

2020 Ports of Genoa Total Traffic Volumes

08 February 2021



The Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing prolonged lockdown measures introduced globally to stem the spread of the virus and to reduce the number of victims, has lead to a year of economic turmoil, both nationwide and worldwide

In Italy alone, GDP plummeted by -5.4% in the first quarter of 2020 and -12.4% in the second quarter, allied to a drop in consumer spending, investments and exports registered from the beginning of April. Following a rapid improvement of +16% in the third quarter of the year, economic activity is expected to fall in the closing months of the year, due to the renewed period of global lockdown restrictions implemented in response to a return to persistently high infection rates.

Consequently, trade has been heavily affected by the repercussions of an unprecedented public health emergency which has hit the world economy and the domestic economies of individual countries. Naturally, the slowdown in global trade has impacted extensively on shipping since over 90% of traded goods by volume are transported by sea. Clarkson Research estimated a 10% drop in world trade in 2020 compared to 2019, a decline unparalleled over the last forty years, with a setback registered only in 2009, in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. The International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) confirms that the crisis has consequently also severely hit the port industry worldwide, with container and passenger shipping reporting the heaviest blow.

With reference to the Italian port industry, the Ports of Genoa, Savona and Vado Ligure recorded total cargo throughput of 58,456,508 tons in 2020, a -14.2% fall on the previous year. Specifically, containerised traffic dropped by -4.9%, conventional cargo by -13.5% and solid bulk by 30.5%. Nevertheless, the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority has maintained its leadership as premier Italian gateway container port, with 2,498,850 TEU handled in 2020, a -6.4% decrease year-on-year, considering that in 2019 Genoa and Savona accounted for 32% of total Italian gateway traffic volumes. In addition, notwithstanding the quasi-total shutdown of cruise activities worldwide since the month of March, the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority, which resumed cruise services in the latter part of the year, reported a total 206,689 cruise passenger throughput, premier Italian port, and a total of 1,546,987 passengers, including ferry passenger traffic.

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