

Press Release

EU-project Amber Coast Logistics supports transport and logistics sector in Belarus “Making Belarus more attractive for foreign carriers”

Warsaw, November 2012: “The participation of Belarus in ACL will help to make the country more attractive for foreign carriers”, emphasized Dr. Anatoly Molokovitch, Head of Logistics Department at the School of Business and Management of Technologies of Belarusian State University, at the third Steering Committee Meeting of Amber Coast Logistics (ACL) in November in Warsaw. The School of Business and Management is one of 19 project partners in the transnational logistics project.

ACL is funded by the European Union’s Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). Its aim is to develop multi-modal logistics centres and to connect remote areas in the Amber Coast region and its natural hinterland, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Three partners of the initiative are from Belarus: The research institutes “School of Business and Management of Technologies of Belarusian State University” as well as “Scientific Technological Park ‘Polytechnik’” and the association “Belarusian Association of International Forwarders”. Besides Belarus, representatives from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Denmark and Germany are participating.

The Lead Partner of the project, Port of Hamburg Marketing, the marketing organization for the Port of Hamburg, announced in Warsaw that the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus, Mikhail Uladzimiravich Myasnikovich, recently signed a document confirming the participation of Belarus in the European Union’s Baltic Sea Region Program and thereby the partaking of Belarusian institutes and companies in the logistics project Amber Coast Logistics (ACL). Thereby he underlined the importance of ACL for the further development of the Belarusian transport and logistics sector.

In the Amber Coast region Belarus has a particular role as a transit country of transnational land based trade and transport flows. It links the economic area of the EU to Russia. It is estimated that about 12 percent of the transit volumes by rail and road from or to Russia run through Belarusian territory. Since 1995, trade flows between Russia, Belarus and the EU increased by a factor of three to four. However, the steadily increasing trade flows are also exposing the need for action in the Belarusian transport and logistics sector. Project partners of Amber Coast Logistics have analysed it as follows:

Looking at the share of rail, road and inland waterway transport in Belarus an imbalance becomes apparent: With 83,9 percent rail transport has the biggest share, followed by road with 9,8 percent and inland waterway with 6,3 percent. One reason for the low significance of road transport is based

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on the situation that the road network of Belarus has only a few areas with highway-standard and capability that can be compared to, for example, Denmark and Germany. Although this share of transport is very ecological, it does not serve the reachability of remote areas. The inland waterway transport is only of minor importance in the region simply because of its topography.

Another technological aspect hindering fluent transport flows is the track gauge. In countries of the former Soviet Union and Finland track gauges are 1.520 mm, while the Western European standard is 1.435 mm. Wagons which can change the track gauge automatically have already been invented but are only used between Finland and Sweden. The only border crossing in Belarus where a system change can be carried out is Brest. Cost-intensive and time-consuming reloading as well as a lack of capacities are the consequences.

Some of the main obstacles in cross border transport are the duration of customs processing and waiting times at international border checkpoints, lengthening transport time, increasing costs and reducing the adherence to schedules. Concerning the waiting times for import traffic from the EU at the border checkpoints to destinations in Belarus, it appears that no transport runs seamlessly and without any time losses at the borders. Here almost just one out of ten transports has to wait less than eight hours. About 85 percent of all transports have to spend between eight hours and two days waiting for clearance.

Further constraints that were analyzed by the ACL project partners are for example the taxation policies, the use and integration of ICT and the degree of corruption.

Contributions of ACL

Based on the examined barriers of the transport and logistics sector in Belarus, ACL project partners will next analyze potential improvements of accessibility along different transport corridors that go through Belarus – for example the relevant Branches of corridor IX Helsinki – Chişinău. After that, operational concepts of multi-modal transport chains will be developed.

Dr. Molokovitch also referred that the topic of logistics in Belarus attracted the attention of the Belarusian government just a few years ago: "In 2008 the 'Program of logistics system Development in Belarus up to 2015' has been adopted. First outcomes of this program are currently built or already operated logistics centers owned by 'Belintertrans – transport-logistic center of the Belarusian Railway', 'Beltamogservice' and others. Belarus is still at the beginning of developing a logistics system. Currently more than 40 logistics centres are under construction. To support this development it is necessary to design an effective scheme that positions logistics centres strategically. Therefore ACL offers the perfect framework with its strategic principle of operation."

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About Amber Coast Logistics:

19 project partners from Belarus, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and around 25 associated partners came together under the transnational project Amber Coast Logistics in order to strengthen and exploit existing potential in the transport and logistics sector in the southern and eastern Baltic Sea region.

The uppermost goal of Amber Coast Logistics: Support the development of multimodal logistics centres in the southern and eastern Baltic Sea region and thereby improve the accessibility of remote areas.

For more information and the detailed interview with Anatoly Molokovitch please visit our website:
<http://www.ambercoastlogistics.eu>

Picture caption:

“The participation of Belarus in ACL will help to make the country more attractive for foreign carriers”, emphasized Anatoly Molokovitch, Head of Logistics Department at the School of Business and Management of Technologies of Belarusian State University.

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