

LOGISTICS PILOT

EDITION

JUNE 2025

 GERMAN PORTS



THE HINTERLAND – THE JOKER IN THE PACK

NATIONAL TASK

Sprucing up
the hinterland

Page 06

SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH

New heavy-load shuttle from
Bonn to Bremerhaven

Page 14

BUNDLE & COMBINE

Spotlight on freight villages in
Bremen and Wilhelmshaven

Page 18

Focus on:
**Well-connected in
the hinterland**

CONTENT

Edition:
June 2025



14

Sustainability

A new heavy-load shuttle has been in operation between Bonn and the Bremen Ports since March – stopping along the way in response to individual requests.



18

Logistics Story

From the port to the hinterland, and from the customer to the quay. The freight villages in Bremen and Wilhelmshaven show how clever logistics work.



22

Portrait

Heavy-load wind turbines or huge cranes – Noah Maritime from Emden has made a name for itself in the field of project logistics.



06

Main Topic

A lot needs doing in the hinterland. Consequently, ports are working flat out to optimise road, rail and waterway transport.



03 Editorial

04 Big Picture

12 Point of View
“CT needs planning security”

16 Facts & Figures

24 Community

26 Start-up
AI as a digital motivator

30 Events & Impressum

**LOGISTICS PILOT
digital!**

Visit us online at
www.logistics-pilot.com



**Marco Kutscher, Senior Manager for Mobility and Logistics
at the Federal Association of German Industry (BDI)**

TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE

Dear readers,

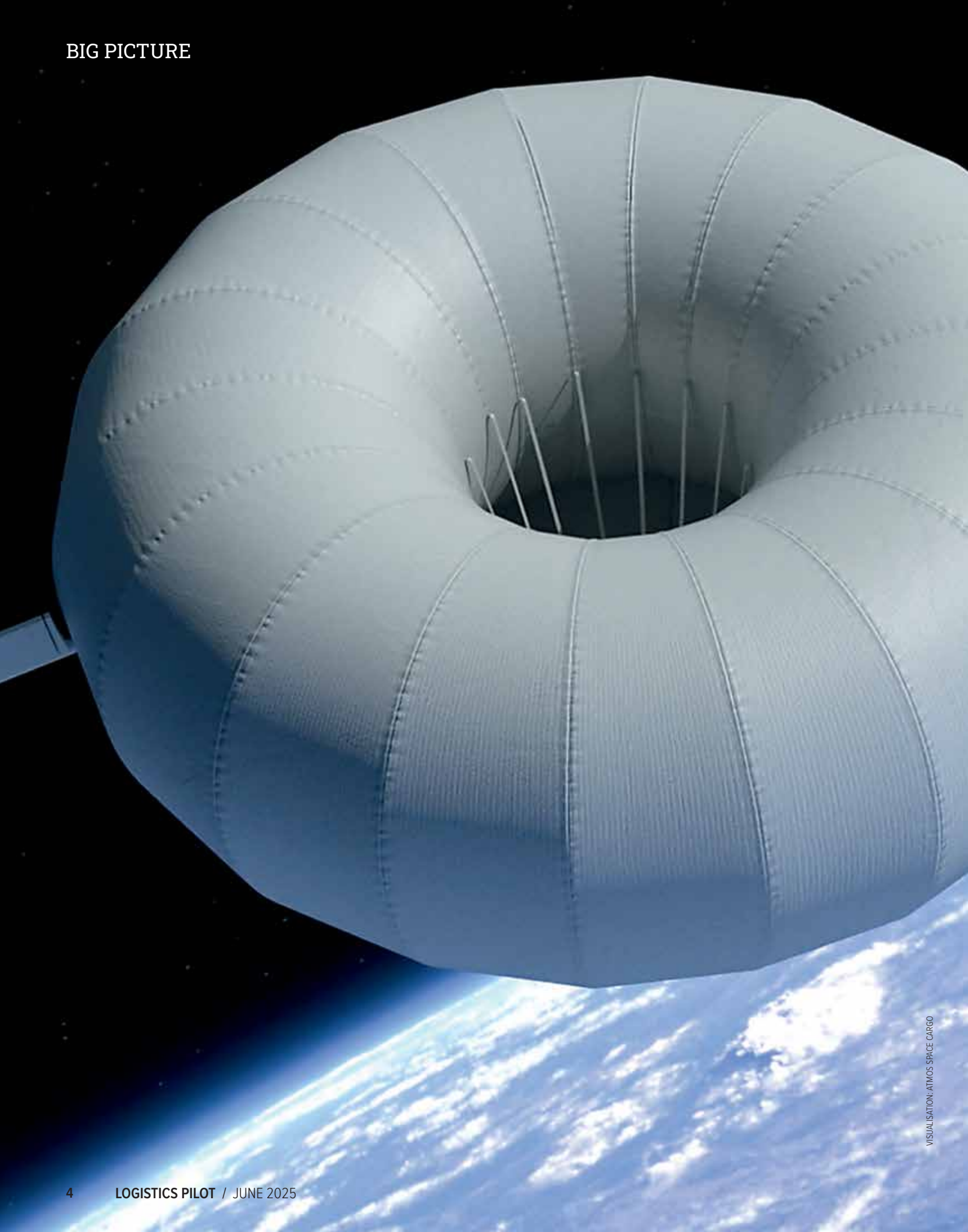
Since the change of government in the USA, networking no longer just represents economic opportunities but also sleepless nights in many places. The temptation to abandon multilateralism as the guiding principle of our economic and political actions is accordingly great. But that would be a fatal mistake. Germany's economic success is based on our access to global markets and international cooperation. However, in order to survive in global competition, we not only need strong partnerships, the location also needs a competitive strategy.

Northern Germany's seaports are key partners for the industrial region and decisive pieces of the puzzle for economic success as well as our country's future climate neutrality and security. Without Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Wilhelmshaven, export-based industry here would be just as inconceivable as the energy transition. Our new government must therefore see the ports as a national task and, alongside the federal states, invest in their competitiveness.

Particular attention should be paid to the transport infrastructure. Transport routes have been dramatically underfunded for decades, resulting in an infrastructure in crisis mode, which increasingly presents system partners with challenges. This means that an investment offensive as well as realignment of infrastructure development and financing are urgently required. Effective incentives for multimodal solutions must also be created in the transport sector. The key levers for expanding combined transport are the development, automation and digitalisation of terminal infrastructure as well as appropriate funding for the integration of transport modes.

So, politics and business have quite a lot of work to do. Let's get it done together!


Best wishes, Marco Kutscher



VISUALISATION: ATMOS SPACE CARGO



CARGO DOUGHNUT **TEST FLIGHT**

Standard containers are usually made of robust steel, while air freight containers – known as unit load devices (ULDs) – are often made of lightweight aluminium to minimise the airborne weight. Space containers, on the other hand, are made of very strong, thick layers of heat-resistant ceramic to protect the cargo from burning up when re-entering our atmosphere. Atmos Space Cargo, based in Lichtenau in Baden-Wuerttemberg, is now testing a self-inflatable heat shield made of a special film. This should not only make the container considerably lighter, it will also protect it from temperatures of up to 1,000°C and, when inflated into a doughnut-shaped cushion, act as a braking system if the container plummets back to the ground in free fall. Atmos sent the ‘Phoenix 1’ capsule into space and back on its first test flight in late April – with a scientific experiment set-up as its cargo. All in all, the mission was a success. However, due to a last-minute change to the SpaceX launcher’s flight route, the landing did not take place east of the island of La Réunion in the Indian Ocean as planned, where the ground stations had been set up, but rather in the extended ‘hinterland’, so to speak, in the Atlantic around 2,000 km off the Brazilian coast. Even a small aircraft that rushed to the area to track the capsule’s descent was unable to record all the flight data due to unfavourable cloud conditions. Nevertheless, Atmos CEO Sebastian Klaus hailed it as a ‘huge step forward for Europe’. All hopes are now pinned on 2026, which is when ‘Phoenix 2’ is due to take off. It will have its own propulsion system, so that Atmos can decide where on Earth the capsule will land. [\(men\)](#) 

SPRUCING UP THE HINTERLAND



According to the “Traffic Forecast 2040” presented in October 2024, traffic in Germany will grow significantly by 2040, especially in the freight sector. The Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport Affairs (BMDV) estimates that transport volume will increase by around a third compared to 2019 – from 689 to 905 billion tonne-kilometres. This development will also pose numerous challenges for the infrastructure of the ports in the hinterland. Nevertheless, strategies and projects are already in place that integrate lorry, rail and land waterway transportation in different ways.

