

ESTONIAN-LATVIAN GOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR THE LATVIAN-ESTONIAN GOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION IN 2019

The legal and administrative cross-border obstacles identified by the Estonian-Latvian Governmental Commission (GC) in 2019 for the 2019/2020 Intergovernmental Commission's (IGC) agenda:

1. Crossing of persons under the age of 18 in Valga and Valka

- To include the issue to the IGC agenda and to initiate an intergovernmental procedure to resolve the issue within 12 months from the inclusion into the IGC agenda;
- The initiator to convene a working group of representatives of the relevant municipalities, the Estonian Ministry of the Interior, the Latvian Ministry of the Interior, the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board and the Latvian State Police within 2 months from the inclusion into the IGC agenda;
- To define the more specific and exact nature of the cross-border cooperation legal barrier within 2 months after convening the relevant Working Group, and to analyse the relevant laws in force and potentials exceptions, so that relevant Estonian and Latvian ministries could coordinate law amendment proposals;
- To initiate the harmonization and revision of information texts and codes of conduct of local government and police authorities' websites in order to ensure awareness raising among border residents through a harmonized information field.

2. The financing of the cross-border medical services

- To keep the issue in the IGC agenda until it has been resolved with a solution that satisfies the inhabitants of the border area;
- To map possibilities organizing a thematic meeting between the Estonian Minister of Social Affairs and the Latvian Minister of Social Affairs and to map the perspectives of a political solution.

3. Definition of the River Pedeli in CBC projects

- To acknowledge the regional importance of the Pedeli River and the need to enable its involvement in cooperation projects.

4. Cross-border movement of social data

- To include the issue to the IGC agenda and to initiate an intergovernmental procedure to resolve the issue within 12 months from the inclusion into the IGC agenda.
- The initiator to convene a working group of representatives of the relevant municipalities, the Estonian Social Insurance Board, the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs, the Latvian Ministry of Welfare and the Latvian Social Insurance Board within 2 months from the inclusion into the IGC agenda;
- To analyse, within 4 months of convening the relevant working group, the automation of queries and the exchange of information through information systems, the possibilities of sharing cross-border electronic data exchange of peoples' actual place of residence and employment (including data protection and the handling of sensitive personal data).

5. Initiating an exchange of information on the processing speed and costs of Russian visa applications of participants in cross-border cooperation projects

- To include the issue to the IGC agenda as an informative discussion point without a need for a solution and to initiate the exchange of information between the Estonian and Latvian Foreign Ministries within the next 3 months from the inclusion into the IGC agenda.

- To raise the issue of Russian visas in regard of cross-border cooperation projects within the framework of regular consultations between the Estonian and Russian Foreign Ministries being regulated by the Financing Agreement between the European Union, the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation.
- 6. Renewal and synchronization of the respective Government Orders of the Republics that regulate the Governmental Commissions**
- To consider initiating the synchronization and amendment of the Government Order of the Republic of Estonia No. 193 and the Government Order of the Republic of Latvia Regulation No. 488 to further enhance the IGC as a cross-border cooperation platform and mechanism for resolving border area administrative and Legal obstacles with the following proposal:
 - To consider establishing a common structure in the respective Estonian and Latvian Governmental Orders that regulate the work of the respective Governmental Commission, consisting of the following elements: functions, tasks, liberties and servicing unit of the Governmental Commission.
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The Estonian-Latvian GC proposals in regard of the current 2018/2019 IGC agenda issues:

- 1. Health care and health care related public services in cross-border regions**
- To invite the Estonian Ministry of Finance and the Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development as observers into the Medical Working Group in order to improve the exchange of information
- A. Emergency medical assistance**
- To exchange draft agreements in 2019 between the relevant Estonian and Latvian authorities in order to move forward and to conclude the respective intergovernmental agreement as soon as possible.
- B. Cross-border use of Valga hospital services**
- To exchange draft contracts in regard of providing medical services in Valga hospital between the relevant Estonian and Latvian authorities during 2019 in order to move forward.
 - To map possibilities organizing a meeting between the Estonian Minister of Social Affairs and the Latvian Minister of Social Affairs to discuss the topic in depth.
- C. Cooperation in health emergencies and disasters**
- To exchange draft contracts between the relevant Estonian and Latvian authorities during 2019 in order to move as soon as possible forward to the contracting phase.
- 2. Development of joint packaging deposit system between Estonia and Latvia**
- To keep the issue on the IGC agenda for another 12 months and to map the Estonia-Latvia programme and other instruments options to support the project in 2020.
- 3. Cooperation in providing passenger traffic service on Tartu-Riga railway line**
- To keep the issue on the IGC agenda for another 12 months and to monitor Estonian Railway negotiations on the extension of the Kiev-Riga passenger train to Tallinn;

- To ask the Estonian Railway and the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications to provide an overview about the state of negotiations to the IGC within 6 months.
- 4. Coordination of cross-border rescue operations' procedures and plans**
- To keep the issue on the IGC agenda for another 12 months and to monitor the process of the sub-activities of the Baltic Joint Rescue Agreement.
 - To ask the Estonian Rescue Board and the Latvian State Fire and Rescue Service to provide an overview about the state of negotiations on major disaster and emergency capabilities and procedures to the IGC within 6 months.
- 5. Elaboration of the unified geodetic justification for the Rail Baltic railway line construction**
- To keep the issue on the IGC agenda for another 12 months and to monitor the Rail Baltic railway line planning process;
 - Geodesy Working Group to provide an overview of the Estonian and Latvian investment needs and to draft a proposal for resolving the issue within 3 months.
 - To create a unified Estonian and Latvian coordinate and elevation system (including the geoid model) in the border area and to analyse the transition of the coordinate and elevation system according to the official geodetic systems of the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia (including the geoid model).
- 6. Determination, prioritisation and coordination of the list of road sections for reconstruction in the border area**
- Initiators to convene a Working Group composed of representatives of the Estonian and Latvian municipalities, the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Estonian Road Administration, the Latvian Ministry of Transport and the Latvian State Roads, as decided by the 2018 IGC Joint Session;
 - The Working Group to compile a proposal to the IGC on the synchronized prioritization of local state roads (including bridges and streets supporting cross-border mobility) in border regions, with a priority list that includes each object's official infrastructure designation and register number, statistics on the frequency of daily use, estimated Estonian and Latvian section costs and total investment cost based on price offers and potential financing sources for the renovation of each road section.
 - To keep the issue on the IGC agenda until the proposal has been compiled to tackle the obstacle with a prioritized list of local state road sections for reconstruction in the border regions (including bridges and streets that support cross-border mobility).
- 7. Lack of ferry transport connections between Saaremaa and Kurzeme**
- Initiators to continue negotiations with each other in order to determine the legal and financial preconditions for launching the Mõntu-Ventspils ferry line and to report back to the IGC within 6 months.
 - To ask the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications and the Latvian Ministry of Transport to analyse under which circumstances assistance and support could be considered to the ferry line and to provide an overview to the IGC within 6 months.
 - To keep the issue on the IGC agenda for another 12 months until initiators have compiled a specific action plan to tackle the issue.