

EDITION  
OCTOBER  
2022

# LOGISTICS PILOT

 GERMAN PORTS

Magazine for Ports, Shipping and Logistics



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## “A strong and reliable partner”

Dr Uwe Horn, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Lower Saxony and Managing Director at IAV



Dear readers,

Lower Saxony and Bremen seaports act as the global gateway for companies in the automotive industry, from which vehicles are shipped all over the world, making these ports the backbone of overseas exports. IAV also benefits from Poland’s modern infrastructure – namely as a tech solution provider – and develops future technologies for every major OEM that are

subsequently installed in the shipped vehicles.

Both vehicle components and entire vehicles are manufactured in Poland. Volkswagen, alone, runs three factories in Poland and the second-largest foundry of the VW Group. I spent many years working in Poznan as an HR manager for Volkswagen and learned to love and appreciate the country and its people during my time there. As Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Lower Saxony, I have kept close ties with the country, which is why I am so thrilled to see the strengthening trading relations between Germany and Poland. Close German-Polish relations, in all their diverse forms, are significantly influenced by strong, intensive economic cooperation.

Poland has established itself as a strong and reliable partner to Germany in more than just the automotive industry and is now Germany’s fifth largest partner in foreign trade. 2021 even saw a new record: the figure for total imports and exports between Germany and Poland rose by 18.9 per cent compared to last year and reached EUR 146.8 billion, according to provisional trade figures from the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (Destatis).

With the global inflation crisis putting pressure on the automotive industry, as well as other sectors, internationalisation will become increasingly important. Poland certainly stands to benefit from this development with its attractive framework conditions and high quality of work. In times of crisis, strong partnerships are essential.

Best wishes, Uwe Horn

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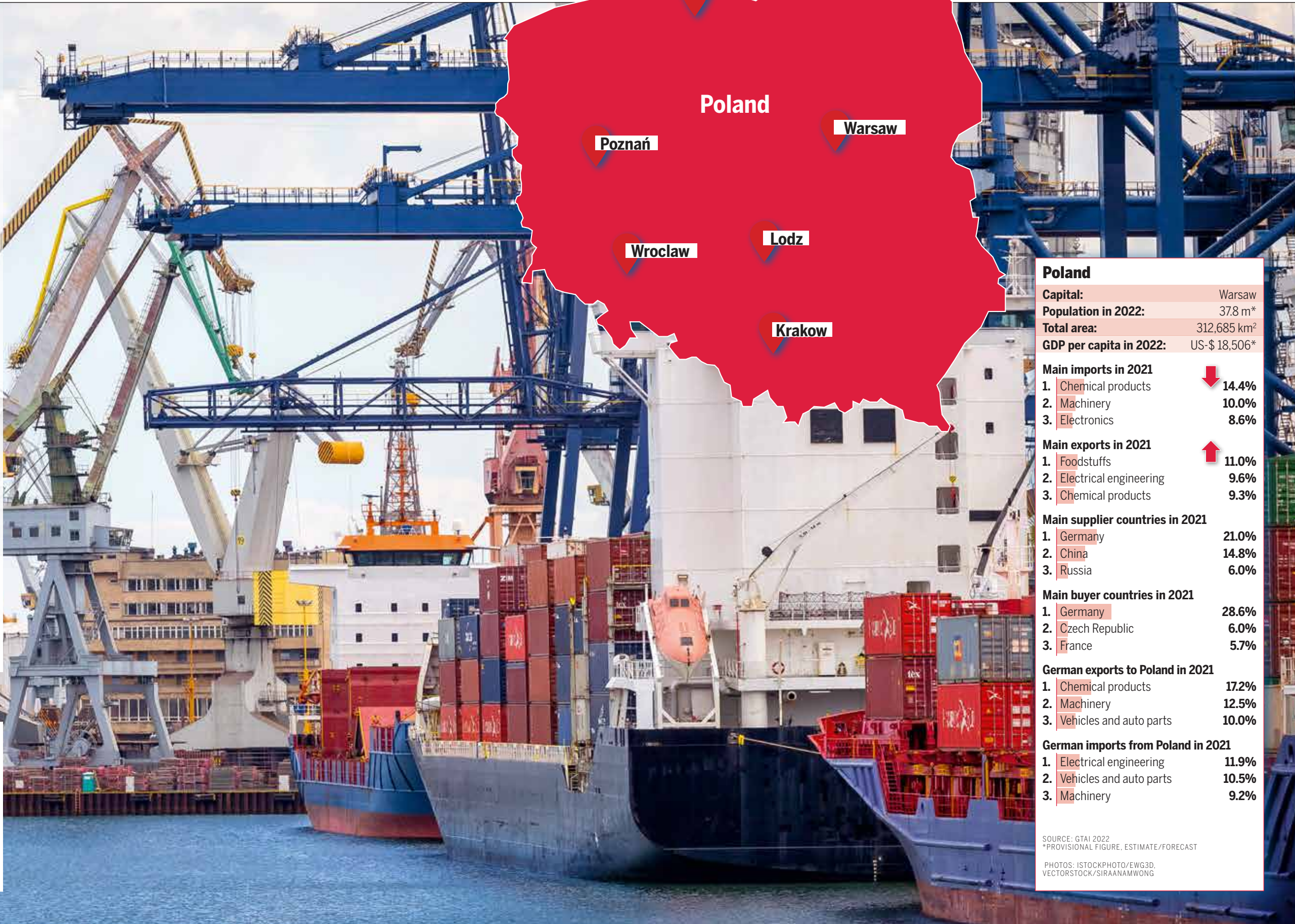
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# At the very heart ...

Many things in life are a question of perspective. Germany sees Poland as their neighbour to the east. Since Poland joined the EU in May 2004, they have formed the eastern border to non-EU countries. Nevertheless, Poland considers itself predominantly as Central European. Indeed, with its population of more than 37 million, this republic considers itself geographically as being in the middle of Europe, and the geographic centre in the town of Suchowola. At least this was how the Polish cartographer and astronomer Szymon Antoni Sobiekrajski calculated it in the 18th century. There are also regions in Ukraine, Czech Republic, Slovakia and parts of Germany that also covet this unofficial title. However, it is difficult to determine the very heart of Europe as different aspects need to be taken into account, and it is also unclear where the borderline between Europe and Asia actually runs through. (bre)



**Major cities in Poland 2021**

1 Warsaw	1,794,166	inhabitants
2 Krakow	779,966	inhabitants
3 Lodz	672,185	inhabitants
4 Wrocław	641,928	inhabitants
5 Poznań	532,048	inhabitants
6 Gdańsk	470,805	inhabitants

SOURCE: GTAI 2022

**Poland**

Capital:	Warsaw
Population in 2022:	37.8 m*
Total area:	312,685 km²
GDP per capita in 2022:	US-\$ 18,506*

**Main imports in 2021**

1. Chemical products	↓ 14.4%
2. Machinery	10.0%
3. Electronics	8.6%

**Main exports in 2021**

1. Foodstuffs	↑ 11.0%
2. Electrical engineering	9.6%
3. Chemical products	9.3%

**Main supplier countries in 2021**

1. Germany	21.0%
2. China	14.8%
3. Russia	6.0%

**Main buyer countries in 2021**

1. Germany	28.6%
2. Czech Republic	6.0%
3. France	5.7%

**German exports to Poland in 2021**

1. Chemical products	17.2%
2. Machinery	12.5%
3. Vehicles and auto parts	10.0%

**German imports from Poland in 2021**

1. Electrical engineering	11.9%
2. Vehicles and auto parts	10.5%
3. Machinery	9.2%

SOURCE: GTAI 2022  
\*PROVISIONAL FIGURE, ESTIMATE/FORECAST  
PHOTOS: ISTOCKPHOTO/EWG3D, VECTORSTOCK/SIRAANAMWONG



COMPACT

**BREMEN.** Since July, Bremen has had a **new vocational college for wholesale, export and transport.** It is located in Nordstraße 360, 100 metres from the main timber and factory port. The vocational college is a public-private partnership. The private investor built it for the city and has pledged to keep it in good working order for 25 years. Budding freight forwarders and shipping agents as well as students interested in wholesale and export careers are taught there.

**OLDENBURG.** In August, **Dr Bernd Althusmann, Lower Saxony's Economics Minister, welcomed a delegation of more than 15 company representatives from Japan to EWE's Huntorf gas storage facility near Oldenburg.** As part of the Internationalisation of Regions in Structural Change programme of Germany, Trade and Invest (GTAI), the delegation visited five North German coastal federal states over five days, focussing on the main topic of "Green Hydrogen Energy Economy in North Germany – Prospects for Japanese Companies."

