

Towards a more customer oriented approach

A customer-oriented approach is the word also when planning corridors.

– We should serve containers and make attractive packages for customers, **Olli-Pekka Hilmola**, a professor in Lappeenranta University of Technology, says.

Hilmola, and the other speakers at RailForum2015, believe in a more customer-oriented approach.

Hilmola thinks we could learn from the countries in which the share of rail freight is on the rise.

– For example in Poland a direct connection from the harbour to China has made the container traffic four times as big as it used to be.

Jarkko Rantala, professor in Logistics at the Tampere University of Technology, calls for thinking ahead and vision. He questions whether planning new corridors necessarily has to be based on existing markets and material flows.

– Could we start with infra? A new corridor could function as a base for new industry, especially in Northern areas. We should now seek new means to increase the attraction of the Northern areas.

– On the other hand, good connections and solid infra also bring companies and customers to the area, Rantala says.

What the customer wants, is good service, reliability and cost effectivity.

Jari Voutilainen a Senior Vice President in Metsä Group would like to see a more customer-oriented approach to planning new routes and connections. Customers could also be involved in the planning process.

– Understanding your customer is important. On the whole, logistics must be reliable and fluent. In the end, it's about customer's time and money, Voutilainen said.

Voutilainen presented audience with an overview of the transport methods used Metsä Group and about the challenges the company has faced. The production lines of Metsä Group are located in Finland, the customers mainly in Central Europe. The company exports everything from toilet paper and soap to tens of tons of pulp. Nine percent of all is transported by rail.

– When choosing the mode of transport, service level and price level are the critical factors, Voutilainen says.