



The experiences of the Dutch participants



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On Saturday September 24, 2022, we traveled to Timisoara in Romania to participate in a multilateral exchange on the subject of Regulation (EU) 561/2006 and Regulation (EU) 165/2014. This exchange started on Sunday, September 25, 2022 and lasted until Friday, September 30, 2022.



Start on Sunday, 24 September

On Sunday the 25th we had a late breakfast and we talked to a colleague from the BAG. During the day, several inspectors arrived from different countries. In the afternoon most participants were present and the first contacts were made, an app group was created and before we officially started, the atmosphere in the group was relaxed. The official start was at 6:00 PM and we could start dinner at 7:00 PM. During dinner it became clear that people knew how to find each other and interesting conversations started. After dinner, everyone's ice was broken.

Monday, 25 September

On Monday we started with a word of welcome by a person in charge of the Ministry of Transport in Romania. The secretariat gave a presentation on the set-up and objectives of the ECR, the developments towards the new set-up of the ECR, the structure and the task forces. After a round of introductions by the participants, several presentations were given about driving and rest times, the tachograph and the Mobility package. We were divided into groups of 4 to 5 colleagues with different nationalities. You were given four cases per group, which led to interesting discussions. The results were presented to each group and fun conversations ensued. The motivation in this was of course the harmonization, most inspectors were on the same page. We thought that was a positive sign! In between coffee, where several countries had brought something cultural, we of course stroopwafels from the Netherlands.

After dinner at the hotel, the Romanians had organized taxis outside the program to take us to the center for an informal drink in a nice bar.



Tuesday, 27 September

On Tuesday we had presentations that went deeper into the requirements of the tachograph and the manipulations encountered. In groups we discussed and explained methods of detecting manipulations. It turned out that the manipulations found in Romania are manipulations that we regularly encountered in the Netherlands six years ago. The target group vehicles are older cars compared to the vehicles driving in Western Europe. The BAG in particular agreed with this because they also find the latest manipulations difficult. Romania understandably wanted to show their "muscles" because they had as many as 80 inspectors. The 15 in the Netherlands was introduced with frowning eyebrows. We explained the Tachograph Fraud project and that we at ILT try to exert influence up front by influencing the behavior of carriers so that we have to take less repressive action along the road. In the last case, they had found a tachograph with software that had been fraudulent. They had taken the driver card to put pressure on the driver. When we entered the number of the tachograph in the "list" we were able to give them the corresponding pin code.

We had explained that there are still 2,500 manipulated tachographs in the "list" and that these tachographs can theoretically be traced in four weeks according to the working method of the Dutch project "Tachograph fraud". This led to the interest of several colleagues and to the conclusion that data sharing should become an important item within ECR.



There was also room for relaxation on Tuesday. With a van we were taken to the center of Timisoara for a city tour. Some of the Romanian colleagues live in Timisoara and gave us a tour with explanations of some buildings. After the walk there was room for a drink on the terrace. It's nice to see that during these moments all kinds of anecdotes are shared and that work is secretly talked and discussed.

Wednesday, 27 September

On Wednesday we had a briefing and we went to a checkpoint. The group was divided into two control sites located on the A1. Remarkably, the highway was closed and all traffic was diverted over the parking lot. We were able to watch Romanian colleagues who spoke remarkably good English. Friendly and enthusiastic colleagues who also asked us questions during the analyses. Not a one-way street but "talking" about the way of analyzing and applying interventions. One of the findings was that they also dealt very proportionally with registered violations, almost in accordance with the LHS (Dutch national enforcement strategy).



The I.S.C.T.R. also check coach buses. Especially for Nienke, 2 buses were brought into the checkpoint. Both buses had rest time violations.



It is nice to see that they enter their information in 1 system and from there they can immediately configure a fine report, which saves time. During the inspection of trucks, deviating values were measured and we went to the workshop for investigation. There were two cases of manipulation.



Back at the hotel there was lunch followed by an evaluation and debriefing.

Thursday 29 September

On Thursday we went to the control locations again and the location changed per group. It was now known that Nienke was "our" bus controller. During the checks, the request was also made to check a bus. The discussions that took place show that passenger transport by bus was not high on the agenda in the other countries, but that this has changed, just like in the Netherlands. In some cases, this is partly due to fatal accidents involving a coach.

During the talks it emerged that more countries check buses and encounter the same problems as the Netherlands and that they need cooperation and discussions in order to gain new insights and build knowledge. Knowledge of legislation and information sharing is not (yet) of the same level as that for freight transport. Answers should be found within the ECR. The secretary of ECR also concluded that passenger transport by bus has no place (yet) in the working groups of the newly formed ECR. In our opinion, the new ECR to be formed could provide more platform for passenger transport by bus.

Back at the hotel we had lunch. Then there was the debriefing of the controls. And we evaluated all week. All attendees had the opportunity to provide feedback about this week. Most shared that:

- Educational week
- It's good that inspectors watch each other and share knowledge with each other
- Despite the same rules, not everything is the same everywhere
- The Romanians have taken care of everything well
- A pleasant setting and good atmosphere, contact details have been exchanged, inspectors can more easily approach each other back in their own country
- The hotel, food and the Polenka were well arranged!

Our feedback in the evaluation earlier this week about influencing behavior among drivers/transporters in order to exert influence in the foreground and thus have to act less repressively was once again considered during this moment. There was a positive response to this. The Secretary of the ECR and the President of Romania have concluded the official part. After this we went to a wine farm where we had a tour and explanation about the wines and where we had a delicious meal.

Friday 30 September

Friday was all about leaving home. Some flew around 06:00 and another part around noon. During the transfer to Frankfurt we all had lunch. Around 21:00 Bert and Nienke were also home safely. 2 weeks later, there is still heavy app traffic in the group app, information is shared. England has already been contacted to check a serial number. We know where to find each other. New friendships have been formed.

With special thanks to all our involved European colleagues, and compliments to our Romanian colleagues for organizing this outstanding ECR exchange.

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