

LOGISTICS PILOT

EDITION

#1 2026

GERMAN PORTS

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Main Topic

No matter whether cooperation, alliances or networks is the subject – pooling strengths and asserting oneself in the market is the goal.



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Rolf Habben Jansen,
Chief Executive Officer Hapag-Lloyd

“ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER”

Dear readers,

The past few years have brought lasting change to global logistics. The Covid-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions, disruptions in the Red Sea, temporary restrictions in the Panama Canal and congestion in ports around the world have highlighted how fragile global supply chains can be. Uncertainty is no longer an exception to the rule; it is now a daily business reality.

Precisely these circumstances emphasise the importance of cooperation and resilient networks. Going it alone can no longer guarantee robust and reliable supply chains. Cooperation is not an option, rather a strategic necessity, extending far beyond the shipping industry.

Shipping companies, terminals, energy and fuel producers, infrastructure providers, politicians, shippers and, ultimately, consumers must all take responsibility. Only by coordinating investments, sharing risks and aligning long-term perspectives can we reduce complexity, create stability in our supply chains and ensure reliability.

The Gemini network is a prime example of successful cooperation. Wilhelmshaven has established itself as a reliable and efficient hub in Northern Europe. The close cooperation of all parties involved – from shipping companies and terminals to politicians and all other partners in the logistics chain – was and remains crucial to this success.

It demonstrates that, especially in increasingly volatile times, cooperation is *the* decisive lever for keeping supply chains stable and offering outstanding quality to customers worldwide.

Best wishes,
Rolf Habben Jansen



PHOTO: DIRK NÖLLE/DESY



COOPERATIVE TEMPERATURE DROP

Temperatures in western Hamburg are expected to fall to minus 271 degrees Celsius this year. No, these are not the predictions of some madcap meteorologist, rather the conditions achieved by introducing liquid helium into the European XFEL (X-ray Free Electron Laser), the world's largest X-ray laser, which resides in a 3.4-kilometre-long underground concrete tube that runs from Hamburg-Bahrenfeld towards Schenefeld in Schleswig-Holstein.

What makes it special is that the X-ray laser enables researchers to examine atomic structures and dynamic processes, including chemical reactions, viruses and cells, at the nanometre level in unprecedented detail. To this end, the European XFEL generates around 27,000 X-ray laser flashes per second, recording "films" at maximum speed and with three-dimensional images. This is achieved by introducing liquid helium that, due to its extremely low temperature, creates the conditions necessary for the electrons to shoot through the tube at nearly the speed of light.

The images, which are generated in an astonishing billionth of a second, contribute to the development of new materials for use in IT, medicine and energy research. However, they are also intended to help investigate what is known as superionic water, which forms only under both extreme heat and pressure. Experimental researchers and other experts believe that this novel form of water occurs on other planets, such as Uranus and Neptune.

A total of twelve partner countries are involved in the European XFEL, which went into operation in 2017 – Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Slovakia, Spain, Hungary and the United Kingdom. This makes for a truly "cool" collaboration, with the partners investing over 1.22 billion euros in the construction and commissioning of the facility alone. (bre) ■

PARTNERSHIP AS A COMPETITIVE EDGE



Some talk of collaborations and networks, others of alliances. Regardless of the terminology used, the underlying concept is always one of pooling strengths – for example, sharing risks, reducing costs or accessing new markets. Especially in times of complex global challenges, such as those we face today, this type of collaboration seems to be developing into an efficient (survival) strategy.



“The complexity of global supply chains has increased significantly in recent years.”

Axel Luedeke, Managing Director Network and Cooperations at Hapag-Lloyd

Febuary 2025 saw the launch of the Gemini Cooperation – an operational partnership between container shipping companies Hapag-Lloyd and Maersk that boasts a global network of 29 mainliner and 29 shuttle services. Hapag-Lloyd fondly refers to this as a hub-and-spoke model, as regular shuttle connections radiate out from the central hub ports like spokes from a wheel. “This enables us to make better use of our fleet, have clearly defined rotations and more stable operational processes,” explains Axel Luedeke, Managing Director Network and Cooperations at Hapag-Lloyd, while outlining the benefits of the Gemini Cooperation, which currently has around 340 ships from both partners in operation.

