



YOUR VOICE IN EUROPE

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Public Consultation on European Union e-Freight Initiative.

Background

INTRODUCTION

The EU aims at establishing the adequate structural conditions for fostering growth of the EU economy. A main element needed to support growth is the facilitation of the transport of goods. e-Freight will help improving the efficiency of freight transport and thus contribute to growth and competitiveness. Through supporting the achievement of the missing link between different information tools and the facilitation of seamless information flows and thus transport of goods across modes and countries, it will simplify the organisation and execution of freight transport across modes and countries, and therefore contribute to unifying the European Transport Area.

PROBLEMS

Efficient multimodal freight transport is still hampered by inefficiencies of information exchange along freight transport logistics chains. These inefficiencies are due to several specific problems :

- a lack of seamless flow of information along the whole supply chain, due to a lack of interoperability between existing systems : information exchange along the logistics chain is still fragmented, representing an obstacle to smooth operation of the internal market. Freight transport stakeholders are facing a variety of information exchange tools that differ from stakeholder to stakeholder and from mode to mode, and can be either paper, phone or electronically supported. Information requirements vary and are repetitive.
- administrative burden and costs for actors in the logistics chain, due to a duplication of information submission : operators have to provide information through different transport documents (CMR for road, Bill of Lading for maritime, etc...), as well as often the same information several times for different reporting requirements.
- a perceived complexity of multimodal transport, leading to an under-exploitation of multimodal transport and a non-optimal use of the existing transport infrastructure. This is due to the limited level of information on multimodal transport services and of multimodal booking tools, which makes operators look for information on available services from many sources, and therefore creates inefficiencies for setting up multimodal operations.
- a suboptimal management of cargo transport, due to :
 - o the lack of integration of information coming from tracking and tracing technologies in planning, monitoring and compliance processes
 - o the under-exploitation of possibilities offered by cloud computing and more precisely Internet of the Things technologies, such as intelligent cargo applications

MODAL INITIATIVES

In recent years, the EU as well as other institutions have promoted the development of paperless information flows for several freight transport purposes and in different transport modes. In particular, electronic systems for exchange of information on traffic and freight are being implemented:

- for maritime transport, apart from the existing SafeSeaNet and VTMS (Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information Systems), Directive 2010/65/EU on reporting formalities for ships arriving in or departing from ports imposes for each EU Member State to ensure that the reporting formalities at their ports are requested via a "single window". Moreover the e-Maritime initiative will ensure that the data are collected in a harmonised and coordinated manner and will establish a standard electronic transmission of information. Furthermore, it will clarify the rules for allowing the sharing of the information collected for maritime transport and will extend the benefit of directive 2010/65/EU in order to include maritime non-administrative applications, in cooperation with stakeholders. In application of the Blue belt concept, positioning information will be made available to the various authorities in ports for facilitating their work while at the same time reducing the administrative burdens and delays due to reporting formalities for ships operators and shippers.
- for inland waterways, RIS (River Information Services) are being implemented,
- in the rail sector, electronic flow of information on freight and traffic is achieved through TAF-TSI (Telematics Applications for Freight) and ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System).
- in the road sector, relevant ITS applications are under development, in particular according to the 2008 ITS (Intelligent Transport Systems) Action Plan and Directive 2010/40/EU.
- in the air transport sector, the IATA e-Freight initiative is being implemented,
- Finally, in the specific domain of customs, e-Customs aims at making Member States' electronic customs systems compatible with each other and creating a single, shared computer portal.

A MULTIMODAL INITIATIVE : e-Freight

The EU has been for many years actively supporting a policy of efficient and sustainable unimodal and multimodal transport logistics chains, for which accompanying seamless information flows is a prerequisite. While progress in this respect has so far mostly taken place at an individual mode level, in terms of vertical integration and interoperability, often triggered by traffic management needs and public reporting requirements, the additional challenge lies in the horizontal integration and interoperability of information and information exchange across several transport modes.

