THE GROUP HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2020

Welcome and Introduction

The Chair of the meeting Ms. Karin Jacobs (NL) opened the virtual discussion meeting and welcomed the Group members, noting nearly full attendance. Two missing Countries - Armenia and Belarus conveyed their apology. List of Participants is attached in Annex 3.

The ITF Secretary-General Mr. Young Tae Kim also welcomed the participants and updated the Group on extended membership of the Organisation, which now comprises 62 Member countries, while the Multilateral Quota system remains a European issue. He called upon the Members of the Group to work on the further development of the Quota and look for novice solutions.

Ray O'LEARY (IRL) welcomed the Group on behalf of the ITF Irish Presidency and confirmed the dates of the next Summit - 26-28 May 2021, to be held under the Irish presidency in Leipzig.

1. Draft Agenda of the virtual discussion meeting ITF/TMB/TR/A(2020)2/REV

The Draft agenda was noted.

2. Update on outcomes of the previous meetings

2.1. Draft Summary of discussions of the ITF/TMB/TR/M(2020)1/PROV Virtual Discussion Meeting of the Group held on 26 June 2020 via Zoom

Austria requested a minor amendment to point 4 of the Draft Summary. *With this amendment, the Summary was noted.*

3. Quota from 1 January 2021 and in Mid – term

3.1. Quota from 1 January 2021 [Ref. ITF/TMB/TR(2020)6/PROV Outcome of the written procedure ITF/TMB/TR(2020)8]

The Chair noted that following the written procedure launched on 26 June and completed by 10 July 2020, as discussed and agreed during the virtual meeting of the Group on 26 June 2020, the 2021 Quota will remain unchanged from 2020, with a pending issue of technical adjustment to the UK Quota [see annex 1; ITF/TMB/TR/M(2020)1, pages 6 & 7] .

It was noted that the proposed revision of multipliers aimed to better environmental performance of the ECMT system was not agreed, as four Member countries (DK, H, I, P) were unable to support this proposal, for the different stated reasons.

At the same time, four Member countries (D, F, H, I) felt that the technical adjustment of the UK Quota, as a new non-EU country, needed more detailed explanation about the procedures and calculations. To clarify these questions the Secretariat prepared explanatory note ITF/TMB/TR(2020)8, which was circulated to Member countries, together with relevant

background documents attached, on 30 July 2020. A fifth member state (A) expressed its doubts in the recent email dated 1 September 2020.

UK noted that it was its fundamental right to be treated equally and comparably with other non-EU countries and asked the five States' delegates to acknowledge the positions communicated by the Chair during and after the 26 June meeting that the UK quota of 375 basic licences stands automatically as part of the 2021 and future quotas.

Further discussion showed that the five Member States were not ready at this stage to accept the technical amendment, for different stated reasons. These stated opinions were answered by the UK, point by point and this can be followed up in writing.

The Chair concluded the discussion and asked the representatives of the five States to reconsider their position based on Explanatory note and its attachments, as well as explanations given by the UK and the Secretariat during the discussion.

The Chair postponed a final decision on 2021 Quota and its technical adjustment until the next 22-23 October 2020 meeting and invited the five countries to engage in the dialogue with the Chair and the Secretariat, for further clarifications on the technical adjustment, with a view of finalising the 2021 Quota at the October meeting of the Group.

Note on Austrian position on Quota Multipliers ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)6

The Chair noted that Austria informed by email the Secretariat about its intention to restrict access to its territory under the ECMT quota system to EURO VI lorries. The Member countries were notified correspondingly by the Secretariat on 7 August 2020.

Numerous Member countries expressed by email or high-level letters [cf. ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)6/REV] their disagreement and disappointment by this unilateral action, imposing on the system further restriction without prior discussion or agreement in the Group and requested the ITF Secretary General and the Chair to bring their positions to the attention of the Austrian Minister.

Discussion confirmed that countries could not agree to such a step, both procedurally and given its potential negative effect on trade, which had been already affected by Covid-19 pandemic. The Countries indicated in addition, that EURO V lorries were very close to EURO VI in their environmental performance, while they were the basic category to carry trade between east and west Europe, including Russia – which disposes only Euro V registered lorries, and removing them from the system was unjustified.

The Chair concluded the discussion by asking Austria to work in partnership with the Member countries and reconsider its position in the light of objections and opinions expressed by them; requested the ITF Secretariat¹ and Austria to address the issue in writing at a highest political levels, with a view of finding the acceptable solution before the 22- 23 October meeting of the Group, to establish the final situation as regards the 2021 Quota at that meeting.

¹ The letter from ITF SG Mr. Young Tae Kim addressed to the Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology of Austria, Ms. Leonore GEWESSLER, dated 09/09/2020, is reproduced in Annex 2.