One year on, Luedeke’s assessment is equally positive. “The cooperation has delivered exactly what we hoped for,” he adds. “Significantly higher schedule reliability, noticeably fewer port omissions and a clear improvement in overall service quality. Our schedule reliability of 90 per cent sets new standards in the industry.” Furthermore, additional upgrades are planned for this year without altering the existing coverage. These include a further port call in Wilhelmshaven, which has been integrated into the partners’ Indian Ocean Service (IOS) since late January 2026.

“These are strong signals of appreciation for Germany’s only deep-water port.”

Holger Banik, Managing Director, JadeWeserPort-Realisierungs GmbH & Co. KG



But what motivates shipping companies in general, and Hapag-Lloyd in particular, to conclude such partnerships? For Luedeke, the answer is clear. “The complexity of global supply chains has increased significantly in recent years,” he continues. “Cooperation helps shipping companies to structure networks more efficiently, share risks and improve quality for customers.” The latter is particularly important for Hapag-Lloyd – as Luedeke states, the Hamburg-based shipping company aims to become the “undisputed number one for quality” as part of its “Strategy 2030”. He also makes it clear that Gemini is a purely operational partnership. “Competition between Maersk and ourselves will continue,” he emphasises, while reiterating that certain parameters must be met for a partnership of this kind to work properly. “Above all, this requires clear common goals, mutual trust and open communication. It’s important that roles, responsibilities and decision-making are clearly defined.”

Praise for the Gemini Cooperation

Even before the Gemini Cooperation was launched, Hapag-Lloyd Chief Executive Officer Rolf Habben Jansen predicted that the partnership would lead to “an overall positive development” in cargo volumes at German ports. The current analysis seems to confirm this statement. “It’s clear that Hapag-Lloyd is highly committed to JadeWeserPort,” says NPorts Managing Director Holger Banik. “The Gemini Cooperation’s calls have significantly increased our transshipment figures.” He emphasises this further by noting that Wilhelmshaven is the “first port of call” from China to Europe for many of the Gemini Cooperation’s services. “This decision by the partners, as well as the christening and naming of the Hapag-Lloyd container ship *Wilhelmshaven Express* at JadeWeserPort in October 2025, are strong signals of appreciation for Germany’s only deep-water port,” Banik adds.

Steffen Leuthold, Head of Corporate Communications at EUROGATE, has observed the Gemini Cooperation’s positive influence across several sites. “In general, we can say that the 2025 financial year was a thoroughly positive one for EUROGATE,” he states. “A key driver of this development was the newly formed Gemini Cooperation, which has selected two of our terminals, EUROGATE Container Terminal Wilhelmshaven and North Sea Terminal Bremerhaven, as international hub ports in its network and is also generating significantly more throughput at these locations. However, our EUROGATE terminals in Bremerhaven and Hamburg are also benefiting from this new partnership as common user hubs, as are other shipping line customers and alliances.”





“Cooperation based on mutual respect isn’t merely an option, it’s a prerequisite.”

Matthias Magnor, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of BLG LOGISTICS

“The quality of cooperation at the interfaces is crucial”

Matthias Magnor has been Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the seaport and logistics service provider BLG LOGISTICS since early 2025. “Stable networks and partnerships are strategic levers for us,” he states confidently. “In complex supply chains, it’s not only operational excellence that counts, but also the quality of cooperation at the interfaces.” Accordingly, his company regularly enters into long-term, trust-based

partnerships along the entire supply chain – with industry and trade, shipping companies, terminal and infrastructure partners, and with technology providers.

Last year, for example, the door-to-door transportation of a state-of-the-art wood press from Bremen across the Atlantic to the USA demonstrated how such partnerships operate. Plant constructor Siempelkamp provided logistics management for the international transport of complex plant components, while project freight forwarder UTC Overseas managed the sea freight and delivery of the item from the port in Longview to the Roseburg construction site in Oregon. PTS Logistics ensured that the fragile components were packed appropriately for transport by sea, and BLG LOGISTICS oversaw the central transshipment at Neustädter Hafen. BBC Chartering handled the subsequent overseas transport, bringing the entire cargo across the Atlantic in a single charter with its heavy-lift vessel *BBC Aquamarine*.

“Such collaboration only works if responsibility is taken, information is shared openly and decisions are made transparently. Cooperation based on mutual respect isn’t merely an option, it’s a prerequisite,” Magnor concludes, not only reflecting on this 10,000-tonne freight logistics shipment, but also with an eye on the group’s future projects.

