

From the industry, for the industry

# Logistics as carrier and driver of digital innovation

Information paper from the  
Open Logistics Foundation

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## 1. No more going it alone: Strategic challenges

Logistics is the backbone of the European economy: in a time of geopolitical tensions and fragmented supply chains, it guarantees security of supply and competitiveness. However, the ability of the logistics sector to act is increasingly under threat. After logistics companies have already lost significant market share in B2C logistics, this must not be repeated in B2B logistics. Efficient logistics processes along the entire supply chain – from the raw material suppliers through the producers and retailers, to the logistics service providers and ultimately to the end consumer – form an indispensable foundation for the economy and society.

In such value creation networks, the challenges are not company-specific, but systemic: interoperability, sustainability and resilience. Logistics companies therefore have only one option: they must shape their own digital infrastructure, even beyond traditional competitive logics.

The Open Logistics Foundation supports companies in

- developing basic digital functionalities and open industry standards for logistics challenges based on the open source approach, and
- making the software components freely and openly accessible to all market participants.

Such joint developments are more efficient than parallel developments that tie up resources and hinder interoperability. This new, collaborative form of cooperation between companies in non-competitive differentiating areas not only creates robust, internationally compatible solutions, but also strengthens the digital sovereignty and independence of business and government.

## 2. Function of the Open Logistics Foundation

The Open Logistics Foundation is an industry-backed organisation for open source development. The non-profit foundation was founded by the internationally leading companies Dachser, Rhenus Logistics, duisport and DB Schenker. More than 50 European and international logistics and logistics IT companies – from start-ups and SMEs to large corporations – are members of the open source organisation (as of December 2025). The Foundation's governance model guarantees neutrality, fairness and participation for all involved, including competitors. The headquarters are located in Dortmund.

The companies actively address regulatory and current cross-company issues, developing concrete software solutions for day-to-day business practice.

The Foundation's Head Office ...

- organises the joint projects and additionally provides professional and technical support,
- manages the open source community and represents it in the market and the public sphere,
- operates the Open Logistics Repository, in which the developed open source components are made freely and openly available to all market participants.

### 3 Role of the open source approach

In all innovation-intensive sectors today, it is evident that open source is a strategic accelerator. For logistics, this applies to an even greater extent:

- From a business perspective, interoperability, regulatory requirements, and international supply chains make closed and incompatible isolated solutions expensive, inefficient and vulnerable.
- From a policymaker perspective, freely accessible infrastructure components that cannot be controlled by individual companies or third countries/parties strengthen digital sovereignty and form the basis for technological leadership.

In the Open Logistics Foundation, member companies propose specific open source projects. They are implemented if their relevance for the entire industry is confirmed. Examples include projects for digitalising transport documents to increase efficiency in goods handling, or for developing data models to achieve sustainability goals. Depending on their role in the supply chain, their size, and their national affiliation, companies contribute different perspectives to the projects. The result is robust, practical and internationally compatible solutions.

### 4 Acting together: Tasks for the future

The opportunity to take a leading role in the digitalisation of logistics has not yet passed. What matters now are two things: greater attention to open source projects and a wider use of existing solutions to strengthen standards. The more companies participate in shaping open source software, the more valuable the solutions become – for the resilience and sustainability of supply, for the industry, and for the business location. A critical mass can only be created through greater visibility of initiatives and projects and through the involvement of many more stakeholders – a task that must be supported equally by business and politics. Furthermore, it is essential to promote and prioritise open and interoperable standards in digitalisation.

## Get in touch with us

We look forward to supporting you.

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## Scan now and find out ...



... why logistics needs open standards: The Open Logistics Foundation's open approach is changing companies' traditional view on digitalisation in logistics. Together, more robust, creative and sustainable solutions are being developed.



... how collaboration makes logistics better: At the Open Logistics Foundation, ideas, projects, and solutions are developed through dialogue. Every member can propose ideas for joint development projects. Every perspective is important, and every voice is heard.



... which Working Groups and projects the Open Logistics Foundation member companies are currently working on and which components and solutions are already available in the Open Logistics Repository.