

Athens



Context

Athens, with a population of approximately 640,000 inhabitants within an area of **39 km²**, may be perceived as a compact medium to large-sized city. However, **mobility and logistics planning must consider a significantly larger functional urban area**, encompassing over **3.5 million** residents across more than **3,000 km²** of administrative boundaries.

E-commerce

The city **lacks visibility into e-commerce's role in urban logistics**, as logistics service providers (LSPs) are not required to share trip or vehicle data. Without this information, Athens cannot quantify how online shopping shapes logistics flows or traffic patterns.



Logistics landscape



Athens is home to logistics hubs and distribution terminals of national significance.



The city's intense logistics landscape ultimately contributes to increased road traffic and emissions, hindering progress toward climate neutrality.

To mitigate these effects, the city **has introduced the following measures:**

- ➔ **Delivery Schedules** – for example, deliveries by trucks exceeding 2 tons are prohibited between 09:00 and 21:00.
- ➔ **Small Ring** – regulates which vehicles are permitted to operate within a designated area in the city centre, based on the last digit of their license plate. Additionally, commercial vehicles over 2.2 tons are not allowed in this zone.
- ➔ **Commercial Triangle** – in the area bounded by Stadiou, Mitropoleos, and Athinas streets, and the squares of Syntagma, Monastiraki, and Omonia, heavier commercial vehicles are permitted to operate during hours when such movement is otherwise restricted in other parts of the city.
- ➔ **Blue Zone** – On selected roads in central Athens, unrestricted circulation of all commercial vehicles is permitted between 14:30–17:00 and 19:00–07:00 (the following day).

Main Challenge

While the city has **introduced regulations to curb logistics-related congestion** (e.g., time-restricted access for heavy vehicles), **systematic enforcement remains weak**. Without monitoring tools or compliance incentives, measures like the "Small Ring" traffic restrictions struggle to deliver tangible results.

Lesson learned

Athens demonstrates that regulations alone are insufficient without enforcement. Effective urban logistics policies require both clear rules and mechanisms to ensure adherence—whether through technology (e.g., ANPR cameras) or stakeholder collaboration.

Data preparedness



LSPs are not obligated to share information on their trips, routes, returns or types of goods delivered with the city. As there is not a strategy to promote this exchange, LSPs do not share any type of data with the public authority



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