Significant data on traffic development in the hinterland is provided in the “Market Observation Report on Freight Transport – Container Transport on Inland Waterways and Rail Freight Transport in Germany”, published last year by the Federal Logistics and Mobility Office (BALM). According to the study, container transport by rail rose from just under 4.2 million TEU in 2005 to around 7.7 million TEU in 2022 – an increase of around 85 per cent. At the same time, the volume of containers transported by inland waterway increased from around 2.1 million TEU in 2005 to just under 2.6 million TEU in 2017, before falling to just under 2 million TEU in 2020. This meant that the transport volume of containers on German waterways in 2022 was around 6.6 per cent below the 2005 level.

Interesting conclusions can also be drawn from the “Market Observation Report on Freight Transport – Opinion Survey on Combined Transport” online survey published by BALM at the beginning of 2025. Among other things, it shows that companies already actively using combined transport (CT) have a more positive attitude towards it than companies that have not. Respondents highlighted CT’s strengths in terms of its climate and environmental friendliness, yet – at the same time – it was perceived as inflexible, costly and unreliable. We come full circle, as it were, with the “Traffic Forecast 2040”, which shows the following trends for each individual mode of transport. Indeed, rail freight transport will see the strongest growth (up 35 per cent), lorries will remain the dominant mode of transport and increase by 34 per cent, while inland waterway transport will decline.

Gemini Cooperation could set a positive spiral in motion

“Hinterland transport has been much more stable than transshipments in recent years,” explained Sönke Maatsch, Project Manager at the Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics (ISL) and expert in ports and maritime transport chains, with these developments in mind. “This is mainly due to the good rail links to the hinterland, which give Germany’s ports a decisive market advantage in many regions, including over the ARA ports.”

In light of this, he believes that there is “virtually no alternative” to rail transport on long and medium distances. However, rail transport is also increasingly being tested for shorter distances of up to 300 kilometres. “Lorries are more flexible locally,” said Maatsch. “But the more attractive that alternatives are offered by rail in terms of price and operation, the more market participants are willing to consider this option. The vulnerability of the rail network, as well as the closures of various rail corridors as part of the general



“Good rail connections to the hinterland give Germany’s ports a decisive market advantage.”

Sönke Maatsch, Project Manager at ISL

overhaul, is also very painful for freight transport,” he continued, rubbing a little more salt in the wound. “The future of the railway will largely depend on the successful and rapid renewal of the infrastructure.”

However, he is looking very optimistically towards JadeWeserPort and the Gemini Cooperation between Hapag-Lloyd and Maersk, launched in February 2025. “If the volumes announced do actually reach Wilhelmshaven via the joint liner service, this could set a positive spiral in motion for the hinterland there,” stated Maatsch confidently. He also sees a positive trend where Bremerhaven is concerned. “Compared to other sites, inland shipping as a mode of transport has increased its market share there in recent years,” he stressed. As regard shifting transport to rail and inland waterway vessels, however, he distances himself from rigid targets. “Politicians have set a framework with CO₂ pricing, the effect of which is becoming increasingly visible, but where there are insufficient volumes, bundled transport cannot develop,” he continued.



Following its first call at JadeWeserPort, the ‘Damietta Express’ has now also moored in Bremerhaven for the first time. In future, the new build will call regularly at both ports as part of the Gemini Cooperation.





In Brake, J. Müller handles agricultural products, breakbulk goods, high-quality commodities and more. The trimodal transport links on site guarantee smooth onward transport to the hinterland.

“We need all modes of transport”

How do politicians assess the current situation regarding hinterland connections? “A strong economy needs strong transport routes,” said Olaf Lies, Minister for Economic Affairs, Transport, Construction and Digitalisation of Lower Saxony. “Our ports are the gateway to the world – but they can only work if the connection to the hinterland is right.” Based on this premise, significant steps have already been taken as part of the 2030 Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan, but a long-term strategy that focuses equally on

“The ports and resilient hinterland port connections are of national interest.”

Olaf Lies, Minister for Economic Affairs, Transport, Construction and Digitalisation of Lower Saxony
(as at 1 May 2025)



roads, railways and waterways must now follow. “More capacity in the rail and road network, more efficient port connections and better networking with the major economic regions – these are the levers for a future-proof infrastructure,” he added.

“We need all modes of transport,” Lies continued. “Besides rail and waterways, this also includes good road connections. This is crucial, not only for national transport but also for regional transport and the last mile. The current review of the German government’s requirements plan confirms my view once again, as we’ll see further massive growth in freight transport in particular. And we also need to press ahead with important infrastructure projects such as the A20 and A39 motorways.” On the railways, however, Lies calls for better funding programmes, faster bridge renewals, modern interlocking technology, additional sidings and consistent electrification of the lines. He also identified areas where inland waterway transport can be improved. “Inland waterways are the only mode of transport with spare capacity,” he outlined. “We need to expand the inland ports, create more turning facilities and modernise the locks, in order to use this mode of transport more efficiently and further develop it as a climate-friendly alternative.”

Lower Saxony has already successfully charted several successful courses in this regard. “The expansion of the offshore berths in Cuxhaven, the renovation of the large sea lock in Emden, and the planned expansion of both the northern port in Stade and the LNG terminals in Wilhelmshaven and Stade are examples of investments in a strong port infrastructure,” Lies explained. At the same time, Lies is certain that the ports in Lower Saxony fulfil all the requirements for becoming the central logistics hub for European trade and the energy supply of the future – and sees the federal government as having a duty in this regard. “Our ports are taking on a key role in the climate transition as well as ensuring the competitiveness of our business location,” he continued. “This is why our government must also play its part by investing in the ports themselves and in resilient hinterland port connections. It’s of strategic, national interest.”

Multimodality is key

Strengthening the infrastructure in the hinterland is also at the top of Bremen’s political agenda. Multimodality with a clear focus on rail transport is key here. “We’re continuously investing in the further development of Bremen’s port railway so as to continuously increase the already leading share of rail in hinterland transport in the future,” said Kristina Vogt, Bremen’s Senator for Economic Affairs, Port and Transformation. She highlighted two particular projects here. “With an investment volume of 56.1 million euros,” she added, “capacity at Speckenbüttel station will be increased and the infrastructure adapted to the growing requirements. At the same time, DB InfraGO AG is carrying out a comprehensive modernisation programme for high-performance corridors. Both projects converge in the Bremen-Bremerhaven corridor.” She clearly welcomes the fact that the route to Bremerhaven is high up on the railway’s refurbishment list – but the implementation must be plain. “Freight and car trains must not experience significant accessibility restrictions to our ports during the construction period.”

An asset that Bremen can leverage

“Bremen’s ports have first-class connections to the hinterland,” emphasised Robert Howe, Managing Director of bremenports. “This is not only due to the port railway, for which bremenports maintains a well-developed rail infrastructure with around 200 kilometres of track. This is an asset we can leverage,” he added. Besides the terminal capacity expansion at Speckenbüttel station Kristina Vogt spoke of, he also mentions the terminal operator EUROGATE, which has built a new combined



“We’re continuously investing in the further development of Bremen’s port railway.”

Kristina Vogt, Bremen Senator for Economic Affairs, Ports and Transformation

transport facility in Bremerhaven, soon to be followed by a second. “More than half of all containers in hinterland transport reach or leave our ports by rail,” he continued. “In the RoRo sector, in fact, a good 80 per cent of all vehicles that piggyback on rail wagons in hinterland transport to or from the ports of Bremen.”

A lot is also happening on the roads and waterways of Germany’s smallest state. Last year’s port tunnel opening and the expansion of Cherbourger Strasse, for example, significantly improved road connections to the hinterland of Bremerhaven’s Überseehafen. Similar progress is now imminent in Bremen. Roughly a kilometre-long motorway tunnel is being built there that will lead the A281 motorway under the Weser. ➔

At Speckenbüttel station in Bremerhaven, the staging capacities – i.e. the track systems on which trains can be assembled or “parked” for transport to or from the port – are to be expanded. The entire project costs around 56.1 million euros.



“Bremen’s ports have first-class connections to the hinterland.”

Robert Howe, Managing Director, bremenports



Due to be completed in 2029, this structure will close the motorway loop around Bremen, not only providing a further bypass on the way to Bremerhaven, it will also be the first connection for lorries and cars between Bremen’s industrial and port areas on both sides of the Weser. Where water is concerned, the environment surrounding the Stromkaje quay in Bremerhaven represents a real locational advantage. “While, elsewhere, dredging to create appropriate water depths for large ships has to occur regularly and with much more interference in the environment, this effort is significantly less in Bremerhaven,” explained Howe. “This is because, as an ebb-flow river, the Weser simply returns a large proportion of its sediment to the North Sea naturally. The planned deepening of the Outer Weser, which we hope will be completed soon, will improve the connection even further and ensure that the ports in Bremerhaven remain competitive in the future.”

