

**Question for oral answer O-00005/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 128

Michael Cramer

on behalf of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

Subject: Impact of Russian restrictions on international road transport carriers

On 7 August 2014 the Russian Federation introduced a ban on imports of certain food and agricultural products from, among others, all EU Member States. For the transport sector, the embargo means a ban on the entry of vehicles carrying agricultural and food products, and therefore a substantial loss of contracts. The Russian Federation is also impeding the transit to third countries via its territory of food and agricultural products covered by the embargo, e.g. by requiring escorts for such transports, by increasing tenfold the price of guarantees for companies transporting goods covered by the embargo, and even by blocking such transits altogether. The Russian market is economically attractive for EU international road hauliers, in particular those based in countries neighbouring Russia, thanks to its proximity, size and development potential. The Commission has already responded to these Russian restrictions by introducing short-term market support measures, worth well over EUR 155 million, aimed at addressing market oversupply problems with regard to fruit and vegetables and to dairy products. However, the effect on the market for the transport of these products has so far been neglected. It is important to note that goods imported by the Russian Federation (mainly food and industrial products) are transported primarily by road. For road hauliers specialising in food transport (and which have invested in dedicated fleets of refrigerated vehicles), the Russian embargo means the loss of the bulk of their contracts.

Moreover, at the last meeting of the Road Transport Group of the International Transport Forum (ITF), held in Paris on 25 and 26 September 2014, a Russian representative announced that Russia would further restrict international road freight on its territory by reducing, from 1 January 2015, the number of ECMT (European Conference of Ministers of Transport) base permits valid on Russian territory from 67 to 16.

1. In the light of the above, is the Commission aware of the gravity of the current situation, and of all the consequences for EU hauliers of these Russian restrictions?
2. Can the Commission provide exact data on the losses suffered by the EU economy, in particular in the transport sector, as a result of these Russian restrictions?
3. What measures does the new Commission envisage taking to avoid further deterioration of the situation for EU hauliers?
4. How does the new Commission intend to intervene, in particular in the transport sector, in view of the effect of these Russian restrictions on the EU's economy as a whole?
5. Does the Commission intend to take action within the Trade Policy Committee to prepare a complaint against Russia in the WTO?

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Deadline for reply: 10.2.2015