The programme is aimed at attracting international investors and setting up partnerships. Althusmann stated: "Lower Saxony has enjoyed many years of excellent foreign trade relations with Japan. There is a lot of potential for collaboration, especially in the field of the hydrogen economy."



## Huge investments in Bremen Ports' competitiveness

**BREMEN/BREMERHAVEN.** Bremen has **invested heavily in modernising its port infrastructure like never before.** There are currently nine projects in progress, with another eleven initiatives in the pipeline. The renovation of the Westkaje Quay in Kaiserhafen III, the reconstruction of "Kaje 66" quay at the entrance to the north lock and the reconstruction of Quays 64 and 82 in the fishing harbour are worthy of mention. Furthermore, parts of the fishing harbour lock will be renewed and the port railway extended. Columbuskaje is the biggest project and is due to open in 2025, with the new build budgeted at 80 million euros. "The renovation projects in our

ports are all on schedule and aimed at guaranteeing the competitiveness of our ports in the long term," stated Dr Claudia Schilling, Senator for Science and Ports. "Over the next ten years, we will be investing more than half a billion euros in the infrastructure of our ports since we need a new bridge at the Nordschleuse lock, desperately need to replace the old container quays in the southern sections, some of which are more than fifty years old, and we will also do what is necessary to ensure our ports continue to provide the basis for business and employment in the port areas of Bremerhaven und Bremen in the coming decades and beyond."



## Extensive repairs to Freilaufkanal

**BREMERHAVEN.** Heavy equipment was in operation at the Lohmandeich in July. **The floating crane, otherwise known as "Athlet", dismantled large parts of the jetty at Freilaufkanal,** which was then taken to USM North in Kaiserhafen 1 for structural repair work and new conservation. The cost of the repairs was roughly 400,000 euros. The Freilaufkanal is of immense importance for safe nautical conditions in the Kaiserhafen and Nordhafen because it compensates for the loss of water at low tide, thereby avoiding the need for pumps which are energy-intensive and costly to run.



## Training for port logistics specialists

**BRAKE.** **J. MÜLLER expands transshipment of breakbulk goods in Brake.** Together with "Zeit & Service", the corporate group has developed a **trainee programme** to find the right staff for this expansion. **Newcomers from different backgrounds have the opportunity to qualify as port logistics coordinators within six months.** Thirty are currently enrolled on this programme. The first graduates successfully completed the course in July and have since become permanent employees of the company. Students are taught how to load and unload ships, wagons and lorries as well as store goods.



## Spectacular Apprentice Day at NPorts

**OLDENBURG.** For the first time in two years, the **"Apprentice Day" at NPorts** was once again an in-person event with a **potpourri of talks, interactive sessions and networking.** This year's new apprentices from the various sites, including Emden, Cuxhaven and Brake, met up for the first time on 18 August and were able to get to know some of the executives. The budding electronics technicians, metalworkers and industrial mechanics were given an insight into company activities. Previous apprentices from Emden even produced a video on the subject.



## XXL parking assistance for ships

**CUXHAVEN.** In July, after a two-and-a-half year development period, **the "SmartKai" project went into trial operation with a berthing manoeuvre of the "Sealandia Seaways" ferry at the RoRo bridge of the Europakai.** The IHATEC funding programme, which focusses on innovative port technologies, aims to improve safety when ships enter and leave the port as well as when mooring and entering locks. Furthermore, it should also prevent damage to ships and port infrastructure. The ideas gained from this trial operation are to be used in the future for other quay facilities, port entrances, locks and bridges.



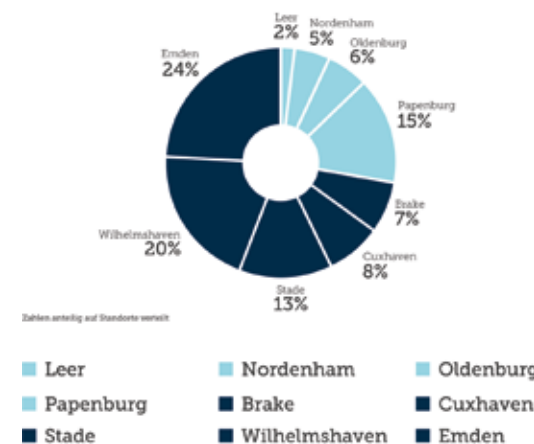
## New branch office and award for Leschaco

**BREMEN/LIMA.** Leschaco celebrated the **opening of its new branch office in Lima, Peru,** with over 100 guests on 14 July. With the setting-up of this subsidiary, the company that specialises in providing logistics solutions across continents has expanded its network of branch offices in 23 countries. A few days later, Leschaco was awarded the silver medal by EcoVadis for its achievements in the areas of safety and quality of transport, occupational safety and health protection as well as environmental protection and sustainability – for the fourth year in a row.



## Maersk logistics campus in Bremerhaven

**BREMERHAVEN.** A logistics campus, spanning around 70,000 square metres, is being built in the fishing port for A. P. Møller-Mærsk. The world's largest container shipping company is thus expanding its activities in Bremerhaven. "Maersk is already a long-term partner for container traffic and Bremen Ports' biggest customer. **We are extremely pleased that Maersk settled on Bremerhaven and intends to further develop its logistics business from here,**" stated Port Senator Dr Claudia Schilling. The new build is planned for handover in the second quarter of 2024.



## Lower Saxony's seaports create new jobs

**OLDENBURG.** In 2020, the region surrounding the nine seaports of Lower Saxony **employed 47,374 persons in port-related jobs.** This was the result of a projection made by the Department of Maritime and Logistics Studies at Jade University based on an earlier empirical study. 71,428 employees are working in port-related jobs throughout the state of Lower Saxony. The increase was calculated outside of the region for the entire state for the first time: 4.7 billion euros in gross value added and **594 million euros in tax revenue** were recorded in 2020.

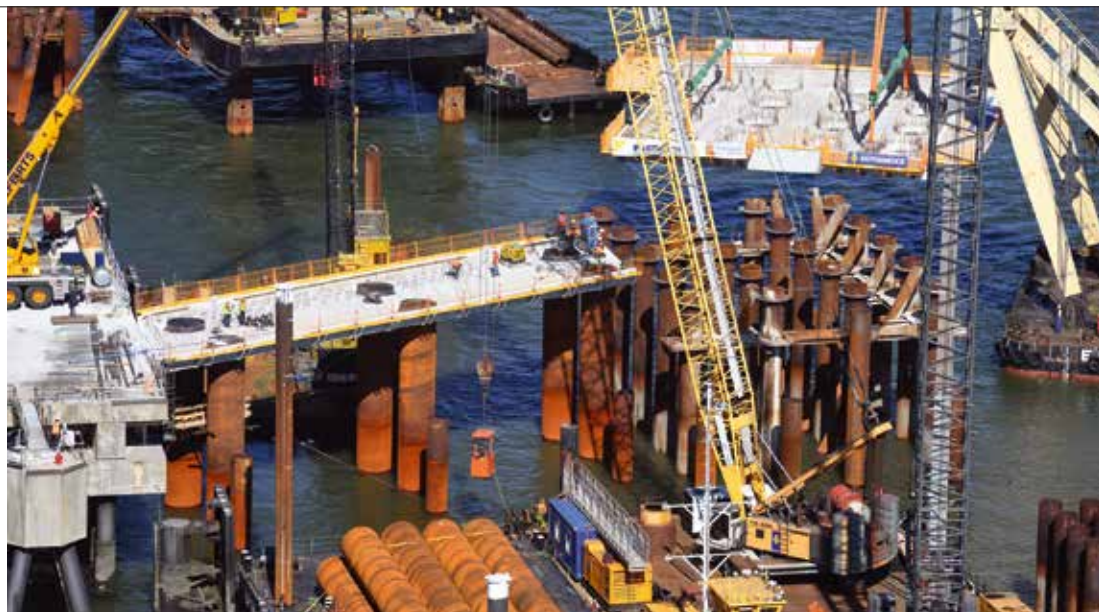
PHOTOS: PIXABAY/GERHARD BRUNS, BREMENPORTS, LESCHACO, J. MÜLLER, NPORTS (2X), NPORTS ANDREAS BURMANN, DLH



## COMPACT

**ELSFLETH.** In August, Jade University of Applied Sciences started the “Quantum Supported Maritime Just-In-Time Navigation” (QSMN) project. The scientists are developing an innovative approach to maritime navigation and aiming to minimise a ship’s fuel consumption for a given length of time by precisely adjusting the speed profile and thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions. “Although there are already methods on the market for route optimisation, there is still no global optimum for the entire route. This is something we are endeavouring to change within the project with the help of the Bellmann equation,” stated Dr Wolfgang Mergenthaler, owner of the company Frankfurt Consulting Engineers (FCE), which is heading up the project consortium.

