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## Cargo sous terrain Switzerland

Ask any major retailer in the world and they'll tell you their biggest headache is logistics. Getting goods across the country is an unpredictable business, often relying on hundreds of variables and third parties with less skin in the game. This is one reason Amazon is developing drones for airborne deliveries. But while it heads for the skies, the Swiss are digging a really big tunnel.

A number of retailers in Switzerland have banded together to develop Cargo Sous Terrain (Cargo Underground), an ambitious, purpose-built transportation system for goods, hoped to be complete by 2030. Involved in the project are Switzerland's two major supermarkets Coop and Migros, as well as national postal service Die Post. According to their plans, the system will comprise a tunnel 50m underground, connecting key urban centres within Switzerland, and automated pods travelling at 30km/h filled

Cargo Sous Terrain is a project backed by Swiss and foreign companies

Up to 10 hubs along the route are essential for loading and unloading of the packages

Plans foresee routes across the country from Geneva to St Gallen

with parcels and packages. Coop alone expects to put today's equivalent of 200 full truckloads of goods on the first track from Härkingen to Zürich each day once this part of the project is up and running.

"The need for better logistics solutions has been around for a long time," says Daniel Wiener, a member of Cargo Sous Terrain's executive board. "Congested highways have been a major issue, along with road and rail systems that operate at maximum capacity." The tunnel scheme won't just take strain off inter-city transport, it will also help within urban areas. "Imagine the efficiency gains if one truck delivers to three shops close to each other, even though they're competing."

All that stands in the way of the vision becoming a reality – aside from millions of tonnes of earth – is a special law, which must be passed by the Swiss parliament in the autumn and that will set its regulatory framework. As Wiener explains, "The project is fully privately financed; the government sets the rules. Cargo Sous Terrain is going to be profitable and will save money in the long run." — cs

At the roof of the tunnel a system for smaller packages will be installed

Connections to other means of transport are essential to the concept

Cargo will be distributed to smaller vehicles for the "last mile" of distribution

