

## TRANSPORT

# Hupac Intermodal Forum: Innovations for the future of logistics

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The focus was on pragmatic measures to improve the competitiveness of climate-friendly combined transport

Once again, the intermodal sector met in Lugano to discuss the current market situation. And once again, the focus was on pragmatic measures to improve the competitiveness of climate-friendly combined transport.

This was reported in a note from Hupac.

A great opportunity lies in standardization and digitalization, said Hupac President Hans-Jörg Bertschi. More than 25% of terminal-to-terminal intermodal revenue is spent on staff working in offices, with siloed scheduling and manual data entry in non-integrated environments. "With DXI, we have taken an important first step toward standardized data exchange," he said. Developed together with a dozen market players, DXI is a neutral, independent data hub for exchanging machine-to-machine data along the intermodal process chain.

"This positive experience leads us to ask ourselves if we can take a few more steps, together with industry organizations such as UIRR, ECTA and ERFA," Bertschi added. "We are ready to launch an industry-wide initiative for broader standardization in additional areas of intermodal transport," he announced.

Heiko Krebs, CEO of Kombiverkehr, highlighted the long-standing collaboration with Hupac for the development of joint solutions for the benefit of intermodal transport. He concluded his speech by calling on the industry to use the DXI data hub to improve the intermodal supply chain and seize the opportunities offered by increased data availability and visibility. "Together, we can create standardized processes and workflows for the entire industry!"

Investments in terminals, intelligence and networks are key to a long-term growth path for intermodal transport, said Michail Stahlhut, CEO of Hupac. Productivity and agile solutions are the answer to rising rail costs and the unstable performance of many railway infrastructures. "For the closure of the Rastatt line in August, we developed a bypass solution through France thanks to very good cooperation in the rail sector," he explained. "However, the restructuring of infrastructure in many countries, especially in Germany, requires a specific approach to ensure rail freight capacity at a reasonable cost, even in the case of challenging diversions."

Infrastructure is key to the future growth of intermodal transport. Hupac continues its investment strategy in transshipment terminals. "Cologne Nord, Duisburg DGT, Piacenza, La Llagosta Barcelona, Milano Smistamento – until 2026 we will open one terminal per year together with our partners," said Stahlhut. "These 'gateways' to intermodal transport will allow us to expand our network with new services."

The shift of traffic from road to rail is an ongoing effort, stressed Peter Füglistaler, Director of the Swiss Federal Office of Transport. Switzerland has invested heavily in rail infrastructure with the Lötschberg, Gotthard and Ceneri base tunnels, the 4-metre corridor and terminals in Switzerland and neighbouring countries. There is still much to be done: to promote the development of access routes, to secure capacity for freight transport, to secure capacity in the event of works and disruptions and to keep prices stable. "We want to give rail transport a chance to become profitable in a sustainable way," Füglistaler concluded.