

# PROMARES

## COOPERATION NETWORK

### Involvement of relevant stakeholders

**WHO:** *RAM Logistica Infrastrutture e Trasporti S.p.A.*, Project's partner of PROMARES is in charge for its strategical activities of dissemination and involvement of relevant stakeholders and is supported by *SINERGIA Consulenze*.

**HOW:** virtual interviews with strategic subjects.

**WHY:** identifying the elements necessary for the definition of a correct **cross-border strategy**, envisaged in the framework of PROMARES, involving and integrating the point of view of some of the most relevant institutional subjects in the field of maritime and multimodal freight transport. At the same time, creating a **cooperation network**, which facilitates both an operational and an institutional dialogue, with the ultimate goal of continuing to promote maritime and multimodal freight transport in the reference areas.

## **TOPICS THAT THE INTERVIEW FOCUSED ON:**

- 1.** Is PROMARES Project coherent with the vision of your organization and which are the possible common elements and synergies?
- 2.** What are the major challenges in the digitization of the port system vis-à-vis the entire logistic chain?
- 3.** What are the more avant-garde solutions to the date with respect to the aforementioned challenges, on management, organizational and political field?
- 4.** What are the most promising technologies and how can they be integrated into the existing systems?
- 5.** Are there any legislative instruments at a regulatory level or any dedicated financing programme lines to sustain the development of multimodal transport and particularly of the combined rail-sea?
- 6.** Which weight will cyber security – related to the information systems of the Ports and other operators involved in the logistics chain – have in the upcoming years?
- 7.** What are the other relevant priorities that should be taken into consideration?
- 8.** How the current geo-political scenario, post-pandemic and with an armed conflict almost within the EU, which immediately has a strong impact on the procurement of raw energetic materials, can affect medium and long-term green strategies in the field of freight transport?

## SUMMARY OF PERFORMED INTERVIEWS AND MAIN OUTPUT CONTENTS

<b>Interview n°1 - ASSOPORTI</b>	
<i>Subject</i>	President Mr. Rodolfo Giampieri
<i>Date</i>	07/03/2022
<i>Review of technical contents</i>	
<p>The <b>digitization</b> of the port systems is nowadays fundamental because it helps transforming into a competitive economy the sustainable supply chain.</p> <p>It is important to highlight and sustain those success experiences of <b>cooperation</b> among different administrative institutions.</p> <p>Harmonization of differences within the logistic chain, made up by different subjects, with the goal of creating as much as possible a <b>unique network</b>, able to react and adapt to big changes and challenges.</p> <p>What could really change things is the creation of a <b>control booth</b> that is able to put together all the elements that otherwise appear to be fragmented and become useless versus the whole logistic chain. This could ensure a good</p>	

velocity for all the logistic flows and guarantee to play within a more protect and safe system.

To integrate factively concepts like A.I. or Blockchain systems in a national logistic chain, the Ministries should keep the control of it, by entrusting on economic subjects, that are not scalable and are therefore able to guarantee the confidentiality of data transmission and exchange. A trans-national cooperation has to be even facilitated by this kind of institutional paradigm.

<b>Interview n°2 - IPCSA</b>	
<i>Subject</i>	President Mr. Richard Morton
<i>Date</i>	07/03/2022
<i>Review of technical contents</i>	
<p>Emphasis has to be put on <b>Community</b> and not on technology. Despite technologies are becoming more and more evolved, they play the secondary role of enabler, while the key role within the organizations is still covered by <b>People</b>.</p> <p>Changing the mindset of management and users is still one of the hardest challenges, in fact <b>transparency</b> is hardly accepted and <b>political barriers</b> are often relevant. Single organizations are frequently looking to their own interests, not really working together and hardly cooperating. Sustaining cooperative initiatives and pushing them beyond at an <b>international level</b> is absolutely urgent.</p> <p>Today the opportunity to share and exchange data is very important, but what really makes a difference is to share <b>experience and knowledge</b>, that are the way someone have used profitably his data points. What can derive from this correct approach is to share practical advices and guidance within a cooperation network, instead of having simple pieces of information.</p>	

To sustain cooperation and the concept of community it is necessary to obtain specific **agreements at cross-border level**.