**BREMEN.** Harren Bulkers, the Bremen-based shipping and management company, which is part of the Harren Group, is expanding its commercial activities. **Early in September,** the company announced that it was setting up a new trading company. The subsidiary, trading under the name of Harren Bulk Shipping, will be headed up and run by the same team as at Harren Bulkers. Moreover, Jan-Philipp Rauno, a bulk cargo veteran, recently joined as managing director.



## A second LNG terminal for Wilhelmshaven

**WILHELMSHAVEN.** The port site on the northwest coast of the Jade Bight is increasingly developing into an important energy hub for Germany. It was announced in early September that the companies Tree Energy Solutions (TES), E.on and Engie from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) had been chosen to jointly develop and implement the fifth floating storage and regasification terminal (FSRU) in Germany. It is also **the second FSRU for Wilhelmshaven** and is due to go into operation in 2025. The construction of the first FSRU is on schedule, and the pile driving works for 140 piles have already been done. The next step will see the remaining 53 piles driven in, the concrete parts for the jetty platform will be installed and a bridge element will be built as a link to the current transshipment facility at Voslapper Groden. Liquid gas is due to be fed from here into the German gas grid by the end of the year. **Construction works** began in East Frisian Friedeburg in August for a **new pipeline roughly 26 kilometres in length** to link the floating LNG terminal with the national gas grid. The Lower Saxony State Office for Mining, Energy and Geology (LBEG) in Hanover had already given planning permission in August for the construction and operation of the LNG pipeline from Voslapper Groden-Nord to the north of Wilhelmshaven to Netra, a natural gas pipeline system which starts from the Etzel gas storage facility at Friedeburg (District of Wittmund).

## Successful blasting of the bridge at the South Quay

**EMDEN.** Everything went to plan when **Bridge 11** was **blown up** at the end of July. The project team led by Christian Best, Project Manager, NPorts in Emden, was responsible for the meticulous preparation. Bridge 11, the last remaining transshipment bridge on the South Quay,

buckled almost gracefully and hit the ground after two consecutive blasts. The facility, built in 1976 for breakbulk goods, is now being further dismantled. As from this autumn, a new port area covering around 1,600 square metres will be available for handling and storage.



## Joint solution for dock basins

**EMDEN.** Over the past months, **NPorts and Emden Dockyard (EWD) have agreed on a maintenance concept for the dock basins around the former Nordseewerke.** “We’re pleased that we are all pulling together,” said Nports managing director Holger Banik. The initial tests, conducted as part of the concept development, enabled reliable data to be collected. It was also proven that there are alternative docking facilities in the port, even when maintenance work is being carried out in the dock basins.



## 1.5 million euros for new lock technology

**BREMERHAVEN.** A building was completed in the small fishing harbour lock in August, which will house the technical equipment for running the lock. The cost amounted to 1.5 million euros. The new build will store all the sensitive drive components and controls above the current valid level, in order to ensure operational safety even at higher water levels. Further construction works are already planned for 2023, notably the modernisation of the electromechanical drives on the lock head.



## Canadian-German port collaboration

**WILHELMSHAVEN.** The Belledune Port Authority (BPA) of the Canadian port in New Brunswick and the Lower Saxony port of Wilhelmshaven signed a memorandum of understanding in August to **work together in the logistics of dry and liquid bulk as well as industrial goods traded between Canada and Germany.** This concerns mainly green energy sources and other green industrial products, and is intended to support Wilhelmshaven’s efforts in playing a leading role in Germany’s energy supply.



## Dettmer Group expands waste and recycling segment

**BREMEN.** In July, the **Dettmer Group announced the takeover of Purus Plastics,** a company that manufactures completely recycled products such as “Ecoraster” ground reinforcement pavers, as well as rooftop greenery. “Expanding our Waste and Recycling division by acquiring Purus Plastics is the next step in improving the environment. The use of Ecoraster is particularly effective in avoiding so-called heat islands in urban areas,” explained Heiner Dettmer, managing partner of the Dettmer Group.



## 50 years of Roland Umschlagsgesellschaft

**BREMEN.** On 4 September 1972 the Roland Umschlagsgesellschaft started operations with its first loading unit. **Since then, this Bremen-based company located at the heart of Germany’s biggest freight village, has served as the gateway between German seaports and the hinterland – and celebrated its 50th anniversary in September.** Numerous train operators and railway companies operate daily to and from the transport terminal. The transport department of Roland Umschlag currently organises 42 trains each week, handling 3,800 TEU goods, primarily with the ports of Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg and Bremerhaven. In addition, eight company trains travel between Bremen and Bönen, Duisburg and Dortmund. “This ensures that there are roughly 550 fewer lorries on the A1, A28 and A29 motorways each day. Consequently, around 30,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> is saved each year,” said Roland Umschlag’s MD Christoph Holtkemper, and added: “We are now the largest rail operator in Wilhelmshaven.”



# A growth engine at full steam

Since Poland joined the EU in 2004, it has demonstrated impressive economic development. However, the world market situation has not stopped at the country's borders, as experts in the local logistics market are quick to testify.

Poland and Germany are closely intertwined in economic terms. On the one hand, Germany is by far the most important trading partner for the country on the eastern border, and the economic significance of Poland for Germany has grown steadily in recent years. In 2020, Poland rose to become Germany's 5th most important trading partner and maintained this position in 2021, with a considerable margin over Italy and the United Kingdom. At the same time, the volume of trade between the two countries over the past year reached a historical record of roughly 147 million euros, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

"A major reason for this is that there has been a relatively stable development in German-Polish trading relations, even during times of crisis. Trade covers a large range of goods, of which vehicles, auto parts, machinery, chemical products and foodstuffs are dominant," explained Fabian Möpert, economic expert at Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI). The trade in goods has also been driven by extensive German direct investment in Poland, i.e. branch offices and subsidiaries of German companies. "From a business perspective, German-Polish relations can be viewed as a true success story – and Poland can be considered a growth engine with the largest market in the east of the EU. Pre the pandemic, Poland's market had grown for almost three decades, with annual increases in GDP significantly above the EU average," Möpert continued.



"From an economic perspective, German-Polish relations are a success story."

Fabian Möpert, economic expert at Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI)

## Port of Gdansk – container hub

A predominant part in this success story was, and still is, the huge amount of grants from the EU for Poland, of which the lion's share goes to the country's infrastructure projects. This financial support also benefits the maritime industry with the three major ports – Gdańsk, Gdynia and the port group Szczecin-Świnoujście. The Port of Gdańsk with its deepwater container terminal (DCT) is considered to be Poland's leading port for the transshipment of containers and one of the key container ports in the Baltic Sea region. In 2021, it handled 53.2 million tonnes of goods and approximately 2.1 million TEU. The Port of Gdynia loaded 26.7 million tonnes of goods in 2021 and is particularly significant in the handling of, among other things, agricultural products. By contrast, bulk goods, including mineral ores, coal and grain, dominate the goods handled in Szczecin-Świnoujście, where 33.2 million tonnes left the quays last year.

"Extensive modernisation and expansion projects have been in progress at Polish seaports for some time, in order to deal with the ever-growing increase in the freight volume. Key factors include the rise in container traffic, expansion of handling capacity for energy sources and agricultural goods, as well as the rise in the number of ships involved in the construction and maintenance



PHOTOS: ISTOCKPHOTOS/EWG3D/KONOPLYTSKA, PRIVATE



Gdansk offers ideal port facilities very close to the city.



A new central airport, Centralny Port Komunikacyjny (CPK), located approx. 40 kilometres southwest of the current airport in Warsaw, is due to be built by 2027.

of offshore wind farms off the coast of Poland,” said Möpert, summarising the current situation. As part of this development, the DTC in the Port of Gdansk is being extended for 450 million euros. At the same time, a new type of terminal has been planned for the loading of carbon dioxide as well as crude oil. Furthermore, Grzegorz Witkowski, Poland’s Deputy Minister for Infrastructure, announced that two port facilities were going to be built for agricultural products, one in Gdańsk and the other located to the west in Świnoujście. The Polish growth engine is working at full steam in other fields of transport too. A new central airport is due for completion by 2027. It will be known as Centralny Port Komunikacyjny (CPK) and will be located approximately 40 kilometres southwest of Warsaw. At the same time, CPK will be developed into a key railway hub. Indeed, the plans also anticipate extensive investment in high-speed rail lines.

Whilst the initial tenders as well as planning and construction works have already begun, the logistics sector in Poland is currently battling against the effects of the war in Ukraine, the global breakdown in supply chains and the rising cost of electricity and gas. Against this background, two logistics experts, one from the seaport and logistics service provider BLG LOGISTICS and one from Hapag-Lloyd container shipping company, give an insight into the current

In Poland, too, BLG LOGISTICS takes care of the handling, storage, customs clearance and transport of manufactured vehicles.

daily operations in Poland below. In addition, the head of maritime intelligence at the Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics (ISL) gives his opinion on the competitive situation between German and Polish ports.

