

Another record result for Rostock Overseas Port in the first six months

Goods handling at high level / passenger traffic flows continue on the rise

A total of 16.5 million tonnes of cargo passed the edge of the quay in the port city on river Warnow during the first half of 2023. Of this amount, 15.8 million tonnes were handled at the Overseas Port, which yet again topped the record results of the two previous years. According to the city's port and shipping authority, about 700,000 tonnes were handled at other port facilities in Rostock such as the Cargo and Fishing Port and the Chemical Port of Yara. Thus the goods handled in the whole Rostock estuary also reached a new all-time high of 16.5 million tonnes for the first six months of a year. The number of ferry passengers carried to and from northern Europe increased by 50,000, reaching one million, which represents a five percent increase compared to the same period last year.

„After the two previous record years this new handling increase is more than impressive. Once again the great strength of our port location is its all-purpose character. For the handling results of the individual cargo groups at the all-purpose port of Rostock do vary quite considerably. While the handling of liquid goods in particular increased very much, there were declines in dry bulk as well as ferry and ro-ro goods due to the economic situation, following on high growth rates in the last two years“, states Dr. Gernot Tesch, managing director of ROSTOCK PORT, adding: “But the very strong increase in high-value-creating general cargo is also particularly gratifying.” ROSTOCK PORT managing director Jens A. Scharner adds: “All the port companies and authorities of Rostock, especially the shipping companies, cargo handling businesses, forwarders and railway companies operating here have made it possible for Rostock Overseas Port with its all-purpose character to once more demonstrate its enormous efficiency thanks to their close interaction.”

Rostock Overseas Port

With 15.8 million tonnes of goods handled at Rostock Overseas Port during the first six months of 2023 the result of last year was exceeded by 1.4 million tonnes or ten percent.

At the ferry and ro-ro terminal 8.4 million tonnes of wheeled cargo were moved across the edge of the quay, which represents 700,000 tonnes or seven percent less than in the two previous record half-years of 2021 and 2022. The ferry and ro-ro goods accounted for 53 percent of overall handling at the all-purpose port of Rostock. Handling of bulk and general cargo contributed a share of 47 percent to the total cargo handling with 7.4 million tonnes.

Rostock Overseas Port recorded 3,660 calls (2022: 3,709) by ferry, ro-ro, cargo and cruise vessels in the first six months of the year, 2,813 (2022: 2,921) of which were port calls by ferries and ro-ro vessels.

Wheeled cargo

192,000 trucks (escorted units) were carried on the three ferry and three ro-ro services to and from Denmark, Sweden and Finland, 12 percent less than in the same period last year. Handling of unescorted units also decreased: 75,000 trailers and other cargo units rolled on and off the vessels (minus 15 percent). In addition 13,570 railway wagons were carried by sea in the first half of 2023. "In view of the changed geostrategical situation the strong growth in railway wagons (plus 5,420) is a clear sign with regard to the enormous importance of transport alternatives and two-way strategies for rail cargo traffic between Sweden and Central Europe", says Dr. Gernot Tesch.

The newly opened car terminal has found its feet in the market surprisingly quickly and already enjoys a good utilization rate: "The concept of adding new fields of business to the port despite its already enjoying quite a diversified business model has shown to have a stabilizing effect on the ferry and ro-ro operation", says Dr. Gernot Tesch.

The number of cars carried in ferry traffic to Denmark and Sweden increased by seven percent to 217,400 during the first six months of 2023.

Slight decline in intermodal cargo transport

During the first half of 2023 there was a slight decline in intermodal transport. The terminal operator Rostock Trimodal (RTM) handled 60,120 units during the first half year and thus 7.6 percent less than during the same period last year. "This decline after about 50 % of growth over the last five years is in particular due to the trend in the economic situation as well as current insecurities and imponderabilities for the forwarding industry. The building industry is having a weak phase, so is the basic chemicals industry and consumption suffers from high inflation. The online trade and building suppliers as well as DIY store sales, which enjoyed a boom during the pandemic, no longer acted as drivers of growth during recent months. We are pleased by the increased frequencies of the operator TX Logistik on the service to and from Verona. This intermodal operator, which belongs to the Italian Mercitalia group, is expanding its intermodal activities at the Rostock location, which were begun in 2015", states Dr. Gernot Tesch.