Implementing politically difficult decisions

For Michael de Reese, Chairman of the Lower Saxony Seaports Working Group and Head of the Rhenus Port Logistics Division, one thing is certain. “A port that can’t be reached – whether by water or by land – won’t be able to compete,” he stated categorically. He continued, emphasising his belief that one of the

top priorities over the next few years is to expand and maintain the seaport hinterland traffic in Germany in line with demand. “The ports in Lower Saxony are well positioned and well connected for this step. Nevertheless, there’s still a considerable need for action,” de Reese clarified, not just looking at the Hunte Bridge near Elsfleth or the as yet unelectrified railway line between Cuxhaven and Stade.

For him, the expansion of the A20 and A26 motorways are important infrastructure projects that will significantly improve the German North Sea ports’ hinterland connections and the road links between the Lower Weser and Lower Elbe business areas. On the railways, he also identified considerable strain on the routes in the triangle between Hamburg, Bremen and Hanover, which is why he hopes the “Alpha-E” project will be completed quickly. “The German rail network is at its limit,” he stated. “The general refurbishment of the main transport routes is an important step but Deutsche Bahn won’t be able to manage without new lines.” He continued, shifting focus to inland shipping. “We have numerous options for transport by water – on the Elbe, Weser and Ems. Here, it’s particularly important to ensure that the locks remain functional.”

Regarding the ongoing dredging of the Weser and Ems, de Reese is also clear when he says that these are decisions that are difficult to implement politically. “However, the port industry isn’t a hobby or a mast we’ve simply nailed our colours to ... it’s a national task.” Accordingly, he also expects financial support from Berlin and draws attention to the developments in our neighbouring countries – the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark. “There, the interests of the ports are already firmly anchored in their DNA. In Germany, we’re not quite there yet, unfortunately. But the National Ports Strategy is an important step in the right direction.” Regardless, de Reese criticises how long it takes to put good maritime strategies into practice in Germany. “The timeframes required for decision-making processes are definitely too long and no longer in keeping with the times,” he concluded. (bre) 

“There, the interests of the ports are firmly anchored in their DNA.”

Michael de Reese, Chairman of the Lower Saxony Seaports Working Group



Our Ports. Your Future.

www.nports.de

Follow us on



“CT NEEDS PLANNING SECURITY”

Whether due to a lack of funding for the outdated rail network, route closures or rising costs – combined transport (CT) is currently grappling with a number of problems. However, Niels Riedel, Head of Sales at Eurogate Intermodal, and Philipp Best, Head of Sales at TFG Transfracht, see more rays of hope than dark clouds on the horizon.

“The state of the German rail network is below par.”



LOGISTICS PILOT: For years, CT was predicted to have the highest growth rates in road logistics, at least in percentage terms. However, the reality is now showing a downward trend. How come?

NIELS RIEDEL: At Eurogate Intermodal, we're not seeing a downward trend in maritime combined transport. Despite the general economic weakness, we're currently experiencing very good capacity utilisation, particularly in the import sector. Of course, we're keeping a close eye on market developments and adapting our services flexibly.

PHILIPP BEST: We continue to maintain our positive growth expectations – our figures at TFG also confirm this. Our business is developing well. Nevertheless, we mustn't forget the economic fluctuations

NIELS RIEDEL

Head of Sales at Eurogate Intermodal

of recent years. Events such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the energy crisis have had a huge impact on global supply chains – and are still having an effect today. Then there are other challenges, such as rising costs, persistent or growing price pressure and the increasing shortage of skilled labour, which affect the entire industry. Despite these difficult conditions, we're succeeding in maintaining and continuously expanding our range of services in our AlbatrosExpress network. An example is our successful link to the JadeWeserPort with daily departures to and from 25 terminals in the German-speaking region.

LOGISTICS PILOT: Are infrastructure problems and high energy costs, particularly in rail-based transport, the biggest problems facing CT?

RIEDEL: The state of the German rail network is currently below par, which is why measures and a new government package have been launched. We assume that the infrastructural challenges and their effects will be with us for the next few years. By contrast, after their rapid increase in 2022, energy costs have now become more predictable and are no longer the main cost driver. The current one is track prices. What we need is better predictability for the coming years – ideally with binding details on rising track prices.

BEST: Volatile transport volumes and business fluctuations, in particular, are among the challenges that will accompany CT in the long term and will continue to do so in the future. Here, it's crucial to maintain a high level of flexibility and fast response times. Our nationwide train network, intelligent landing flow bundling and the integration of lorries as a mode of transport allow us to manage this very

PHILIPP BEST

Head of Sales at TFG Transfracht

well. Digitalisation also plays a major role – it's made a significant contribution to improving efficiency and transparency in logistics processes.

LOGISTICS PILOT: How do you deal with route closures, and what solutions do you have for them? Most importantly, though, how do you keep your customers informed of them?

RIEDEL: Route closures are a significant business risk for us. Not only do they lead to longer journey times, they also cause significantly higher costs, for example additional track access charges, increased energy consumption and longer locomotive and personnel deployment times. As a rule, we don't pass these additional costs on to our customers. We communicate possible impacts, such as delays or train cancellations, to our customers openly and as early as we can. The cost risks increase but we can only offset them via the market to a limited extent. This means even more precise planning and close dialogue with everyone involved.

BEST: Proactive and transparent customer communication is hugely important in the event of disruptions. We use several channels for this. On the one hand, we email our customers on our TFG-Info platform. On the other, the protected customer area of our website has a live ticker. In addition to reporting faults, we also always provide possible alternatives we can offer at short notice. Our dense network and close cooperation with partners and suppliers enable us to react flexibly to disruptions, for example by implementing diversions, using alternative terminals or deploying additional lorry capacity.

LOGISTICS PILOT: What should politics do to enable CT to grow? What has priority?

RIEDEL: From our standpoint, there's only one thing CT needs – reliability! Stable products can only be developed for the market if we can build on reliable framework conditions, for example concerning track utilisation fees, network access or long-term infrastructure planning. Access to the network must be organised fairly, and the conditions for the rendering of services must be improved. Unfortunately, we are currently experiencing the opposite. The increasing transfer of risk to the operators, for example through stricter penalty regulations for the non-usage of routes, is making it harder to develop new products. People are less willing to take risks, and innovation is slowing



“Proactive and transparent customer communication is hugely important in the event of disruptions.”

down. If politicians want CT to grow, these barriers must be removed. Regardless of this, at EGIM we're continuing to press ahead with the development of optimised solutions.

BEST: Politics have already charted a significant course. Secured long-term funding for the modernisation and expansion of the rail infrastructure is essential. The course taken with corridor refurbishments promises considerable improvements in the medium to long term. Another focus should be on simplifying and speeding up authorisation procedures. (bre) ■



SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF NEW HEAVY-LOAD SHUTTLE

An inland waterway shuttle – a new transport option for heavy-load and project cargo organised by the Am Zehnhoff-Söns Group in cooperation with BLG LOGISTICS and a company from the construction machinery industry – has been running regularly between the ports of Bremen and the inland areas of western Germany since March.

During the first week of each month, the barge runs from Bonn to the BLG terminal in Neustädter Hafen in Bremen and to the high and heavy terminal in Bremerhaven. On board is heavy or large-volume cargo that fits into the ships' holds, which can be 60 to 73 metres long, 7.4 to 8.7 metres wide and up to four metres high. "In principle, we can transport anything," explains Victoria Prokopp, Head of High & Heavy Sales at BLG LOGISTICS. "From project cargo, such as transformers, generators and plant components, to high-and-heavy

self-driving vehicles, like road construction machinery, tractors or other agricultural equipment. Weight restrictions are only imposed by the port equipment available." The positive feedback the partners have already received about their transport offer during the first few months is pleasing. "We first showcased our idea to the public at LogisticsConnect in Bremen in March," she smiles. "Since then, manufacturers, freight forwarders and shipping companies have been impressed, especially as inland waterway transport has so far largely been used on a project-related basis, not as a shuttle."

The partners have planned a transit time of around six days for the route via the Rhine, the Mittelland Canal and the Weser. "In our planning, we first had to get used to the fact that inland shipping operates a little differently to maritime shipping," explains Prokopp as she outlines the coordination discussions that took place. "It's in operation 24/7 and you have to say goodbye to weekends off. However, it all worked out quickly and smoothly in the end." In turn, the shuttle is highly flexible. "Whether from Neuss, Krefeld, Duisburg, Dortmund or Osnabrück – potential shippers can request individual stops and partial loads from us or BLG along the route," explains Thomas Keppelstrass, Manager Project Cargo & Sales Conventional at Am Zehnhoff-Söns GmbH. "If there's enough demand for it, it's also possible to connect the Moselle and Saar to Bremerhaven." The partners then check which nearby harbour has the appropriate loading infrastructure, including a crane, and arrange everything else.