Port community systems bring inside a big risk in terms of cyber security and this should be considered by Countries as part of the core national security.

Port, community systems and single windows are very practical people. They're about doing rather than talking. So what we should try and do is proposing and then implementing **specific actions**.

A technology – generally speaking – is really **promising, only if everybody is using**. The Blockchain e.g. cannot effectively be considered as this stage yet.

Information Technology is still perceived as an expense within the organizations and furthermore IT Providers do not know the structure of maritime sector. For this reason creating long-lasting **partnerships** can better sustain a consistent development and a related growth. Finally only the application of international standard can guarantee real **interoperability**.

**Less regulations is better**. About the correct role of the national and local administrations towards the freight transport business: B2B relations should be let free, not regulated but simplified in terms of administrative bottlenecks. Regulatory simplification from governments is thus value-added.

<b>Interview n°3 – EUSAIR</b>	
<i>Subject</i>	President Mr. Pierluigi Coppola
<i>Date</i>	14/03/2022
<i>Review of technical contents</i>	
<p>The <b>EUSAIR Strategy for Adriatic and Ionian Macro Region</b> was created in the last decade and is compounded of specific pillars to pursue; since the beginning within the second one “<b>Connecting the Region</b>” the prior initiatives to develop have been oriented towards two main scopes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ On maritime side, developing the connections between the two shores of the Adriatic and Ionian seas;</li> <li>○ On intermodal side, developing the connections between the ports and the land networks.</li> </ul> <p>PROMARES has been labelled as EUSAIR Project because it is fully coherent with these two action priorities of the Macro Strategy, being able to provide a contribution on the overall knowledge of bottlenecks and issues related to the Intermodality.</p> <p>Furthermore PROMARES, focussing on IC technology and its application on port/hubs systems, is compliant with another basic concept included in the Action Plan of the EUSAIR, that became also the Flagship Project of the Strategy: the Green &amp; Smart Port.</p>	

This reference topic holds a double meaning definition: technological and environmental.

**Smart Port** concept originated within EUSAIR particularly refers to the development of those Information & Communication technologies able to improve in the Adriatic and Ionian basin:

- the operations concerning the maritime connections;
- the information exchange between the ports and also with the other stakeholders;
- the safety of navigation.

As every single Port is not an isolated entity, but part of a network, the right dimension to be considered is the one of the **Port Community System**. In this sense to rely on Smart Ports means being able to develop communities, endowing them with digital platforms that enable the exchange of information, data and best practices.

As a result this sharing can bring about higher efficiency of the operations, such as on custom clearance or on the whole logistic process.

PROMARES Project acted exactly towards this direction: through the application of Pilot Actions, the main Italian and Croatian ports in the Adriatic and Ionian Region were able both to upgrade some ICT features of their Port Community systems and to become parts of a wider interconnected network.

EUSAIR promotes the development of concrete initiatives and PROMARES appears to be coherent because the *state of the art* of these kind of Projects can contribute to create and share a new knowledge basis. This process relies on two different elements: **ICT innovation** on one side and



**overcome of bureaucracy** related to the implementation on the other.

Concerning the first element, Communication and information technologies, if mature, can easily be integrated to improve the monitoring and the exchange of data within the logistic process.

PROMARES Project was able to do this, by upgrading the modules of the Port Community Systems of the main ports and hubs in the Adriatic and Ionian basin.

Trieste and its RRT, Venice, Ravenna, Ancona, Bari & Brindisi, Rijeka and Ploče had the chance to implement specific ICT pilot actions on their PCSs (e.g. Suite based on data from cameras to ensure goods traceability, Integration of Railway telematics system, OCR gates, Back-up and disaster recovery systems, etc.) so as to optimise multimodal operations through digital data exchange with terminal and logistic operators.

Each player was able in fact to develop ad-hoc solutions according to the specific needs and context; the impact was then different but for sure shared within the framework of the Project and therefore well-known and potentially replicable.

Concerning the second element of bureaucratic issues on implementation process, it has been observed that this is often the hardest part of the job.

Normative application, regulatory constraints, geographical differences, political limits are amongst the bigger hurdles that usually affect the implementation of good initiatives.

Sometimes the normative misalignment can obstacle the implementation of technologies that provide tools able to facilitate procedure and data sharing.

