



# INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF REFRIGERATION

## SUMMARY SHEET | ATP Agreement

AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL CARRIAGE OF PERISHABLE FOODSTUFFS  
AND ON THE SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TO BE USED FOR SUCH CARRIAGE

### INTRODUCTION

The ATP Agreement was drawn up by the Inland Transport Committee of the United Nations Economic Committee for Europe (UNECE) and presented in Geneva on September 1, 1970. It entered into force on November 21, 1976. The Agreement and its annexes have been regularly amended and updated since their entry into force by the Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11) of the Economic Commission for Europe's Inland Transport Committee, in order to take technological evolutions into account.

This agreement lays down a set of rules and standards that are to be applied to the international transport of certain perishable foods (fruit and vegetables are outside the scope of the agreement). It provides a multi-lateral agreement between Signatory Countries (Contracting Parties) for overland cross-border carriage of perishable foodstuffs. Its purpose is to facilitate international traffic by setting common internationally recognised standards.

It is an Agreement between States, and there is no overall enforcing authority. In practice, highway checks are carried out by Contracting Parties, and non-compliance may then result in legal action by national authorities against offenders in accordance with their domestic legislation. ATP itself does not prescribe any penalties. It applies to transport operations (excluding air transport) performed on the territory of at least two of the Contracting Parties. In addition, a number of countries have also adopted the ATP as the basis for their national legislation.

The publication is available [here](#) in English, French and Russian. It contains the Agreement itself and three annexes:

- **Annex 1:** definitions of and standards for special equipment for the carriage of perishable foodstuffs;
- **Annex 2:** selection of equipment and temperature conditions to be observed for the carriage of quick (deep)-frozen and frozen foodstuffs;
- **Annex 3:** selection of equipment and temperature conditions to be observed for the carriage of chilled foodstuffs.

[ATP Agreement - Full Text](#)



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#### FUNCTIONS

- Lists foodstuffs to be carried in accordance with the ATP agreement and sets the warmest permissible temperature of the load.
- Lays down common standards for temperature controlled transport vehicles such as road vehicles, railway wagons and (for sea journeys under 150 km) sea containers.
- Sets down the tests to be done on such equipment to ensure that it meets the standards.
- Provides the system of certification of equipment, which conforms to the standards.
- Requires all contracting parties to recognise certificates issued in accordance with the agreement by the competent authorities of other contracting parties.

If the requirements of the ATP agreement are not met, the food being transported (in particular frozen or deep-frozen foods as well as butter, game, poultry, fish) may have to undergo special checking. The main requirements are with respect to the technical details of the transport equipment (lorries, trailers, containers, wagons/freight cars, etc.) and test requirement to check for these standards. For that purpose, the transport means are divided into classes (ATP classification) according to means of cooling, refrigerator or a eutectic plate, simple or reinforced insulation, what temperatures transport equipment is suitable for.

- Equipment is certified according to test results, and each ATP certificate issued states the classification to which the equipment is approved. Common ATP classifications are IN, IR, FNA, FRC, etc.
  - **Insulated equipment** is equipment where the body is built with rigid insulating walls, doors and roof making it possible to limit heat transfer between the inside and the outside of the case, depending on the overall coefficient of heat transfer (K coefficient). A distinction is drawn between:
    - Normally insulated equipment (IN) where K is equal or less than  $0.70 \text{ W/m}^2\cdot\text{K}$
    - Heavily insulated equipment (IR) where K is equal to or less than  $0.40 \text{ W/m}^2\cdot\text{K}$ . The latter is compulsory in Europe for transporting frozen foods.
  - **Mechanically refrigerated equipment** is insulated equipment fitted with a refrigeration appliance (vapour compression or absorption system). The most widespread is class C equipment, which is multi-purpose.
  - **Refrigerated equipment** is insulated equipment using a source of cold (natural ice, eutectic plates, dry ice, liquefied gases, etc.). It is primarily used for distribution of frozen foods and ice cream in cities. A refrigerating plant must be shown to have a heat extraction capability at the class limit temperatures of at least 1.75 times the heat flowing through the insulation at those temperatures in order for a type approval to be granted.

Other equipment considered are “Heated equipment” and “Mechanically refrigerated and heated equipment”.

