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PRESS RELEASE

The Future of Logistics

BRUSSELS, 15 November 2016 – At the first Forum organized by the European Logistics Platform (ELP) hosted at the Microsoft center, more than 100 EU policymakers and industry stakeholders came together to discuss the future of logistics.

In her keynote address, the **European Commissioner for Mobility and Transport, Violeta Bulc** pointed out the remarkable dynamics and changes unfolding in Europe today; especially in the area of logistics and digitalisation of transport. The Commissioner gave her vision on how to harness and use data allowing organisations to build efficient transport logistics chains. And then she announced her vision on multimodality and effective use of all transport modes, which requires both a well-functioning single European transport area and modern infrastructure. The Commission encouraged stakeholders in the logistics sector to benefit from the various funding and financing opportunities which the EC can offer in the coming years. She concluded that a wave of innovation is about to revolutionize the transport sector, driven broadly by employing new energy sources, decarbonisation, modern electronics and information and communication technology. This should be embraced, since it improves green efficiency and brings job opportunities to European citizens.

Markus Kückelhaus, Vice-President Innovation and Trend Research at DHL, presented a deep dive into logistics trends and game-changing solutions, from robotics and 3D printing to automated solutions with drones. By turning research into practice, Markus emphasized the importance of testing new technologies under real-life conditions, not only to further improve the technology but also to accelerate the adoption and unlock new levels of process efficiency and performance.

The first panel with **Marc Verelst**, P&G Supply Network Innovation Center, **Prof. Dr. Cathy Macharis**, VUB, Head of Research group MOBI, **Arthur van Dijk**, President TLN and **Johan Gemels**, Business Development, Intermodal expert, B Logistics and **Markus Kückelhaus**, DHL debated new ways of delivering sustainability in logistics. There was in general not much appetite for stringent regulation, but rather for regulators to become more agile, to allow for much-needed innovation to be commercialised more quickly. At the same time, the development of multimodal transport and the shift to a more collaborative approach with all actors on the supply chain are needed to improve efficient synchro-modality.

Ismail Ertug MEP gave a wrap-up of the first session, noting that logistics is vital for Europe, and while R&D funding and collaboration are important for its success, it is essential not to ignore the skills and education of workers.

A second panel reviewed some real game-changers in logistics and provided insights in what logistics may look like in 2050. **Professor Eric Ballot** introduced the world of the Physical Internet, which may appear a distant prospect but in fact is already happening today. Panel speakers including **Hanns-Georg Rybak**, Project Manager Transportation, 3M EMEA, **Mark Scheerlinck**, Booking Platform Antwerp and **Maciej Surowiec** from Microsoft demonstrated that today's new business models are based on the sharing and collaborative business practices. Where this collaboration is not yet happening, culture is a barrier, which is due to be broken by a new generation for which the potential gains are so obvious, both in terms of efficiency and sustainability. Some myths will need to be broken, since for example data-sharing would not mean having access without restrictions to data. The session was concluded with a call to 'stop talking and start acting!' on this.

Wim van de Camp MEP noted the debate demonstrated again that Europe needs to foster solutions based on state-of-the-art information and communication technologies, well established infrastructure – but not necessarily the hardware, particularly in logistics chains. It is crucial that anyone involved in supply chain management and logistics, including those that draft the regulations, understand these potentially game-changing developments and the implications for business and the society. He said that industry must be the driver of change, with regulators flexible to developments in technology.

In concluding the event, **Gesine Meissner MEP** expressed a wish that Member States would cease dragging their heels when it comes to the adoption of digital freight transport documents at a time when innovation is proceeding at a rapid pace. She noted that keeping current European world leadership in logistics is the key for the future of Europe's citizens.

The European Logistics Platform consists of more than twenty industry stakeholders representing a wide variety of actors involved in logistics and supply chains across Europe. Current members include

ABP, ACEA, BDL, CER, CLECAT, Deutsche Bahn, Deutsche Post DHL Group, Duisport, ECG, ESC, ECSLA, ERFA, FEPORT, FERRMED, FTA, Goodyear Dunlop Tires, Hutchison Whampoa, IRU, Michelin, NLA, Port of Rotterdam, P&G, RFG, TLN, UIRR, Volvo Group
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