

**WORLD CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT  
RESEARCH SOCIETY  
WCTRS – SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP A2  
THE PORT AND MARITIME SECTOR:  
KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES  
3–4 May 2018, Antwerp, Belgium**

The two-day international conference was organized by the Special Interest Group A2 (Ports and Maritime) of the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS), co-chaired by Prof. Thierry Vanelslander (Department of Transport and Regional Economics – University of Antwerp / TransportNET), and Prof. Enrico Musso (Department of Quantitative Methods – University of Genova / TransportNET). The conference featured presentations on topics that can be considered as current key developments in the port and maritime business, either at the management, operational, or policy levels. The topics included maritime transportation, port activities, business economics, transport planning, policy-making, environmental issues, infrastructure, cost optimization, chain optimization, human resources, and legal issues.

There were 120 papers from all over Europe and 236 participants from 50 nationalities who simultaneously presented their papers in 4 different halls under the sections: Port Competition, Maritime Clusters, Chain Security, Sea Shipping, Port Clusters, Port Data Application, Autonomous Shipping, Maritime Innovation, Synchromodal Transportation, Port Governance, Chain Safety, Hinterland Connectivity, Maritime Networks, Hinterland Bundling, etc. As vicerector of the University of Antwerp, Prof. Silvia Lenaerts said at the opening ceremony that the main motivation for this kind of conference was the need for an exchange of ideas, where science meets business, with an interdisciplinary, international, theoretical, and empirical approach. She also added that concerning congestion

impact emissions related to the new IMO (International Maritime Organization) rules, an initial strategy on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships is setting out a vision to reduce GHG emissions from international shipping with the task to phase them out as soon as possible within this century.

Worldwide developments and challenges have totally transformed the port and maritime sector, and now ports are seen as maritime logistic chains using the AI for further progress of data sharing to enable high performance of the maritime sector. In addition, one of the most important areas of motivation was how to start digitizing and big data sharing.

All of the papers were peer reviewed and are due to be printed in the Conferences Proceedings. The selection of papers will be prepared for joint publication in a number of scientific journals.



The next event in the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS) series will be held 26–31 May 2019 in Mumbai (India) at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay.

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