The following tables gives examples of the maximum temperatures to be observed for the carriage of chilled and frozen products:

**Table 1: Temperature conditions for the carriage of chilled foodstuffs**

Product	Maximum temperature
Raw milk	+ 6 °C
Red meat and large game other than red offal	+ 7 °C
Meat products, pasteurized milk, butter, fresh dairy products, ready cooked foodstuffs, vegetable products and fish products not listed below	Either at + 6 °C or at the temperature indicated on the label and/or on the transport documents
Game, poultry and rabbits	+ 4 °C
Red offal	+ 3 °C
Minced meat	Either at + 2 °C or at the temperature indicated on the label and/or on the transport documents.
Untreated fish, molluscs and crustaceans	On melting ice or at the temperature of melting ice

**Table 2: Temperature conditions for the carriage of quick-frozen and frozen foodstuffs**

Product	Maximum temperature
Ice cream	- 20 °C
Frozen or quick-frozen fish, molluscs and shellfish and all other quick-frozen products	- 18 °C
All frozen product (except butter)	- 12 °C
Butter	- 10 °C

Conformity to the requirements of the ATP is assessed by unit or by type testing and the results are recorded in a test report. These tests must be repeated in predefined intervals. The classification and the expiry date have to be written onto the outside of the vehicle in dark blue letters. They have to be wiped out if the requirements of the ATP are no longer met.

A list of the competent authorities and ATP test stations and their details are available at the following address: <http://bit.ly/ATP-Test-Stations>.



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#### CONTRACTING PARTIES

In 2017, 50 parties had contracted the agreement. The initial signatories in 1971 were: Austria, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal and Switzerland. France and the Russian Federation also partly approved this agreement in 1971. The list of the parties which ratify the treaty is regularly updated on the United Nations Treaty Collection website: <http://bit.ly/ATPparties>.

#### OTHER TEXTS RELATED TO TRANSPORT

##### The ADR

The European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road was created in Geneva on September 30, 1957 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and it entered into force on January 29, 1968. The Agreement itself was amended by the Protocol amending article 14 (3) done in New York on August 21, 1975, which entered into force on April 19, 1985. The key article of the Agreement is Article 2, which states that, apart from some excessively dangerous goods, other dangerous goods may be carried internationally in road vehicles subject to compliance with:

- The conditions laid down in Annex A for the goods in question, in particular as regards their packaging and labelling.
- The conditions laid down in Annex B, in particular as regards the construction, equipment and operation of the vehicle carrying the goods in question.

Annexes A and B have been regularly amended and updated since the entry into force of ADR. They were entirely revised and restructured between 1992 and 2000, and a first version of the restructured annexes entered into force on July 1, 2001. New amendments entered into force on January 1, 2003 and on January 1, 2005, consequently, a third consolidated “restructured” version was published as document ECE/TRANS/175, Vol. I and II (“ADR 2005”). The new structure is consistent with that of the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations, the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (of the International Maritime Organization), the Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air (of the International Civil Aviation Organization) and the Regulations concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (of the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail). The lay-out is as follows:

- **Annex A:** General provisions and provisions concerning dangerous articles and substances: Part 1: General provisions; Part 2: Classification; Part 3: Dangerous goods list, special provisions and exemptions related to dangerous goods packed in limited quantities; Part 4: Packing and tank provisions; Part 5: Consignment procedures; Part 6: Requirements for the construction and testing of packaging, intermediate bulk containers (IBCs), large packaging and tanks; Part 7: Provisions concerning the conditions of carriage, loading, unloading and handling.



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- **Annex B:** Provisions concerning transport equipment and transport operations:

Part 8: Requirements for vehicle crews, equipment, operation and documentation; Part 9: Requirements concerning the construction and approval of vehicles. For further information on the ADR Agreement, consult the UNECE website: <http://bit.ly/ADRUnece>.

[ADR Agreement - Full text \(2017\)](#)

### The ADN

The European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways was adopted on 25 May 2000 on the occasion of the Diplomatic Conference organized jointly by the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR).

ADN consists of a main legal text and annexed Regulations, and aims at:

- Ensuring a high level of the safety of the international carriage of dangerous goods by inland waterways;
- Contributing effectively to the protection of the environment, by preventing any pollution resulting from accidents or incidents during such carriage;
- Facilitating transport operations and promoting international trade of chemicals.

The annexed regulations contain provisions concerning dangerous substances and articles, provisions concerning their carriage in packages and in bulk on board inland navigation vessels and tank vessels, as well as provisions concerning the construction and operation of such vessels. They also address requirements and procedures for inspections, issue of certificates of approval, recognition of classification societies, monitoring, and training and examination of experts.

For further information on the ADN Agreement, please consult the UNECE website: <http://bit.ly/ADNUnece>.

[ADN - Full text](#)

### International UNECE Transport Agreements and Conventions

A list of 57 transport agreements and conventions texts are available on the UNECE website: <http://bit.ly/UneceConventionsList>.