The White Paper on Transport “Roadmap to a Single Transport Area – towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system” adopted in March 2011 has therefore proposed action n°7 on multimodal transport of goods - e-Freight.

e-Freight will support the development of an overall framework for information exchange between the different actors in the transport logistics chain (logistics service client, logistics service provider, transport network manager, transport regulator) in combination with the necessary standards, administrative, governance and legal provisions. It will:

- allow for entering information only once in the whole logistics chain for planning, execution, monitoring and reporting purposes
- retrieve information on vehicle position and network status from modal traffic information and management systems (co-operative systems such as RIS, ERTMS/TAF TSI, SafeSeaNet/eMaritime, road ITS, SESAR).
- develop a structure for the use of information coming from tracking and tracing technologies as well as for intelligent cargo applications.
- support the development of interoperable information and booking tools (such as multimodal journey planners for freight) for an optimized use of multimodal transport possibilities.

This will allow for a more efficient information exchange, and therefore a more efficient freight transport, and will simplify the use of multimodal and cross-country freight transport.

EXAMPLE OF A USE CASE

Following use case will give non exhaustive examples of concrete applications of e-Freight.

Before e-Freight	With the use of e-Freight	Change
<p>A shipper sends a request to a freight forwarder for transport of goods via email.</p>	<p>A shipper sends a request to a freight forwarder for transport of goods through entering the relevant information into a booking tool available online or through using electronic messages from in-house systems.</p>	<p>Information sent by the shipper is already in a format that will be manageable by the freight forwarder (either directly readable or automatically translatable).</p>
<p>The freight forwarder requests transport for the second leg of the trip to a maritime company.</p>	<p>The information submitted by the shipper is completed where needed and forwarded to the maritime company.</p>	<p>There is no need to re-enter information, the request is automatically created based on the previous documents received and any additional information needed that was not submitted by the shipper.</p>
<p>In most cases (except for intercontinental carriers and very large companies), the maritime company requires manual intervention to handle the booking request before confirming the transport to the freight forwarder.</p>	<p>When the request for transport arrives in the system of the maritime company, availabilities are verified and an answer is sent to the freight forwarder with minimal manual intervention.</p>	<p>There is no need to re-enter information, the transport document is automatically created based on the request received. The process is quicker thanks to a higher degree of automation.</p>
<p>Once the freight forwarder has the answer from the maritime company, he calls a road operator for requesting transport for the first leg of the trip.</p>	<p>When the freight forwarder's system receives the confirmation from the maritime company, information from the shipper's request and from the maritime transport document is automatically processed in order to create a request to the road operator.</p>	<p>There is no need to re-enter information, the next request is automatically created based on the previous documents received. The process is quicker thanks to a higher degree of automation.</p>

<p>The road operator checks availabilities and sends a confirmation to the freight forwarder by email or over the phone.</p>	<p>When the request for transport arrives in the system of the road operator, availabilities are verified and an answer is sent to the freight forwarder with minimal manual intervention.</p>	<p>There is no need to re-enter information, the transport document is automatically created based on the request received.</p> <p>The process is quicker thanks to a higher degree of automation.</p>
<p>The same procedure is used to book a third leg of transport via inland waterways (most of the time via email or phone).</p>	<p>When the request for transport arrives in the system of the inland waterways operator, availabilities are verified and an answer is sent to the freight forwarder with minimal manual intervention.</p>	<p>There is no need to re-enter information, the transport document is automatically created based on the request received.</p> <p>The process is quicker thanks to a higher degree of automation.</p>
<p>Goods are transported via road to the port, and boarded on a vessel.</p> <p>No formal interaction exists between the road operator and the port.</p>	<p>Goods are transported via road to the port, and boarded on a vessel.</p> <p>Electronic communication is established between the road operator and the port in order for example to simplify check-in and to avoid waiting times.</p>	<p>More efficient port terminal operations.</p>
<p>During the trip, the shipmaster has to submit information related to the cargo he is transporting to authorities (e.g. FAL forms), based on the paper transport documents.</p>	<p>During the trip, a message with the necessary information on cargo for submission to authorities is automatically created from the transport documents, and the shipmaster completes the message with additional information if needed.</p>	<p>There is no need to re-enter information already submitted for the transport documents, the message for authorities is automatically created based on the transport documents, and, where necessary, information is added.</p>
<p>During the trip, an unexpected event causes delay.</p>	<p>During the trip, an unexpected event causes delay.</p>	

