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Parking Policy Measures and their Effects on Mobility and the Economy

Subject: Overview of national and regional parking policies in Latvia Republic

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1. CHARACTERIZATION ON NATIONAL POLICY, LEGISLATION, MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE ELEMENTS OF TRANSPORT SECTOR

Latvia hasn't separate Parking policy, programme or strategy in the national level, because it is integrated in the National policy of transport sector. This chapter gives an overview on national level transport problems, existing policy and most important legislative acts bearing in mind physical planning.

1.1 National level plans and programmes

Latvia has to tend to formulate transport policy on a sector by sector basis at the national level. There is a trend to have an integrated approach to national transport policy covering all sectors by preparing **National transport development programm** (1996-2010). Coordination Council of National Transport Development meeting in 6 of June 1999 adopted the fourth programme and it is complex special purpose programme consisting of 9 subprograms. *Document states national strategic goals and tasks for 7-year period and covers all transport sectors. Programme also presents placing and development of transport infrastructure in regional context.* Policies for integrating land use with transport policies have to be established in future.

During last decades several overall programmes has been developed in Latvia. They concern problems of transport sector development as well.

The Economics Ministry, the Finance Ministry and the Latvian Bank have prepared **the Medium- Term Economical Strategy in the Context of the Accession to the EU** in 1998. The Strategy among the others sets out the aim for the transport sector:

- *to promote stabile increase of transport services, to improve the quality and compatibility of export services ,*
- *to develop multimodal transport sector in a way to develop Latvia as transit country with a good infrastructure,*
- *to improve the transport legislation in accordance to the free market principles and the EU directives.*

The National Rural Development Programme was accepted by the Parliament on 1998 where one of the main sectors was the development of rural roads. **The Concept for Latvian Rural Road Maintenance** *was accepted that aims to improve financing, management and to increase the right of municipalities in the decision process about roads that important to provide local transport. The concept in order to improve finances aims to increase revenues from the excise tax into the State Road Fund and to channel them towards rural roads, what is already fulfilled in 1999.*

Environment Policy Plan (1995) defines transport impact on environment as one of the main problems and proposes following measures and solutions is suggested:

- *The development of transport infrastructure,*
- Minimisation of noise and dangerous compounds emission caused by transport,
- Establishment of the system for re-use of chemicals (oil, fluids for refrigerators etc) used for transport, re-use of vehicles and their parts.

As an effective mean solving transport problems is recognised physical planning at all levels.

Ministry of Transport is preparing **Road Network Maintenance and Development Programme** at the moment. The Programme will include middle term (year 2000- 2005) and long term strategy. The main goals of the programme are:

- *Strategy for road network maintenance and development;*
- Development of international transport corridors(E- class roads, TEN corridors and TINA);
- Development of regional transport corridors (that includes frontier road network);
- List of strategically bridges (including municipal) -identification and increase of their carrying capacity in accordance to the EU loads;
- *Municipal- trunk (main) streets support programme;*
- *Road management strategy .*

1.2. Transport sector in Legislative Acts Regulating Planning Process and Municipalities Responsibilities

Law on Municipalities (the Saeima (Parliament), 1994) *defines that district, city and rural municipalities (pagasts) have an obligation to work out a social and economical development plan and a master plan, and local municipalities define building order on its territory .The article 16 of the law set out that district municipalities have to provide for public transport service.*

Law on Spatial Development Planning, (Saeima, 1998) *defines principles, objectives and goals of spatial planning and competence and responsibility of self-governments and state institutions in order to ensure planning activities.* The law states that local government of districts, state cities, district towns and pagasts (rural municipalities) ensure the elaboration of the spatial development plans of their administrative territories. This plan includes the development programme and the physical plan. *National programmes and sector development programmes regarding to the territory of certain governments should be estimate and adopted in the planning process.*

The law defines planning tasks and principles. For instance, sustainable development principle states, that good environment, balanced economical development, sensible use of nature, human and cultural resources and heritage should be preserved for the future generations. Political declarations from national authorities, the district council and local municipalities, as well as the existing development programme should be

considered. The spatial development plan represents a weighing and prioritising of different sector interests.