3.2. Quota in mid-term

**[Ref. ITF/TMB/TR(2020)6/PROV;
ITF/TMB/TR(2019)23;
ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)4]**

Update on EU Mobility Package and Brexit

The Group held a brief discussion on Quota development in Mid-term, recalling in particular the Ministerial Mandate of 2018, Ministerial Debate and Presidency conclusions of the 2019 Ministerial Council in Leipzig, as well as the findings of the Study on European Road Freight Markets and Multilateral Quota Perspectives², developed following the Minstrel proceedings. It was noted that Group has to discuss the mid- and long term perspectives of Quota development and report back, as requested, to Ministers. Reference document ITF/TMB/TR(2020)6/PROV could be a useful starting point, as well as the table on short/mid and long term measures to meet the ministerial mandate developed by the NL delegation.

In addition, Italy proposed to develop the Quota system to include unaccompanied transport operations, as this was becoming more and more important, especially in the pandemic situation (reducing person to person contact and lengthy travel abroad).

The Chair asked the Group to reflect on all these points and prepare the constructive positions by next meeting of the Group on 22- 23 October, to be able to meet the ministerial Mandate.

She also invited Italian Delegation to submit their proposal on unaccompanied transport in writing the Secretariat as soon as possible, for discussion at the next Group meeting.

The European Commission and the UK briefed the Group on Brexit negotiations. In addition the European Commission representative updated the group on the next steps and time-line in Mobility Package 1 enforcement, as well as on possible areas of relevance for the development of Quality Charter.

4. Follow-up on issue of Brexit related contingency measures

Note by Informal Task-Force on Brexit Related Quota

ITF/TMB/TR(2020)10

Letter from Netherlands

ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)5

**Letter from the Ministry of Infrastructures
and Transport of Italy**

ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)8

The Chair briefed the Group on the discussions held by the informal Task Force, initiated by the Netherlands and comprising BG, E, IRL, LV, NL, PL, SK, UA, UK and B (as an observer).

After brief discussion which demonstrated differences in Member countries approach and that the Member countries were not ready to make any decision at this stage, the Chair requested the Secretariat to carry out a survey on proposals and principles outlined in the paper.

In addition, Belgium requested legal opinion on possibility of establishing quota sub-system in this context. *The Secretariat will seek legal advice on this and related matters.*

The Group survey will be carried out as soon as possible and within the tight deadlines, to allow timely preparation of the revised paper before the next meeting of the Group in October, as

² Report on European Road Freight Transport Markets and ECMT Multilateral Quota Perspectives - Update 2019/2020 by Prognos AG

requested by the Chair.

5. Digitalisation of ECMT Licenses - EDI Phases 2 and 3

Proposal on full digitalisation of licences and logbooks and related control procedures	ITF/TMB/TR(2020)2
Presentation by the IN Groupe (26 June 2020)	PPT and Slide notes
Questions raised by Member countries and experts	ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)1/REV ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)2/REV ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)3
ECMT EDI Data Protection	ITF/TMB/TR(2020)9
Draft Business offer by the IN Groupe (for discussion)	PPT

The Chair and the Secretariat recalled that the detailed presentation on the proposal for full digitalisation of licences was made during the previous (26 June 2020) virtual meeting of the Group by the IN Groupe and Mr. Ronald Attard Pullicino, former Chair of the EDI Sub-Group, who led the work of the Sub-Group until its full development.

The remaining questions by the Member countries were addressed in the Room Documents listed under this agenda point and the technical development of the Proposal was now complete.

It was recalled that the proposed system provides the advanced security and highly secure applications, in full compliance with data protection provisions. The system provides significant advantages compared to current paper-based system for all the actors involved - National Issuing Authorities, National Control Authorities, the national hauliers, allowing much more efficient handling of the licence issuing and monitoring process at the country levels, rigorous and quick control procedures at any time and place, efficiency gains for the hauliers in handling the licences and linking them to transport operations.

The Secretariat presented the preliminary business proposal, including the tentative costs for development and running of the system, and options of their budgeting. The Group was informed that the Secretariat was still working with the IN Groupe on reducing the cost of system.

The final business proposal will be distributed to the Member countries as soon as possible, and in good time before the next meeting of the Group, to allow the final discussion and agreement on the proposal.

It was underlined that in order to have a fully digital licence system implemented from 1 January 2022, allowing also sufficient leading testing period, the Group needed to make a decision by the 22-23 October meeting, at the latest.

Finally, the Member countries were invited to provide their last minute questions to the Secretariat, shall they need any further clarifications on the proposal.

6. Outstanding issues and next meeting of the Group

Proposal from Turkey on using Electronic Stamps on ECMT Licences	ITF/TMB/TR/RD(2020)
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The proposal from Turkey on using the Electronic Stamps (Red for country restrictions, Green

for Euro categories – cf. annex 3 of the Guide 2014) on ECMT licences was reiterated, following the preliminary discussion in Baku. The Secretariat noted that no objection was received by any Member country up to this point and the proposal was formally agreed.

The electronic stamps will be designed by the Secretariat, to ensure their uniform view, and the printable images will be sent to the Member countries, upon request.

Use of the electronic stamps remains optional, along with currently used physical stamps.

Update of the User Guide on Multilateral Quota [ref. ITF/TMB/TR/MQ(2020)1/PROV
- Chapters 1 to 8 of the Guide ITF/TMB/TR/MQ(2020)7/PROV]
- Technical Chapters and the Certificates

ECMT Platform on Good Practices in International Road Transport
- Survey on Taxes and Charges

These items will be discussed at the next meeting of the Group on 22-23 October.

