

Logistics integration between
ports and the railway system:
the North Western Mediterranean

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to deepen, through analysis of benchmarks and best practices, the role of public policy in supporting intermodal rail to and from the ports aimed at raising their competitiveness and at mitigating the environmental externalities that affect the relationship between the port and the city, in Green port logic.

The work is introduced by a summary of the EU policies that encourage modal shift from road to rail and by some reflections on the role of ports within sustainable logistics systems and on the institutional modes of governance that may or may not enhance this aspect. EU policies, particularly those relating to the trans-European network (TEN-T), the Marco Polo program to promote pilot projects for modal shift and the guidelines for state aid to railway companies are the main regulatory framework for policies at a national and local scale. The core of this work is focused on the cases of leading ports in order to identify the organizational and trade aspects of direct investment promoted by the public sector and aimed at promoting intermodal rail transportation to and from the ports within the North Western Mediterranean. The policies analyzed here are those carried out by Port Authorities, local and national administrations and by public-private partnerships and they are related to the leading import-export ports in the Northern Mediterranean between Valencia and Koper whose market of reference is Southern Europe.

The study is structured to address the issue from the methodological point of view, taking account of the technological and organizational evolutions of ports caused by the significant growth rate of unitized traffic (container and Ro/Ro). A further aim of the study is to address the operational and management issues, which are different from the ones related to the railway system. The work concludes with some food for thought and policy indications.

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