

**European Co-operation**  
**in the Field of Scientific and**  

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Laurent Bonnaud



## **Management Committee**

### **COST 340**

#### **Towards a European Intermodal Transport Network, Lessons from History**

**Subject:** Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of Working Group 1, held in Paris on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002

**COST 340/ 42**

# **COST 340 Working Group 1, 5<sup>th</sup> meeting**

**12<sup>th</sup> December 2002, Paris**

**“How high the moon:  
intermodal ground transport at European scale, lessons of history”**

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## **1. OPENING:**

The 5<sup>th</sup> WG 1 meeting took place at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2002 and was chaired by Laurent Bonnaud.

Attendees (in alphabetical order) were:

Erik Buyst (Belgium), Hans-Liudger Dienel (Germany), Colin Divall (United Kingdom), Paul Van Heesvelde (B), Jan Kyncl (Czech Republic), Peter Lyth (United Kingdom), Maria Eugenia Mata (Portugal), Michèle Merger (France), Gijs Moms (Netherlands), Rui Montero (Portugal), Marie-Noëlle Polino (France), Michael Schmidt (A), Jan Spousta (European Commission), Laurent Tissot (Switzerland), Mojca Tomsic (Slovenia), Antonin Tuzar (Czech Republic), Jakub Vesely (Czech Republic), Hanna Wolf (Netherlands).

Albert Carreras (Spain), Ioan Cuncev (Rumania), Rainer Fremdling (Germany), Andrea Giuntini (Italy), Igor Kabashkin (Latvia), Claudio Pavese (Italy), Tom Rallis (Denmark), were prevented to attend the meeting.

## 2. PRESENTATION AT THE 13TH IEHC IN BUENOS AIRES:

2.1. As agreed since the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting held in Berlin, the COST 340 project, including WG 1 subject matter, was presented in July 2002 at the 13<sup>th</sup> International Economic History Congress, Buenos Aires, Argentine. The IEHC, which occurs every four years, is the most important global event for economic historians. This was the 3<sup>rd</sup> IEHC session dedicated to the transport history, demonstrating continuity after two precedents:

- The 1<sup>st</sup> in Leuven 1990 on Transports in Europe 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> (François Caron, Terushi Hara)
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> in Milan 1994 on European Trans-National networks 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> (Michèle Merger, Albert Carreras, Andrea Giuntini).

The session 74 was named after the COST 340 project, *Towards an Intermodal network of European transport: the teaching of history* and offered the first opportunity to advertise the project and promote its results.

2.2. Laurent Bonnaud was in chair and presented a paper by Michèle Merger<sup>1</sup>, describing the COST structure and COST 340 project. Maria Eugenia Mata, Andrea Giuntini and Laurent Tissot each presented their research in the frame of COST. The session was well-attended and gave way to an animated discussion.

2.3. Reginald Loyen, University of Leuven, has been invited to deliver a paper on *Trends and Challenges in comparative Port History: the case of Antwerp and Rotterdam*. This historiographical presentation is related to a broader research program on “Rotterdam and Antwerp: a century and a half of seaport competition in the Rhine-Scheldt-Meuse delta (1860-2000)”. This program hosted by the Center for Economic Studies, University of Leuven, has just given rise to a recent book<sup>2</sup>. Erik Buyst, co-editor, gives WG 1 attendees some highlights on both. Though not specifically devoted to transport topics, they question hinterland strategies and containers development and are therefore precious for the study of intermodal axes.

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<sup>1</sup> Michèle Merger could not attend the meeting in Buenos Aires.

<sup>2</sup> Loyen Reginald, Buyst Eric, Devos Greta, *Struggling for Leadership: Antwerp-Rotterdam Port Competition between 1870-2000*, proceedings of the International Conference on Comparative Antwerp-Rotterdam Port History held at Antwerp, 10-11 May 2002, Heidelberg, New York, Physica-Verlag, 2003, 330 p.

### **3. WORK IN PROGRESS:**

A review of essays is given. A debate on individual papers was not on the agenda.