### Logistics on the rise

In the early nineties there was a growing need for transport by road towards eastern Europe. “We launched activities in Poland back in 1994, initially with a small fleet of trucks,” explained Pawel Byglewski, Managing Director, BLG Southeast Europe. Today, BLG LOGISTICS runs the BLG AutoTerminal in Gdansk, where around 60 staff deal with the handling, storage, customs clearance and transport of finished vehicles and high and heavy goods. With an area of 78,000 square metres, there is sufficient space for up to 3,000 vehicles. The hall for pre-delivery inspection (PDI) is located immediately adjacent to it, and carries out activities, including inspections, repairs and minor PDI tasks. Afterwards, the vehicles are transported to other countries such as Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia using the company’s own fleet of lorries. “Between 1994 and 2021 we transhipped 650,000 vehicles in Gdansk, of which most came by a short sea feeder service from England and were then transported on to Russia,” added Byglewski.



PHOTOS: BLG LOGISTICS (2X), ISTOCKPHOTOS/HECKEPICS/BOARDINGNOW/EWG3D

The war in Ukraine has also had a noticeable impact on the automotive market, which has subsequently had a significant effect on the transport of vehicles in Poland. In this respect, however, Byglewski stresses a completely different aspect: “I am proud of the way my fellow countrymen have welcomed people from Ukraine and actively supported them, not only helping them to find accommodation but also with their everyday needs.” Poland is currently also faced with other challenges such as the acute shortage of lorry drivers, which is the case in many other countries too. “Plus the Polish ports are becoming more important for the handling of goods such as coal and ore due to the energy crisis. This could have an impact on the transhipment of vehicles,” he went on.

Byglewski sees a positive development in the infrastructure of Poland. “Lots of things are now happening here,” partly as a result of the grants from the EU. Good motorways have replaced many of the seemingly endless country roads. “I can now cover distances in a good seven hours that previously took twelve.” This also shortens the driving times of the BLG lorry times, whether for deliveries to neighbouring countries or on the way back from picking up a load from the factories in Poznan and Wrzesnia or Gliwice. The improved roads and traffic infrastructure have also attracted numerous logistics centres to Poland. “New warehouses and transhipment centres are emerging at these traffic interchanges,” concluded Byglewski.



“New warehouses and logistics centres are emerging at many traffic interchanges”

Pawel Byglewski, Managing Director, BLG Southwest Europe



### Important trading partner for Lower Saxony and Bremen

As mentioned, Poland ranks fifth in Germany’s key trading partners. Our eastern neighbour is similarly important for the trade with the federal states of Lower Saxony and Bremen. For Lower Saxony, Poland ranks fourth in major export countries, behind the Netherlands, United Kingdom and France, and in terms of imports Poland even comes at the top of the list. According to information from the Oldenburg Chamber of Commerce, goods worth more than 9.3 billion euros were imported into Lower Saxony from Poland in 2020, of which crude oil and natural gas, vehicles and auto parts as well as electrical engineering were the most important product categories. The volume of goods going in the other direction came to approximately 3.6 billion euros, of which primarily vehicles and auto parts, machinery and electrical engineering left Lower Saxony destined for the Polish border.

The situation in the State of Bremen is comparable. With a goods volume worth 1.3 billion euros, Poland ranks seventh amongst this federal state’s trading partners and the key one in Eastern Europe. 440 companies in this state trade regularly with Poland, of which 40 even have a branch office, subsidiary or production factories there. The top three exports to Poland from the State of Bremen in 2020 were: 1 Vehicles and auto parts, 2. Foodstuffs and animal feed, and 3. Metals, whilst the list of Polish exports to the State of Bremen were: 1 Foodstuffs and animal feed, 2. Beverages, and 3. Agricultural and hunting products. Furthermore, the Bremen Chamber of Commerce stresses the importance of Poland as the Eastern European hub. “Around 1,100 Bremen State-based companies are active in the markets of Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and the Czech Republic. The total trade volume with these countries amounts to approximately 3.5 billion euros,” explained Torsten Grünewald, Deputy Director of International Affairs for the Bremen Chamber of Commerce.

The Hafenspiegel, published annually by Bremen’s Senator for Science and Ports together with bremenports, emphasises this trend. In 2021, around 1.7 million tonnes of goods left Poland destined for Bremen and Bremerhaven ports, whilst 767,000 tonnes were shipped in the other direction. For both ports this means that Poland ranks sixth in terms of imports and 16th in exports. As regards container traffic by sea, Hafenspiegel puts Poland in fourth place with 226,000 TEU in 2021, behind the USA, China and Myanmar.





“Polish ports are competitors to German ports in the container segment”

Dr Sönke Maatsch, Head of Maritime Intelligence, Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics (ISL)

“There has been a considerable improvement to the Polish infrastructure over the past few years, both on the roads and by rail. Here there are opportunities for Czech business at Polish ports, which is still predominantly handled via German ports.” Maatsch then turned his attention to the war in Ukraine: “As is the case in all other ports, the Polish ports have been adversely affected by the cessation of activities with Russia as well as the interrupted supply chains in the trade with China. Nevertheless, the Port of Gdansk was able to record slight growth in the first six months of 2022 compared to the same period last year, due to the expanding Polish economy.”

**Advantages on both sides**

Due to the most recent developments concerning both Polish and German ports, Dr Sönke Maatsch, Head of Maritime Intelligence at the Institute of Shipping and Logistics (ISL) in Bremen remarked: “Polish ports have a cost advantage over the ports in Germany due to the Polish hinterland. Nevertheless, German ports have a distinct transit time advantage because of the sequence of calls by seagoing vessels”. This means, for example, that container ships from Asia always moor first in a German port and then continue on to Poland. That is the reason why the goods always arrive in Bremerhaven first and then in Gdansk. On the ship’s return journey a call at a further German port is usually made, meaning that Germany can also offer shorter transport times for exports too. Maatsch also differentiates between the different types of cargo handled in the course of competition between both countries: “In the container segment, the Polish ports are certainly competitors to the German sites since some of the shipping lines have begun integrating ports in Poland in their overseas liner services, in order to save costs,” the expert explained. Here, the North Sea ports, and above all German ports, have suffered losses in their market share in the past few years. As far as the bulk cargo segment is concerned, on the other hand, the cost-effective supply of customers by road, either by rail or lorry, has played a key role in the decision of which port to use.

Against this background, Maatsch does not see the new port facilities for agricultural goods planned in Gdańsk and Swinoujście as a threat to German ports. “The catchment areas of the target customers will hardly overlap. Consequently, Lower Saxony will not lose any cargo volumes in the agricultural sector to Poland in the long term,” Maatsch said confidently. Only with regard to the markets in the Czech Republic does he speak of a possible competitive situation.

**“Growing uncertainty in the markets”**

Hapag-Lloyd has been active on the Polish market since the early eighties and now operates the routes between Hamburg, Rotterdam and Gdynia with three scheduled services. These are supported by additional services from contract partners if and when required. Further, the shipping company recently opened a link between Wilhelmshaven and Gdynia. “This helps to serve our customers quickly to and from southern China,” explained Alina Angielczyk, Director Sales Area North at Hapag-Lloyd Poland.

She went on to explain the advantages of Poland in terms of international trade: “The infrastructure in the interior of the country is very much intact as well as the diversity of the

goods which are exported and imported. In addition, Poland is an attractive market for foreign investors to open up factories and storage facilities for their companies.” Consequently, she does not see any real competition between German and Polish ports. “The ports in both countries have a strong customer base, which makes the choice of their maritime gateway dependent on, for instance, the transit time or destination. Nevertheless, a significant advantage of German ports is the simplified customs procedures,” said Angielczyk.

Just like other market participants, Hapag-Lloyd has also felt the effects of the war in Ukraine. These are not only reflected in the general shortage of energy, significantly rising prices and interrupted supply chains, but, as Angielczyk puts it: “a growing uncertainty in the markets”. “As part of this development, we are also noticing that the supply chains involved in Ukraine imports and exports are switching to Polish ports. This is having an impact on the storage capacities in and around the ports, where shipments now have to be planned up to two months in advance,” the manager continued. In spite of the current challenges, she is confident: “The shipping and logistics sectors in Poland will continue to develop and will reinforce its role in global trade even further”.

“Poland will continue to strengthen its role in global trade”

Alina Angielczyk, Director Sales Area North at Hapag-Lloyd Poland



The Polish market is currently served by Hapag-Lloyd with three of its own scheduled services, thus proving that the ports there have a “solid customer base”.