In the framework of the PROMARES's Community a broad dialogue has been established in order to overcome these potential issues, by detecting also the more suitable applications for each technical Partner.

EUSAIR sustains the creation of a **transnational network** to foster Intermodality through the cooperation between ports/hubs in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

One of the possible way to overcome those political and normative barriers that normally speed down the development process of multimodal connections, is to promote the exchange of information.

PROMARES involved many subjects in the Adriatic and Ionian area and was able to do this, by sharing among them objectives, experiences and best practices.

The Project in the last phase has also made the effort to establish an enlarged **cooperation network**, by involving institutional stakeholders that can have the interest and the power to sustain the concept of a permanent transnational network, even larger than the cross-border one Italy-Croatia.

This approach is fully compliant with the vision of EUSAIR Strategy, that sustains a political endorsement that facilitate an effective level of cooperation.

A lot of the bottlenecks that block the development of Intermodality can be easily dissolved, if the political commitment is strong.

For this reason the cooperation level has to be set also at higher level: **national entities like Ministries** should talk each other and listen to the opportunities, coming from the implementation of soft management measures and from the adoption of new smart and technological systems. Most of the time the investment cost of these solutions is low compared to the return on the efficiency of logistic processes and thus on Intermodality.

PROMARES has facilitated the fulfilment of this scope, by generating a lot of studies and analysis on territorial needs, technologies, pilot actions, strategies and by creating events of dissemination such as training seminar, press articles, interviews with institutional subjects, technical conferences.

The approach of PROMARES is based on the idea that a consistent group of stakeholders, that insist in a common geographical area, can release winning solutions on multimodal transport field by following two fundamental steps:

- 1) being connected each other into a **common framework** that reduces the distance in terms of interests and potential conflicts and highlights the idea that a real sustainable growth is not exclusive but inclusive;
- 2) implementing **innovative soft measures** that using smart technologies can simplify the operations,

increase the secure exchange of information among the stakeholders of the handling chains and therefore increase the multimodal transport of freight.

High-level institutional players are often focalized on hard topics with the objective to develop better infrastructure systems, that in terms of Intermodality development means investing money to enhance railways, to reduce last-mile bottlenecks of terminals and to increase the infrastructural capacity of gateways.

Notwithstanding the importance to sustain a long-term infrastructural development, to foster multimodal transport solutions the contribution of key national entities needs to offer a **strategic internal guidance** to all players of the supply chain, such as ports and intermodal logistic operators, facilitating their interaction through **dedicated management resources**.

Only after this achievement the cooperation can be effectively and further carried to a transnational level.

**Interview n°4 – CROATIAN MINISTRY OF THE SEA,  
TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURES**

<i>Subject</i>	Project Manager Mr. Toni Maricevic
<i>Date</i>	14/03/2022
<i>Review of technical contents</i>	
<p>Croatian territory is very peculiar, with its super jagged coast the sea has always played a prominent role. The coastline is specular towards the Italian one on the Adriatic-Ionian sea, that is why it really makes sense to create a common approach and a cross-border cooperation. Maritime freight transports arriving at the two coasts should be addressed to multimodal solutions, overcoming the bottlenecks, especially in the last mile. Of course to fully sustain this process, soft interventions on ICT are not enough and in parallel important infrastructure investments have to be done, because especially in terms of railways Croatia has to achieve inevitable improvements as soon as possible”.</p> <p>Croatia has hundreds of county ports, but only about 25 are able to receive big ships and deal with freights. 6, out of this number, are state owned ports. The bigger ports have been involved into the development of a <b>unique digital system</b> and its government is guaranteed by a <b>ministerial guidance level</b>, as well as the monitoring process of the</p>	

implementation. In general Croatia is endowed with a good level of digital applications, regarding the electronic evidences of not only passengers, cargo and set up, but covering also administrative and logistic processes.

One of the criticalities observed is given by the fact that the platform of stakeholders who are involved in the usage of ICT systems within port framework is wide, IT contractors show many differences and the overall environment looks quite **fragmented**.

Together with a national maritime Single Window, also Port Community Systems are built up to have **common functionalities** and modular structures according to specific features and a good **interoperability**. The national goal is to have this unique operational PCS up and running in the next two years.