Looking back on the first shipments, Keppelstrass emphasises the advantages of the shuttle in terms of sustainability as well as its flexibility. "The barge can take several project and high-and-heavy loads at the same time," he explains. "This takes the pressure off the roads and significantly reduces the number of individual journeys." For example, eleven heavy construction machines were shipped on board on one tour, which would have caused around 13.3 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions if transported by road. However, only 7.96 tonnes of CO₂ were emitted carrying the same cargo on the inland waterways. "This is equivalent to a saving of over 40 per cent," adds Keppelstrass. He continues, immediately revealing another impressive statistic to demonstrate the impact of lorry journeys on the infrastructure. "A heavy goods vehicle weighing in at 68 tonnes and with seven loaded axles puts around 28,000 times more strain on the road than a typical, 1.5-tonne car with two axles." When asked about their aims for the new shuttle, Prokopp and Keppelstrass have differing priorities. "Our aim is to establish a regular connection from the



inland to the ports of Bremen, ideally as a shuttle service. And, as the situation stands so far, I'm sure that the shuttle will still be with us in three years' time," says Prokopp. The manager from Bonn wholeheartedly agrees. "I'd also like us to be able to increase the frequency of the shuttle from one to two departures a month by the end of this year."

One of the ways this could be achieved is by attracting new customers, which Prokopp and her team are already working hard to do. "We can also take containers on board where required or transport wind power components to the hinterland," she says. "I can't imagine that much will change in the near future in terms of the numerous construction sites and congested motorway bridges in Germany," she continues with a wink when asked about the current road situation. "Plus, the authorisation procedures for heavy goods transport certainly won't get any easier or less complicated. An inland waterway vessel with a load capacity of around 1,600 tonnes is a sensible alternative." The two partners will also be answering questions about the new heavy-load shuttle at transport logistic, which takes place in Munich from 2 to 5 June. (bre) □

Leaving from Bonn, the heavy-load shuttle sets off for Bremen and Bremerhaven in the first week of each month – with flexible stops along the route.



The first shipments mainly involved road construction machinery on board the barge, such as a stabiliser (top) and a milling machine (left).

More information:

www.blg-logistics.com/schwergut-shuttle
www.azs-group.com/de/



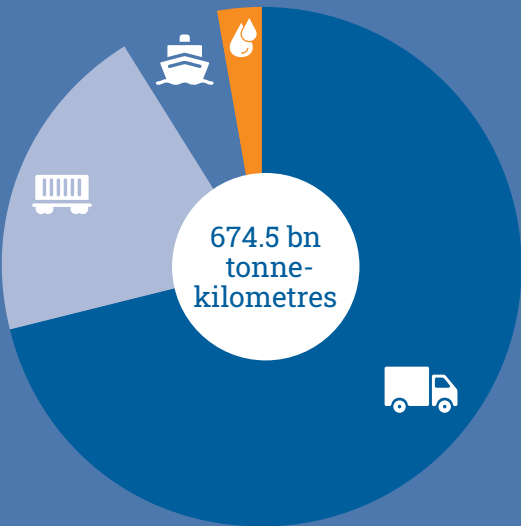
HELD UP, DELAYED AND DIVERTED?

There will always be transport pitfalls in the port hinterland, regardless of the chosen transport mode. HGV transport is susceptible to traffic, bridges with weight restrictions and driver shortages, and rail to line closures, speed restrictions and the decommissioning of track and points. And with lock malfunctions and low water levels, not even inland waterway transport is safe from disruption. But one thing is clear: these modes of transport are the German economy's lifelines – and they work, despite all the criticism. Road transport continues to play a dominant role in the first and last-mile flow of goods to and from the seaports and before and after rail and inland waterway transport. However, transport policy objectives aim to shift transport away from the road and towards eco-friendlier modes of transport. The data and facts listed here are sure to provide some helpful talking points for discussions on this issue.

(bre) □

Breakdown of freight transport by mode

IN GERMANY IN 2023



- 71.3% HGV
- 20.0% Freight train
- 6.1% Inland vessel
- 2.6% Oil pipeline

THE GERMAN TRANSPORT NETWORK



Roads	~ 830,000 km
Rail (operating distance)	~ 39,900 km
Maritime waterways	~ 23,000 km
Inland waterways	~ 7,300 km
Major commercial airports	23

Increase in traffic hours

Around **516,000 TRAFFIC JAMS** were registered on German roads in 2024. Compared to the previous year, the duration of traffic increased by **FIVE PER CENT** to **448,000 HOURS**. At 859,000 kilometres, the total length of traffic jams was somewhat lower than in 2023.

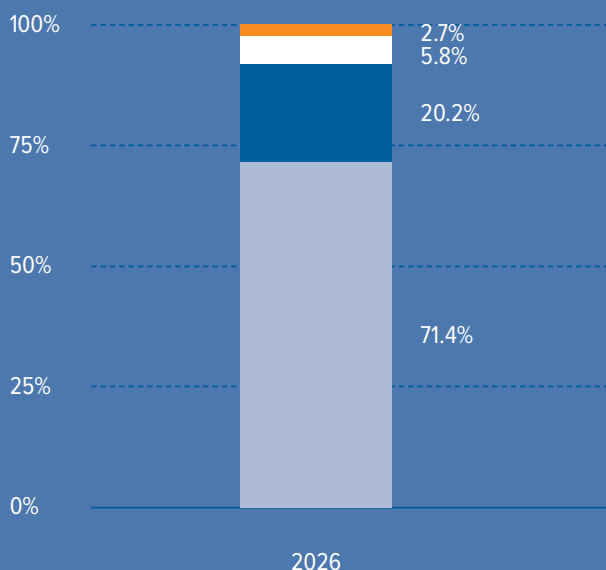
Delayed long-distance trains

More than one-third of all Deutsche Bahn long-distance trains were delayed in 2024. **37.5 PER CENT** of all the stops were delayed by more than five minutes and 59 seconds, and **62.5 PER CENT** of ICE and IC trains were punctual.

ICONS: FIAT/CON.COM, SOURCES: BMDV, FEDERAL TRUNK ROAD AUTHORITY, LÄNGENSTATISTIK DER STRASSENDES ÜBERÖRTLICHEN VERKEHRS, DLR, DIW, "VERKEHR IN ZAHLEN 2024/2025" ON BEHALF OF THE BMDV, BMDV, GERMAN FEDERAL STATISTICAL OFFICE, ALLIANZ PRO SCHIENE, STATISTA, TTS, TRIMODE, ITP, ADAC, IAGESSCHAU, Hanseatic City of Bremen, Senator for Economic Affairs, Ports and Transformation, Seaports of Niedersachsen

Modal split forecast in German freight transport for 2026

■ Road ■ Rail ■ Inland waterway ■ Oil pipeline



HINTERLAND TRANSPORT THROUGH LOWER SAXONY'S SEAPORTS IN 2024

Import by rail
(before seaport transshipment)
Approx. 4.6 million tonnes

Export by rail (after seaport transshipment)
Approx. 4.1 million tonnes

Rail volume at JadeWeserPort:
126,840 TEU

Transshipment volume, inland vessels:
4.71 million tonnes

Rail volume at Bremen ports in 2024



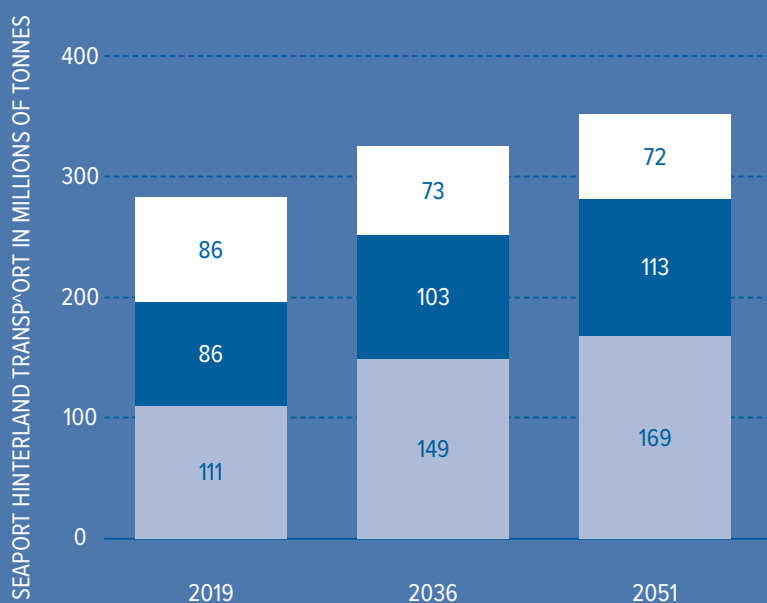
Bremerhaven total	21,795
of which	
Container trains	13,899
Motorail trains	6,629
Other trains	1,267

Bremen city, total	8,670
HB Grolland	5,990
HB Inlandshafen	2,200
HB Hemelingen	480

Simulation of trends in seaport hinterland traffic in Germany from 2019 to 2051

(IN MILLIONS OF TONNES)

■ Road ■ Rail ■ Waterway



BUNDLE, COMBINE, ACCELERATE

From the port to the hinterland, and from the customer to the quay: in Bremen and Wilhelmshaven, two freight villages demonstrate how clever logistics can strengthen locations, shorten routes and link modes of transport – and reveal how to ensure this same level of success in the future.