PHOTOS: MARLENA BIELINSKA.GDYNIA, CONTAINER TERMINAL, ISTOCKPHOTOS/AMONTECELLO, ISL/MÖLLEREFFEKT





## “Chivalry is still appreciated”

The number of potential faux pas is not automatically dependant on how close your business partner's home country is to yours. There are plenty of missteps that can be made in neighbouring Poland – whether it be toasting with the wrong phrase or choosing the wrong lavatory.

Conducting business successfully in Poland requires a mix of knowledge and sensitivity. An organised schedule and good manners can also help in putting your best foot forward. These are some lessons learnt by Uwe Metschke – former Chair of the German-Polish Society (DPG) in Bremen from 2014–2021 and long-term resident in Poland – during his maritime and port-industry studies in Gdansk and his employment at the Interport organisation in Szczecin, amongst others. “There is room for confusion from the very first encounter if, like some Germans, you begin with a rigorous handshake rather than a slight bow,” explained Metschke. He also advises against a kiss of the hand, countering the advice found in many travel guides to this day. “Nowadays, this only tends to be appreciated by certain members of the older generations. Even then, it's only recommended if a lady initiates by offering her hand,” he clarified.

### Hospitable family people

It is also widely customary in Germany to get straight down to business as soon as you step through the door. In Poland, however, it is worth beginning with some small talk to establish personal rapport. “It's completely acceptable to talk about family life and show pictures of your children on your phone. People in Poland are very family-oriented,” explained Metschke. Furthermore, unlike in Germany, there is not such a stark distinction between personal and professional topics. This is evident when you are invited to a business meal at a restaurant or the home of your business contact. “In Poland, it is unthinkable that you would simply be driven back to your hotel after business hours at 5 p.m. Instead, they will host you until you fall into bed. This is part of Polish hospitality,” said Metschke.

It is necessary to keep some principles of etiquette in mind in order to respect this. This includes refraining from jokes about the Pope or the Catholic Church. “It is also inappropriate to ask women about their age or to toast with the Russian phrase ‘Na zdorowje!’. Especially in light of the current situation, Polish citizens do not like to be associated with Russia,” explained Metschke. Since Polish people identify as Central Eastern Europeans, a simple “Cheers!” or “Zum Wohl!” is much more welcome. You'll get a positive reception in our neighbouring country by practising chivalry: by opening the door for women, helping them put on their coats or giving out measured compliments. “Polish women are used to being treated courteously,” Metschke concluded.

### Breaking cultural barriers and name days

Business dinners are the perfect setting to observe cultural differences that arise here and there. In Poland, there is a learnt culture whereby Poles often initially decline an offer of food or drink, only to accept it on the second or third time it is offered. Moreover, a “proper meal” always includes soup and dessert. “But asking for a second helping is considered improper and gives off distasteful undertones of freeloading,” added Metschke. That said, complimenting the local bakery products or beer will be well received. But beware: “Polish beer has an alcohol content almost as high as Bock beer, and even one can quickly go to your head,” warned the expert. If the drinking prompts a bathroom break, you will have another cultural barrier to contend with: some

An unfamiliar sight for someone who has not yet been to Poland. The circle indicates the ladies' toilet, the triangle the men's.



PHOTOS: ISTOCKPHOTO/ISMAGILOV/TOMAP49, PRIVATE



“A kiss of the hand is only appreciated by certain members of the older generations.”

Uwe Metschke, former Chair of the German-Polish Society in Bremen

toilets will only be signed with a circle or triangle. “The circle indicates the ladies' lavatory, and the triangle the men's. If you forget this, you may have to wait until someone comes out,” recommended Metschke.

“In day-to-day business, Polish businesspeople often prove to be skilled and tough negotiators, especially when it comes to deadlines and finances,” he noted, and advised that such negotiations be conducted in English if possible. Bringing an associate who is fluent in Polish is an advantage. After all, they will be well aware of the commonplace issue of language barriers being used by natives to discuss matters privately, particularly in high-stake situations. To preemptively navigate this situation somewhat and score some extra points whilst doing so, you should simply throw some Polish phrases into the conversation. For example “Dzień dobry!” (in English: good morning), “Dziękuję!” (thank you), “Proszę bardzo!” (please), “Przepraszam!” (sorry) or “Trudno” (that's bad luck). “That way, not only will your host be pleased about your interest in the country, but they will also be unsure of exactly how much of the language you understand,” Metschke added playfully. Another tip: if you're already successfully established in the Polish business sphere, you should make a note in your calendar of the name days of your business partners and gift them something small on this day. That is because name days are more important than birthdays in Poland.

### Take part in the “baking”

With regard to the current political relationship between the two countries, Metschke concluded by quoting Marek Prawda, who is Head of Representation of the European Commission in Warsaw. When the Viadrina Prize of the European University was awarded to the cities of Bremen and Gdansk last year, Prawda stated: “The coalition of European states will be measured not only by whether everyone gets their piece of cake, but also by whether everyone can take part in its baking.” For Metschke, this is the perfect analogy of how to best succeed, not just in politics but also in a business collaboration. (bre)



# “Making the culture of modern Poland accessible”

Interview with Katarzyna Weichert, Chair of the German-Polish Society (DPG) in Bremen



**Ms Weichert, on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the closest, how close do you feel the link is between Poland and Germany?**

**Katarzyna Weichert:** Poland and Germany have a special, close relationship, which is characterised by the bilateral relations in many different areas. Going off the close nature of interstate dialogue, in particular, and setting aside the differences in political stance and chequered history of the two countries, I would rate relations an eight.

**How do you come to this rating?**

This is due to several factors. Besides the growing dynamism of trade relations between the two nations, the main thing I have observed is the increasing social and cultural cooperation. This is reflected not only in partnerships between cities and regions, but also at the wider level of associations and private initiatives as well as the German-Polish and Polish-German societies. Not to mention the numerous school and university links, the university partnerships, and the long tradition of exchanges with various youth groups, for example the scouts. All of this has been a catalyst for growth in mutual respect and high regard for one another, and bears fruit regarding the friendly and straightforward relations between the countries.

**How has the German-Polish Society in Bremen been involved in this process?**

In three years' time we will be celebrating the 50-year anniversary of DPG in Bremen. We have been committed to improving German-Polish relations and fostering the cooperation of Bremen and Gdansk in city-twinning activities since December 1975. The key to achieving this has been maintaining close interaction and reciprocal visits. We bring people together by means of organised exhibitions, lectures, concerts, readings, film screenings and other events – with the aim of making the culture of modern Poland more accessible to everyone. We

also promote German-Polish bilingualism and support children, young people and adults who are learning Polish in Bremen. In a nutshell, we're pretty much the place to go in Bremen for all things related to Poland.

**What projects have recently been on your agenda or will be in the coming months?**

In September we were busy with Polish Day, which we coordinated in collaboration with the Focke Museum and included a children's theatre performance on the environment and a reading. We will also be providing a varied programme in the coming months. For children, we are organising German-Polish playgroup sessions and a children's theatre workshop, which will be based on the Gothic genre. For young people, the programme will include a discussion about street art with our partner company TPN from Gdansk, along with other projects focussed on promoting multilingualism. Adults will be catered for with readings and concerts, and the Women's Forum will be taking place for the fourth time. The forum brings together women from Bremen and Gdansk to discuss their thoughts on various everyday issues.

**Am I right in thinking that despite your praise of German-Polish relations, you still see areas that are definitely in need of improvement?**

It is always wise to ensure we look ahead more and to bring future important issues into focus more, particularly when addressing future generations. They embody our future potential, as our future is ultimately in the hands of the people we meet today. On this note, the DPG intends to engage more actively on an economic level in the future than it has in the past. As such, we are hoping to establish a German-Polish economic forum in Bremen to place additional emphasis on the twinning between Bremen and Gdansk, which has existed since April 1976, in addition to the activities already mentioned.

## Piloted from Bremen

Cross-border logistics are standard practice in shipping. However, not all shipments have Germany either as the origin or the destination point. When it comes to such complex cross trades, smooth planning and handling are particularly important. Hansa Meyer Global relies on its globally based offices for this, as well as brain power in the Bremen headquarters.

Industry standards are driven by the global economy. Machines and facilities are typically produced where it is most cost-effective in accordance with the respective quality standards. And that is no longer in Europe, but more often in Asia. “In the past, for example, wind turbines for the Asian market were produced mainly in Europe – that flow of supplies has now completely reversed,” reported Jan-Dirk Schuisdziara, managing partner at Hansa Meyer Global Holding. “Another example is China, where massive capital investment has been made to expand local production, so many components are now produced there and exported throughout the world.”

PHOTOS: DPG







With 360,000 freight tonnes and deliveries from Europe and Asia, the Yamama Cement factory in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is the largest industrial project in the country in the past ten years.

