

# **FACTORS INFLUENCING ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT DEMAND: POLICY INSTRUMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT IN TUNISIA**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between freight transport demand and some macroeconomic factors such as economic growth. A particular focus on the effect of the fuel price on road freight transport demand generation will be given. This study employed a data analysis method called PLS regression in order to estimate Tunisian road freight transport demand based on aggregate time series during the period 1969 – 2010.

The empirical results reveal that Tunisia knows a phase of weak decoupling due to the space distribution of economic activities. The increase of road transport more than the evolution of rail transport leads authors to adopt relative decoupling actions such as taxes on fuels and fiscal measures in order to shift freight transport from road to rail. However, regarding the positive fuel price elasticity, any instrument related to the price signal could be unable to reduce road transport intensity.

**Keywords:** freight transport demand, sustainable transport, fuel price, PLS regression, decoupling

**JEL classification:** C22, Q43, Q56, R41