What is now considered to be a clever solution to congested roads and achieving climate targets originally began in Bremen: the idea of systematically bundling modes of transport – and thus efficiently linking roads, rail and warehouse logistics. That is how freight villages (GVZ) came about, which have been established throughout the whole of Europe since the 1970s. They not only accelerate the flow of goods and provide relief in city centres but are also growing more important in the face of increasing transport.

Established 40 years ago, GVZ Bremen is the oldest freight village in Germany, and it measures just under 500 hectares in size, making it the largest of its kind and placing it at the top of European freight village ranking. Due to its ideal location in the North Range ports, it provides the approximately 160 logistics companies based here with a direct link to the twin ports in Bremerhaven and Bremen as well as the seaports in Wilhelmshaven and Hamburg.

Another benefit is Roland Umschlag's intermodal terminal, which forms the heart of the freight village. The Bremen region has access to daily container traffic of around 2,000 block train runs per year to the three German seaports Wilhelmshaven, Bremerhaven and Hamburg. Additional connections to stations in the German hinterland and to Austria and Italy – including for semi-trailers and swap bodies – complete the service.

Additional space required

Limited fluctuation and high demand pose a challenge. "There's not much space left but we see potential in revitalisation – through redevelopment of brownfields once the first systems have been decommissioned," explains Ralph Sandstedt, Managing Director of GVZ Entwicklungsgesellschaft in Bremen. He also sees further opportunities for future expansion in the Niedervieland III area. For example, 100 hectares along the A 281 motorway would be welcome.

The Weser tunnel along the A 281 motorway should be completed by 2029/2030 and is key to providing traffic access to these new commercial spaces. As an important ring closure in western Bremen, the tunnel will connect the A 1 in the south with the A 27 in the north. "Even if it takes another few years, we'll be glad to have a direct connection from the freight village to the international trunk road network," says Sandstedt. Moreover, important conditions are being created to streamline management of heavy-load transport, offer relief for residential areas and reinforce Bremen's logistics competitiveness.

After all, the completed A 281 will pass directly through the industrial port, where additional spaces will be developed for combined transport (CT).



"Intermodal freight transport is about optimising the port connection schedule."

Ralph Sandstedt, Managing Director of
GVZ Entwicklungsgesellschaft in Bremen

"There's no need to reinvent the world and continuously expand destinations for intermodal freight transport. It's more about optimising the port connection schedule and expanding hinterland routes for the best possible distribution," explains Sandstedt.

The freight village is also in the process of preparing for the future. For example, it is increasing its use of the enormous amounts of photovoltaic energy already generated with the systems on the hall roofs, electrifying the vehicle fleet and expanding the charging infrastructure at GVZ Bremen. The AUTOGVZ lighthouse project launched in January 2025 focuses on fully automated HGV shuttle transport along a route approximately three kilometres in length between Roland Umschlag's intermodal terminal and two logistics centres at GVZ Bremen.

Growth at GVZ Wilhelmshaven

Launched in close proximity to the JadeWeserPort container port in 2012, GVZ Wilhelmshaven is at a different stage of development. It is one of the newest centres in the country and operates as a central hub for the logistics sector in northern Germany and northern German seaports – particularly Wilhelmshaven. "We're operating at 80 per cent capacity," explains Marc-Oliver Hauswald, Managing Director of JadeWeserPort-Vermarktungsgesellschaft.



GVZ Wilhelmshaven operates as a central hub for northern Germany's logistics sector and northern German seaports.



And that number could increase. This year, transshipment at JadeWeserPort should exceed the one-million mark for the first time, due mainly to the new Gemini Cooperation between Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd, which has transformed Wilhelmshaven into Germany's hub. But it also has to do with the settlement of the Zhejiang Seaport Logistics Group in a space of around 31,000 square metres in the P3 Logistic Park at JadeWeserPort. The company is a subsidiary of the Ningbo Zhoushan Port Group, which operates the world's largest port, measured by total transshipment volume.

At the initiative of the Zhejiang Seaport Logistics Group, a new direct liner service between the ports in Ningbo and Wilhelmshaven was also announced last year. The connection between the Chinese coastal city with its population of 9.6 million and Wilhelmshaven now only takes 26 days rather than 40. "The new monthly China-Europe Express (CEX) now brings us 5,000 TEU with every call. There's a real demand," says Hauswald. The Kawa Shipping company's objective is therefore to offer departures every 14 days. Additional ships have already been ordered.

Wilhelmshaven provides the express service with direct access to the European hinterland by road and rail. "With EUROGATE Intermodal (EGIM), containers can now be transported via block train run to destinations like the Budapest Intermodal Logistics Center terminal, which serves as a central hub for intermodal transport in Hungary," explains Hauswald.



"The new monthly China-Europe Express now brings us 5,000 TEU with every call."

Marc-Oliver Hauswald, Managing Director of JadeWeserPort-Vermarktungsgesellschaft

The Chinese can therefore offer door-to-door transport services from Ningbo to Wilhelmshaven and then on to their logistics centre in Budapest.

"As JadeWeserPort's marketing company, we're responsible for delivering outstanding marketing services and ensuring that the right people speak to each other," explains the managing director. Besides new settlements at the freight village, this also includes other services.

According to Hauswald, these developments have significantly boosted demand at the freight village. "More and more customers are asking for larger spaces. For the first time, we'll be marketing maximum spaces of 33 hectares rather than the previous 20 hectares for port-related settlements," says the managing director. "There's already a real scramble for spaces near the port."

(cb)

More information:

www.gvz-org.de

PHOTOS: JADEWESERPORT WILHELMSHAVEN

FACTS

GVZ BREMEN

ESTABLISHED
1985

TOTAL SIZE
475 hectares

INDOOR SPACE
Approx. 1.3 million square metres

COMPANIES
Approx. 160

EMPLOYEES
Approx. 8,700



The new CEX express service delivers 5,000 TEU per call – Kawa Shipping is already planning departures every fortnight.

FACTS

GVZ WILHELMSHAVEN

ESTABLISHED
2012

TOTAL SIZE
160 hectares

INDOOR SPACE
122,000 square metres

COMPANIES
25

EMPLOYEES
1,500

ENVOCONNECT

360° green focus – the new reality



**BREMEN
BREMERHAVEN**
PORTS WITH PASSION.

03. – 04. SEPTEMBER 2025

ENERGIELEITZENTRALE BREMEN



DIE KONFERENZ, DIE NACHHALTIG VERBINDET



envoconnect.com



SECURING FREIGHT

Heavy loads like wind turbines, huge cranes and complex generators are Noah Maritime's bread and butter. Based in Emden, the maritime service provider specialises in securing and lashing cargo and has made a name for itself in the field of project cargo logistics and increased its business fivefold within three years. How did the company manage that?

For his business concept, Cem Öztürk simply needed to keep his eyes open. During his shipping and chartering manager training at epas in Emden, which also included six months with the parent company, the Briese shipping company in Leer, and the subsequent two-and-a-half years of work in operations, he had the opportunity to observe the challenges of securing project cargo.

"I had come to realise that there were a lot of competent tradespeople in the segment who did great work but were also quite focused on day-to-day operations and didn't bother with things like a modern, engaging website and marketing," recalls the company founder and managing director. There must be a better way to do this, he thought. So he quit his job, founded Noah Maritime and began contacting potential customers by email and phone and offering

them cargo lashing services. "I knew what mattered to shipping companies and how to simplify their work," explains Öztürk.