### Observing international customs and requirements

Such contractual triangles constitute a typical cross-trade transaction. In logistics, this refers to cross-border transport where both the place of export and the place of import are located in foreign countries. For typical project forwarders such as Hansa Meyer Global, this has always been part of the service portfolio. What has changed, however, is the prominence of this business segment. “20 or 30 years ago, the proportion of deliveries via Germany was significantly higher, at around 70–80 per cent,” the managing partner recalled. “Today, that ratio has reversed – two-thirds of our shipments are cross trade.” The only outlier here is air cargo, for which the proportion of cross trading is significantly lower at 15 per cent.

Depending on the industry, type of facility and project complexity, thousands of components from up to 20 different countries must be delivered to a single construction site in crates, containers or as break-bulk cargo. This is only possible with sufficient expertise. “Without our near 40 years of international experience and our network of partners specialising in project cargo, we would not be able to run our business reliably for our customers,” Schuisdziara stressed. To this end, the forwarding agency has built a collaborative network of 24 offices and partners worldwide, which has just been expanded to include a company in Texas and a new office in Monterey, Mexico.

Customers are well aware of the challenges involved with this and know that changes in plans on behalf of the supplier and/or construction site are also very common abroad. Nevertheless, getting the components to the construction site at the agreed time and within budget is only possible if there is very close coordination between the suppliers, local service providers such as packaging companies, truckers and lighters, as well as the ports and main transport carrier. Furthermore, the more complex the transport requirements in each country – for example, customs clearance; approval for heavy and oversized cargo; and challenging packaging and interim storage stipulations – the more experts are needed on site.

■ ■ ■ And it is exactly such facility engineers, known as EPC contractors (Engineering, Procurement and Construction), that form part of the client base of project forwarders such as Hansa Meyer Global. “Typically, these companies plan, design and build the facilities independently for the customer until project completion, and they require one or more forwarders to execute this,” explained Schuisdziara. “Your company location usually plays little role in the procurement process. That means the customer or freight payer could be based in Germany and commission us, a Bremen-based company, to handle the project deliveries to the construction site in Texas. Deliveries are made from Shanghai via containers, as break-bulk cargo by ship or via other means.”

“Two-thirds of our shipments are cross trades.”

Jan-Dirk Schuisdziara, Managing Partner, Hansa Meyer Global Holding



### Data transfer with customers is gaining in importance

IT also plays an increasingly crucial role in this type of business: “In order to ensure transparency in complex projects, some of which may involve over 100,000 freight tonnes per individual order, and to manage the contractually agreed key figures, we are investing in the continuous development of our data systems,” reported Schuisdziara. “For example,

Good planning and experience are needed to lift this 300-tonne column from a Texan chemical park and get it ready for transportation.



we can directly transfer order data from our customer’s SAP system or another database via the interface, and then display this alongside the planning and shipping data, including any documents from Hansa Meyer. In addition, all companies involved in the logistics chain are also connected, so that real-time data can be reflected in the original plans and deviations can be accurately documented.”

### Contracts are becoming more complex, terms of trade more challenging

How attractive a lucrative-looking project cargo assignment actually is for the handling company depends largely on the provisions of the logistics contract. Here, too, a lot has changed: “In recent decades, the stipulations to fulfil both customer and legal requirements have increased,” stated Schuisdziara. “Here, it is important to identify and manage requirements diligently and to insure against contingent liabilities.” In any case, the following rule applies: “If the risks are not manageable or adequately insurable, we reject the request and state our reasons. If the customer later determines that our assessment

PHOTOS: HANSA MEYER GLOBAL



was correct, they will continue giving us their custom.” This establishes trust and is one reason why the company has, for decades, been successfully collaborating with many well-known companies.

The pandemic and the war in Ukraine have increased the challenges in the logistics industry as well as in cross trading. “Transportation costs have multiplied: it currently costs over USD 40,000 to ship a 40-foot flat-rack container from east to west. Two years ago, the same freight would probably have cost less than USD 10,000,” explained Schuisdziara. “Depending on the cargo, it is difficult to plan the space on board and availability of containers. Plans often need to be changed two to three times and adapted according to daily requirements – a situation which increases costs considerably and can, unfortunately, only be marginally remedied by digitalisation.”

### Cross trade trends: summary and outlook

“Even if it is inevitable that there are seasonal fluctuations and challenges in world trade from time to time, globalisation won’t be going away,” Schuisdziara believes. The growth markets remain: Australia, for mining, oil and gas, and energy projects; Nigeria, for infrastructure and energy projects; and Saudi Arabia.

“A definite trend is that suppliers abroad are now increasingly interfering in the logistics decision-making process, which is why an effective network with our own offices and quality standards has become more and more important. Since the management buyout in 2021, we have been pursuing a strategy of continuous growth entitled ‘Engineering Transports of Tomorrow’, with extensive product and network expansions over four years. The goal is to expand our network from 24 to 30 offices and to reach EUR 200 million in annual sales.” (cb)

Rotor blades made in China are transported via waterway in Vietnam’s hinterland.

### FACTS

**Hansa Meyer Global**

**Established:** 1986, management buyout 2021

**Headquarters:** Bremen

**Branches:** 24 own offices worldwide

**Area of business:** project forwarding

**Employees:** 230 worldwide

**Turnover 2021:** EUR 84 million

More information: [www.hansameyer.com](http://www.hansameyer.com)





People are not only key to successful automation and digitalisation, they are also indispensable for our future.

## Growing together

Automation, digitalisation – and then what? The impact of these trends on port employment, the skills required in the future and potential solutions are currently being explored within the IHATEC “Portskill 4.0” research project. One thing is certain: the future is dependent on port workers.

The expansion of the IHATEC funding pots to cover areas related to training and further education was the catalyst: “This opened the door for us to conceptually develop both the port and ourselves in this direction and to launch the ‘Portskill 4.0’ project,” explained Thomas Lührs, project manager and employee of the consortium leader maritimes kompetenzentrum (ma-co). Further partners are HHLA, BLG LOGISTICS GROUP and Patient Zero Games as well as Verdi and The Federation of German Seaport Operators (ZDS) as associate partners.

The project, which has been running since December last year and will continue until November 2025, addresses issues relating to the future of the port industry. What opportunities

do digitalisation and automation offer, and what influence do these developments have on people? “We are looking at the effects of technology on employees,” stated Lührs.

“PortSkill 4.0” is primarily aimed at workers carrying out operational activities such as van carrier drivers, gantry crane operators and lashers. Employees with administrative duties, such as ship planners and workers who manage the organisation and control of a terminal, are also addressed. The third group includes maintenance and service technicians.

Two aspects, in particular, are being evaluated. On the one hand, how automation and digitalisation are changing the working world. On the other, what effects this is having on the roughly 30 job profiles that are included in this project,



“Many areas of responsibility are shifting towards problem-solving, meaning that competence will shift.”

Thomas Lührs, project manager and employee of the consortium leader ma-co (maritimes kompetenzentrum)

notably, whether these roles will exist in another form in the future, or exist at all. Building on this, the extent to which the skills required of employees – such as knowledge and soft skills – is changing will be researched: from medium-term adjustments to new competency profiles. “To this end, we are also drawing on Work 4.0 studies from other sectors,” explained Lührs.

### Digital test and training centre

Two objectives have been developed from these enquiries: firstly, to establish a digital test and training centre and, secondly, to investigate the socio-economic impacts. “For the digital test and training centre, we will rely on digital learning worlds using computer simulations, video projection screens, and AR and VR glasses. Training scenarios will be developed for various job profiles and roles,” summarised the project manager.

In terms of content, this could include specialist and digital/technical skills as well as soft skills, for example, teamwork and problem-solving skills. One particular advantage of networked digital training is that learning content can be well contextualised with overarching processes. “In the future, more and more knowledge will be required to consider the big picture, for example, how an action affects the entire supply chain,” emphasised Lührs.

Promoting flexibility and willingness to learn is also important because the world will change much more rapidly in the future. “Lifelong learning will continue to grow in importance,” Lührs predicted. “That’s why informal learning and learning methodology will gain in importance.” The training centre will develop web-based applications and smartphone apps to enable employees to continue with everyday training.

One particular challenge, however, is making the training and further education as engaging and interesting as possible to keep employees on the ball for five to ten minutes a day longer, even over relatively long periods of time. In addition, many employers do not yet see the benefits of allowing their

employees to continue their education during working hours and to work through training units independently.

### Socio-economic impacts

A continual consideration of the project is concerns over the cultural changes that arise from digitalisation and automation. Alongside the learning in the digital test and training centre, it is also important to examine the socio-economic impacts via interviews and analyses of studies. “There is great fear that jobs in the port industry will be lost as a result of increasing automation and digitalisation,” reported Lührs. “In many cases, these do not mean a previous role will be completely eliminated.”