Regulations on Physical Plans (the Cabinet of Ministers, 1998) defines the order of physical planning in the Republic of Latvia: the content and composition, as well as the order of preparation, submission, coming into force, suspension and control. *The purposes of physical plan are to ensure for rational use of the corresponding area, which promotes balanced economic development, preserves environment (including cultural) in accordance with the long-term sustainable development priorities and development plans of the state and municipalities.* In accordance of the article 4 of the regulation all state institutions and enterprises shall co-operate with municipalities in the field of physical planning in accordance with ordinance providing information that is at their disposal about the corresponding sector. In the plan is depicted the existing structure and determined the planned structure of the district with a perspective of at least twelve years.

1.3. Transport legislation relevant for spatial planning

Law "On Roads" (the Supreme Council, 1991) *defines administration, protection and development of the roads, set out institutions that realises the road administration their competence.* 11th paragraph says that development of road plans Ministry of Transport, taking into accounts economical, ecological and social trends as well as state and municipal interests.

Regulations "Statute of the Ministry of Transport" (the Cabinet of Ministers, 1997) defines the structure of the Ministry of Transport and accordingly the competencies of transport sector policy and administration. *Among others, statute sets out tasks to co-ordinate co-operation with municipalities,* as well as within frame of competence ensure to meet requirements of international conventions in passengers traffic, communications and information

1.4. Environmental legislation relevant for transport planing

Law "On Environment Protection" (the Saeima, 1991) *aims to ensure environment protection, effective nature management and inhabitants rights to qualitative environment for life.* The most important questions for transport sector are measures to preserve the quality of the environment, including different kinds of protective zones, the procedure how to proclaim the ecologically dangerous situations, the role of the State to provide environment protection measures and the responsibility of environment quality control.

Law "On Environmental Impact Assessment" (the Saeima, 1998) *defines principles and procedure of environmental impact assessment (EIA).* Appendix to law includes the list of projects for which there are obligatory to prepare the environmental impact assessment report. According to the low, project initiator should cover EIA costs.

1.5. Main principles for municipalities, according to legislation acts, for development and management of parking places

Municipalities have right together with planning process to determine the norms, taking into account local prerequisites and circumstances. For example, in Riga there is a requirement to construct multi-storey or underground parking places together with construction of business, trade and other socially important centres, indicating minimal number of parking places necessary. In construction of multi-storey or underground parking places, it is essential to take into account Normative Acts for Construction.

Usage laws for parking places in Riga are developed for streets, that are under care of municipalities, i.e., marked by red lines. On private lands owners determine laws for usage of ground and multi-storey parking places.

State level tariff regulation does not exist. Owners of parking places determine tariffs.

Conformity to parking laws on streets of Riga is controlled by police, in parking places - by owners or administrators.

2. PARKING POLICY IN RIGA

Riga City Council has developed „Riga Traffic Development Concept 1999-2003”. One of the incorporated sections is

ORGANISATION OF PARKING PLACES WITHIN THE AREA MARKED BY RED LINES¹ ON THE STREETS AND MULTI-STOREY GARAGES.

One of the most efficient types of control of motor transport flow is the regulation of its parking possibilities. Given the forecast that the number of inhabitants in the city centre will diminish and the number of private cars will increase reaching 400-500 cars per 1000 inhabitants, organisation of parking places should be based on the following principles:

- priority granted to the public, utilities and operative transport on the streets of Riga;
- pavements to be used by pedestrians;
- roadways to be used by transport vehicles which are moving;
- parking places on the streets only for short-time parking;
- corporate parking places to be located within the territory possessed by the company;
- parked vehicles on the streets not to exceed 7 calendar days;

¹ Red lines mean imaginary lines drawn a certain distance from the centre of the roadway; within the territory marked by red lines no construction of buildings, utilities networks or improvements is allowed in order not to hinder prospective development of the street, its expansion, improvement of public transport stops, etc.

- vehicles supplying goods and services to be used only at night or in specific unloading zones, during a limited period of time.