Whilst shipping companies tend to secure and lash the containers themselves and service providers specialise in vehicle transport, project cargo always requires tailored securing and lashing concepts. "Sometimes the crew itself is in charge of lashing cargo, but there are rarely any welding experts on board. If that's the case, we can do it." That is why it was clear from the beginning that one of the core USPs should be taking as much of the work as possible off the hands of the customer, which could be the shipping company, freight forwarder, cargo owner or port, depending on who is responsible for securing the cargo as specified in the manifest. That meant total commitment for Öztürk, who was involved both administratively and physically in cargo lashing during the first four years. "I did the office work and helped out on the ships, which is where I developed hands-on experience."

As far as Finland and France for customers

Things were going well, "especially because our competitors were taking it easy and we were hard at work," reports Öztürk. "That made it possible for us as the newcomer to acquire market shares in no time." From the headquarters in Emden and the branch in Gdańsk, the metalworking and welding teams have

been travelling as far as Finland and France for some time now to secure and release project cargo. Most of the cargo they deal with is wind turbine parts such as towers, rotor blades, generators and nacelles. And then there are cranes, large generators and smaller ships that are transported with multi-purpose vessels.

The number of employees required is dependent on the job. “Four employees are currently deployed on a ship at Teesport near Middlesbrough, England, for five days,” says Öztürk. “A total of twelve offshore tower sections had to be released there, which we had previously secured in accordance with all safety regulations.” The individual sections weighed between 202 and 324 tonnes and measured between 32 and 40 metres in length. His employees had plenty of tools with them in the van, including three plasma cutters and five angle grinders. The lashing chains and metal plates used to secure the cargo were welded directly onto the ship and the cargo itself to prevent it from sliding around during the sea voyage. “Broadly speaking, this is a typical job for us,” says Öztürk.

Noah Maritime currently employs 25 to 30 people, either directly or indirectly via subcontractors. There are usually more in the summer, as that is the peak season for project cargo. Ideally, the company will have notice of a few weeks for jobs like that. “But sometimes I get calls from customers who ask, ‘How soon can your team be in Sweden?’” says the managing director. In other words, he cannot offer a nine-to-five job, meaning that sometimes longer working hours and weekend work are involved.

New software for efficient scheduling

But his employees, who tend to be in their early to mid-30s, also see that as a benefit. “They enjoy travelling and like the idea of doing demanding physical work

From the headquarters in Emden and the branch in Gdańsk, the teams travel as far as Finland and France to secure and release project cargo.



The lashing chains and metal plates used to secure the cargo are welded directly onto the ship and the cargo itself to prevent it from sliding around during the sea voyage.

with heavy lashing chains and climbing around in the cargo hatches of the multi-purpose vessels for two to three weeks at a time and then having a week or two off.” Ninety per cent of his employees get around by car – often from ship to ship. Öztürk has just recently introduced the plancraft software to efficiently coordinate team assignments and materials. “It works really well,” he says. There is always plenty of work to be done in the office: “We’re also a small travel agency in the background and are in charge of accommodation, ferries, agent contact and, if necessary, flights,” says the entrepreneur. And then, of course, he has to respond to customer queries. “My main work is planning and coordination.”

Öztürk achieved an annual turnover of 440,000 euros in 2020 and 2.1 million euros in 2023. “Sales have doubled every year since 2020,” he adds. This period also included the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns in many countries, at which time he successfully conducted cold calls through Google and LinkedIn in Sweden, where there were only a few restrictions. In 2024, he applied for a spot in the FOCUS-Business portal’s ranking of companies with the largest sales growth based on percentage and secured 60th place overall out of 500 companies and second place among the logistics companies.

However, you cannot maintain this level of growth in this segment over the long term. “Now it’s largely about efficiency and further optimising all the processes.” Öztürk has just purchased a larger office right on the water in Emden to create more space, as the growth champion, which generated sales of 2.3 million in 2024, has set itself some ambitious goals for 2025. He plans to increase sales by 20 to 30 per cent compared to the previous year.

(cb) □

FACTS

NOAH MARITIME

HEADQUARTERS

Emden

ADDITIONAL LOCATION

Gdańsk

ESTABLISHED

2017

AREA OF BUSINESS

Welding services and cargo lashing in shipping

EMPLOYEES

25 to 30, including subcontractors

TURNOVER IN 2024

2.3 million

More information:

www.noah-maritime.de



ASUKA III AS A POTENTIAL LAUNCH PAD

EMDEN Built at MEYER WERFT, the Asuka III ship was supplied with all the essentials, from sieves to lemon squeezers, at the Emden seaport's Papenburg shipyard in April before being handed over to its new owner, NYK Line. "Once again, this successful event has demonstrated what our port is capable of when everyone works together," says Reinhard Hegewald, Managing Director of Emden Hafenförderungsgesellschaft. "We believe that this can lead to a future of supplying other cruise ships built in Papenburg."



NORDFROST EXPANDS EXECUTIVE BOARD

SCHORTENS The NORDFROST Group expanded its Executive Board in March from two to four members. Philipp Brandstrup and Dennis Gloystein, two long-term company managers, were appointed new executive directors and have since complemented the company's governing body alongside managing partners Dr Falk Bartels and Britta Bartels. Whilst Gloystein oversees the operational divisions warehouse, transport and trade logistics, Brandstrup is responsible for port logistics, internal services and construction and property management.

PORTS READY FOR CLOSE-UP

BREMEN With over 15,800 visitors, Filmfest Bremen set a new record in March. The competition category "Gateways to the World – the Power of Ports" was organised for the first time with bremenports as a partner. *Fire Drill* by Maximilian Villwock and *Como el viento* by Jacqueline van Vugt (centre) were selected Best Short Film and Best Feature Film respectively in this category, highlighting the topic of ports in film. The jury comprised Ilona Rieke, Artistic Director of Filmfest Bremen, Kai Stührenberg (left), Bremen's State Councillor for Ports, and Ronald Schwarze, bremenports Head of Marketing.



PERS CERTIFICATION FOR JADEWESERPORT

WILHELMSHAVEN In May 2025, JadeWeserPort was successfully certified for the fifth time in accordance with the Brussels-based environmental initiative EcoPorts Port Environmental Review System (PERS), a tool used for the extensive analysis and monitoring of environmental management at ports. "We're proud to have acquired this important certification. It's a confirmation of our efforts to position JadeWeserPort as a pioneer in sustainable port logistics," explains Holger Banik (left), Managing Director of both JadeWeserPort Realisierungs GmbH and NPorts.



KEY TO COMPETITIVENESS IN THE WIND INDUSTRY

CUXHAVEN Port expansion with the new berths 5 to 7 kicked off in February, and a new heavy-duty bridge should now also provide a direct connection from the transshipment and commercial spaces and the Siemens Gamesa factory behind the quay line to the B 73 federal motorway. "A heavy-duty bridge tailored to the requirements of the offshore industry would significantly strengthen the location's competitiveness," says Arne Ehlers, Chairman of the Board, Hafenwirtschaftsgemeinschaft Cuxhaven (HWG), and Managing Partner of Blue Water BREB.



EXCITING VACANT POSITIONS

OLDENBURG In April, the new Seaports of Niedersachsen career page at www.seaports.de/karriere began advertising training and employment opportunities at Lower Saxony's new seaports. The site allows potential candidates to find vacant positions at different port locations in Lower Saxony as well as search for positions in many different areas of activity, whether administrative, technical or industrial. Besides apprenticeships, some companies also offer the opportunity to apply for a sandwich course, thus combining practical learning with a degree course.

WATERWAYS – WHEN ART MEETS LOGISTICS

BREMEN “Innovative Waterway Transportation” (InnoWaTr) is the title of an EU-funded Interreg North Sea project dedicated to shifting more cargo from the road to inland waterways. A total of 26 partners from business and science and, for the past year or so, students from the University of the Arts (HfK) Bremen are involved in the project, which brings together experts from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany. “The idea was to expand our focus to inland waterway transport and broaden our horizons beyond ‘mere logistics,’” says Lars Stemmler, who oversees InnoWaTr on the bremenports side. One of the port management company’s responsibilities in the project is to create a sort of manual that, for example, explains how to replicate this shift of freight transport to inland waterways at other locations.



PASSING THE BATON AT ZDS

HAMBURG Dr Florian Keisinger joined the management board of the Association of German Seaport Operators (ZDS) on 1 April 2025 and took over from Daniel Hosseus as the managing director on 1 May 2025. Keisinger was previously in charge of collaboration with political decision-makers and industry partners in Germany, France and Spain as Campaign Manager at Airbus Defence and Space and was then appointed Head of Policy Planning at Airbus. Keisinger has also gained experience in the management teams of the German Federal Ministry of Finance and the German Bundestag.

