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**Methodological development and harmonization of transport statistics:
Intermodal transport statistics**

**Report on the activities of the Task Force on Intermodal
Transport Statistics 2010–2011**

Note by Eurostat

I. Introduction

This document reports on the activities of the Task Force on Intermodal Transport Statistics (TF IMTS) that have been carried out during the years 2010 and 2011. The Task Force was created by decision of the Coordinating Group for Statistics on Transport (CGST) at the end of 2009, with a two-year mandate. The key assignment of the TF is to identify the users and to define the utility of “freight statistics on co-modality and logistics performance indicators”, hence the data to be produced and disseminated.

The TF met twice:

- (a) 18–19 January 2011
- (b) 27–28 September 2011.

Participants in the TF have been:

- Member States: DK, DE, FR NL, AT, SE
- users: DG MOVE, JRC, ETIS Plus
- private sector experts: EIA, ESPO, ECSA
- international organisations: UNECE.

According to the mandate, after two years, on the basis of the TF report, the CGST is requested to express its opinion on the work carried out by the TF, the results obtained and the possible renewal of the mandate. An overview of the activities is given in the section below.

II. Activities of the Task Force

A. Analysis of data needs

The new **White Paper**, adopted in March 2011, outlines that the transport sector in the EU should use less energy, cleaner energy and should occur on efficient networks. A modal shift to environmentally more sustainable modes of transport should further be encouraged, especially freight transport journeys of over 300 km. The Paper mentions a framework for a European Intermodal Network, to be established by 2020. Data to monitor the development towards this goal are needed. Many national governments have similar aims and goals. Various projects have been launched but the approaches remain essentially 'national'. There is a need for a European approach.

The **Marco Polo programme** supports various projects in the freight transport market aiming at shifting freight transport from road to sea, rail, and inland waterways (IWW). It also finances actions involving candidate countries.

In the framework of the Logistics Action Plan 2007, the concept of Green Transport Corridors was launched, denoting long-distance freight transport corridors in Europe, where advanced technologies, innovative management models and co-modality are used to achieve energy efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

Efficient and green freight corridors will be reflected in the **TEN-T** guidelines (adoption in 2012). The Green corridors concept calls for specific data needs as input to compute Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Recently, DG MOVE has launched the '**SuperGreen**' research project (2010–2012), aiming at providing policy recommendations at a European level for further development of Green Corridors along two aspects: (1) Overall benchmarking of Green Corridors based on selected KPIs; (2) Usage of green technologies and smart ITCs on selected corridors.

The **ETIS Plus** project addresses the transport policy data needs; the information including comprehensive metadata is stored and can be retrieved online and it is structured according to the needs of the ETIS users' community. ETIS Plus makes use of existing official statistics from the ESS but complement them by additional data/information. One of the major users of ETIS Plus is the **TRANSTOOLS** model of the European Commission. The model is used for policy monitoring but also for policy decision making (impact assessment of different policy options).

B. National experiences

During the meetings of the TF IMTS various national initiatives were presented.

Of particular interest was the presentation of Germany which uses existing modal statistics with some limited extra data/information, to identify intermodal transport chains and main corridors, without launching any new full-scale data collections. This exercise is part of the German Statistical Office's regular data collections since 2002.

A more in-depth investigation on the proceedings (model, methods, hypotheses, concepts, data input and statistical output) was launched and reported during the last meeting of the TF IMTS.

Furthermore, a possible application of the principles of the "German approach" at EU level is being investigated, by comparing the data available at the German Statistical Office with those stemming from EU legal acts on maritime, rail, road and IWW statistics.

In the domain of rail freight transport statistics, this investigation has been carried somewhat further: more precise proposals to possibly modify the legal basis were presented and discussed by the Rail Statistics WG on 9–10 November 2011. It was made clear during this meeting that the proposals were not presented for decision (since the TF IMTS does not have the mandate from the CGST for such a kind of initiatives), but only for a first preliminary technical discussion by rail transport experts. It was also agreed that the main outcome of the discussion would be part of the TF report to the CGST.

C. International experiences

Intermodal transport is also being addressed at international level. The **UNECE** has published the report “Hinterland Connections of Seaports” and concluded that available statistics are poorly suited to analyse intermodal transport flows and that developing methodological approaches is encouraged. The key role of Eurostat Task Force is specifically mentioned in the report.