#### **3.1. Essays dealing with WG 1 topics forwarded to COST participants:**

- 3.1.1. Mojca Tomsic, *Railway Corridors V and X through Slovenia*
- 3.1.2. Tom Rallis, *Intermodal Corridors in Scandinavia, existing and missing links*
- 3.1.3. Igor Kabashkin, *Transport Telematics as State-of-the-Art factor of the Intermodal approach*
- 3.1.4. Ioan Cucev, *Danube, a Corridor from past to future*
- 3.1.5. Rainer Fremdling *European Railways 1825-2001, an overview*

#### **3.2. Essays still to come dealing with WG 1 topics:**

- 3.2.1. Laurent Bonnaud, *The Channel Tunnel : an intermodal missing link* will be shortly completed.
- 3.2.2. Rainer Fremdling on the Betuwe line in the Netherlands, one of the TEN-T priority project.
- 3.2.3. A paper on intermodal axes in Spain is critical to the action. The old-established intermodal operator Transfesa (1946), the question of Pyrenean transit and the missing link of Gibraltar straits are of particular interest for the development of European intermodal corridors and their integration into existing networks . As proposed by Maria Eugenia Mata and Rui Montero, Portuguese delegates could add value to the study of intermodal corridors in the peninsula by focussing on choices for freight connections between Portugal and other European countries.
- 3.2.4. A similar remark is relevant for Italy. Main topics are the Lyon to Turin railway corridor and projects to overcome the missing link of Messine straits. A study on North-South intermodal traffic through Italy would also be a worthwhile undertaking due to its significance for European goods transit.
- 3.2.5. Switzerland presents an atypical case:
  - 3.2.5.1. East-West axes, as underlined by Hans-Liudger Dienel (see Minutes WG 1 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting), should be given as much consideration as the more researched North-South transit.

3.2.5.2. The Swiss transport policy is typified by its early preference for switching trailers traffic onto rail.

Laurent Tissot points that research programs in Switzerland have focused on interactions between the development of transport networks and traffic and the accessibility of various Swiss regions. He will get in touch with specialists of these topics.

3.2.6. Essay on intermodal freight transport policy of the European Community: since Austrian delegates could not present a paper on TINA (Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment) at the Lisbon Conference last May, Michael Schmidt will check the progress of this. The Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences (ICCR) in Vienna was the co-ordinator of the CODE-TEN project, launched by the European Commission to assess corridors developments, Trans-European Networks improvements and Extensions to the Central and Eastern European Countries. This area has prior claims for consideration in the WG 1 research area.

3.2.7. During the Berlin meeting, Hans-Liudger Dienel had proposed a paper on Transport research policy in European countries – a German perspective. As WG 1 still lacks a study on German intermodal corridors, the Chairman asks H.-L. Dienel if this could be dealt with. H.L. Dienel specifies that the program he referred to is managed by Ms. Anne Meyer-Rath and is not specifically historical, but institutional.

### 3.3. Other proposals for essays:

Erik Buyst proposes an essay dealing with competition between Antwerp and Rotterdam with focus on hinterland strategies.

## 4. WORK PLAN:

4.1. The Chairman recalls that the main objective of WG 1 is **to concentrate on long-term developments of intermodal corridors and their integration into existing transport networks**. At the end of the COST action, the group should be able to deliver a general view, as balanced as possible, of the development of the main North-South and East-West intermodal axes in Europe. Main concern is with the supply side. Case studies on **intermodal operators** would also be of value for the study, as well as the addition of **benchmarks** (See Terms of Reference and previous Minutes of WG 1 meetings).

By **benchmarks**, we understand the delivery of long-term statistical datas on intermodal systems, in order to facilitate comparative studies (e.g. on corridors – extension of networks, width, gauge, power supply, etc. – , or on services – number of operators on a dedicated corridor, frequencies, average commercial speed, etc.) The heterogeneity of national datas constitute the main challenge to the comparative analysis.

4.2. Considering that 18 months before the end of the COST Action, several topics still need to be researched or completed on the base of the Memorandum of

Understanding of the Working Group 1, the Chairman suggests to prepare a call for paper, which would be widely disseminated in support to the responsibility of National delegates to prop up the action. This should lead to a one-day conference and the following publication of selected papers under the supervision of a publishing committee. The conference could take place at one of the meetings planned in York, Milan or Prag, or constitute a separate venue.

This proposal is widely accepted by the attendees and the Chairman suggests to send the call for paper early in 2003 with deadline in mid-2003.

4.3. Hans-Liudger Dienel nonetheless observes that a call for paper should rely on prior definition of the publication program. Moreover, it should be in COST interest to unify all publications under the same communication patterns – publisher, logo, etc. – to the exception of Berlin’s conference book, due to come out soon. Colin Divall states that this depends on the commitment of the publisher and some proposals are reviewed. The theme will be more widely debated during Management Committee.

4.4. Gijs Moms suggests to integrate the proposed WG 1 conference at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility organized by the European Center for Mobility Documentation in November 6-9 at Eindhoven Technical University. The proposal will also be scrutinized during the Management Committee.

## **5. OTHER TOPICS AND CLOSING:**

No other matters arise and the meeting is closed at 15:20.

Laurent Bonnaud