

Ambrosetti Forum, Matteo Paroli launches the Ports of Genoa's strategy on LNG, AI and Sustainability

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The newly appointed Government Commissioner of the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority, Matteo Paroli, was invited to speak at the Ambrosetti Forum “Think Tank Liguria 2030”, an annual event promoted by The European House-Ambrosetti, dedicated to recent trends in the economic growth and sustainable development of the Region of Liguria. The Forum groups together prominent figures from local government and public administrations, leading companies and businesses, and economic and scientific research centres, with the objective of elaborating macroeconomic forecast scenarios for the future of Liguria.

7 July 2025 – Government Commissioner Matteo Paroli, in the panel discussion *“Boosting the Blue Economy: a roadmap for new opportunities”*, outlined, alongside the Port Authority major infrastructure investment programme, three key drivers behind the Ports of Genoa and Savona-Vado’s overall strategy and mission: clean energy transition - with a strong focus on liquefied natural gas (LNG) - digital innovation across an optimal use of artificial intelligence in port management, and sustainability across the board in all spheres of port activities.

In his address, Commissioner Paroli underlined that clean energy transitions can no longer be delayed and that this transition is a prerequisite for ensuring the competitive advantage of the Italian port industry. Within this framework, LNG represents a viable sustainable alternative to traditional fossil fuels. “We cannot talk about green ports,” explained Matteo Paroli, “if our shipowners are forced to refuel LNG-powered vessels in non-Italian ports.. We have to pave the way towards the achievement of self-sufficiency in terms of energy management across the port industry if we wish to consolidate our competitive edge in the new international scenario.” In the long-term, the Ports of Genoa Commissioner also pointed to the possible future role of next-generation nuclear energy as an important component of a successful and complete energy transition.

In terms of sustainability, the Commissioner highlighted forcefully the requirement to adopt an integrated approach in striking a balance between operational efficiency and protection of the environment. A tangible example is the new open-sea breakwater which has been designed to guarantee direct access to the old port terminal facilities and a wide turning basin for ultra-large ships to manoeuvre in full safety, whilst simultaneously affording added protection to the coastline from the repercussions of climate change and subsequent violent sea storms.

“This is a large-scale project which redesigns the layout of the port and opens up new opportunities for development, setting the conditions for the establishment of a modern and efficient logistics management system,” stated Paroli. The construction of the new breakwater represents one of the key drivers towards an enhancement of the competitive advantage of the Ports of Genoa and it has been forecast to generate annually, according to the projections outlined in the Ambrosetti Report, approximately 260 million euros of added value across the region.

The Government Commissioner underlined the potential offered by artificial intelligence in improving port management, also in terms of environmental sustainability. The Port of Genoa is characterised by the presence of over 30 subterranean streams: AI can, for example, be applied to monitor the seabed to optimise dredging operations and to develop dynamic forecasting models regarding the accumulation of sediments and debris. “The digital and energy transitions must proceed together to boost the Ligurian ports’ position as a modern logistics platform and as a sustainable and smart hub,” declared Paroli.

The Ambrosetti Forum provided the backdrop to the release of the data outlined in the “Liguria 2030 Report”, which confirms the central role played by the ports in both regional and national economic growth. Specifically, the Blue Economy consolidates its leadership as one of the strategic sectors in Liguria, contributing by 12.2% to the added value of Genoa’s local economy and by 15.5% to employment, whilst Savona ranks as the fifth province in Italy in terms of percentage of total number of companies operating out of the port industry, and with a strong focus on the production of renewable energy.

In 2024 the ports of Liguria handled a total of 4.1 million teus (+4,6%) and 76 million tons of cargo (+0,7%), accounting respectively for 34% and 15.8% of total Italian throughput, a set of figures which confirm the leadership of the Ligurian port range and its strategic role as prime driver behind local economic development.