Currently there are 43 weekly intermodal transport trains to and from Verona (18) in Italy, to and from Bratislava (6) in Slovakia, to and from Oradea (2) in Romania, to and from Dresden (6), Herne (7) and Halle (1) in Germany as well as to and from Bettembourg (3) in Luxembourg. The latter service, a collaboration of the railway company CFL Multimodal from Luxembourg and of the ferry operator Stena Line, which was extended to the Iberian Peninsula in 2022, is scheduled to be further extended still this year by adding Finland as a destination by a ferry service of Wasaline between Umeå und Vaasa. This will create an environmentally friendly transport offer for craneable and non-craneable load units between Spain and Finland, allowing for a saving of 4.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide per load unit compared to truck transport.

Bulk goods and general cargo

There was enormous growth in the handling of liquid goods. 3.88 million tonnes were pumped across the edge of the quay until the end of June 2023, which was 2.44 million tonnes over the same period last year. Crude oil imports for the PCK Schwedt refinery accounted for more than two million tonnes. But handling of petrol, biodiesel, gas oil and fuel oil was also up.

At 3.1 million tonnes the handling of dry bulk was about 500,000 tonnes below the very high level of the previous half-year. The highest share in dry bulk handling was again contributed by grain with 1.6 million tonnes (2022: 1.8 million

tonnes). There were larger declines especially in the handling of building materials and coal.

In the high value-added general cargo division 386,000 tonnes were hoisted over the side, which is 72,500 tonnes or an impressive 23 percent over the same period last year. Especially more pipes, sheet metal, cranes and wind power plants were transhipped.

Projects and capex

New building of berths 31 and 32

The replacement construction of the two oldest berths at Rostock Overseas Port, berths 31 and 32, officially started in April 2022. ROSTOCK PORT GmbH is the principal of this approx. Euro22 million port infrastructure project which is to be completed until October 2023.

The two berths on the eastern side of pier 2 at port basin B are 62 and 58 years old, respectively. They will be newly built on a total length of 400 metres, a width of 18 metres and for a draught of 12.50 metres. The quay will be designed for a surface load of five tonnes per square metre and it will be equipped with new crane rails capable of carrying 30 tonnes per metre over the entire length.

“Berths 31 and 32 are rebuilt as multi-purpose berths for the handling of both project cargo as well as general and dry bulk cargo. After completion of this building project there are plans to newly build berths 33 and 34, which have also seen better days, in the same quality”, says Jens A. Scharner.

New building of Ost-West-Strasse

As part of stage 2 of the subsidy project to improve the traffic flow at the port the long overdue new building of a roughly 500 metres long section of the highly frequented Ost-West-Strasse at the Overseas Port was begun in the spring of 2022. Due to intense use the road structure was completely worn out. Building activities of public operators of supply and disposal lines are being integrated into the extensive road building and civil engineering works and carried out simultaneously. These include the laying of new drinking water and district heating lines.

One special feature of this building measure is the construction and laying of a large drainage canal in the road structure and below two level crossings.

The canal will be continued up to the transverse quay of berth 30 at port basin B in order to allow for areas south of Ost-West-Strasse to be developed for use by creating a receiving water of sufficient dimensions. This building activity will continue until the summer of 2023. One particular challenge of this project is the routing and diversion of traffic in order to avoid interruptions especially in internal port traffic.

“As part of this subsidy project we intend to start dismantling the western storage shed complex south of port basin A still this year. Until 2026 all other parts of the storage sheds on that ten hectare area are to be demolished”, says Jens A. Scharner.

Second motorway junction to federal motorway A 19 opened

On the basis of planning activities performed by ROSTOCK PORT and after lengthy preparations, Autobahn GmbH has carried out the new building of the partial junction between federal motorway A 19 and the industrial port since the beginning of 2022. The new connection which was financed by ROSTOCK PORT was opened for traffic in October 2022. It is planned to complete additional sign bridges for this partial motorway junction in July 2023, which will finish this building project.

„Via this new motorway junction both the grain handling companies and the large industrial enterprises Liebherr and EEW in the east of the port can be reached by shorter routes, which also avoids traffic tailbacks to and from the ferry and ro-ro terminal in the western port area. And another important fact is that with this new motorway junction the port now has an additional connection to the national road network”, says Dr. Gernot Tesch. The new junction also allows for improved transport of oversized components to the industrial eastern part of the port.

