

Sharing real-time information could save the transport sector billions each year

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Credit: TU Eindhoven

A European research project led by Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) makes real-time information available for the whole transport chain for the first time. The new software platform, which is being presented on 1 October, enables a flexible response to unforeseen circumstances, making transport faster, more environmentally friendly and cheaper each year by many billions. The researchers are confident that the total fuel consumption in the EU can be reduced by some 2 billion liters and CO2 emissions cut by 6.5 million annually.

Say a container full of electronics arrives in the port of Rotterdam via ship from Shanghai for subsequent [transport](#) to the Ruhr in Germany by barge. However, a storm delays the arrival of the ship in Rotterdam and the connection is missed. Such unforeseen circumstances lead to delay, congestion and additional costs. In the port of Rotterdam alone the annual extra costs can run up to millions of euros.

GET Service

A collaborative project involving transport companies and research institutions, led by TU/e researchers Remco Dijkman and Paul Grefen, has spent three years developing a software platform that allows transport routes to be adjusted in the light of unforeseen circumstances. Like a truck being ready and waiting to transport the Chinese electronics by road from Rotterdam to Germany.

Real-time information

This 'GET Service platform' solves a major problem in the transport sector. It makes [real-time information](#) available for every transporter, about the location of goods, how busy the road is, the weather conditions and more. This kind of information is currently lacking and planning is made in advance. "What is holding transporter back is a fear of market share if they share information," Dijkman says.

Less fuel consumption and environmentally friendlier

This widely backed European platform, largely funded by the European Union, is intended to put an end to this problem. The [platform](#) enables plans to be made and adjusted on the basis of up-to-the-minute [information](#) and the availability of transport. The researchers are confident that the total [fuel consumption](#) in the EU can be reduced by some 2 billion liters and CO2 emissions cut by 6.5 million annually by improving the use of environmentally-friendly means of transport and cutting the number of 'empty' trucks on the road.

Provided by Eindhoven University of Technology

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