
Editorial

Carlos Pestana Barros*

Instituto Superior de Economia e Gestão,
UECE (Research Unit on Complexity and Economics),
Technical University of Lisbon,
Rua Miguel Lupi, 20, 1249-078, Lisbon, Portugal
Fax: +351-213 925 912
E-mail: Cbarros@iseg.utl.pt
*Corresponding author

Rui Cunha Marques

Instituto Superior Técnico
Technical University of Lisbon
Avenida Rovisco Pais, 1049-001, Lisbon, Portugal
and
CESUR (Center of Urban and Regional Systems),
Instituto Superior Técnico,
Technical University of Lisbon,
Avenida Rovisco Pais, 1049-001, Lisbon, Portugal
Fax: +351-218 409 884
E-mail: rcmar@civil.ist.utl.pt

Hercules Haralambides

Center for Maritime Economics and Logistics (MEL),
Erasmus University Rotterdam,
Burgemeester Oudlaan 50, 3062 PA Rotterdam, The Netherlands
E-mail: Haralambides@ese.eur.nl

Biographical notes: C.P. Barros research on transportation includes seaports, airports, buses, airlines and other forms of transports with a focus on frontier models, survival models and categorical dependent variables models with heterogeneity and endogeneity. Its research has appeared in several transportation journals, such as the *International Journal of Production Economics*, *Journal of Disaster Studies*, *Policy and Management*, *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation*, *Transport Reviews*, *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, *International Journal of Transport Economics*, *Maritime Economics & Logistics*. He also serves at the board of Maritime Economics and Logistics.

Rui Cunha Marques is a Professor at Instituto Superior Técnico of Technical University of Lisbon. He teaches decision theory, project management and evaluation and operational research for undergraduate students and economic regulation, performance evaluation and public procurement at graduate studies.

He has developed and run short courses and workshops on benchmarking, economic regulation and public private partnerships for industry with more than 500 attendants so far. He has been an Invited Professor at other universities in Portugal, Belgium, the USA and Brazil and has collaborated in post-graduation programs. He carries out research since 1997 in the scope of performance evaluation, regulation and public procurement both in Portugal and abroad. He is a Research Fellow at the Center of Urban and Regional Systems (CESUR) and currently he is visiting the Public Utility Research Commission (PURC) at the University of Florida. His specialisation areas are public service regulation, performance evaluation and public procurement, particularly public private partnerships related to public utilities and transportation sectors. He has authored or co-authored more than 200 technical/scientific publications in about 20 countries in different languages, including four books and two theses and has been a referee for several journals.

Since 1992, Hercules Haralambides is tenured Full Professor of Maritime Economics and Logistics at Erasmus University Rotterdam and Director of the Erasmus Center for Maritime Economics and Logistics. He is also Founding Editor-in-Chief of Maritime Economics & Logistics (MEL). In 1989, he founded the Special Interest Group (SIG2) on Maritime Transport and Ports of the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS) and in 1990, together with three other colleagues, he established the International Association of Maritime Economists (IAME). He has written and published extensively in several areas of the maritime sector and for 25 years, he has been involved as Senior Adviser and Researcher to government and industry in a number of shipping and port related projects in most European countries as well as in Australia, New Zealand, China, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, India, and Brazil. In 1994–96 he was also Senior Adviser to the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Between 1995–96 he was member of Commissioner Neil Kinnock's 'wise men' Group on Maritime Transport, and in 1997–98 member of Commissioner Kinnock's Consultative Committee on Ports and Maritime Infrastructure. In the context of his work for the EU, he has effectively contributed to the formulation of EU policies in the shipping and port sectors. In 2008, he was decorated with the Golden Cross of the Order of the Phoenix by the President of the Hellenic Republic.

This special issue presents a selection of papers received by the guest-editors for the special issue of *IJSTL – International Journal of Shipping and Transport Logistics* on comparative benchmarking analysis of seaports at international level. In this special issue, six papers were selected based on their quality and novelty. The authors are transportation economists and engineers and all papers engage in benchmarking analysis of seaports. All paper went through a rigorous reviewer process that resulted in their revision prior to the final acceptance.

Moreover, the authors come from different universities in Europe, Asia and America. The first three papers focus on productivity change with three different DEA (data envelopment analysis) models and respectively deal with French and Italian seaports, Spanish seaports and Middle East and East African seaports. The following three papers focus on Iberian seaports, Mexican seaports and world container seaports and analyse efficiency using DEA models.

The first three papers analyse productivity change in seaports. The first paper by Jean-Pascal Guironnet, Nicholas Peypoch and Bernardin Solonandrasana presents an analysis of French seaports based on the Luenberger productivity indicator. This is the

first paper that compares French and Italian seaports adopting the Luenberger productivity indicator. Comparison of seaports was the main, but not the sole, subject of this special issue and the two important European countries analysed, and the adoption of the relatively innovative Luenberger approach, make this paper an example of the aims of this special issue. The second paper by Sebastián Lozano presents a non-radial, non-oriented Malmquist productivity index to estimate productivity growth of Spanish Ports. The Malmquist productivity index, with input or output orientation and using a radial efficiency measure, are common in seaports literature, but non-radial, non-oriented Malmquist productivity index is a novelty in this context. The third paper by Ahmed Salem Al-Eraqi, Adli Mustaffa and Ahamad Tajudin Khader provides a radial Malmquist productivity index model to evaluate the efficiency of seaports in the East Africa and Middle East region. East Africa and Middle East seaports have been rarely analysed in seaports literature.

The following three papers focus on efficiency. The paper by João C. Quaresma Dias, Susana Garrido Azevedo, João Ferreira and Sérgio F. Palma presents recursive DEA models to analyse Iberian (Spain and Portugal) seaports efficiency. The fifth paper by José Humberto Ablanedo-Rosas and Alex J. Ruiz-Torres presents the first efficiency analysis of Mexican seaports. Several DEA models are used for comparative purposes. The sixth paper by Jie Wu and Liang Liang presents an efficiency analysis of world container seaports using DEA models.

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