

One Year, 365 Days: Shaped by People, Decisions and Plans for the Future

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One year after the appointment of Matteo Paroli as President of the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority, we are pleased to present a special feature reflecting on the first twelve months of his mandate, whilst looking ahead to the challenges that will be addressed by Italy's premier port range in the forthcoming years.

- [Mr President, can you provide us with a snapshot of your first year in office?](#)
- [One of the most closely watched aspects of the Authority's work today is its management of one of Italy's largest infrastructure investment programmes. What has proved to be the greatest challenge?](#)
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With a focus on the in-depth interview delivered by President Paroli, the feature examines the key issues that have defined his first year in office. Topics include the reorganisation of the Port Authority, the new Port Masterplan, city-port integration, infrastructure investment programme, clean energy transition, accessibility, and long-term development prospects for the Ports of Genoa, Pra', Savona and Vado Ligure, together with the Airport of Genoa.

The interview has been flanked by a series of video statements from the Port Authority Directors, offering a valuable insight into the day-to-day activities conducted across the organisation's various departments. Their perspectives highlight the expertise, professionalism and projects that, often invisible to the general public, do, nevertheless, play a vital role in ensuring the efficient management of daily operations and in supporting the continued growth of Italy's leading port cluster.

The special feature has been designed to provide operators, institutions and the wider public alike with a deeper understanding of the Port Authority's role and achievements. It showcases the progress already made during the first year of President Paroli's mandate, whilst setting out a clear roadmap for the future, reflecting the long-term strategic vision for the future of the Western Ligurian Sea

Ports.

Mr President, can you provide us with a snapshot of your first year in office?

Rather than a snapshot, I would describe it as a journey. My first year has been dedicated to laying the foundations of what is a rather complex port cluster, and to address with greater efficiency the challenges of the forthcoming years. I inherited a Port Authority with outstanding technical and administrative expertise. My foremost priority was to build upon these strengths by further reinforcing the organisation, investing in its people, and enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the decision-making processes.

In my view, leadership begins by creating the right conditions for professionals to perform at their best. Major infrastructure projects naturally follow, but they must be underpinned by sound governance, efficient administration, clear planning, a robust methodology and teamwork. Over the past months, we have also strengthened our engagement with other public institutions, stakeholders across the maritime and port industry, and the wider local community. A port range of this scale can only continue to prosper through close, constructive and ongoing collaboration between the public and private sectors.

One of the most closely watched aspects of the Authority's work today is its management of one of Italy's largest infrastructure investment programmes. What has proved to be the greatest challenge?

The real challenge is to deliver strategic infrastructure without bringing the port to a standstill. The Port Authority is overseeing a 3.6-billion euro public investment programme, at the heart of which the New Open-sea Breakwater represents the largest maritime engineering project currently under construction in Europe. Alongside this flagship project, sizable investments are also being channelled into rail, road and energy infrastructure, as well as the regeneration of port areas.

During 2025, approximately 430 million euro was injected into the wider economy through payments linked to projects underway, including 325 million euro dedicated specifically to infrastructure investment.

Yet, behind these figures lies far more than financial commitment. They reflect the ability of a public authority to transform ambitious investment plans into active construction sites, whilst ensuring that the Ports of Genoa and Savona-Vado continue to operate without disruptions. Striking a balance between development and operational continuity is the defining responsibility of a modern Port Authority.

Throughout your first year in office, one of the most closely scrutinised issues has been the relationship between the port and the city. Why do you regard it as such a fundamental priority?

The development of the port cannot be viewed in isolation from the quality of life of the communities that surround it. In practical terms, this means addressing the everyday challenges that arise where commercial activities and urban life intersect: road traffic management, improving access to port terminals, balancing operational requirements and urban mobility, and ensuring effective coordination between public authorities and private operators.

To tackle these issues, we have fostered a close and constructive dialogue with the Prefecture, Municipality, Harbour Master's Office, Police Force, Customs Agency, motorway operators, Stazioni Marittime Cruise & Ferry, shipping companies and the many organisations involved in managing the movement of passengers and freight. This collaboration has led to the establishment of permanent technical working groups that meet regularly to identify problems, coordinate responses and implement solutions without delay.

I believe that this culture of ongoing open dialogue will prove to be one of the most enduring legacies of our work, extending well beyond the resolution of single emergencies. The port and the city are not separate entities, but they are two interdependent parts of the same system, and both can only prosper if they develop in unison.

The Port Masterplan is set to become the defining achievement of this administration.

I consider it to be the most significant strategic project undertaken by the Port Authority. Its purpose extends far beyond determining how port areas are organised. It will define the future role of the integrated port range of Genoa, Savona and Vado Ligure within both the Italian and wider European logistics networks for decades to come. For this reason, we have chosen to go beyond the requirements of the current legislation in force.

From early September, we will launch a programme of consultations with all the local public institutions involved in preparing the Masterplan. At the same time, we will schedule a structured dialogue with local citizens' associations and representative organisations. This is not a statutory obligation, but a deliberate and considered choice on our part. Planning on this scale should be supported by the broadest possible consensus. Listening does not mean relinquishing the decision-making responsibilities entrusted to the Port Authority. On the contrary, it means fostering a more constructive dialogue, grounded in evidence, mutual understanding and transparency. My hope is that this process will mark the beginning of a new relationship between the ports and the communities that host them.

A port's competitiveness depends increasingly on its ability to combine sustainability, innovation and security into a single strategic vision.

These are no longer distinct priorities, but they have become interdependent pillars of long-term growth. The energy transition is now a key driver of competitiveness. Investments in onshore power supply, alternative fuels, smart energy management systems, digitalisation and advanced technologies are transforming ports into more efficient, resilient and attractive hubs for global operators and investors.

The same evolution applies to security. Today, it extends far beyond the protection of tangible infrastructure. It encompasses robust cybersecurity, compliance with increasingly strict European standards and the ability to guarantee the operational continuity of infrastructure that is strategically vital to the nation. Such investments deliver far-reaching environmental benefits, whilst simultaneously improving efficiency and enhancing the overall competitiveness of the entire supply chain.

What type of Port Authority do you hope to leave behind at the end of your term in office?

I hope to leave behind a Port Authority that is even stronger in both technical expertise and administrative capability, with the know-how and confidence to plan effectively, take sound decisions and remain open to constructive dialogue.

My mission is for the Port Authority to continue serving as the leading point of reference for the maritime and port cluster, supporting investments across a clear, long-term strategic vision, whilst simultaneously strengthening a relationship of trust with the local community.

Communication has also taken on a fundamentally different role in this process. It is no longer simply a means of reporting the public body's activities; it has become an integral part of governance and decision-making. Effective communication promotes transparency, makes complex projects more accessible and understandable, and fosters constructive dialogue with public institutions, businesses, local communities and the media.

Ultimately, the competitiveness of a port cannot be measured solely by the volume of cargo it handles or the infrastructure it delivers. It is also defined by the ability of its institutions to plan ahead, engage openly and earn the trust of those they serve. That is the foundation on which we intend to continue working in the years ahead.