DIGITAL INTEGRATION OF EURASIAN TRANSPORT: RUSSIA'S EXPERIENCE IN ELECTRONIC FREIGHT DOCUMENTATION AND UNMANNED LOGISTICS

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Abstract *This article examines Russia's approach to international cooperation in transport digitalisation and unmanned logistics technologies, grounded in an already-established technological and regulatory foundation rather than in isolated pilots. The article covers four interconnected developments: the mandatory transition to electronic freight documentation through the State Information System for Electronic Transport Documents (GIS EPD), effective 1 September 2026; the deployment of navigation seals across EAEU territory under the Agreement in force since February 2026; the launch of international unmanned freight corridors, including the world's first cross-border unmanned shipment between Russia and Kazakhstan; and the development of the National Centre for Digital Transport Logistics (NCLTP) as a platform designed to interface with partner countries' digital freight systems. Russia's strategic aim is not to export individual technological products, but to construct joint technological frameworks: common standards, compatible digital platforms, unified data exchange rules, and clear regulatory requirements for carriers, vehicles, and unmanned solutions. This approach reflects the fundamental characteristic of international logistics — that efficiency gains from digitalisation materialise only when digital documents, platforms, and regulatory regimes operate coherently across the entire transport route, not merely within a single national jurisdiction. The article then analyses Uzbekistan's position as a strategic partner in this architecture. As a key logistics hub in Central Asia occupying critical transit routes between Russia, Kazakhstan, China, South Asia, and the Middle East, Uzbekistan stands to gain substantially from aligning with Russia's digital transport infrastructure. Cooperation is proposed along two parallel tracks: harmonisation within the Eurasian regulatory framework, and a dedicated bilateral Russia–Uzbekistan agreement covering e-CMR pilots, platform integration, and border digitalisation. The article concludes that Uzbekistan is well positioned to become one of the first countries where Russian digital transport solutions are deployed as a coherent international logistics corridor rather than as fragmented national services.*

Keywords: *electronic freight documents; GIS EPD; transport digitalisation; unmanned logistics corridors; navigation seals; EAEU; Uzbekistan; NCLTP;*

e-CMR; Eurasian transport integration; digital freight platform; cross-border cooperation

1. Russia's Strategic Approach to International Transport Cooperation

Russia today approaches international cooperation in transport digitalisation and unmanned technologies not with isolated experiments, but with an already established technological and regulatory foundation. The key idea is not simply to export individual products, but to create joint technological frameworks with friendly countries: common standards, compatible digital platforms, unified data exchange rules, and clear requirements for carriers, vehicles, and unmanned solutions.

This is especially important for international logistics, where the effect emerges only when digital documents, platforms, and regulatory regimes operate not within a single country, but across the entire transport route. Russia already possesses the full range of technologies in the unmanned sector and has its own proprietary developments in several areas.

2. Unmanned Logistics Corridors

One of the most illustrative examples is the Russian Ministry of Transport's project 'Unmanned Logistics Corridors'. Russia already has practical experience operating unmanned trucks on federal highways, and this experience can be used to create international unmanned logistics corridors.

Unmanned logistics in Russia is now viewed not as a niche experiment, but as a key element of the future transport system. According to the Transport Strategy of the Russian Ministry of Transport, by 2035 approximately 20% of all freight vehicles should be unmanned. For partner countries, Russia's experience in unmanned freight transport offers clear benefits: reduced logistics time and costs, and increased transport transparency.

3. Mandatory Electronic Freight Documentation and GIS EPD

Starting 1 September 2026, Russia will transition to mandatory electronic waybills (e-CMR), which will be submitted to the State Information System for Electronic Transport Documents (GIS EPD). As of early 2026, GIS EPD has already processed over 30 million electronic documents, with monthly volumes exceeding 1.7 million . The system is designed to handle five key document types: transport waybills, expeditionary documents (freight forwarding orders,

warehouse receipts), railway waybills, air waybills, and cargo booking orders .

Operating within this system will eliminate paper document flows, accelerate transport documentation, reduce administrative burdens, enhance transparency across logistics processes, ensure end-to-end cargo movement tracking, and simplify interaction between businesses, carriers, and the state.

Looking ahead, GIS EPD will provide the technical basis for exchanging electronic transport documents with partner countries. The Eurasian Economic Commission has already established a working group to implement a pilot e-CMR project across EAEU member states, with representatives from transport, digitalisation, tax, and customs authorities, as well as business communities .

4. The National Centre for Digital Transport Logistics (NCLTP)

GIS EPD will become the foundation of the National Centre for Digital Transport Logistics (NCLTP) — a national transport platform designed to interface with the digital platforms of partner countries in international transport. The NCLTP can serve as a model for building similar national platforms and for integrating with partners' existing systems.

