

PRESS RELEASE

## **The Future of Multimodal Transport**

BRUSSELS, 30 January 2018 – At the first European Logistics Platform (ELP) event of the year 2018, more than 80 EU policymakers and industry stakeholders met to listen to testimonies and experiences from companies that have implemented multimodal strategies in their companies' supply chains and to discuss the opportunities and the challenges they face with making multimodal transport a success in Europe.

The event was hosted by MEP Wim van de Camp, member of the TRAN Committee and of the ELP advisory board. In his introductory remarks, Mr van de Camp noted, with reference to the multimodal year 2018, that modal shift is the starting point of multimodality and that not only rail, but also inland waterways and shortsea shipping have to be considered as sustainable solutions within the logistics chains.

**Rickard Backlund, Senior Manager Logistics, SSAB Europe**, provided the customers' perspective on the need for multimodal transport. As a large shipper SSAB wishes to increase its rail share as much as possible but there are obstacles such as the Rastatt incident, derailments, weather disruptions, which force them sometimes to go back to road transport. Road support is always needed and the rail system is not always robust enough. Seeking to accommodate the needs of customers, who want higher frequency and shorter lead times, SSAB is equally aiming to reduce their customers' CO2 by 10mn tonnes by 2025. This requires among others: infrastructure as a European asset; rail freight corridors with high availability and flexibility; reduced and reliable lead times; digitalisation; cost-efficient solutions and a customer-first focus in service provision.

**Sam Bruynseels, Managing Director of Lineas Intermodal**, presented the company's work in developing new rail freight services with bundled freight through its Green Express Network. Lineas was seeking to bundle different types of cargo, including intermodal and conventional wagons (mixed trains) in a high frequency service between economic hubs in Europe. He said that the company was responding to concerns that the current transport model in Europe is not sustainable in the long-run, as the expected 35% increase in transport volume would threaten economic growth due to its effects on congestion as well as on the environment. Shifting traffic to rail is the right choice, he said, because of its higher safety record, lower environmental costs and better use of existing capacity; moreover, it's crucial for sustainable logistics in Europe. He noted that the rail sector also needs to improve its service offering, by asking its customers what the sector needs to do to get them to shift to rail and to ensure that price, quality and ease of use are optimum, while enabling business and profits to grow.

**Bram Bellemans, Logistics Manager at Aurubis Belgium**, highlighted that the current reality is congestion, longer distances, a shortage of drivers and restrictive regulation. The optimal transport solution is reliable, flexible, sustainable, environmentally-friendly and user-friendly. Highlighting the need for shippers to take their responsibility for choosing sustainable logistics solutions, a logistics network should resemble a metro map, with hubs connecting multiple lines (modes), as well as an electricity network, with "high voltage" main lines and local "lower voltage" delivery legs at the end. Aurubis has gone from an eighty per cent road share in 2000 to forty-five per cent in 2016. For this to happen, infrastructure is the key enabler and further strategic infrastructure construction is vital.

**Magda Kopczyńska, Director for Waterborne Transport in Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport** considers multimodality an important driver for sustainable transport, economic strength and efficiency. She presented in a nutshell the Commission's intention for the 2018 Multimodality

Year, pointing out that the Multimodality Year will not transform the transport system overnight, but shall contribute to a vision of what is needed in the short, medium and long term. The focus will be on digitalisation as an enabler for multimodality, with a specific initiative on electronic transport documents, building support for physical and digital infrastructure in the CEF, and on economic incentives for multimodal transport.

ELP Chair Nicolette van der Jagt, closing the event, noted that with the ELP celebrating its fifth anniversary this year, more was expected on the theme of multimodal transport with the aim of finding suitable solutions to the transport and mobility challenges we face to make European industry more efficient, sustainable and innovative.

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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 are 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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