For example, where ship planners currently enter the stowage plan data manually, this could also be undertaken via artificial intelligence in the future. But this function would only work as well as it was programmed. Manpower continues to be needed for this. However, this cooperation has changed the power dynamic. “Many areas of responsibility have shifted to problem-solving, meaning that skills are changing,” explained Lührs.

“It is important for us to ensure people adapt in line with the rapidly changing working environment,” the project manager stressed. It is not enough, for example, to simply move crane drivers from behind the wheel to the control station. Rather, this project is all about how to qualify employees differently, and what training measures are required if their jobs change.

“We also want to give recommendations to employers for action in order to support cultural change and to implement change processes,” said Lührs. “Therefore, we must always consider the impact of such changes on employees. It is necessary to find out who is suitable for which jobs, who wants what and about those who aren’t open to change.” Many projects have been delayed or failed solely due to those involved creating barriers, explained Lührs. “That’s why it’s essential to coach people and grow together.” (cb)

### FACTS

#### Portskill 4.0 project

**Cause:** port work of the future

**Duration:** December 2021 to November 2025

**Project coordinator:** ma-co maritimes kompetenzentrum

**Partners:** BLG LOGISTICS GROUP, HHLA, Patient Zero Games, Verdi and The Federation of German Seaport Operators (ZDS)

**Project volume:** EUR 3.2 million

**Funding:** Innovative port technologies (IHATEC)

More information:  
[www.ma-co.de](http://www.ma-co.de)



# Full speed ahead – with a fleet of tugs and integrity

Founded in 1905 under the name “Fairplay Schleppdampfschiffs-Reederei Richard Borchard”, today, the Fairplay Towage Group is one of the leading towage companies in Europe. “Shipping has changed dramatically since our establishment, mainly due to the introduction of containers. We have always adapted with the times and continually offered our customers tailor-made solutions. One thing that hasn’t changed is our promise to offer our services at a fair price, with integrity and honesty. Our name is a reflection of this,” stated Holger Schwesig, Managing Director, Fairplay Towage Group.



This philosophy has served the company well over the past 117 years. Since the merger of Fairplay Towage and Bugsier in 2017, the company now has bases in 29 European ports, including Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Bremen, Bremerhaven, Brake, Nordenham, Wilhelmshaven, Rostock, Wismar and Mukran. The group is also represented in the Polish ports of Gdynia, Świnoujście and Szczecin. Fairplay Towage offers its maritime services worldwide from these ports and numerous other locations with a total of 105 tugboats, which are suitable for a wide range of requirements thanks to their high performance propulsion systems of up to 5,500 kilowatts and a bollard pull of up to 105 tonnes.

## One provider, abundant solutions

The backbone of the group is tugboat assistance, offshore towage, long-distance towing and coastal protection. The tugboat assistance service involves ships of all kinds – from container ships to bulk carriers and supertankers –

being safely manoeuvred in the port with one or more tugboats, whilst the offshore towage service includes oil rig manoeuvre and the towing of docks and hoisting platforms for offshore wind energy, amongst other things. “Long-distance towing assignments could even involve transporting a ship from the Bahamas to Bremerhaven,” explained Schwesig. The managing director is particularly proud that, as a founding member of the German association of tug and salvage operators, Fairplay is currently providing the federal government with the three special tugboats – the “Baltic”, “Fairplay 35” and “Nordic” – to provide emergency assistance and prevent damage to the environment.



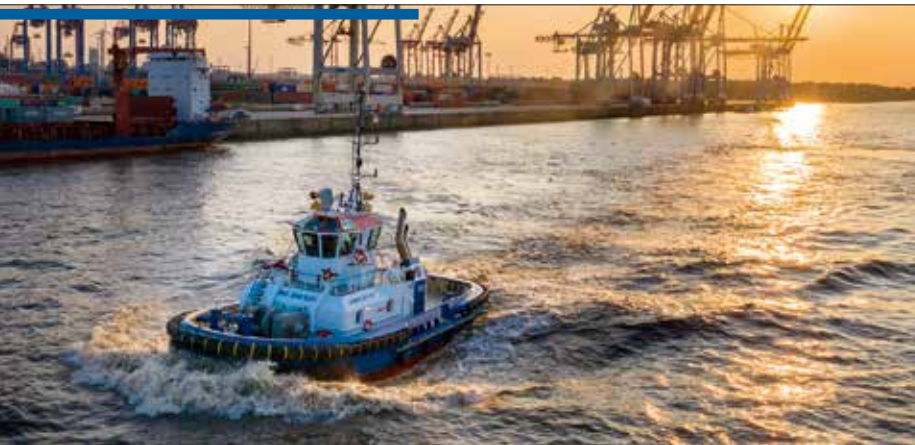
The “Vilm” is one of five oil-fighting vessels operated by the Fairplay Towage Group on behalf of the German government and coastal federal states.

In addition to these four main pillars, Fairplay Towage Group’s services also include pontoon transport, salvage operations, mooring, as well as classic shipyard work, ship repairs and special steel construction – with the latter three services being offered at the Theodor Buschmann shipyard in Hamburg. “Last but not least, our activities are rounded off by the prevention of pollution incidents. We have been managing several oil-fighting vessels on behalf of the German government and coastal German states for over 20 years. These currently include five vessels, namely the Knechtsand, Vilm, Mposs, Kiel and Westensee,” said Schwesig.

## A plea for better port cooperation

Reflecting on the developments of the past two-and-a-half years, he summarised: “So far, the pandemic and war in Ukraine have not had a major impact on our daily operations. What has changed is the fact that ships are entering ports more irregularly. But up to now we have always been flexible enough to adapt to these requirements.” That said, this kind of flexibility is something that Schwesig feels is lacking when it comes to the cooperation between German seaports. “Germany is lacking an overall strategy to be better positioned in relation to international competition. The key here is to throw old animosity and pride overboard and to work together on solutions that extend beyond individual port boundaries. If we were to cooperate more closely with one another, there would be a much higher chance of competing with the likes of Rotterdam and Antwerp, for example, whose efficiency and collaboration with other ports is, in my opinion, impressive.”





FACTS

The Fairplay Towage Group has bases in 29 European ports with 105 different types of tugboat.

**Fairplay Towage Group**

**Established:** 1905

**Headquarters:** Hamburg

**Group companies:**

Fairplay Towage, Bugsier, Theodor Buschmann and a 50 per cent share in Multraship Towage & Salvage and Antwerp Towage

**Fleet:** 105 tugboats

**Employees:** Approx. 1,030

**Focusing on environmental protection and young talent**

The greatest challenges Schwesig faces over the next few years are decarbonisation and the search for more environmentally friendly fuels and technologies along with the necessary infrastructure. In his view, however, this is not an issue that companies can address single-handedly, but rather a challenge that can only be overcome with the combined efforts of various maritime players and with political intervention. "We have already established close contact with port authorities, navigators, mooring companies and

other port service providers in order to find novel solutions for the challenges we face. For example, with the support of the service provider Lion Rock, we are working on a fuel efficiency project in which we have provided our captains in Rotterdam with helpful tips on fuel economy. Our most recent analysis showed that we have been able to save up to 30 per cent in fuel, so we have now extended this concept to other ports as well."

In terms of his company's future plans, Schwesig also heads the promotional campaign for Fairplay Towage's apprenticeship programme, figuratively throwing out the towlines for potential young talent. "We are one of the last major German shipping companies to offer a training programme for ship mechanics with subsequent career opportunities up to captain level. Not only does this role involve a high degree of responsibility on the tugboat, but also attractive working hours – or so I think!" Each week on board is followed by a week off, contrary to the hours of sea captains, who are often away for up to six months. And not to mention how fascinating it must be to tow a vessel up to ten times the size of your tugboat – such as a container ship or cruise ship – through a port with accuracy to the precise centimetre. (bre)

More information:  
[www.fairplay-towage.de](http://www.fairplay-towage.de)



Holger Schwesig, Managing Director, Fairplay Towage Group

"Germany is lacking an overall strategy to be better positioned in relation to international competition."



