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Special Edition: Hinterland Connections of Seaports

Hinterland connections of major (gateway) seaports include diverse transport routes (rail and road links as well as costal and inland waterways). They can be thousands of kilometres long. As gateways for growing merchandise trade, seaports have been increasingly confronted by hinterland bottlenecks.



The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Transport Division is organizing a conference on “The Role of Seaports as a Link between Inland and Maritime Transport”. The conference, which is kindly hosted by the Government of Greece, will take place in Piraeus, Greece on 17-18 September 2008.

Economic benefits from increased trade are in danger of going to waste unless measures are taken to develop hinterland connections of seaports. Increasingly efficient container transport, coupled with the recent growth in trade volumes, is creating bottlenecks at ports because hinterland connections moving goods forward are not sufficiently developed to handle the growth.

In keeping with the Transport Division's mandate of facilitating international transport, and in order to help achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in the UNECE region, a Group of Experts on Hinterland Connections of Seaports was established by member countries in February 2008 to help tackle this challenge. The Group will collect and analyze information, presenting a final set of recommendations to governments in 2009.

The Conference in Piraeus is one of the activities being organized to produce the set of recommendations. Experts on the issue will report their most recent

research findings in presentations offering key data and examples of best practices. Participants should gain an understanding of what is necessary to ensure efficient links between maritime and inland transport modes, how to effectively integrate seaports in transport infrastructure planning, and how to develop sustainable national, regional and global transport systems.

In addition to stimulating free-flowing and focused discussions on the best ways of solving the hinterland connection problem, the Conference will also provide middle and low-income countries in the UNECE region with an opportunity to benefit from the experience of high-income port/hub/transit economies.

The recommendations, if implemented effectively, could significantly reduce the prohibitively high costs of international trade in a number of UNECE emerging market economies, thereby enhancing prospects for their self-sustaining economic and social development.

The development of well functioning pan-European transport systems has been among the strategic objectives of the UNECE for over 60 years. The current project marks a new path in the UNECE transport-related work which can help achieve the Millennium Development Goal of a global partnership for development (Goal no. 8). This Goal encourages addressing the special needs of

landlocked countries and, by cooperating with the private sector, making available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication. Indirectly it therefore also contributes to reducing poverty (Goal no. 1) through more efficient trade practices and to ensuring environmental sustainability (Goal no. 7) by optimizing transport connections that favour intermodal transport, including rail and inland waterways.

Contact information

For more information and to register for the Conference, please consult our website: http://unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5_ge1_SPC.html or contact

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Container Throughput in Major European Ports

Thousand TEU*

Ports	2007	2006	2005
1. Rotterdam	10,791	9,653	9,288
2. Hamburg	9,890	8,862	8,088
3. Antwerp	8,176	7,018	6,488
4. Bremen	4,912	4,450	3,735
5. Gioia Tauro	3,445	2,939	3,161
6. Algeciras	3,414	3,255	3,180
7. Felixstowe	3,300	3,000	2,700
8. Valencia	3,043	2,612	2,410
9. Le Havre	2,638	2,137	2,058
10. Barcelona	2,610	2,318	2,071
11. Zeebrugge	2,020	1,653	1,408
12. Ambarli	1,940	1,446	1,186
13. Southampton	1,900	1,500	1,374
14. Marsaxlokk	1,900	1,485	1,321
15. Genova	1,855	1,657	1,625
16. St. Petersburg	1,698	1,450	1,121
17. Constantza	1,411	1,018	771
18. Piraeus	1,369	1,386	1,395
19. Las Palmas	1,230	1,329	1,091
20. La Spezia	1,187	1,137	1,024
21. Haifa	1,143	1,053	1,107
22. Leghorn	1,044	658	659
23. Marseilles	1,002	941	908
24. Duisburg	901	787	712
25. Izmir	892	848	784
26. Gothenburg	841	812	772
27. Ashdod	809	693	587
28. Tilbury	783	753	678
29. Liverpool	695	630	626
30. Gdynia	614	461	400

*Note : TEU: Twenty Feet-Equivalent-Unit.

Source: The Port of Rotterdam Authority/Industry & Bulk Cargo

Participation

Government Representatives

Minister of Mercantile Marine, The Aegean and Island Policy and Minister of Transport and Communications, Greece; Vice Minister of Transport, China; Vice Minister of Infrastructure, Poland; Maritime Expert, Undersecretariat of Maritime Affairs, Prime Ministry, Turkey, as well as high level representatives and experts from Austria, Belgium, Iran, Lithuania, Slovakia and other countries.

Organizations

European Commission; World Bank; International Maritime Organization (IMO); International Labour Organization (ILO); International Transport Forum (ITF); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC); United Nations Economic and Social Commissions for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Western Asia (UNESCWA); European Sea Ports Organization (ESPO); International Association of Ports and Harbors; International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF); International Union of Railways (UIC); and European Association of Freight Villages (Europlatforms).

Business Sector

Port of Rotterdam; DB Schenker; Koninklijk Nederlands Vervoer; Hutchison Port Holdings; P&O Ferries; International Freight Forwarders Association Turkey; Ports of Stockholm; Port of Antwerp; Ningbo Port, China; Turkish State Railways; Russian Railways; and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Greece.

Academia

Erasmus University Rotterdam; University of Gdansk; University of Antwerp; National Technical University of Athens; University of Westminster, London; Istanbul University; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Programme Highlights

- ▶ Seaport Best Practices: The interface between maritime and inland transport
- ▶ Hinterland connections of seaports: Bottlenecks or seamless links with roads, railroads and inland waterways
- ▶ Port operations and management: A key factor in the supply chain management
- ▶ Challenges to the development of seaports in the globalized world
- ▶ Technical visit of the port of Piraeus

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