Digitization process in Ports and intermodal subjects is ongoing and in a short time it will ensure **standardized and harmonized solutions**. This has been made easier by the fact that Croatia started some enhancement processes later (entering EU 2013) and could rely on European specific know-how and best practices.

On the other side, digitalization is going faster than the increase of **infrastructural upgrades**, which nevertheless are absolutely needed.

Despite its guidance, Croatian Ministry highlights that its role is more on a **coordination level**, in terms of project

management. They need therefore to collect and provide **guidelines, ideas and opportunities**, but the willingness of port authorities and related subjects to cooperate is then fundamental.

The level of cooperation on a national basis is right now considered as good in Croatia, but it is a result coming from a structured process. As said the entering process of the Country in the European Union requested some legal obligations; in this political framework the national government defined a **medium-term strategy** that in some way obliged all maritime and logistic administration bodies to cooperate together. Through such legal acts Croatian entities managed to get at the same table the main relevant stakeholders, by promoting as national contact point and administrative and management body.

**National contact point** has to be stressed as a concept, because it allows the creation of a **direct communication network** with all the relevant stakeholders.

These concepts are fully coherent with those expressed within the other interviews and that represent the cooperation idea suggested by PROMARES Project.

Looking ahead important achievements on intermodality can derive from **cross-border medium-long term strategies**, developed by the Countries of a Macro-Region, based on the European regulations and directives and sustained on **each national level** by a **lean governance** as reference point.

## Interview n°5 – EUSDR

<i>Subject</i>	President Mr. Franc Žepič
<i>Date</i>	12/04/2022

### *Review of technical contents*

The Communication on **European Union Strategy for the Danube Region** (Document COM(2010) 715, 8 December 2010) **features three exemplary targets for EUSDR Pillar 1 (Connecting the Danube Region)** which are of relevance for **EUSDR Priority Area 1b: *To improve mobility and multimodality-road, rail and air links.***

The Priority Area 1b Steering Group amended these three exemplary targets in the first half of 2016 so that the final wordings of targets for EUSDR Priority Area 1b are as follows:

I. **Support efficient freight railway services** and improved travel times for competitive railway passenger connections between major cities **in the Danube Region by 2030:**

- a. Promote Interoperability;*
- b. Support Removal of cross-border administrative, operational and technical barriers;*
- c. Support Deployment of traffic management systems (ERTMS).*

II. **Support fully functional multi-modal TEN-T Core Network Corridors by 2030.**



- a. *Identify physical, bottlenecks and missing links in DR;*
- b. *Coordinate development of infrastructure;*
- c. *Identify possible new corridors linking the non EU member states' transport systems to the TEN-T core network;*
- d. *Support the coordinated Implementation of the relevant Rail Freight Corridors in the DR.*

**III. Support the development of efficient multimodal terminals at sea, river and dry ports in the Danube Region and ensure their connectivity and access through the integration of all modes of transport and efficient logistics services by 2030.**

- a. *Support and Coordinate development of intermodal terminals;*
- b. *Identify need for possible new terminals;*
- c. *Support the efficient logistics services in the Danube region;*

IV. Support improvement of the regional air connectivity and the implementation of the Single European Sky initiative.

V. Facilitate the improvement of secondary and tertiary roads in the Danube Region.

VI. Support safe and sustainable transport and mobility in the Danube Region.

PROMARES project has been fairly defined as EUSDR strategy-coherent since has been able to enhance maritime and multimodal freight transport planning competences providing a contribution on the overall knowledge of physical and non-physical bottlenecks and to enhance maritime and multimodal freight transport

capacities through the use of ICT supporting transport stakeholders and policy makers in streamlining freight flows between port and the hinterland and at cross-border level through the use of ICT tools. This second objective has been achieved through the realisation of Pilot Actions: the main Italian and Croatian ports in the Adriatic and Ionian Region were able both to upgrade some ICT features of their Port Community systems and to become parts of a wider interconnected network. PROMARES is therefore *supporting the development of efficient multimodal terminals in the Danube Region.*

The methodologies for implementing pilot actions and the results of WP4 can be directly transferred to other ports and intermodal logistic nodes, since the implementation of ICT pilot actions provides useful data as regards the latest and most efficient technology options available as to streamline traffic flows on the TEN-T corridor networks, all nodes using similar ICT systems. In this view PROMARES will for sure *support fully functional multi-modal TEN-T Core Network Corridors.*

The EUSDR Strategy, together with EUSAIR and EUSALP Strategies should exchange experiences and objectives in order to contribute to the so-called **sustainable transport**. This concept is probably better expressed as **full modal integration cooperation** because a strategy should take into consideration all modes of transport. In fact, all modes of transport should be given the opportunity to develop in a sustainable way (in terms of reduced consumption, low emissions...).