MSC IS MOVING TO ÜBERSEEINSEL

BREMEN After 19 years in Hafenstrasse, MSC is relocating its headquarters within Bremen to Überseeinsel. The new “Verde” office building is connected to Überseeinsel’s own energy, cooling and heating supply and boasts special facade greenery as well as rainwater storage for sustainable irrigation. Besides providing more space and a modern infrastructure, the building will also offer staff a large and inviting green roof terrace, which is perfect for lunch breaks. The move is planned for the third quarter of 2026.



INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIALS RECYCLING AT THE PORT

PAPENBURG In May, proRC GmbH announced an investment of approx. five million euros in a new processing and transshipment facility at the Papenburg port for building materials sourced from secondary raw materials. One objective is to manufacture high-quality alternative materials for road and civil engineering companies that help increase sustainability in the construction industry and conserve resources. From there, the authorised waste disposal company, founded in 2023, can carry out its logistics not only by road and rail, but also by eco-friendly shipping in the future.



BHV KOMPETENZATLAS WEITERBILDUNG GOES ONLINE

BREMEN In May, the training work group of BHV – Bremische Hafen- und Logistikvertretung launched a new website, the “Kompetenzatlas Weiterbildung” (expertise atlas for training), at www.weiterbildung.bhv-bremen.de providing employers and employees with access to a whole host of BHV member company offers in this area – with everything clearly sorted according to type, topic and target group. Whilst only BHV member companies are permitted to post offers on the website, the website can also be used by non-members.



AI AS A DIGITAL MOTIVATOR

The Bremen-based start-up “to matter” is committed to using artificial intelligence (AI) to identify employee needs and create a digital database. The resulting recommendations should both serve as a form of motivation over the long term and increase company efficiency.



Satisfied employees are more motivated. Using AI, to matter plans to better identify their needs and provide HR staff with helpful recommendations.

Inspired by the intro to the cult TV series *Star Trek: Enterprise*, you could say, “The year is 2025. These are the voyages of the start-up to matter. Its mission: to seek out new solutions, help motivate staff and successfully navigate the company”.

Or according to Dr Moritz Schirmer, Managing Director and co-founder of to matter, “We use AI to uncover hidden knowledge and thus make the informal sphere visible”. He considers that to be the factors which create a positive environment for employees, from healthy workstation design and an open communication structure to opportunities for personal development.

“We provide employees with the opportunity to articulate their perspectives and requirements in special interviews. The results are then bundled and clustered in digital form. After that, we tap into the knowledge of the world using AI – for example, to develop tailored recommendations for HR staff with best practices

and case studies,” explains Schirmer. Founded in summer 2023, the start-up gradually optimised the underlying AI application over the past 18 months in collaboration with pilot partners from the manufacturing sector, telecommunications and the insurance industry. “Technology is the smallest problem,” says the manager. “It’s much more about the people who have a hard time incorporating active machines into their business processes as decision-makers.” But it did not take long, he says, for the new AI tool and its capabilities to win over the selected pilot partners. According to Schirmer, it reduced the amount of time from data collection to implementation of the corresponding measures by 90 per cent.

From their studies at the University of Bremen, Schirmer and his to matter co-founder Jan-Lucas Sachse Wang contribute extensive interdisciplinary expertise in data science, AI, human resources and psychology to the project. They also incorporate experts in software development, business development and sales into their team as necessary. “In this way, we’ve developed a tool that sensibly complements the HR department’s toolbox, thus supporting important decisions concerning leadership and transformation in the future,” says Schirmer, describing the company’s established “flight plan”. (bre) ■



“We’ve developed a tool that sensibly complements the HR department’s toolbox.”

Dr Moritz Schirmer, Managing Director and co-founder of to matter



EXCAVATOR NOT TO BE REPAIRED

BREMERHAVEN Following a major fire in the machine room of the Bremerhaven bucket chain excavator at the end of 2024, a decision in April meant that repair was not justified given the high costs and age of the ship. “Nothing else would’ve been economically viable, especially as the future concept of wet dredging approved by the Senate and Port Committee members for Bremen and Bremerhaven calls for a decommissioning of the working vessel,” says Henry Behrends, Head of Port Operations at bremenports. This will now take place about two years earlier than originally planned.

VOGT: MORE STATE FUNDS FOR TRANSFORMATION

BREMERHAVEN According to Kristina Vogt, Bremen’s Senator for Economic Affairs, Ports and Transformation, it is essential that the German government allocates higher funds to German seaports. She repeated this demand at the German Transport Forum’s (DVF) Port/Shipping Steering Committee meeting in Bremerhaven in March and said, “The states won’t be able to shoulder these huge investments on their own.” She also talked about important upcoming projects, including EnergyPort in Bremerhaven and a special transshipment terminal for CO₂ at Neustädter Hafen.



TAILWIND IN GERMAN MARITIME SHIPPING

BREMEN Sabine Zeller, MD of Berufsbildungsstelle Seeschifffahrt (BBS), was delighted to present the 2024 BBS annual report in Rostock in March. “Many measures have been taken in recent years to attract the next generation of employees and consolidate the shipping location. I couldn’t be happier that these efforts are now bearing fruit. We were able to conclude around 18 per cent more ship mechanic training contracts in 2024 than in the previous year. And our most impressive achievement was increasing the number of female apprentices from 12 to 23, which is more than 90 per cent,” says Zeller.



NPORTS’ 20TH ANNIVERSARY: A LOOK BACK AND AHEAD

OLDENBURG NPorts is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Over the past 20 years, a total of 15 port locations have been expanded, repaired and maintained at a cost of more than 1.5 billion euros. Investment in Lower Saxony’s seaports increased from 2.9 million euros in the first year, 2005, to 117.6 million euros in 2024. “Standing still has never been an option for us, as the importance of Lower Saxony’s seaports has soared over the years,” said NPorts managing director Holger Banik at the annual media conference of Lower Saxony’s seaports in Oldenburg in March. In the weeks that followed, NPorts held press conferences at the individual port locations Wilhelmshaven, Emden, Brake, Norden and Cuxhaven, where Banik and his regional management team – here at Norddeich with Katrin Büscher, Deputy Manager of the Norden branch, and Branch Manager Friedrich Voß – presented further details, including the amount invested in location maintenance and development, the projects that have received the most funds, as well as the measures on the 2025 agenda.



HIGHER TRANSSHIPMENT AT GERMAN SEAPORTS

WIESBADEN Despite a challenging market environment, German seaports increased the volume of import and export transshipment in 2024. As announced by the German Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) in March, around 274 million tonnes passed through the quays last year, equivalent to growth of a good 2.3 per cent compared to 2023. Despite this growth, we have not yet reached the level of transshipment of the pre-coronavirus year 2019. Total volume in 2024 was 6.7 per cent below this historical best record from 2019, when 293.5 million tonnes were loaded or discharged. The most important partner country in German foreign trade by sea in 2024 was the US with 29.8 million tonnes (up by 6.7 per cent). According to Angela Titzrath, President of the Association of German Seaport Operators (ZDS), the 2024 results reveal that “Germany, with its diverse port landscape, is well positioned to accommodate a whole host of requirements”. The national ports therefore play “a central role” in the German economy, she says.



J. MÜLLER FOUNDS NEW JOINT VENTURE

BRAKE In April, the J. MÜLLER Group founded J. MÜLLER Chartering GmbH with experienced sea freight partners. The newly established company is a joint venture of J. MÜLLER Weser and sea freight experts Jörg Lampe and Karsten Bolles. Management of the new joint venture, in which J. MÜLLER is the majority shareholder, falls to Clemens Sommerfeld (left), also Managing Director of J. MÜLLER Weser, and Karsten Bolles (right), who is also Head of Sales at the new company. With this step, the Group is expanding its service portfolio.



TWO NEW MEMBERS ON THE VBSP BOARD

BREMEN The Bremen Freight Forwarders Association (VBSp) appointed new board members at its AGM in early May. Thilo Kugel and Sven Schoon stepped down as part of the regular rotation. In their place, Sylvia Meyer Nesslage (3rd from right), Authorised Officer and airfreight expert at freight forwarder Carl Ungewitter Trinidad Lake Asphalt, and Arne Müller (right), MD of TERRATRANS Internationale Spedition, were appointed. Thorsten Dornia (4th from right) and Holger Schulz (2nd from right) were reappointed Chair and Deputy Chair respectively.



