

PRESS RELEASE

Smart Infrastructure Investments

BRUSSELS, 25 September 2017 – At the fourth European Logistics Platform (ELP) event this year, around 35 EU policymakers and industry stakeholders came together to discuss the need for smart infrastructure investments in the EU. The event was hosted by Gesine Meissner MEP, Member of the TRAN Committee and of the ELP Advisory Board. In her introductory remarks, Ms Meissner said "the demand for investment in transport infrastructure is huge. This new wave of investment focuses on clean, innovative and digital projects to modernise Europe's transport network". She also reminded participants that "success of the joint efforts to finalise the TEN-T network will rely on the plans of the member states in setting priorities, and deliver the expected investment results on the ground.'

Paul Mazataud, Europe Director of SNCF Réseau, the French rail infrastructure manager, addressed the challenges for infrastructure financing in the EU. He noted that rail investment needs before 2030 are significant, distinguishing four categories of investments: renewals, digitalisation, enhancement and new lines. He recommended that "priority should be given to renewals and digitalisation. In particular, 'digital railways' that combine dematerialised safety systems, automated train supervision and ultimately, driverless trains will constitute a new paradigm for the sector." He also said that private financing was not a substitute for EU grants, but rather complementary, as neither form of financing would be sufficient to cover the needs of the sector.

Johan Gemels, Business Development manager at Lineas, gave a presentation on the implications of the incident in Rastatt for rail freight transport in Europe and the lessons learned from it. "Priority should be given to restore traffic and to ensure a fair distribution of paths between railway undertakings providing for conventional/intermodal freight traffic as well as passengers. The rail freight corridors are an excellent basis for international cooperation on rail freight services, but today they lack essential operational competences to ensure competitive rail services." He also called for the establishment of an incident management structure at corridor level, i.e. covering all EU member states along a rail freight corridor.

Joost Vantomme, Smart Mobility Director at ACEA, presented the potential of connected and automated mobility for the road freight sector and for decarbonisation. He specifically emphasized the need for smart and synchronized investments in physical and digital infrastructures across Member States. Finally, he pleaded for a true European roadmap for cooperated, connected and automated mobility including a coherent funding strategy for R&I and deployment initiatives.

Florentine Hopmeier, member of the Cabinet of Commission Vice-President Jyrki Katainen, gave a perspective on the **Investment Plan** of the European Commission which focuses on strengthening European investments to create jobs and growth. Highlighting the importance of transport for the European economy with numerous financing possibilities from the EU budget, she also referred to the need to make smarter use of new and existing financial resources and leveraging private investment, providing visibility and technical assistance to investment projects as well as improving the business environment.

In conclusion, the host **MEP Gesine Meissner** underlined the importance of pushing Member States to invest in smart transport infrastructure, by providing funding mechanisms at EU level, but also by investigating the reasons why they do not presently make such investments, even when funding envelopes are available. She added that the EU funds currently available must be at least maintained,

but preferably increased even further to give the necessary boost to Europe's future transport infrastructure investment.

The lively event was moderated by **Tom Antonissen, EU Affairs Adviser at the Association of European Vehicle Logistics (ECG)**, who highlighted its timeliness seeing just the week before a coalition of 30 European transport organisations, among which many ELP members, launched its campaign for a strong Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for the next financial period 2021-2028. With this campaign – launched in Tallinn at the Connecting Europe Conference – the European transport sector is not just asking for (more) money, but is asking for the necessary means to make the TEN-T network, which is in itself a “smart infrastructure investment plan” for Europe, a reality.

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

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