PROMARES Project acted exactly towards this direction: through the application of Pilot Actions, the main Italian and Croatian ports in the Adriatic and Ionian Region were able both to upgrade some ICT features of their Port Community systems and to become parts of a wider interconnected network improving the connections between maritime transport, hinterland transport, land transport both on rail and road (full modal integration cooperation).

As every single Port is not an isolated entity, but part of a network, the right dimension to be considered is the one of the **Port Community System**. In this sense to rely on Smart Ports means being able to develop communities, endowing them with digital platforms that enable the exchange of information, data and best practices.

As a result, this sharing can bring about higher efficiency of the operations, such as on custom clearance or on the whole logistic process.

Nowadays, transportation is evolving fast and digitalization, automatization and innovation play an important role in this evolution worldwide. But what is important for the Danube Region? Many of the Ports facing the Adriatic are doing really well in terms of digitalization and can for sure compete with all the other ports. At the same time, for some of them it is important to narrow the gap with other ports that are more advanced in terms of managing the business, digitalization and so on. Ports in the Adriatic should cooperate – of course also compete on some levels – but they should mainly cooperate to be able to be competitive with those of the North Atlantic and to

intercept goods coming from Asia. Talking about digitalization, e-platforms will for sure contribute to narrow the above-mentioned gap as well as advanced analytics, Internet of Things (in particular for vessels monitoring), Artificial intelligence, blockchains. With the advent of digitalization of course the cybersecurity plays a fundamental role.

PROMARES Project was able to do contribute to narrow the gap among the Adriatic Ports, by upgrading the modules of the Port Community Systems of the main ports and hubs in the Adriatic and Ionian basin.

Trieste and its RRT, Venice, Ravenna, Ancona, Bari & Brindisi, Rijeka and Ploče had the chance to implement specific ICT pilot actions on their PCSs (e.g., Suite based on data from cameras to ensure goods traceability, Integration of Railway telematics system, OCR gates, Back-up and disaster recovery systems, etc.) so as to optimise multimodal operations through digital data exchange with terminal and logistic operators.

Each player was able in fact to develop ad-hoc solutions according to the specific needs and context; the impact was then different but for sure shared within the framework of the Project and therefore well-known and potentially replicable.

Since the sore point of the Macro Strategies is the one of not having a real power in hands, one of the main EUSDR goals is to bring to the Danube Macro Region a concrete added value. In this sense, the EUSDR view is to become an exchange platform of best practices of knowledge, cooperation and so on. The EUSDR has been for years now

the main or co-organizer of the annual Conference “Transport & Logistics of South East Europe and Danube Region – TIL” where it has been able to present within the “transport days” the key issues concerning Danube Region rail or aviation system, road safety... At the same time, the EUSDR has representatives of the Ministries in the Steering Groups, has a close contact with decision makers and might have the power to influence them. The EUSDR has therefore visibility, can give support, can facilitate but has no power to realise a concrete own project while is with projects that the transport problems are tackled. At the same time, many projects like PROMARES have no power to reach decision makers with their results while many of them presents very good results and achievements and the tested solutions should be replicated in other regions, but most of the time they do not upscale.

PROMARES involved many subjects in the Adriatic and Ionian area and was able to do this, by sharing among them objectives, experiences and best practices. The Project in the last phase has also made the effort to establish an enlarged **cooperation network**, by involving institutional stakeholders that can have the interest and the power to sustain the concept of a permanent transnational network, even larger than the cross-border one Italy-Croatia. The cooperation level has to be set also at higher level: **national entities like Ministries** should talk each other and listen to the opportunities, coming from the implementation of soft management measures and from the adoption of new smart and technological systems. Most of the time the investment cost of these solutions is

low compared to the return on the efficiency of logistic processes and thus on Intermodality. PROMARES has facilitated the fulfilment of this scope, by generating a lot of studies and analysis on territorial needs, technologies, pilot actions, strategies and by creating events of dissemination such as training seminar, press articles, interviews with institutional subjects, technical conferences.