<p>The inland waterway operator has no information on the delay.</p> <p>Since this transport is a scheduled transport, the vessel waits until time of departure for the cargo and finally leaves without the cargo that is expected.</p>	<p>Thanks to tracking and tracing services offered by e-Freight, a message is automatically sent to the inland waterways operator with an updated estimated time of arrival.</p> <p>The transport is a scheduled transport. Since the operator knows that the cargo will arrive at the port 2 days later than planned, it will reschedule the cargo transport for the next vessel, and use the free space to transport other cargo that arrived at the port earlier than planned or that was booked recently.</p>	<p>Tracking and tracing services allow for better information on the transport status, and for a better reactivity to unexpected events.</p> <p>Use of available transport resources is improved.</p>
<p>The cargo is finally transported via inland waterways to its final destination. The document proving reception of the goods is then signed by the consignor, and transported to the shipper. The freight forwarder sends an invoice to the shipper.</p>	<p>The cargo is finally transported via inland waterways to its final destination. The reception of the goods is confirmed by the consignor electronically, and the freight forwarder can immediately send the invoice.</p>	<p>Time is gained, costs are reduced.</p>

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTATION

This consultation aims at collecting your views on the e-Freight initiative in order to assess the possible actions that could help meet the above mentioned objectives. We kindly ask you to evaluate the presented measures, propose modifications or even other measures. We also ask your opinion on the EU e-Freight initiative in general.

Please visit for more information and background documents the web page of this public consultation.

In the consultation you are asked to express your opinion on the relevant challenges identified by the Commission's services. Additional contributions, e.g. through position papers, should be sent to the email address move-d1-e-freight@ec.europa.eu

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Timing

The online questionnaire should take around 30 minutes to complete. You are strongly encouraged to complete the questionnaire online, however you also have the option to [download the questionnaire](#) and draft your answers. After preparing all your answers, please complete the online questionnaire or submit your reply by e-mail to move-d1-e-freight@ec.europa.eu or by post to:

European Commission,
Directorate-General for Mobility & Transport,
Unit D1 – Maritime Transport and Logistics,
DM28, Rue de Mot 28,
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium.

Please also note that the online idle time is 90 minutes. If you leave the opened form untouched for more than 90 minutes, your session will time out and your replies will be lost.

The public consultation period lasts 12 weeks, all questionnaires should be returned by 17 January 2013 at the very latest.

Questions are either compulsory or optional. If any of the compulsory fields have not been filled in, the system will not allow you to submit the questionnaire but will redirect you to the incomplete answer and give you an opportunity to correct it. An error message will appear in a purple/red colour under the question in which a problem occurred.

Note that you should not use the 'Back' button in the upper left-hand corner of the screen to navigate the online questionnaire, because this will lead to a loss of all the data that you have already inserted. For navigation, you should use the buttons 'Next' and 'Previous' at the bottom of the questionnaire page instead.

When you will successfully have submitted the questionnaire, a confirmation message will appear on your screen and you will be able to print your answers. Please record your registration number.

Following the public consultation, a report will be made publicly available on the Commission's website.

Important notice

Contributions may be submitted in any official EU language. Nevertheless, in order to facilitate the work and allow easy access to all submission, we would appreciate it if contributions could be submitted in the English language or, in the absence thereof, at least a summary in the English language.

As part of the European Transparency Initiative, organisations are invited to use the Register of interest representatives to provide the European Commission and the public at large with information about their objectives, funding and structures. If you are not registered yet in this register, please visit: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/transparency/regrin/welcome.do?locale=en>

Please note that this document has been drafted for information and consultation purposes only. It has not been adopted or in any way approved by the European Commission and should not be regarded as representative of the views of Commission staff. It does not in any way prejudice, or constitute the announcement of, any position on the part of the Commission on the issues covered. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the information provided, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.

Structure

This online questionnaire is divided into 5 parts:

Part 1: Respondent information

Part 2: Problems to be addressed

Part 3: Objectives (framework and services)

Part 4: Envisaged measures

Part 5: Additional issues to consider in e-Freight