2.1. Current situation

1999

Type of parking places	Number of places	%
Parking lots, total	3,348	27.0
* free of charge	823	6.6
*pay	2,200	17.8
* with special permits (work)	325	2.6
on streets and pavements, total,	9,043	73.0
including		
* free of charge	6,268	50.6
* pay	1,749	14.1
* with special permits (work)	1,026	8.3
Sum Total	12,391	100

In the city centre, approximately 70% of parking places are occupied by cars parked for 7-9 hours. Currently, no multi-storey garages are available. There are three multi-storey garages under construction with 300 places in each on 13. janvāra iela, Prāgas iela and Ģertrūdes iela. Permits to construct such garages are issued to two projects to be performed on Lazaretes iela (250 places) and Ģertrūdes iela (300 places). With regard to parking places in residential developments, no analysis has been performed and no precise data as to their capacity are available. Municipal parking places are equipped with mechanical and electronic slot machines. Only some 60% of the users pay for the received services in the Centrs District.

2.2. Problems

Caused by unorganised parking of cars:

1. congestion, decrease of the capacity of streets due to cars parked on roadways;
2. cars looking for a parking place (drivers who cannot park their cars in the vicinity of their object of interest) resulting in increased air pollution;

3. low traffic safety;
4. illegal parking of vehicles;
5. Voluntarily reserved, but not used parking places.

2.3. Purpose

To arrange and reorganise the parking system for automobiles in the city, securing the capacity of streets.

2.4. Solution

In order to successfully resolve the existing problem, the following complex of tasks to be performed is offered:

1. Preparation of the zoned model for parking places in the City of Riga;
2. Preparation of the layout of parking places;
3. Introduction of differentiated pay and limited parking time principles;
4. Creation of efficient instruments for the implementation of the concept:
 - Administrative (laws of the Republic of Latvia and normative acts of the RCC);
 - Fiscal (the mechanism for collection of pay and penalties);
 - Information-related;
 - Formation of the public opinion.

In order to define the main principles for organisation of parking places, relevant experience of foreign cities has also been analysed.

2.5. Types of parking places

Parking places are divided into the following categories:

- Pay, located on roadways,
- Multi-level;
- Single-level (squares, yards, etc.);
- Special unloading zones for vehicles supplying goods and services.

2.5.1. Zoned model. Payment and time principle

The City of Riga is divided into three zones, A, B, C, to which different pay tariffs and duration of parking are applied.

Division	Zone A 1	Zone A	Zone B	Zone C
	Old Riga	Centre	Greater centre	Residential developments
Functional	To maximally release the zone from automobiles	Convenient short-time parking of automobiles on roadways in the vicinity of the object of interest and the possibility of long-term parking in a multi-storey garage		Availability of parking places within walking distance
Parking places on roadways	All permitted parking places are free of charge	Only short-term pay parking places. 20:00-8:00, on Saturdays and Sundays and state holidays free of charge.	Short-term pay parking places within areas with high automobile concentration. 20:00-8:00, on Saturdays and Sundays and state holidays free of charge	All permitted parking places are free of charge
		Vehicles of suppliers of goods and services (retail outlets, restaurants) may be parked free of charge from 20.00 to 8.00		
Parking places on pavements	none	none	none	none
Corporate parking places on roadways or pavements	none	none	none	none
Vehicles of handicapped		2 parking places per each 100 parking places will be free of charge		
Tariff	Tariff is determined for entering	0.60 – 1.00 LVL per hour 8.00 – 20.00	0.20 – 0.40 LVL per hour 8.00 – 20.00	
Maximum parking time	Different tariffs per hour, day, month and year	2 hours	no restrictions	no restrictions

Special unloading zones for vehicles supplying goods and services	20.00 – 8.00	20.00 – 8.00	24 hours per day	not established
Establishment of "pockets"	not allowed	allowed if the width of the pavement exceeds 4 metres		
Single level parking places	None	Free places in yards and other arranged upon agreement of		places are the RCC
Multi-level parking places	Only for automobiles which have entered with a pass	In the vicinity, parking places on streets are liquidated in the amount of 50% of capacity of the pay multi-level parking place		Pay parking places on streets are not liquidated in the vicinity