GREEN FOCUS AWARD: NOMINATION STILL POSSIBLE

BREMEN No time to lose! Recommendations for the Green Focus Award can be submitted until 6 June using the online form at www.bremenports.de/nachhaltigkeit/green-focus. Since 2014, bremenports has been acknowledging the “Most Environmentally Friendly Ship” and the “Most Environmentally Friendly Shipping Company Fleet” to call at Bremen ports. Last year, the award included the category “Engagement”, honouring people who have campaigned for sustainable development in the port and logistics industry in a unique way. Can you think of anyone suitable?



FLY THE FLAG FOR THE ENERGY TRANSITION

COPENHAGEN The WindEurope exhibition in April was all about the future of wind power and the European energy transition. Seaports of Niedersachsen and NPorts also flew the flags of wind energy at the three-day event with a shared stand. Their teams presented a wide range of logistics services for the wind energy industry, from the transshipment of ultra-long and heavy components to storage, installation and utility lines for onshore and offshore wind farms. It was a wonderful opportunity for many customers and business partners to share their experiences.

BLG LOGISTICS GROUP INCREASES EARNINGS

BREMEN Despite economic uncertainty and geopolitical crises, the BLG LOGISTICS GROUP was able to close the 2024 financial year with stable sales of 1.2 billion euros, an increase compared to the previous year. “Due to positive developments in the Container and Automobile divisions, in particular, we achieved 91.8 million euros in earnings before taxes,” said Matthias Magnor, Board Chairman of the BLG Group, at the press conference in Bremen at the end of April. Despite a drop in vehicle volumes compared to the previous year, turnover in the Automobile segment increased by 7.1 per cent to 687.5 million euros. In the Container division, the 50 per cent stake in EUROGATE resulted in an increase in earnings of twelve per cent to 61.2 million euros. The economic situation had a negative impact on sales and profits in the Contract division, which fell by 33.5 million to 535.6 million euros compared to the previous year. “It’s important to be vigilant and recognise and exploit opportunities. This provides us with a chance to anticipate the pressure of change and adapt accordingly. That’s where BLG excels,” says Magnor.



FREIGHT VILLAGES SHOULD CALCULATE CARBON FOOTPRINT

BREMEN In March, Thomas Nobel, MD of Deutsche GVZ-Gesellschaft, recommended that freight villages in Germany calculate their carbon footprint in the future. Some freight villages, including the one in Bremen, have already begun the process. Two-thirds of freight village emissions are purportedly the result of transport, which is why this issuer is the most important lever in preventing CO₂. Nobel is hesitant to define a deadline for climate neutrality at the freight villages. “We won’t be able to say by decree that we intend to achieve this goal by 2030 or 2035.”



NEW PRESIDENT AT WHV

WILHELMSHAVEN

An era came to an end on 15 April 2025, the 40th anniversary of Wilhelmshavener Hafenwirtschafts-Vereinigung (WHV). WHV President John H. Neumann (right) has retired after 40 years of service on the board and has passed on the company reins to Andreas Bullwinkel (left). “John has set a high bar. He was able to win people over for many forward-looking ideas – with foresight, persistence and genuine interest,” said Bullwinkel during a ceremony at Hotel Atlantic celebrating WHV’s foundation day and Niemann’s lifetime achievements.

TRADE WAR COSTS BREMEN FREIGHT FORWARDERS WORK

BREMEN There is growing concern about massive drops in overseas business at the Bremen site, which has always focused heavily on the US. Based on a survey of member companies of the Bremen Freight Forwarders Association (VBSp), the site warned in April of losses in sea freight of around 15 per cent due to US punitive tariffs and retaliatory tariffs. “It appears that there will be significant drops in sales for the freight forwarders based in Bremen,” says VBSp Managing Director Thorsten Dornia, who considers this forecast to be optimistic. “It could be even worse,” he said.



SECOND FSRU MOORS ON THE JADE

WILHELMSHAVEN Excelsior, the second floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) in Wilhelmshaven, is now operating as a floating LNG import terminal. The special ship of shipping company Excelsior Energy is moored on the Jade at the end of April. The Höegh Esperanza FSRU has also been in operation there since December. “The arrival of the Excelsior is another milestone on the path to completing the Wilhelmshaven 2 terminal, thus ensuring supply and stabilising gas prices in Germany and the rest of Europe,” says Peter Röttgen, Managing Director of Deutsche Energy Terminal GmbH (DET).

2025		 GERMAN PORTS	
<h1>SAVE THE DATE</h1> <p>Numerous exciting events have been announced and are planned. However, there may still be short-term postponements after the editorial deadline. The information published here is subject to change. We would recommend that you check again shortly before the event is due to take place, for instance on our website www.logistics-pilot.com/event-kalender/</p> 	JUN	2. – 5. 6. 2025	Transport Logistic www.transportlogistic.de Munich, Germany
		17. – 18. 6. 2025	Vocatium www.vocatium.de Bremen, Germany
		26. 6. 2025	Hong Kong Convention Ceremony www.bremenports.de Bremen, Germany
	SEP	3. – 4. 9. 2025	ENVOCONNECT www.envoconnect.com Bremen, Germany
		5. 9. 2025	Lower Saxony Port Day www.seaports.de Brake, Germany
		5. 9. 2025	58th Captain's Day www.bhv-bremen.de Bremen, Germany
		18. 9. 2025	LOGISTICS TALK www.bremenports.de Vienna, Austria
		30. 9. – 2. 10. 2025	Breakbulk Americas www.americas.breakbulk.com Houston, USA
	OCT	9. 10. 2025	LOGISTICS TALK www.bremenports.de Neuss, Germany
		14. – 16. 10. 2025	AntwerpXL www.antwerpxl.com Antwerp, Belgium
		29. – 31. 10. 2025	Transport Logistic Southeast Asia www.transportlogisticsea.com Singapore, Singapore
	NOV	5. – 7. 11. 2025	HTG Congress www.htg-online.de Münster, Germany
		11. 11. 2025	BHV-Hafenclub www.bhv-bremen.de Bremen, Germany
		11. – 13. 11. 2025	Transport Logistic Americas www.tl-americas.org Miami, USA

IMPRESSUM

LOGISTICS PILOT
ISSN 2195-8548

Publisher:

bremenports GmbH & Co. KG
Hafenstraße 49, 28217 Bremen
www.bremenports.de
Ronald Schwarze
Phone: +49 421 30901-610
Email: marketing@bremenports.de

Project and Advertising Manager:

Thomas Walbröhl
Phone: +49 421 30901-616
Email: marketing@bremenports.de

Advertisement price list of 1.1.2023
www.bremenports.de/logistics-pilot

Publishing house: DVV Media Group GmbH
Heidenkampsweg 73–79, 20097 Hamburg
www.dvvmedia.com

Project management:

Thorsten Breuer (editor-in-chief);
Julia Schwericke

Editorial team: Thorsten Breuer (bre), responsible;
Claudia Behrend (cb), Sven Mentel (men)
Email: redaktion.logisticspilot@dvvmedia.com

Layout: Monique Dobrzalak

Translation: translektion GmbH

Printer:

müllerditzten, Bremerhaven www.muellerditzten.de
printed on 100% recycled FSC-certified paper

LOGISTICS PILOT is published five times a year in a print run of 5,000 copies (German). Contents can also be viewed at www.logistics-pilot.com. To view them, please scan the QR code.

The publication, its articles and its illustrations are protected by copyright. Any copying or distribution must be approved by the publishing house or publisher. This shall also apply to electronic use or transfer into databases, online media (Internet), intranet or other electronic storage media. The publisher and publishing house decline any liability for photos, manuscripts and other data media submitted without request.

The male gender is usually used in LOGISTICS PILOT for depicting persons in general or people-related nouns in order to simplify legibility. These terms apply in principle to all genders in the sense of gender equality. Any abbreviation used in this respect has only been done for editorial reasons and does not reflect any judgement.



**THIS MAGAZINE IS
A JOINT PROJECT OF:**

bremenports GmbH & Co. KG
Bremische Hafen- und Logistikvertretung e. V.
JadeWeserPort-Marketing GmbH & Co. KG
Seaports of Niedersachsen GmbH



BLG
LOGISTICS

FORTSCHRITT IN TRADITION VERANKERT.

**Wir bieten seit fast 150 Jahren
zuverlässig weltweite Lösungen.**

blg-logistics.com



LÖSUNGEN FÜR DIE HAFENWIRTSCHAFT.

dbh

dbh bietet ein großes Portfolio an Software-Lösungen im Hafenbereich an: für Binnen- und Seehäfen, für Verlader, Reedereien und Industrieunternehmen.



Haben wir Ihr Interesse geweckt?
Nehmen Sie direkt Kontakt mit uns auf.