If platforms from different countries are compatible, a carrier will be able to process documents, permits, routes, cargo data, and vehicle information digitally, without paper duplication or re-entry of information at each border. This is particularly relevant for routes between Russia, EAEU countries, and Central Asia.

In the future, when unmanned solutions are combined with electronic transport documents, platform-based logistics, and state data exchange, transport in Russia will operate within a fully digital chain — from cargo registration through movement control to transport completion.

5. Navigation Seals across the EAEU

Russia has established successful international cooperation with EAEU member states on cargo tracking using navigation seals. Such shipments have been operating since 11 February 2026 under the Agreement on the Use of Navigation Seals in the EAEU Territory. A navigation seal is a reusable technical device that enables remote digital monitoring of cargo location and the integrity of cargo compartments, as well as real-time transmission of this information to regulatory authorities.

The rollout follows a three-stage schedule. Stage one (from 11 February 2026) covers road and rail transport of sanctioned goods, alcohol, and tobacco under transit, export, and mutual trade procedures, as well as road transport of light industrial goods and electronics under customs transit. Stage two (from 31 July 2026) extends to all road transport goods and rail transport of light industrial goods and electronics. Stage three (from 27 May 2027) will cover all rail customs transit.

The Russian authorised national sealing operator — the Centre for the Development of Digital Platforms — has integrated the Russian information system with the information systems of all EAEU member state operators. The use of navigation seals creates a trusted transport environment along the entire route within the EAEU, from the moment the seal is applied and activated until it is deactivated and removed at the final point.

6. International Unmanned Transport Pilots

Russia has launched initial pilot programmes in unmanned transport with partner countries. On 25 May 2026, the world's first cross-border unmanned logistics shipment between Russia and Kazakhstan took place: two KamAZ autonomous trucks successfully completed a route of approximately 3,000 kilometres, one departing from Moscow and the other from Astana. The pilot demonstrated readiness to develop regular unmanned freight services between the two countries. Unmanned cargo delivery with China is also planned.

At the highest political level, the Presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan have reviewed the results of this historic shipment. During the state visit, transport ministers signed an interdepartmental plan to coordinate digital transport development, including the establishment of common rules for unmanned logistics within the EAEU framework.

However, the full-scale launch of international unmanned corridors

res unified and agreed-upon rules. At the first stage, it is therefore advisable to develop international unmanned transport within experimental legal frameworks. This approach enables technology testing on limited routes with pre-defined safety parameters, without waiting for full legislative harmonisation across all participating jurisdictions.

7. Uzbekistan's Role in the Eurasian Transport Agenda

Uzbekistan holds a special place in the international transport agenda. The country is a key logistics hub in Central Asia and is actively interested in developing international routes, digitalising transport, increasing market transparency, and accelerating border procedures.

Although Uzbekistan is not a full member of the EAEU, it participates in cooperation with the Union and can adopt compatible standards to facilitate trade and transport. Uzbekistan occupies a strategically important position in Central Asia and can serve as a critical link on routes connecting Russia, Kazakhstan, regional countries, Afghanistan, Iran, China, and South Asia. At the same time, a substantial transport and logistics flow already exists between Russia and Uzbekistan — one that digitalisation can significantly accelerate.

Cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan should therefore develop along two parallel tracks: through alignment with EAEU regulatory approaches, and through dedicated bilateral agreements between Russia and Uzbekistan.

8. The Eurasian Track: Regulatory Harmonisation

Within the Eurasian track, it is necessary to develop common rules covering: electronic transport documents; e-CMR for international road transport; digital carrier profiles; digital vehicle profiles; cargo data exchange; mutual recognition of legally significant electronic documents; and integration of national platforms and state information systems. This regulatory framework can serve as the basis for progressively connecting Uzbekistan to individual services and route segments.

9. The Bilateral Track: Russia–Uzbekistan Cooperation

Regarding bilateral cooperation, it is advisable to establish a dedicated regulatory framework that includes: an agreement on the digital exchange of transport data; mutual recognition of electronic transport documents; e-CMR pilots, particularly on Russia–Kazakhstan–Uzbekistan routes; integration of national platforms; unified data requirements; and the digitalisation of border crossings.

As a result, Uzbekistan could become one of the first partner countries where Russian digital transport solutions are applied not in a fragmented manner, but as part of a fully integrated international logistics corridor — a concrete demonstration that the transition to digital freight documentation and unmanned logistics, when built on shared regulatory and technical frameworks, creates lasting gains for all participants across the route.

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