The **European Sea Ports Organisation** (ESPO) has carried out the PPRISM (Port Performance Indicators – Selection and Measurement) pilot project aiming at identifying a set of sustainable, relevant and feasible port performance indicators to be implemented at EU level in order to measure and assess the impact of the European Port System on society, environment and economy. Fourteen indicators have been selected. Around 400 ports of the ESPO network could potentially report on these indicators.

The **European Intermodal Association** (EIA), an independent platform promoting sustainable intermodal mobility in Europe, proposes balanced and sustainable solutions in line with EU transport policy. It publishes a yearbook on intermodal transport and has significantly contributed to the work of the TF with its technical knowledge and expertise.

D. Reference list of intermodal terminals

In intermodal transport, freight transshipment points obviously play a crucial role. It appears that various countries are establishing national lists. At EU level, there is no single reference list for these transshipment points; however different studies have been carried out in this area.

The Task Force has been looking at existing initiatives and projects.

Criteria for a reference list of intermodal terminals have been established and a preliminary list of 533 European intermodal terminals (covering EU-27 and other countries) has been drawn up. The various modal combinations and other useful pieces of information are listed for each terminal.

From this preliminary list an official reference list of terminals could be developed. This list, which will have to be updated regularly, could represent a common statistical infrastructure (like the list of ports or the list of airports). More specifically for the IMTS project, the list could be useful for the detection of terminal density and the notion of transport corridors, as important intermodal/ container flows are concentrated on only a few routes.

E. Logistics indicators

Logistics performance indicators (LPI) are also within the mandate of the Task Force. A tangible dimension of ‘Logistics’ is not easy to obtain: terms that attempt to

define logistics include *transport* (moving objects in space), *handling* (changing the arrangements of objects) and *storage* (moving objects in time).

The Task Force has elaborated a document outlining possible definition of "logistics" and possible indicators for the logistics sector performance where 30 LPIs are presented. The indicators are presented in a theoretical framework.

Underlying data needed to produce certain indicators may be difficult to obtain, others seem more feasible.

F. Other methodological aspects

On the basis of work of the TF, additional methodological developments emerged as possible issues to be discussed and analysed by the TF: better integration of existing modal statistics (harmonisation of concepts: weight of goods, place of loading/unloading, ...), developments of concepts and activities at EU level (EU main transport "corridors", possible conception of statistical activities at EU level) and, in a longer term perspective, integration of transport statistics with other statistics (first priority: Transport & Trade statistics; Structural Business Statistics, etc...).

G. Possible Eurostat publication

On the basis of existing official statistics and the developments described above, currently efforts are being undertaken to define the content of a possible statistical publication (*Statistics in Focus* publication or *Statistics Explained* article) based on the theoretical framework of the Logistics Performance Indicators together with a limited set of indicators using available data stemming from the ESS official statistics.

III. Suggestions of the TF IMTS to the CGST

During its last meeting on 27 and 28 September 2011, the participants concluded that the work of the Task Force is most useful and should be continued. This would notably allow continuing testing the feasibility of implementing the "German approach" at EU level, while continuing work in the other areas mentioned in the current mandate of the TF.

However, for the sake of efficiency, an extension of the mandate of the TF would be necessary:

to grant the TF the right to consult uni-modal Working Groups (and possible existing Task Forces) "for decision" on proposals to extend the scope of existing data collections (both in the framework of legal acts and voluntary data collections). Of course, according to our usual procedures, decisions of uni-modal WGs will then be submitted to the CGST for further discussion and possible adoption, where relevant (non-minor changes and, in any case, changes of "horizontal nature", having a potential interest/impact also on other modes and amendments to legislation).

Taking into account that users demands are moving more and more from sectorial (uni-modal) policies to integrated (and more complex) transport policies, the following additional extensions of the mandate are submitted to the CGST for decision:

to allow the TF to work towards harmonisation of definitions in transport statistics (transport as a system rather than a sum of mode-specific elements) and the development of new general concepts such as "transport corridors";

to allow starting to think beyond transport alone and to explore ways to integrate transport statistics with other statistics, such as trade statistics, business statistics, etc...

Hence, the mandate should be extended by other 2 years (until December 2013).

The CGST is required to examine the report of the TF IMTS and to give its opinion on the work done.

The CGST is required to take a decision and give further guidance on the possible way forward for this project. In this context the CGST is specifically required to examine the proposals and suggestions of the TF itself about the content and time-frame extension of the TF mandate.
