

## Castle - Cooperation Among SMEs Toward Logistic Excellence

A project for the improvement of local and regional policies in logistics for Small and Medium Enterprises



*CASTLE – Cooperation Among SMEs Toward Logistic Excellence* – is a project financed under the European Union program *Interreg IVC*, aimed to improve public policies in transport and logistics, with a specific focus on SMEs (small and medium enterprises). **CASTLE intends to strengthen local & regional policies in logistics and to support logistic innovation and competitive-ness** on 4 fundamental aspects:

1. strengthening the logistics supply chain & the logistics industry
2. improving the demand for logistics in the production systems (industrial areas & clusters)
3. strengthening logistics training for SME systems
4. institutional & governance consolidation in logistics, public-private cooperation in policy formulation

The methodology put in practice by CASTLE for the improvement of policy making concerns: the surveying, analysis, exchange and transfer of best practices, the creation of a new regional policy tool usable by policy makers, as well as joint partners policy making exercises (EU and Transfer Forum).

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2010, the Emilia-Romagna Region and the Institute for Transport and Logistics – ITL (lead project partner), organised the **2<sup>nd</sup> EU Forum and the Workshop on Logistic Competence Centres (LoCCs)**. The events were part of the Mid-term Conference of CASTLE project, called “EU Challenges and Regional Initiatives Strengthening Public

Policies for SMEs Logistics”, held at the Emilia-Romagna Region office in Brussels.

The Mid-term Conference intended to offer the opportunity to exchange experiences and transfer best practices among EU regions, to strengthen existing collaboration and to encourage net-working.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> EU Forum was opened by Alberto Preti of ITL, who set the context for the regional policies’ challenges in logistics. The importance of the added value of innovation and cooperation for the competitiveness of SMEs in Europe was highlighted by Jean-Marc Venineaux of the European Commission.

Piotr Novak of the Institute for Logistics Warehousing – ILIM, presented the best practices for policy making improvement concerning the optimisation of the logistics demand in industrial systems.

The sustainable growth of European regions is based on a series of factors related to business performance, productivity, prices, costs and labour supplies. In this respect, policy makers can contribute to sustainable growth through policies that foster the business environment, the physical and the knowledge infrastructure of the territory.

Balázs Barta, of the Pannon Business Network Association – PBN, focused on the clustering and the strengthening of the logistic supply, aimed at fostering the regional competitiveness.

Anneliese Heitzinger, on behalf of the Development Agency of Carinthia, highlighted the link between the logis-

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