PROMARES project is therefore a good candidate to be involved in the Priority Area 1b Steering Group activities. Sharing PROMARES results will surely give a valuable input to draw policy recommendations for a coherent modal shift policy.

The EUSDR was one of the contributors that managed to get the back the Adriatic Pan European Corridor (going from Salzburg to Greece), now called Alpine – Western Balkan Corridor Rail Freight Corridor No. 10. But the main EUSDR aim was to have a multimodal corridor for all modes, not only a rail corridor. Only after the commitment of Austria, a letter of intent signed by all involved countries, the realisation of a multimodal corridor (plus branches) connecting EU and non-EU countries (candidate countries) was possible. This has been a very good result indeed because the freight transport doesn't stop at EU borders. The Macro Strategies work should be finding the best solutions at problems and join forces with implemented projects and decision makers to reach common objectives and, at the same time, narrow or get rid of the difference between countries belonging the same Macro Region because all the countries of the same Macro Region should

develop a good logistic and should be competitive in the business. The Macro Strategies should also defend the pluralism of transport avoiding simplifications because what is good for one country may not be good for another looking locally, but at the same time the strategies should look transnationally with the aim of having a seamless network connecting the whole Macro Region.

The approach of PROMARES goes in the direction of narrow the differences between the two sides of the Adriatic since is based on the idea that a consistent group of stakeholders, that insist in a common geographical area, can release winning solutions on multimodal transport field by following two fundamental steps:

- 3) being connected each other into a **common framework** that reduces the distance in terms of interests and potential conflicts and highlights the idea that a real sustainable growth is not exclusive but inclusive;
- 4) implementing **innovative soft measures** that using smart technologies can simplify the operations, increase the secure exchange of information among the stakeholders of the handling chains and therefore increase the multimodal transport of freight.

<b>Interview n°6 – EUSALP</b>	
<i>Subject</i>	President Mr. Patrick Skonieczki
<i>Date</i>	26/04/2022
<i>Review of technical contents</i>	
<p>The EUSALP Action Group 4 - Mobility - offers a <b>platform to coordinate and harmonise the activities</b> of Alpine regions and countries for a sustainable transport and mobility system. Its mission is to build a common understanding of transport policy and mobility, to define common objectives and to launch specific activities and projects. The logistic system has to be seen in a holistic way and the platform provided by EUSALP should get all the stakeholders of the logistic system together.</p> <p>For the AG4 implementation initiative on modal shift, the AG4 commissioned a stakeholder analysis in the second half of 2021 to identify and show the relationship between the key actors in freight transport. Building on the results of the analysis, AG4 will organise dialogue events in different parts of the Alpine Region to gather those actors (public and private sectors, ministries, public bodies at regional levels, ports, terminals...) and identify concrete solutions. The events will form valuable input to draw policy recommendations for a coherent modal shift policy.</p>	



The stakeholder analysis was conducted with the aim to identify stakeholders and their interests to provide input to dialogue events.

One of the main AG4 aim, implementing this activity, is also to bring to this dialogue events the results of projects where the relevant stakeholders have been involved. The real challenge here is to get all those actors at one table to create a good synergy.

PROMARES involved many subjects in the Adriatic and Ionian area and was able to do this, by sharing among them objectives, experiences and best practices. The Project in the last phase has also made the effort to establish an **enlarged cooperation network**, by involving institutional stakeholders that can have the interest and the power to sustain the concept of a permanent transnational network, even larger than the cross-border one Italy-Croatia. A PROMARES representative is therefore a good candidate to be involved in the upcoming dialogue events to be organised within the AG4 implementation activity of stakeholder analysis and involvement. The PROMARES Lead Partner already responded to the invitation of organising a dedicated workshop of digitization.

