

Abstract

Freight transport and intermodality – alternatives and terminals

Presentation of the work in Subgroup 2.4.2 with focus on new intermodal transport solutions in Europe

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In order to establish effective intermodal network with less environmental impacts responding to growing freight transport strong collaborative measures amongst roads and other modes of transport are necessary. The subgroup 2 will gather and present best practise of measures to promote intermodal transport. We will focus on alternatives to road transport and freight terminals.

In Ouagadougou I will present the progress of our work so far and especially some results from a literature study of freight terminals and new intermodal transport solutions in Europe.

The European Union (EU) normally does not accept governmental subsidies which can result in unfair competition. But there are exceptions. A better balance between the transport modes and substituting road transport with railway and sea transport are important parts of the European transport policy. Therefore the European Commission has several times accepted governmental subsidies to support intermodal transport, for example due to buying lots for freight terminals, equipment for reloading (cranes and lifts), equipment for carrying goods (containers, trailers etc.) and information systems which make it possible to track and follow goods in the whole transport chain. Some examples from different countries:

- Subsidies to support intermodal freight terminals in Rotterdam in order to promote transport with railway from the harbour
- Investments in new and existing intermodal terminals in Germany to move goods transport from roads to railways and inland waterways
- Subsidies to actors in intermodal transport in France – as an amount of each reloaded intermodal transport unit at freight terminals in France
- Subsidies to railway transport and intermodal transport in Italy to compensate for absence of internalising the external effects in road transport
- Subsidies in Great Britain to intermodal containers carried by railway – as an amount of each container carried by rail depending on the freight distance
- Financial support to intermodal transport solutions through EU:s Marco Polo program – in 2004 the European Commission decided to support 13 different projects of intermodal transport

In Germany it is common to finance intermodal freight terminals with a combination of governmental and private funds. Freight villages and freight terminals are included in the national infrastructure plan. The German government yearly allocate funds for construction and operation of freight terminals. It is also a more or less strong governmental influence with freight intermodal terminals, especially roads/railways, in for example Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Italy. Some experiences will be presented in Ouagadougou.

Unfortunately we so far have no knowledge of intermodal transport and freight terminals in Africa. Here we need help and we hope that the questionnaire sent to the member countries will give us some new information.