

WORLD PORTS

According to the new IAPH COVID-19 Survey, from the ports viewpoint, the global maritime transport scenario shows a clear deterioration compared to the previous weeks.







42% of the ports interviewed, experience moderate declines (minus 5% to 25%) in container vessel calls, but 1 out of 10 ports face significant decreases (in excess of a 25% drop).

Some major ports report a drop of ultra large vessels calls in the range between 25 to 50%. Nevertheless, the cuts to shipping services on long haul routes have been often counterbalanced by new high frequency feeder services at the regional level.

Close to half of the ports are seeing a drop in port calls of bulk and general cargo vessels, an 8-point percentage rise compared to last week.

The cruise/passenger market remains the most affected by the COVID-19 contagion. About two thirds of the respondents indicate that passenger vessel calls are down more than 50%, in some cases even down more than 90%.

WPSP-IAPH COVID-19 Dashboard

		Week 15 April 6	Week 16 April 13	Week 17 April 20
 Ports with decline in vessel calls (last week compared to normal conditions, %)	Container vessels	41%	41%	53%
	Other cargo vessels	41%	39%	47%
	Passenger vessels	77%	77%	76%
 Ports with extra restrictions on vessels (last week, %)	Container vessels	49%	22%	33%
	Other cargo vessels	47%	23%	34%
	Passenger vessels	51%	38%	31%
 Port call delays due to extra procedures (last week, %)	Container vessels	42%	35%	33%
	Other cargo vessels	35%	28%	32%
	Passenger vessels	53%	40%	49%
 Hinterland transport delays (last week compared to normal conditions, %)	Inland barges	27%	21%	19%
	Trucks (cross-border)	43%	41%	35%
	Trucks (in/out port)	37%	33%	35%
	Rail services	28%	21%	32%
 Ports facing high capacity utilisation of warehousing and storage facilities (last week, %)	Inland barge services	41%	23%	40%
	Foodstuff & medical supplies	35%	34%	33%
	Consumer products	27%	28%	25%
	Liquid bulk	21%	22%	20%
 Ports facing shortages in port-related workers (last week, %)	Dry bulk	16%	17%	13%
	Dock workers	16%	16%	16%
	Technical-nautical services	7%	9%	4%
	Harbour master services	4%	8%	7%
	Port authority	28%	22%	22%
	Truck drivers	no data	no data	21%

EUROPEAN PORTS

The impact of the COVID pandemic becomes clear, observing European ports quarterly traffic data.

During Q1, the port of Rotterdam recorded a -4.7% decline in container traffic (3.549.670 TEU) and a -9,3% drop overall (112.4 million tonnes). According to the Port Authority, traffic will further weaken from April onwards and the decline on an annual basis might reach 20%, depending on the duration of the lockdown measures and of the following recovery phase of world productive and commercial activities.

In March, cargo traffic in the port of Barcelona diminished by -8.3%, leading to a -6.2% in Q1. In particular, container traffic decreased by -18.9% to 219,827 TEU.

In Valencia container traffic showed a -4.1% decline during Q1, reaching 1.29 million TEU, due to the -9.8% drop in the month of March.

PORTS OF GENOA

During Q1 2020, overall traffic in the Ports of Genoa amounted to 16.050.177 tonnes, corresponding to a -5,4% drop compared to 2019, due to 1 million tonnes lost in the month of March. After a boom in the first two months of the year, following the halt to cruise activity introduced in March, at the end of Q1 passenger traffic totalled 296.908 pax, declining by 21,5%.

Container traffic

The first quarter of 2020 was affected both by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and by new container operations at Vado Gateway, the recently inaugurated full-container hub of the Ports of Genoa.

The new terminal already showed, in addition to a redressing of the balance of traffic between Genoa and Savona, its capacity to attract new volumes from other ports. This has contributed to the good performance of the container sector.

In March container throughput was down 5.3%, registering a total of 208,962 TEU, but, despite the slowdown in industrial activity due to the lockdown, the first quarter of 2020 closed at 663,671 TEU, an increase of 3.2% compared with the same period of 2019.

Looking only at the hinterland traffic, the segment of container volumes mostly closely linked to the effective demand of the market, exports during Q1 2020 increased by 2.9% y-o-y, while imports lowered slightly to 283,345 TEU, a drop of 1% compared to the same period of 2019. The slowdown in imported containers is directly linked to the stop of production in the first months of the year in China, in addition to the reduction of several services to Europe.

PORTS OF GENOA CARGO THROUGHPUT	Q1 2019	Q1 2020	%
CONTAINERIZED GOODS (Tonnes)	6.121.710	6.453.254	5,4%
GERNERAL CARGO (Tonnes)	3.630.019	3.306.718	-8,9%
DRY BULK (Tonnes)	986.226	527.560	-46,5%
LIQUID BULK (Tonnes)	5.404.891	5.072.118	-6,2%
OTHERS (Tonnes)	607.098	409.416	-32,6%
BUNKERS (Tonnes)	216.294	281.111	30,0%
TOTAL THROUGHPUT (Tonnes)	16.966.238	16.050.177	-5,4%
CONTAINERS (TEU)	643.175	663.671	3,2%
PASSENGERS (pax)	378.281	296.908	-21,5%

General Cargo

Conventional cargo showed a stable trend in the first two months of 2020, but the drop recorded in March also affected the performance of the whole first quarter. The first quarter of 2020 closed down by 8.9%, losing almost 330,000 tons compared with the corresponding period of 2019.

In particular, during March, we registered a sharp reduction in Ro-Ro services, both to North Africa and to the major islands (Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily and Malta) that also hit traffic in the Ports of Genoa.

The Port of Genoa closed the first quarter of 2020 with a 6.1% decrease, while the Ports of Savona and Vado Ligure suffered from an even worse performance, closing March with a 8.3% fall.

Due to the stoppage of most of the international Motorway of the Seas services, volumes are expected to fall even further in April.

Bulk cargo

Oil products showed a negative performance (-5.9%), and other liquid bulk fell by 11.9%. The only positive performance was recorded by vegetable oils, with a 17.9% increase. The incredibly low oil prices registered over the previous week has been reflected in the negative price for crude oil, which could push imports over the following months due to a speculative stockpiling by refinery companies, even in case of a persisting lack of demand.

Dry bulk traffic recorded a sharp -46.5% reduction due to low market demand and, in particular, to the completion of major construction works in the port area.

Passengers

Passenger traffic has been completely halted during March due to the COVID-19 pandemic and, as a consequence, the performance in the first quarter showed negative results.

Over 165,000 pax transiting through the cruise terminals in Savona and Genoa, corresponding to a 25.8% slowdown compared with the first three months of 2019, while the ferry passenger sector recorded a decrease of approximately 15,000 passengers (-15.3%)

In line with recent directives, all passenger liner services have been suspended and no activity is expected until May, with the exception of pre-authorized services between the Italian peninsula and the major Italian islands operated by Tirrenia ferry line, which has resumed operations thanks to a new financial agreement renegotiated with the support of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport.