The Logismed Soft project’s knowledge network on logistics platforms

This network of experts, created as part of the Logismed Soft project, has held three meetings to share experiences and good practices to help implement modern logistics platforms in the Southern Mediterranean countries.

Members of the knowledge network at their third meeting

Members of the knowledge network during their visit to the logistics platform in Perpignan

Newsletter Contents

The Logismed Soft project’s knowledge network on logistics platforms PÁG. 2
CETMO participates in the Annual Summit of the International Transport Forum PÁG. 3
The potential of blockchain technology in transport and logistics PÁG. 4
Regional Workshop on the Production of Georeferenced Maritime Transport Statistics, under the MEDSTAT IV programme PÁG. 5

Events: May-July 2018

8-10 May 2018

23-25 May 2018

6-8 June 2018
Networking event for the Logismed Soft project’s knowledge network. Barcelona.

13 July 2018
Conference: The impact of blockchain technology on managing infrastructure and transport services, organized by CETMO, the Infrastructure Circle Foundation and the Association of Civil Engineers of Catalonia. Barcelona.
The Logismed Soft project’s knowledge network on logistics platforms

The Logismed Soft project was launched in 2014 and promoted by the European Investment Bank (EIB) to help increase the competitiveness and development of modern logistics in the countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. CETMO was made partially responsible for implementing the project.

The project is structured around three components: “Component I - Coordination” involves ensuring that the different parts of the project are coherent, as well as carrying out activities to promote the creation of logistics platforms, and preparing a technical guide on the design and implementation of logistics platforms. “Component II - Training Activities” aims to implement a series of training activities to promote high-quality logistics in the participating countries. Finally, “Component III - Observatory” is aimed at promoting the creation of a regional transport and logistics observatory and acquiring a better overview of the logistics sector in the region.

One of the main results of “Component I - Coordination” has been the creation of a knowledge network on logistics platforms, which should facilitate the direct sharing of experiences and good international practices in the logistics sector. Although the project was initially conceived to establish a network of logistics platforms in the Mediterranean, as it progressed, the idea of creating a knowledge network made up of experts from the different countries was seen as something that could be of major interest and more beneficial to the countries involved in the project.

On 19-20 September 2016, the first meeting between the experts from the different countries took place in Barcelona and led to the creation of this knowledge network. In addition to representatives from the public administration and some important logistics stakeholders in the Southern Mediterranean countries, representatives of European logistics platform associations, such as Europlatforms, GVZ and ACTE-CIMALSA, also participated. On the first day of the meeting (19 September), discussion focused on the technical features that modern logistics platforms should have, the types of services that they should provide and possible institutional models. In addition, information was provided on the logistics situation in the Southern Mediterranean countries and some successful cases in Europe. The second day of this meeting (20 September) had a more practical focus, as it involved a visit to the CIM-Valles logistics platform managed by CIMALSA. The visit enabled participants to get a close view of the services and features discussed the previous day.

The Logismed Soft project has helped increase the competitiveness and development of modern logistics in the Southern Mediterranean countries

The second meeting of the knowledge network took place on 9 January 2018 in Rabat, where a technical seminar on logistics platforms was held. During the seminar, the network members discussed the main challenges the region faces to make progress with the implementation of logistics platform projects. To give the seminar a more practical approach, participants identified specific situations in the network member countries so that possible solutions could be presented and discussed based on other members’ lived and known experiences.

The knowledge network on logistics platforms enables members to directly share experiences and good international practices in the logistics sector

The most recent meeting of the knowledge network was held on 6-8 June 2018, which coincided with the Barcelona International Logistics Exhibition (SIL).
Network members enjoyed access to the different parts of the exhibition and participated in activities targeted specifically for them. On 6 June, a conference on good practices in implementing logistics platforms was held, where the EIB presented an overview of international financial institutions and the common requirements of the private sector for participating in logistics platform projects.

On 7 June, the second day of the meeting, various networking activities were organized. The most noteworthy were the meeting with the Escola Europea - Intermodal Transport, which presented the logistics-related projects it is developing in the region, and the meeting with representatives from Panama, who shared their experiences in a country that has developed its own national logistics strategy.

Finally, on 8 June, participants made a technical visit to the logistics platform in Perpignan and the Saint-Charles container terminal, which enabled them to learn how Perpignan and different institutions have worked together to promote the MP2 multimodal platform.

Even though the Logismed Soft project will finish at the end of 2018, the experts would like the meetings between the members of the knowledge network to continue beyond the end of Logismed Soft, as they are aware of how important sharing experiences and good international practices is to the development of the sector in the region. It is very likely that these meetings will continue to be held. However, they will do so within the framework of the Group of Transport Ministers of the Western Mediterranean (GTMO 5+5), of which CETMO is the Technical Secretariat, as the result of a cooperation agreement signed between Europlatforms, the European logistics platforms association, and CETMO.

