

How to standardize and digitize site logistics processes? Use case and perspectives for trilateral collaboration

Interactive Trilog workshop and site visit in cooperation with DOW Terneuzen

February 29th 2024. Nearly sixty logistics and digitalization experts from chemical companies located in Flanders, the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia as well as members of ministries and ports took part in an interactive workshop in Terneuzen organized by the Trilog initiative in cooperation with Dow Terneuzen and supported by [Cefic](#). The hot topic of the day: Why do we need digital standards for intermodal transport and in general for logistics and how to overcome the hurdles to proceed?

Recap of the first workshop at BASF Antwerp and insights into the DOW Terneuzen site

The workshop was opened by DOW's Senior Logistics Director Peter van Egerschot and the chair of the Trilog working group on infrastructure Gerd Deimel (c2i), with Tanja Merckx (essenscia), coordinator for the digitalization activities in the framework of the Trilog infrastructure initiative. The entire day was moderated and hosted by Lennart Heip from DOW Terneuzen.

The attendees enjoyed a site tour through the DOW chemical site, after a short recap with Tom De Roover of BASF Antwerp on their fully automated site logistics eco-system. Tom De Roover gave an update of what BASF has achieved since the last TRILOG workshop in December 2022 referring to their digitizing efforts and automation of site logistics processes on the Antwerp campus and their plans for 2024 going forward.



Deep dive: input and discussions on B2A and B2B standards, standardized marine emission reporting

After a refreshing networking lunch, the presentations from Juergen Willemsen (DOW) and Peter Devos ([ECLIC](#) & [ECTA](#)) focused on the standards necessary for the digitalization processes in maritime transport on emission reporting through Sea Cargo Charter and cleaning quality processes through ECLIC (European Chemical Logistics Information Council). The unanimous opinion of the participants was that it could not be implemented efficiently without standardization. The B2B data and process standards such as ECLIC as a nonprofit organization and eECD were once again presented as successful first movers allowing a digital collaboration at industry level.

The European Commission representative Villu Varjas from DG Move provided an insight into the implementation schedule for the paperless transport processes eCMR (electronic freight letter - Convention Relative au Contract de Transport International de Merchandises par Route) and eFTI (electronic Freight Transport Information) and pointed out the different framework conditions of the member states and promoted the widest possible use. He underlined, that nobody will be forced to use eFTI, but should think about the advantages to extend for B2B purposes. Business keep all eCMR and eFTI information in one platform. Implementing and delegated acts on eFTI platforms, service

provider specifications and rules for certification should be adopted by August 2024, for Member States Authorities to implement eFTI data acceptance by December 2026.

"Speaking the same language": panel discussion on standards in intermodal transport

The subsequent panel discussion concentrated on the question of intermodal standards with senior decision-makers from various perspectives from logistics service providers and ports. The questions of how the "data-based handshake" can be carried out, what prerequisites must be met for the readiness and security of the data and how we speak the same digital language between the different modes were discussed intensively also with the participation of the audience. It was also emphasized that with fewer workers available in the future, we will have to digitize significantly more processes anyway.

The wrap up from Tanja Merckx (essenscia) and the concluding discussion focused on lessons learned from the day and experiences in the respective companies. The participants agreed strongly on the need for more best practice exchanges and stressed the huge collaboration potential in the trilateral chemical industry cluster. Sharing knowledge about established digital solutions and exchanging more standardized industry data sets can lead to their increased usage and, thus, to come to a chemical logistics network in Flanders, the Netherlands and NRW that is more interoperable, more efficient, sustainable and resilient and also of benefit for logistics operators in times of driver shortages. Joost Naessens, Cefic Director Transport & Logistics underlined this.

The participants agreed to come together in a Trilog digital follow-up meeting and strive also for a continuation of the site visits. The next step, will be a web meeting already announced for May 24th 2024.

Background on the Trilog initiative:

The TRILOG or 'Trilateral strategy for the chemical industry' is a cross-border cooperation between the Netherlands, Flanders and North Rhine-Westphalia. In a global competitive environment that is changing drastically, the trilateral chemical industry faces fundamental economic, environmental and technological challenges. To prepare for the future, capture the benefits of a growing chemical industry and remove existing bottlenecks for this development, an important strategic process had been launched in 2017. North Rhine-Westphalia, the Netherlands and Flanders agreed on a joint vision on the future development of their flagship industry – the chemical industry.

More: [Home \(trilateral-chemical-region.eu\)](https://trilateral-chemical-region.eu)

Organisation and Support of Trilog workshop and site visit:





From left to right:

Lennart Heip - DOW, Tanja Merckx - essenscia, Gerd Deimel - c2i, Jan Hinterlang - VCI NRW