7. Any other business and closure of the virtual session

Next meetings

- Due to uncertainty caused by Covid-19 pandemic autumn session of the Group initially planned in Sofia, Bulgaria on **22-23 October 2020 will be held virtually, in two half day morning sessions.**

The Chair and the Secretariat would like to thank the Bulgarian Authorities for their willingness to host the meeting and express a hope that this will become possible in near future.

Annex 1.

QUOTA FROM 1 JANUARY 2021

(FOR DECISION BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE)

Following remote discussion meeting of the Group on Road Transport held on 26 June 2020, the following fine-tuned¹ proposal on 2021 Quota is proposed to the Group for approval by written procedure in line with the ITF General Rules, Annex 2²:

Basic quota

Maintain constant the size of the Basic quota in 2021 in absolute terms - i.e. applying the 2020 situation in 2021 unchanged, except for technical adjustment of the UK Quota, which shall be treated in the Quota system comparably to other non-EU countries following the exit from the EU, to 375 basic licences.

System of Multipliers

Amend the system of Multipliers to gradually eliminate older vehicle categories and promote the newest vehicle categories in line with the Ministerial indications and the Member countries' commitments in relation to emissions reduction, as follows:

Proposal for Basic Quota Multipliers for 2021

	(2020)	2021
EURO IV	4	2
EURO V	10	10
EURO VI	12	14

The above proposal will be adopted within the deadline of 14 calendar days - **by 10 July 2020 closure of business**, if no Member Country objects.

In case of any expressed objection the status quo situation will apply, both as regards the basic quota and multipliers and excepting technical adjustment to the UK quota.

The results of a written procedure will be notified to Members by e-mail after the closure of the written procedure, on 10 July 2020 18.00 Paris Time.

¹ Cf. ITF/TMB/TR(2020)6/PROV

² https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/revised_general_rules_text_2019.pdf.

From: SKRITSKAYA Tatyana, ITF <Tatyana.SKRITSKAYA@itf-oecd.org> **On Behalf Of** SHATBERASHVILI Elene, ITF
Sent: 10 July 2020 18:18
To: Members of the Group
CC: Members of the Group
Subject: Outcome of the Written Procedure on 2021 Quota due by Friday 10 July 2020, at 18:00 pm (Paris time)
Importance: High

Dear Group Members,

Chair of the Group and the ITF Secretariat would like to notify on the outcome of the written procedure on 2021 Quota:

- Four Member countries expressed their objection to the Proposal as they could not agree to the revision of multipliers at this stage.

Consequently and as indicated in the paper for written procedure (please see re-attached), for 2021 the status quo situation will apply, both as regards the basic quota and multipliers and excepting technical adjustment to the UK quota.

- However, four Member countries questioned the procedures as regards the technical adjustment of the UK quota. The Secretariat and the Chair will provide all necessary information and clarifications to these countries, with a view of establishing common understanding by September. The Group will be notified on the outcome of these consultations at its next online meeting on 4 September.

With kind regards,

Elene

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Annex 2.



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SECRETARY-GENERAL

SG/2020.135
 YK/ES/ts

E Mail

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Date

9 September 2020

Dear Minister,

Subject: Austrian position on ITF/ECMT Multilateral Quota

I am writing to express, on behalf of the ITF European Member countries and the Secretariat, concern in relation to the intention by Austria notified on 7 August to unilaterally restrict access to their territory to EURO VI vehicles using ECMT licences from 2021.

The issue was discussed on 4 September 2020 at the meeting of the ITF working Group on Road Transport comprising 43 European States and several high-level letters (attached in a separate document) were addressed to the ITF Secretariat.

The Member countries expressed their deep concern and disagreement with this position which would further jeopardise trade already hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic. It will also affect severely the Eastern European Member countries, including Russia, which will not be able to carry out trade to Austria under the ECMT authorisations, if Austria enforces its position.

This new proposed measure comes on top of an already restrictive Austrian position in the ECMT system. The Member countries recognise that Austria is justifying this action on the basis of the environment and climate change targets. However, they express strong concern that the decision to apply this restriction directly contradicts the purpose of the ECMT system, with its common goal of a gradual elimination of the restrictions introduced by Member countries, as stated by the Ministers.

Moreover, as indicated in the letters, this step implies unilateral introduction of a new restriction, which was never agreed by the Ministers or the Group itself. Such unilateral approaches severely damage the decision-making ability of Member countries and the Multilateral quota system itself, which represents indeed the highest quality road transport segment in a wider Europe.

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-2-

May I urge therefore, on behalf of the Member countries, to refrain from this unilateral measure in 2021, bring the issue to the Group discussion, with a view to taking an agreed decision as from 2022.

We strongly hope for your positive answer for the mutual benefit of all countries and remain at your entire disposal for any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Young Tae KIM
Secretary-General

Handwritten signature of Young Tae KIM in blue ink, consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

Annex 3. List of Presence**GROUP ON ROAD TRANSPORT****Final Participants List****Meeting of 4 September 2020, Paris**

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