With the heavy-lift vessel *BBC Aquamarine*, the entire cargo was shipped across the Atlantic from Neustädter Hafen to Oregon in a single charter.



PHOTOS: BLG LOGISTICS, MCN, BLG SIEMPELKAMP, MSC

Developing and promoting new solutions together

In 2011, the German states of Hamburg, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein have jointly formed the Maritime Cluster Northern Germany (MCN). Bremen and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania followed three years later. “Our network now has more than 350 members working together across all five states and covering the entire spectrum of the maritime industry,” reports Dr Susanne Neumann, head of the MCN office in Lower Saxony. As an example of successful cooperation under the umbrella of MCN, she cites ShipRec, a ZIM innovation network that was launched in 2024 as an expert platform for sustainable ship recycling with the active support of the EurA network agency and comprises more than 14 network partners besides MCN. These include Turbo-Technik, GSR Services, EWD Benli Recycling, HB Hunte Engineering, BIBA – Bremen Institute for Production and Logistics, and the Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research (ZMT). All are committed to developing a viable German alternative to the inadequate conditions under which end-of-life ships are often dismantled in low-income countries.

“The ShipRec network is a central platform for the maritime community to promote innovation, technologies and projects that advance a more sustainable ship recycling industry. We’ve taken this task on because, among other things, the importance of ship recycling for the extraction of secondary raw materials for the steel industry has grown rapidly in recent years,” emphasises Andreas Born, head of the MCN office in Bremen. “A study was conducted in Bremen in 2023 that identified a ship recycling potential of 20 to 25 ships per year, which equates to around 10 to 15 per cent of ArcelorMittal’s steel scrap requirements in Bremen,” he adds.

“At a specialist MCN symposium in late 2023, the need for innovation projects was identified, as was a call to standardise the licensing requirements for ship recycling in the coastal federal states,” continues Born. “In response, MCN has built up a community that is working on new solutions for a maritime circular economy.” Two companies have emerged as market leaders in this field. In May 2025, EWD Benli Recycling in Emden became the first German shipyard to receive approval for ship dismantling on German soil. “What’s more, the Lloyd shipyard in Bremerhaven is also currently undergoing the approval process,” adds Dr Neumann. “Our work in ship recycling highlights the need for ongoing dialogue between partners. The ShipRec network offers numerous advantages in this regard. In addition to industry insights and strategic partnerships, these include access to new markets and participation in developing new supply chains. →



“The work highlights the need for ongoing dialogue between partners.”

Dr Susanne Neumann, head of the MCN office in Lower Saxony



ShipRec network members documented the tough business of ship recycling at the Danish shipbreaking yard Smedegaarden Ship Recycling, among other places.



“The ShipRec network is a central platform for the maritime community.”

Andreas Born, head of the MCN office in Bremen



Goods are regularly transported between Germany and the UK using the service jointly provided by DFDS and Rhenus Cuxport.

In many cases, it's also helpful to ask other players in the maritime sector for their expertise," she observes.

Good contacts and guaranteed success

For Captain Arne Ehlers, Chairman of the Cuxhaven Port Industry Association (HWG) and Managing Director of the BREB shipping company and port service provider Blue Water BREB, the strategy of focusing on cooperation is hardly new. "Trade and shipping have always thrived on good international contacts and forming the corresponding alliances," he says. His view of the concept of cooperation is much broader than that of his predecessors. "All port-specific developments in Cuxhaven have been initiated collaboratively and with broad consensus," he praises. "I'm not just talking about politics, the economy and society here, but the administration in particular. NPorts is doing an excellent job in Cuxhaven. A prime example is the construction of the German Offshore Industry Centre there, which includes berths 8 and 9.1 to 9.5. Furthermore, the current expansion of berths 5

to 7 will reinforce Cuxhaven's position as a key hub for the offshore wind industry still further."

He then vividly describes a variety of successful collaborations in Cuxhaven, touching on RoRo traffic, wind turbines, project cargo, and even the town's role as a fishing hub. He has also been closely involved in developing Blue Water BREB. The joint venture between the German shipping company BREB and the Danish logistics expert Blue Water Shipping was founded in 2016 under his leadership and has since specialised in carrying wind power components and project cargo. "I remember how many people shook their heads at the time when both partners held a 50 per cent stake in the venture," recounts Ehlers. "But our experience in recent years has shown how advantageous it is when important business decisions are made strictly in tandem, with no one being overruled."

