

Major Milestone at Genoa Sestri Ponente Shipyard as New Outfitting Quay is Completed

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The new outfitting quay at Genoa's Sestri Ponente shipyard is now fully operational, marking the first project to be completed in the overall 440-million euro expansion plan implemented by the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority.

The new facility comprises a 15,000 sqm operational yard alongside a 315-metre long quay, designed to support the final stages of the construction of the next-generation ultra-large vessels. It represents a key component of a wider redevelopment plan that includes the construction of a new 400-metre mega drydock, set to become one of the largest and most technologically advanced in the Mediterranean.

Ship repair, refitting, recycling and newbuilding rank as one of Genoa's primary industrial sectors, home to over 80 dedicated companies and 4,800 highly skilled workers across the port, and which continues to thrive as one of the leading facilities in Europe in terms of size and the service quality offered.

The works completed include the construction of a 315-metre multi-purpose utility tunnel accommodating gas and electricity networks, creating a dedicated service corridor for ships undergoing refitting. Additional works comprised quay resurfacing and furnishings, a stair tower to support refit operations, installation of an electrical substation to provide onshore power supply, crane runways, and river defence facilities at the mouth of the Cantarena Creek, including a new bridge and a protective sheet-pile system.

The 60-million euro project was delivered by the Port Authority on schedule over a 15-month construction period, from October 2024 to January 2026. The only structure completed subsequently was the bridge across the Cantarena Creek, finalised in March 2026, as construction activities did not interfere with shipyard operations.

Marco Vaccari, Chief Director for Large-Scale Engineering Works at the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority, declared: "To comply with the project timetable, we implemented a range of corrective and mitigation measures based on established project management techniques. The new quay was built in parallel with the partial demolition of the previous facility. We adopted a construction method combining prefabricated components with on-site works, while civil engineering and mechanical and electrical installations progressed simultaneously, from the new multi-purpose utility tunnel to the electrical substation installed in the yard."

Construction of the new mega drydock is well underway. Once it has been completed and fully operational, work will commence on the conversion of the existing drydock into a new operational yard.

"We are now fully focused on delivering the mega drydock," stated the Project Manager, Leo Fortunato. "A number of activities have been undertaken concurrently, including specialist foundation works, heavy excavations, preparatory operations, dredging alongside the two existing drydocks, demolition works and the earthmoving required to prepare the new site. With the specialist foundations now complete, construction of the drydock facilities can now commence."

The seabed at the entrance to the future drydock will also be dredged from its current depth of 9 metres to 11 metres, to provide the safe access of vessels, with a draft of up to 10 metres, under construction.

"Most of the excavated material is being recycled in line with the application of circular economy principles," explained Vaccari. "The material is temporarily stored in two dedicated stockpiling areas: one supplies fill material for the caissons of Genoa's New Breakwater, creating an important synergy between two major large-scale port infrastructure projects; whilst the remainder will be reused on-site at the shipyard, in particular in the planned landfill associated with the redevelopment of the existing drydock into a new operational yard."

These measures reduce costs, minimise the consumption of raw materials and mitigate the environmental impact, further strengthening Genoa's position as a leading international sustainable hub for the shipbuilding industry.