

**Question for written answer P-011654/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Preslav Borissov (PPE)**

Subject: Escalating problems for road hauliers operating between the EU and Turkey

Over the past few years, the Turkish customs authority has been stopping Bulgarian lorries at border crossing points with increasing frequency, thus restricting their access to the Turkish road haulage market. In 2009, Turkey unilaterally introduced minimum journey times for various European routes served by hauliers from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Moldova operating with European Conference of Ministers of Transport (CEMT) permits. The actual times required for the journeys are shorter than the periods stipulated, and the hauliers are thus forced to wait at the border crossings into Turkey until the times arbitrarily set by the Turkish authorities have expired.

On 1 September 2013, the Turkish Government introduced a EUR 3 000 charge for hauliers whose transport permits were 'not in order'. The Turkish customs authority is stopping Bulgarian lorries on a daily basis on the pretext that the hauliers' permits are 'not in order'. The customs officers refuse to accept bilateral permits for carriage between loading and unloading points in Turkey and Bulgaria respectively, and ask for third-country or transit permits. The Turkish authorities do not recognise the hauliers' transportation documents, and they categorise the freight on the basis of the origin and ownership of the goods and other data included on the commercial invoice or in documents unrelated to the shipment. This unprecedented and discriminatory action by the Turkish authorities is in breach of international agreements and accepted practice in the road haulage sector, it impedes trade between Turkey and the EU and it is causing heavy losses for EU, and especially Bulgarian, hauliers operating in this market.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation and is it monitoring it?
2. Has the Commission requested information from Turkey about this matter?
3. What information has been requested from Turkey and has it been provided?
4. What measures does the Commission intend to take to resolve the escalating problems faced by road hauliers operating between the EU and Turkey?