CETMO participates in the Annual Summit of the International Transport Forum

The Annual Summit of the International Transport Forum (ITF), an intergovernmental organization that works as a think tank on global transport policy, was held in Leipzig (Germany). This year’s session, which took place on 23-25 May, was devoted to transport safety, a key concern for the sector. The session also contributed to the implementation of two major international agreements: the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

During the summit, on 24 May, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean organized the session, “Towards Ensuring Road Safety in the Euro-Mediterranean Region”, to discuss road safety problems in the region. During the session, participants shared good practices on road safety, identified the main challenges faced by the sector, and discussed specific projects to reduce the number of road deaths. The session brought together officials from public administrations and senior officials from transport and financial institutions in the region. This made it easier to increase synergies and cooperation between participants.
The CETMO representative was one of the speakers. During the presentation, CETMO identified the lack of data and standardization in data processing as a problem that needs to be resolved to help identify corrective measures to improve road safety. In addition, CETMO expressed its interest in working towards creating safer infrastructure, starting with road design, maintenance and management. In fact, road safety is expected to be a point featured in the work programme of the future Mauritanian Presidency of the GTMO 5+5, of which CETMO is the Technical Secretariat. The idea is to take advantage of the knowledge in the Western Mediterranean, the GTMO 5+5’s area of activity, to enable national and regional stakeholders to share experiences and good practices, and help improve a global problem at regional level.

The potential of blockchain technology in transport and logistics

On 13 July 2018, CETMO jointly organized a conference in Barcelona with the Infrastructure Circle Foundation and the Association of Civil Engineers of Catalonia on the impact of blockchain technology on managing transport infrastructure and services.

Broadly speaking, blockchain technology revolves around a secure distributed database whose different nodes are responsible for verifying transactions to provide a transparent, unalterable and traceable record of these transactions.

Although the best-known application of blockchain technology at the moment is in cryptocurrency, this technology is expected to have wide range of applications in many other areas. This conference aimed to visualize these possible uses in transport and logistics.

Two different sessions were held to achieve this. The first started with a presentation of practical applications of blockchain technology in transport. In particular, discussion focused on the advantages of this technology for electric-car charging networks, and its use in decentralizing mobility services and digitalizing bills of lading in maritime goods transport. Participants left with a clear understanding of the technology and the requirements for applying it. Presentations were given by the Head of Technological Innovation and Internationalization at the Catalan Energy Institute and the President of Blockchain Catalonia, the Co-Founder and Head of Technology at the company Internet of Mobility, and the Managing Director of PORTIC.

The second session, which had a more open approach, was aimed at getting participants to exchange opinions about blockchain technology’s potential impact on infrastructure and transport services. This session was attended by the Head of Information and Communications Technology at FGC, the Head of Cybersecurity at Abertis Autoústicas España, the Director of CENIT, and the Head of Systems and Innovation at the Metropolitan Transport Authority, all of which are significant organizations in the transport sector. The aim was to hear the expectations of the representatives of different modes of transport to acquire a global vision of the sector.

Blockchain technology guarantees a transparent, unalterable and traceable record of transactions.
The conference showed participants that the situation of blockchain technology is not uniform across the entire transport sector, but that the technology could play a significant role in intermediary services. This technology may see greater development in the area of maritime goods transport. One application of this technology would be digitalizing bills of lading, which would help reduce document costs and the risk of fraud. However, conceiving a model that could be comprehensively applied is complicated because it calls for a change in the traditional model and for each country to make amendments to its legislation.

Another area where blockchain technology could be introduced is mobility, as it could enable small service providers to be included in an open, decentralized, multimodal and multi-supplier global mobility market. In this case, blockchain technology would help protect relationships between stakeholders and validate transactions within the mobility system.

It is still not clear how blockchain technology could be applied in other areas of transport, either because the technology is still in the discovery phase or due to interoperability problems in transport that could make the technology difficult to implement.

On 8-10 May, CETMO participated in the meeting on transport statistics, “Regional Workshop on the Production of Georeferenced Maritime Transport Statistics”, held in Palermo and organized by the agency Expertise France under MEDSTAT IV, the European Union programme that provides support to improve statistics systems in the Southern Mediterranean countries.

This regional seminar focused on the development of georeferenced maritime transport statistics in the Southern Mediterranean countries and enabled participants to do exercises to compare statistics on maritime transport flows produced by the main ports in these countries. The seminar aimed to take stock of the progress made thus far in producing maritime transport statistics in the beneficiary countries, and to identify the difficulties and possible activities to overcome them in future. Representatives of national organizations involved in transport statistics and relevant port authorities participated.

CETMO contributed to the workshop in three key ways:
First, by explaining the needs of maritime statistics users, the public information available to the European and Western Mediterranean countries, and by making some recommendations for meeting the needs of users working on planning and investigation.

The second contribution focused on one of the main objectives of the meeting: to do exercises comparing the georeferenced databases of Mediterranean ports with the aim of identifying key disparities and their causes.

The third and final contribution involved proposing the main topics of the seminar to generate discussion on the measures and agreements to be implemented in the near future to improve georeferenced maritime data in the partner countries.

Exercises to identify disparities enable data quality to be improved through the sharing of information

For CETMO, it is particularly important that the seminar’s comparison exercises proved to be a beneficial tool and also showed that sharing information can improve the quality of georeferenced information. The need to fully implement these exercises within a wider framework to promote collaboration between ports and statistical agencies in partner and European countries was one of the main recommendations from this seminar.
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