The port representative also considers the UK service jointly operated by DFDS and Rhenus Cuxport to be a successful project. This short sea shipping service stems from the 1970s. The commissioning of the Cuxport terminal in 1997 took cooperation in the RailRoCargo sector to a new level and developed it into the most successful shipping line between Germany and the United Kingdom – with up to eight departures per week. "The capabilities of DFDS as one of the largest and leading short sea operators in Northern Europe and of Rhenus Cuxport as a multimodal terminal on the German North Sea coast go hand in hand for shipping all kinds of goods to the UK," adds Ehlers. "If I can be part of a successful merger, then I'll definitely get my share of the rewards, which should be enough to dispel the concerns many opponents of the merger have," he continues with a wry smile. "Otherwise, I might just end up with nothing at all." (bre) □


"Important business decisions are made strictly in tandem."

Captain Arne Ehlers, Chairman of the Cuxhaven Port Industry Association (HWG)



PHOTOS: BREB, CUXPORT

“FRANK” EXPANDS THE LOAD CAPACITY RANGE



Since December, BLG LOGISTICS has been expanding its capacity for handling project and heavy-lift cargo at the Neustädter Hafen in Bremen with a new Liebherr LHM 550 mobile harbour crane. The crane was purchased as part of the company’s strategic investment in a high-performance, future-proof port infrastructure.

With a maximum load capacity of 154 tonnes, the LHM 550 covers a wide range of demanding transshipment needs. Its long reach also allows the 440-tonne crane to handle modern heavy-lift vessels. Its ten powered axles provide flexibility across various terminal areas. The new mobile harbour crane is named “Frank” in honour of long-standing CEO Frank Dreeke, who played a key role in shaping the development of BLG over many years and who was officially inducted into the Logistics Hall of Fame in Berlin in December.

The addition of “Frank” to the existing crane fleet enables tandem lifts with higher capacity at Neustädter Hafen – although two cranes could already operate in tandem, they could only handle loads of up to 220 tonnes. Together, they can now lift loads of up to 280 tonnes, enabling them to handle load capacities that were previously unattainable.

(bre) 

A MEETING OF EQUALS

When LogisticsConnect opens its doors for the second time at the Bremen Congress Centrum (CCB) in early March, it will feature not only more exhibition space but also a broader programme – one tailored more precisely to the specific requirements of breakbulk and project cargo experts.



“ From the outset, our goal was to establish LogisticsConnect as a platform for national and international knowledge exchange,” explains Petra Lüdeke, Managing Director of BHV – Bremische Hafen- und Logistikvertretung. “After all, cooperation isn’t just a buzzword in project logistics, it’s part of our DNA. If we win large projects, we win them as a team,” she continues. And it is precisely for these teams that LogisticsConnect creates a space where they can meet and network – between industry, logistics service providers and specialist suppliers.

With an equally wide-ranging programme of practical workshops, keynote speeches and panel discussions, the congress trade fair takes place on 5 and 6 March. On Thursday, prominent industry experts

will discuss topics such as “Germany as a place of the future – how are the economy and German seaports progressing?” and “Market outlook for breakbulk and project logistics – where are we heading in 2026?”. As part of Friday’s events, Thomas Röwekamp, Member of the Bundestag and Chairman of the Defence Committee, will highlight the currently shifting security landscape and its demands on security policy, defence capabilities and logistics. A practical workshop on the topic of “Training and future skills for project logistics” is also on the agenda.

Furthermore, LogisticsConnect will play host to the presentation of the 4th BHV Project Logistics Award and the launch of the new BHV Project Logistics Monitor, which provides important market data for



Following the resounding success of 2025, this year's LogisticsConnect offers a programme more precisely tailored to the industry's networking needs.

strategic decisions in project logistics. The event will be rounded off with an evening entitled "Break Bulk Bash", where more than 60 exhibitors and their guests will have numerous opportunities for networking in a relaxed atmosphere with a buffet and live music. And all this on an exhibition area of around 610 m², which is around a third larger than at the event's inaugural year.

For Ronald Schwarze, Head of Marketing at bremenports, Bremen is the ideal setting for this event. "As a logistics location, Bremen is the perfect backdrop for bringing a variety of ideas together," he says. "It's where decades of logistics tradition meet new beginnings and innovation." In his view, the direct exchange between business, science and start-ups, as well as the international openness of the location, create a special dynamic force. "You can really feel it. In Bremen, ideas don't come from the drawing board, but from genuine collaboration – and this is exactly what makes LogisticsConnect such a success," he adds.