Digitisation was a key challenge for the Port of Trieste and surely is a key challenge for the whole Brenner corridor since the Strategy it is obviously oriented to it, involving actors and partners from different countries and regions in a macro regional perspective. Sharing PROMARES results

will surely give a valuable input to draw policy recommendations for a coherent modal shift policy.

The EUSALP area covers not only the areas of the Alpine convention (the mountainous area) but also other regions touching the Adriatic and Mediterranean seas, that means that the above-mentioned AG4 challenges concern the freight transport crossing the Alps but also the ports. Therefore, the Strategy is active in the connection between the ports and the hinterlands but also between ports and inland terminals.

PROMARES Project results surely affects the connection between the ports and hinterlands since the modules of the Port Community Systems of the main ports and hubs in the Adriatic and Ionian basin have been upgraded through the implemented Pilot Actions. Trieste and its RRT, Venice, Ravenna, Ancona, Bari & Brindisi, Rijeka and Ploče had the chance to implement specific ICT pilots on their PCSs (e.g. Suite based on data from cameras to ensure goods traceability, Integration of Railway telematics system, OCR gates, Back-up and disaster recovery systems, etc.) so as to optimise multimodal operations through digital data exchange with terminal and logistic operators. Each player was able in fact to develop ad-hoc solutions according to the specific needs and context; the impact was then different but for sure shared within the framework of the Project and therefore well-known and potentially replicable.

The AG4 is obviously looking with great interest the revision of the EU 'Combined transport directive' being the support the modal shift from road to rail one of its main objectives. The real need is to find a good balance on how to promote modal shift: the rail transport should be the means of transport for the long distance but then there should be a combined transport when it comes to transport and distribute the goods within the last mile.

Likewise, all the partners and stakeholders involved in PROMARES Project keep an eye on the 'Combined transport directive' revision. In fact, PROMARES addressed the issues related to the **low operational and institutional cooperation** between each port and its hinterland and between logistic nodes at cross-border level that are hindering the competitiveness and attractiveness of maritime and multimodal freight and additional modal shift from road to rail/sea. PROMARES therefore paved the way for the solution of these issues through the cross-border cooperation aiming at harmonising different administrative, organisational and institutional structures on the two sides of the Adriatic Sea, by involving the competent institutions and relevant operators. The Directive revision will be an important step forward the solution of the above-mentioned issues.

When it comes to the digitization of the logistic chains AG4 believes that the major challenge is the **data exchange**. Looking at the North Sea Ports, large part of the operations is already fully digitized and all the ICT tools are already in place. The main barrier is therefore the data exchange to

let the hubs work transparently together. The overcoming of this barrier would help in having a common macro-regional vision. In Europe in general seems to lack a big picture when it comes to open and data exchange and that is because operators and transport logistic companies are **afraid of competition**.

PROMARES project worked taking a step forward the challenge of ensuring a secure exchange of data. The approach of PROMARES is based on the idea that a consistent group of stakeholders, that insist in a common geographical area, can release winning solutions on multimodal transport field by following two fundamental steps:

- 1) being connected each other into a **common framework** that reduces the distance in terms of interests and potential conflicts and highlights the idea that a real sustainable growth is not exclusive but inclusive.
- 2) implementing **innovative soft measures** (through realisation of pilot actions) that using smart technologies can simplify the operations, increase the secure exchange of information among the stakeholders of the handling chains and therefore increase the multimodal transport of freight.

A major challenge for EUSALP is also the commitment of political stakeholders. The AG4 deals with passengers and freight transport and the latter are usually the more political ones and the most difficult to solve. The dialogue events foreseen by AG4 should not be political; they should rather be mostly technical but as a following stage the

results of the events will be presented and must lead to a political discussion with political commitment.

A lot of the bottlenecks that block the development of Intermodality can be easily dissolved, if the **political commitment** is strong. For this reason, the cooperation level has to be set also at higher level: national entities like Ministries should talk each other and listen to the opportunities, coming from the implementation of soft management measures and from the adoption of new smart and technological systems. Most of the time the investment cost of these solutions is low compared to the return on the efficiency of logistic processes and thus on Intermodality.

PROMARES has thus facilitated the fulfilment of this scope, by generating a lot of studies and analysis on territorial needs, technologies, pilot actions, strategies and by creating events of dissemination such as training seminar, press articles, interviews with institutional subjects, technical conferences.