



## **EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Chisinau, 20 June 2014

#### **EU Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas visits the Republic of Moldova**

Today, Vice-President Siim Kallas, responsible for Mobility and Transport, is visiting Chisinau, the capital of the Republic of Moldova. The visit comes at a time when the EU's relationship with the Republic of Moldova is expanding and follows the official visit of the Republic of Moldova by the President of the European Commission, Mr José Manuel Barroso, on 12 June 2014. The EU and the Republic of Moldova are expected to sign on 27 June 2014 an Association Agreement aimed at accelerating the Republic of Moldova's political association and economic integration in line with the EU's Eastern Partnership policy.

Yesterday, Vice-President Kallas met with Mr Vasile Botnari, Minister of Transport and Road Infrastructure of the Republic of Moldova and national transport organisations and associations. Today meetings will take place with Mr Iurie Leanca, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, and Mr Igor Corman, Speaker of the Parliament.

The discussions explore issues related to the current challenges and perspectives of the transport cooperation, and in particular the positive effects of both the Eastern partnership transport cooperation in the field of transport networks and the 2012 EU-Moldova Common Aviation Area agreement on the industry, broader economy, trade and tourism between the Republic of Moldova and the EU. The further strengthening of the transport cooperation between the EU and the Republic of Moldova is expected to provide opportunities for business and significant economic benefits for consumers.

#### **Facts and figures**

Since 2004, trade relations by road between EU28 and Moldova have greatly increased, for reciprocal benefits. From the import side, the tonnes of goods entering European borders from Moldova by truck have increased by 83% from 2004 till 2013, which corresponds to an average growth rate of 7% per year. In the last year, the imports have grown by 8.5% reaching 426 thousand tonnes delivered in 2013.

From the export side, European operators have delivered by road increasing quantities as well: since 2004 till 2013 the volumes entering Moldovan borders by trucks have increased by 116%, which corresponds to an average growth rate of 9% per year. In particular, last year's exports have grown by 13.4% reaching 952 thousand tonnes delivered by truck in 2013.

Air traffic between the EU and the Republic of Moldova has been growing steadily in recent years. Passenger demand grew by 16.7 % in 2012, and an estimated 6.5 % in 2013. Growth in seats available was nearly 26 % between 2013 and 2014. The number of direct routes between the Republic of Moldova and the EU increased from 16 in 2012 to 18 in 2013.

The passenger demand is expected to further pick up as the visa obligation for citizens of the Republic of Moldova who hold a biometric passport and want to travel to the Schengen zone for a short-stay was abolished on 28 April 2014.

The Republic of Moldova is one of the beneficiaries of the EU technical assistance projects for the implementation of the EU transport legislation, aimed at increasing the level of aviation safety and security.

In addition, the EU supports a range of projects aimed at improving transport infrastructure and connections with both EU Member States and other Eastern Partnership countries on the TEN-T network. 15 Million Euros have been earmarked for the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of Moldova roads rehabilitation approved in 2013; completed and ongoing projects include Chisinau and Balti trolleybuses (respectively 3 and 1.6 Million Euros) and passenger trains fleet renewal (5 million Euros).

**More information on the European Neighbourhood policy:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/international/regional\\_cooperation/europe-an-neighbourhood\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/international/regional_cooperation/europe-an-neighbourhood_en.htm)