New building of deep-water berth 5 at the oil port

In June 2022 ROSTOCK PORT commissioned a general and environmental planning for the construction of a deep-water berth in the eastern part of the existing oil port. “Based on qualified and accelerated planning, a building permit is to be obtained as quickly as possible in order to upgrade berth 5 for future energy imports and provide sufficient amounts of renewable energies via Rostock. Over the next few years the German government will provide up to

Euro50 million in subsidies to expand facilities as part of the Future Package for the PCK Schwedt refinery and for strengthening the energy port Rostock”, explains Jens A. Scharner.

The planning process has completed the draft stage and will be supplemented by the necessary environmental planning until the end of 2023. Currently an application for an environmental compatibility assessment is being prepared. An official approval procedure is to be initiated next year in order to allow for the start of construction in 2025. Building time is estimated to be around two years.

New building of two office centres

In the spring of 2023 ROSTOCK PORT started the ITTs for the new building of two new office blocks on Ost-West-Strasse. Construction work was already begun and will continue to the end of 2025.

„ROSTOCK PORT is investing several million Euros in order to create modern premises for port companies and public authorities and integrate the office locations on the port territory“, says Dr. Gernot Tesch. After the companies have moved into the new building, the old office buildings that have had their days and are scattered all over the port are to be demolished and the land thus freed is to be used for logistical purposes and as areas for expansion and for industrial development, „Internal port development using all available spaces remains our first priority in order to enable us to offer land for successful economic activities to both existing companies and newcomers for the benefit of the port, the city, the region and the whole federal state“, says Dr. Gernot Tesch.

Development plan for the area between the oil port and the chemical port

The area of land between the oil port and the chemical port represents one of the last sizeable coherent areas available for port use in the current special area of the port. The Hanseatic and University City of Rostock, represented by the office of urban development, urban planning and business, is preparing for the drawing-up of a supply-led development plan for this area which is sensitive from a nature conservation perspective, together with ROSTOCK PORT.

On 26 April 2023 the city parliament of the Hanseatic and University City of Rostock endorsed the decision of the city planning department to prepare the development plan for the 27 hectare area of land between the oil port and the chemical port. This process requires extensive investigations and will take at least three years.

Provision of areas for port development

Demand for areas close to the quays for port-related activities remains high. Larger, coherent areas at the Overseas Port are foreseeably running low. The gratifying establishments of businesses and the extension projects of numerous companies established at the port were only possible until now due to the availability of space. It is therefore necessary to intensify the provision of areas for port-related purposes, especially also with regard to the various opportunities presented by the energy transition.

The provision of areas for long-term port development is being continued. The municipal and regional planning authorities are working on the process of drawing up a new preliminary municipal development planning – “land zoning” and/or redrawing the “future plan” of the Hanseatic and University City of Rostock – as well as of the regional planning. „Together with the aforementioned partners, the Rostock Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Corporation Rostock Business, ROSTOCK PORT has worked out a communication strategy to be presented in various decision-making bodies of the city as well as at the port panel. Its contents are to be implemented over the next few years”, says Jens A. Scharner. For further information and background: <https://rathaus.rostock.de/de/startseite/325396>

Energy Port Rostock: Hydrogen production is making progress

Renewable energies and green sources of energy continue to be in the focus of port development. „The hydrogen production project ‘HyTechHafen Rostock’ is an important building block of the energy port concept. Since the start of the measures was given an early green light at the end of 2022 the activities have been ramped up. Together with the lead planner Dornier Power and Heat GmbH, work is currently under way on the technological plant concept and also on the approval procedure”, says Jens A. Scharner.

Cruise shipping in Warnemünde

The cruise vessel *AIDAdiva* opened the cruise shipping season in the Baltic Sea spa of Rostock with the first cruise tourists in Warnemünde on 14 April. „Cruise shipping in Warnemünde is an important economic factor for the city and the federal state as well as a flagship and showcase for our federal state as a holiday destination “, says Dr. Gernot Tesch.

Until the end of June seven cruise vessels used environmentally friendly shore electricity during 16 port calls in Warnemünde: *AIDamar*, *AIDAsol*, *Celebrity Apex*, *Viking Jupiter*, *Rotterdam*, *Bolette* and *Nieuw Statendam*.

Based on current information, 135 port calls are expected in the Baltic Sea spa of Rostock on 108 days of the year 2023. 31 cruise vessels of 22 international cruise shipping companies are calling on Warnemünde this season. The cruise shipping season will end on 29 October with the port call of *AIDamar*.

In December the cruise vessels *Amera* and *Spirit of Discovery* will end the cruise shipping year 2023 with their port calls on the 18th and 28th of December 2023.

For further information please visit www.rostock-port.de