3. Parking Policy: Activities, Results and Problems in Riga

Activities performed in Riga:

- "Riga Parking Development Concept" has been developed and approved, and it is a part of the "Traffic Development Strategy".
- The city is divided into three zones: A, B, C,
- Determined principle for establishing payment parking places on streets, marked by red line:
 - Zone A - all parking places for fee,
 - Zones B, C - payment parking places only next to socially important objects.
- Set up payment parking places.
- Developed and approved payment tariffs:
 - Zone A 0.4 - 1.0 LVL/h,
 - Zone B 0.2 - 0.6 LVL/h,
 - Zone C 0.2 - 0.4 LVL/h.
- Developed and approved times for payment parking places on streets, marked by red line: working days 8.00 - 20.00 and free of charge on weekends and national holidays.
- All the parking meters are changed to automatic ticket dispensers
- Initiated abolishing of service parking places,
- Reserved parking places for transport of government, police, municipalities etc.,

- Developed and approved perspective plan for location of multi-storey parking places (altogether 37 places).
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- In Normative Acts for Construction there is a demand: when building or reconstructing social objects in the technical project parking places have to be foreseen.
- Developed construction of multi-storey garages,
- When new multi-storey or underground parking places are opened, the first month owners usually set it free of charge to get drivers used to parking there.
- Ceased auto evacuation from payment parking places when the parking is not paid.

Results:

- In zone A duty of parking places in streets, marked by red line, has increased from 2.7 to 10.7 cars per place,
- In zone A average standing time for one car has diminished from 5-7 hours to 45 minutes,
- During the last two years 4 multi-storey garages and 1 underground parking place has been constructed.
- After increasing fees in parking places on streets, marked by red line, it is possible to find a free place to park a car for a short time, although in some areas with the highest tariff 1 LVL/h (on Basteja Boulevard near Old Riga) the fulfilment of parking places in working days from 11.00 to 16.00 is close to 100%.
- Turnover in Riga Municipality's non-profit Ltd "Rīgas Autostāvvietas" which manages all the parking places on streets, marked by red line, has grown 3 times, which opens possibility to settle new payment parking places in zone
- "Rīgas Autostāvvietas", Ltd has improved the management and the system of control to contend with the drivers who park, but do not pay.
- The right to manage the underground parking place, where there are presently the lowest fees in the city, is given to "Rīgas Autostāvvietas", Ltd. Consequently, the fees in other multi-storey parking places have diminished, becoming more accessible to users.
- The usage of multi-storey and underground parking places during half a year has increased from 20% of capacity initially to 30 - 40%, which indicates, that drivers get used to them.

Problems:

- Still standing cars in forbidden places on streets,
- Undisciplined drivers,
- Lack of legislation to contend with standing in forbidden places.

- The fruition in multi-storey garages is only 30% of capacity.
- Struggle from the side of state, municipalities and business organizations to maintain service parking places.
- In the automatic ticket dispensers sell tickets forward, not for the time the parking place is used.
- Foreign currency coins with lower real value used in the automatic ticket dispensers.
- Lack of serious investment in construction of multi-storey parking places (there is lack of long term credit resources in the Republic of Latvia).
- Lack of information about free places in multi-storey garages.

4. Review on other towns in Latvia

Actions performed:

- Formed payment parking places on streets, marked by red line, as well as on free grounds in towns' centres.
 - With capacity 30 - 350 places,
 - The fee is fixed, which is normally 0.20 LVL/h, except for Jurmala and Aluksne, where several areas with increased tariff 0.5 LVL/h exist.
 - Fee collected in working days from 8⁰⁰ to 18⁰⁰.
 - In several areas also on Saturdays the parking places are for fee.
 - On Sundays and national holidays parking places are free of charge.

- Municipalities' communal department or non-profit Ltd, owned 100% by municipality, manages parking places.

Problems

- The cars are parked in forbidden places next to payment parking places.

Results

- It is possible in working days to park cars in town centre and in front of socially important objects.
- Improved town's infrastructure.
- The traffic turnover in the town's centre increases, eliminating the possibility to park the car for a long time period.
- Municipalities obtain resources for development of parking places.