PHOTOS: FAIRPLAY TOWAGE GROUP

2022  
OCTOBER



- 29.9. – 2.10.2022** **German Shipping Day**  
[www.deutscher-schiffahrtstag.de](http://www.deutscher-schiffahrtstag.de)  
Bremen/Bremerhaven, Germany
- 30.9. – 3.10.2022** **Wilhelmshaven Sailing Cup**  
[www.wilhelmshaven-sailing-cup.de](http://www.wilhelmshaven-sailing-cup.de)  
Wilhelmshaven, Germany
- 4. – 6.10.2022** **Expo Real**  
[www.exporeal.net](http://www.exporeal.net)  
Munich, Germany
- 13.10.2022** **BHV-Hafenclub**  
[www.bhv-bremen.de](http://www.bhv-bremen.de)  
Bremen, Germany
- 19. – 20.10.2022** **Hydrogen Technology Expo**  
[www.hydrogen-worldexpo.com](http://www.hydrogen-worldexpo.com)  
Bremen, Germany

NOVEMBER

- 3.11.2022** **Logistics Talk**  
[www.bremenports.de/en/events](http://www.bremenports.de/en/events)  
Stuttgart, Germany
- 5. – 10.11.2022** **CIIE China International Import Expo 2022**  
[www.ciie.org](http://www.ciie.org)  
Shanghai, China
- 8.11.2022** **BHV-Hafenclub**  
[www.bhv-bremen.de](http://www.bhv-bremen.de)  
Bremen, Germany
- 8. – 10.11.2022** **transport logistics Americas**  
[www.tl-americas.org](http://www.tl-americas.org)  
Miami, USA

SAVE THE DATE

Due to the pandemic, scheduled dates and events are liable to change, sometimes at short notice. The dates for some of the maritime commercial and logistics events listed here have already changed several times recently. The information published on this page is subject to change. Please consult our website [www.logistics-pilot.com/event-kalender/](http://www.logistics-pilot.com/event-kalender/) shortly before an event is due to take place to ensure there have been no changes. Thank you!





COMPACT



**BREMEN.** **Andrea Eck**, member of the BIG LOGISTICS board since 2017

and responsible for the automobile division, will be leaving on 31 December 2022. She stepped down from the board at the end of August. Chairman of the board Frank Dreeke has taken over this division on an interim basis. "We would like to thank Ms Eck for all her efforts and the valuable part she played in the company's success. We wish her all the best for her future," said Dr Klaus Meier, Chairman of the Supervisory Board. The successor to Ms Eck was still pending at the time of going to press.



**HOLZWICKEDE.** **Jan Harnisch** (left) and **Tobias König** have been appointed as the global co-CEOs of Rhenus Air & Ocean. The key responsibilities of König include the development of strategic customer relations and industries, marketing and the positioning of Rhenus. Mean-while, Harnisch will assume responsibility for specifying the direction of growth, product and service innovation as well as improvement in operational excellence.

## Claus Hansen – new bremenports representative in Vienna

**BREMEN/VIENNA.** In future, the Ports of Bremen will be represented in Austria by the logistics expert **Claus Hansen**. Robert Howen introduced the new bremenports representative at the Logistics Talks held in Vienna in mid-September. "Claus Hansen can look back on over 40 years of experience in the industry, which he can put to good use for the Ports of Bremen", emphasised bremenports managing director. "It will give us excellent representation for an exceedingly important partner country." Howe then went on to thank Alfred Wolfram, who had been the representative of bremenports in Vienna since 2013. "Alfred Wolfram played a major part in ensuring that the Ports of Bremen are a central hub for the transshipment of goods for Austria."



Claus Hansen worked for Maersk Line in Copenhagen for many years and was most recently responsible for the global feeder network. During his time in Austria, he held a senior position with Rail Cargo Austria, among others. "Austria's economy is dependent on the ports and countries that border the country as well as an efficient inland network. We have to get even more traffic switched over from the road to rail. As the Ports of Bremen have an excellent range of rail services, they are the ideal partner for Austria's strong economy."

## Paul takes over at K+N

**SCHINDELLEGI.** In early August, **Stefan Paul** took over from Detlef Trefzger as CEO at Kühne + Nagel. Trefzger, who will be 60 at the end of the year, has stepped down for private reasons after nine years at the top. Paul, an experienced and long-serving employee at KN, has now moved to be the operational head. He held several executive positions at DHL between 1997 and 2013 before he returned to KN. He is responsible for overland transport and global sales on the management board.



## TO Group recruits automotive manager

**BREMEN/DUBAI.** As part of its expansion in Dubai, the Bremen-based Transport Overseas Group recruited **Richard Hall** in July. As sales director, Hall will be able to demonstrate his expertise in commercial vehicles. Moreover, he will further market the services of the TO Group in the Middle East, Asia-Pacific and Africa. Hall has been in the automotive sector for over 20 years, most recently as Head of Sales at MAN Truck & Bus in Dubai. He was previously employed at Daimler in Singapore.



## Two new names at Combi Lift

**BREMEN.** The project freight-forwarding company Combi Lift has strengthened its team. In August, **Jens Siedentopf** was appointed to the position of general manager of the subsidiary Harren & Partner Group, and will be responsible for opening up new markets and regions. He was previously Head of Breakbulk & Projects at the Dutch shipping company Samskip. Siedentopf left Samskip for Combi Lift along with a colleague. Nico Seedorf took the same path and has joined Combi Lift as Logistics Manager.

## Change at the top of BAG

**COLOGNE.** **Christian Hoffmann** was elected the new president of the Federal Office for Goods Transport (BAG) in mid-August. In January 2019, the 45-year old was appointed Deputy President of the above agency. The law graduate was previously employed in different departments of this government agency, including as field office manager as well as head of section and department. His long-term predecessor at the helm of BAG, **Andreas Marquardt**, has since returned to the Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport.



## L.I.T. double-pack extension

**BRAKE.** The L.I.T. Group recently extended the executive board in two of its subsidiaries. While **Michael Borowski** (l) was appointed to the leadership ranks of L.I.T. Air & Sea, **Robert Hennemann** (r) took on the same role but at L.I.T. Cargo. Extending the executive board was the consequence of the growth of both companies in the Brake-based corporate group. Borowski has been employed with the L.I.T. Group since 2018, and Hennemann was most recently in charge of operations and driving staff of L.I.T. Cargo.



## New NPorts technical director

**OLDENBURG.** The previous manager of Nports Emden branch office has been appointed technical director. During the interim period starting October, **Volker Weiß** (centre) will take over the duties of **Folker Kielgast** (right), who previously co-managed the company along with **Holger Banik** (left) and who will be retiring at the end of this year. Weiß has managed this port operator's largest branch office with around 200 staff since 2016 and is responsible for the management of investment and redevelopment measures, port planning and real estate management as well as acquisition and customer service.

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EDITION  
**DECEMBER**  
**2022**

**Focus on:  
D-A-CH**

According to Statista, the D-A-CH region is one of the most important and wealthiest regions in the world, accounting for a population of over 100 million inhabitants and a joint economic output of more than five trillion US dollars. A closer look at Germany, Austria and Switzerland nevertheless reveals that things in common are only part of the equation ...

**Point of view**

**Dennis Lühr, Head of Sales, Saacke GmbH**  
on DACH

“ With a working population of roughly 50 million, the DACH region is an important business location that is also measured by just how innovatively and flexibly it meets the new logistics requirements, in addition to low emissions. Despite ever-increasing transport needs, it is precisely the current geopolitical developments that have now led to noticeable restrictions within the DACH region.

Nevertheless, transport solutions for raw materials, manufactured goods or passengers should be, first and foremost, efficient, sustainable and, ultimately, affordable. Consequently, it is even more important that the expansion of infrastructure is given the highest possible priority in the German-speaking centre of the EU.

We experience daily the advantages that a rapid expansion of the A20, an earlier completion of the Brenner Base Tunnel or the Gateway Basel Nord could not only have for us but for the economy, too. These and other investments need to be made; there is no point in shying away from the costs. On the contrary, additional new and alternative transport solutions must be developed and launched quickly. Independence from supply chains is yet another item on the management agenda of many companies. Besides the rising costs of raw materials and energy, geopolitical effects continue to put pressure on the balance sheets. Adjusting the business model or even relocating the production site can be used as an appropriate tool. This could lead to further migration from the region.

Rhein-Ruhr, the Balkans and southwestern Europe can be ideally linked by means of trimodal transport. However, time and transparency of costs can be further improved.

And the water levels of the major rivers running through the heart of Europe have recently caused sleepless nights for many a logistic expert. The Fraunhofer Institute for Material Flow and Logistics report that 5.5 per cent of all CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are caused by transport and logistics. Saacke already offers technical solutions necessary to transport goods by water that are low in emissions and, therefore, more sustainable. There is still a lot to do, not only in the DACH region!



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HAFEN  
ENTWICKLUNGS  
KONZEPT→2035

Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung des Landes Bremen wird entscheidend durch seine Häfen geprägt. Sie bilden das ökonomische Rückgrat des Bundeslandes. Ziel bremischer Politik ist es, diese Schlüsselrolle weiter zu erhalten und auszubauen. Das HEK 2035 (Hafenentwicklungskonzept) hat alle am Hafenwirtschaftsgeschehen Beteiligten mit einbezogen. Es wird Perspektiven aufzeigen und beschreiben, wie das Land diese Ziele erreichen will.



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