Exhibitors' expectations of the congress trade fair are correspondingly high. "LogisticsConnect is a successful collaboration in two ways," says Knut Voigt, Branch Manager at the Bremen office of the BBC Chartering shipping company. "On the one hand, it's a place to meet old acquaintances and new peers. To exchange ideas as equals. On the other, three strong partners – BHV, Messe Bremen and bremenports – have come together to establish a new and exciting trade fair format at this location." Stefan Nousch, Managing Director of Atlantik Hafenbetriebe, shares a similar view. "The LogisticsConnect event specifically brings the relevant players together and promotes direct communication," he states. "In doing so, it makes an important contribution to sustainable cooperation across the breakbulk, RoRo and project cargo sectors." He sees the event as a first step towards cooperation. "It's like getting to know each other, developing trust and appreciation, and identifying common goals before a tender process," he adds.

Steffen W. Fulst, Managing Director of the Karl Gross Group, emphasises how important these values are for the industry and for fostering team spirit.

As with logistics in general, project logistics thrives on trust – above all in the skills of those you work with," he emphasises. "Continuous exchange and discussion help to promote precisely that. Ensuring reciprocity so that everyone involved in a network has the opportunity to benefit from it is crucial." (bre) □



ROLLERCOASTER NEGOTIATIONS

The Mercosur Free Trade Agreement negotiations had been ongoing for over 25 years before the European Union and four of the Mercosur states – Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay – signed the deal in Asunción, the Paraguayan capital, on 17 January 2026. The Agreement, which Friedrich Merz, Federal Chancellor of Germany, hailed a milestone in European trade policy, would achieve one of the largest free trade areas in the world with more than 700 million citizens.

However, this partnership agreement is not welcomed by everyone. In fact, a few days after the agreement was signed, the European Parliament called on the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to examine whether the agreement was compatible with basic EU treaties. Consequently, the ratification of the Agreement by the European Parliament has been put on hold. Experts talk of the review leading to the ratification being postponed by two years or even called into question. The rollercoaster ride may very well continue.

(bre) □



GERMANY AND MERCOSUR

More than **7 million tonnes** of goods arrived at German seaports in trade between Germany and the four Mercosur states in 2024.

In 2024, the transshipment of containers between these countries amounted to **286,000 TEU**.

Goods to the value of **16 billion euros** were exported by Germany to the four Mercosur states in 2024.

All goods imported from this region in 2024 totalled almost **10 billion euros**.

THE EU AND MERCOSUR

Exports from the EU to the four Mercosur countries accounted for roughly 56 billion euros in 2024, while imports totalled around 57 billion euros in the same period. These included:

■ Imports ■ Exports

IN EURO BN

Machinery and vehicles

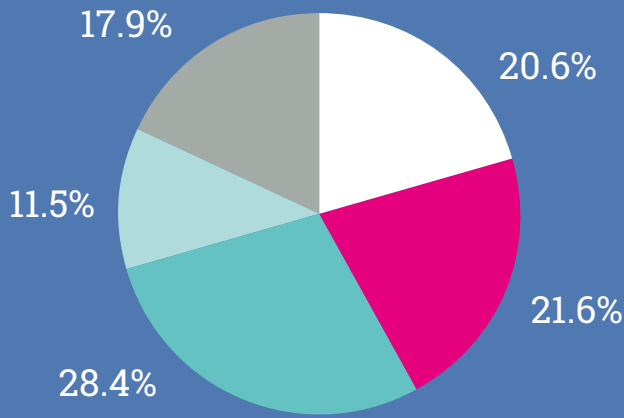


Food and livestock



Chemical products





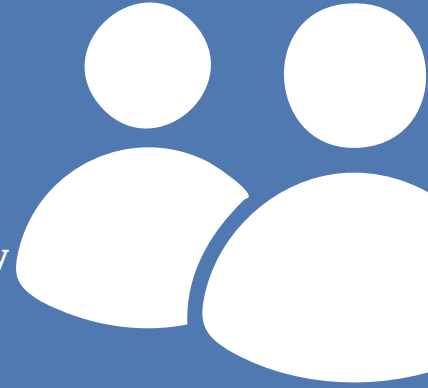
Alliance affinity

Over 80 per cent of container shipping capacity is handled by ship alliances and the MSC container shipping line:

■ MSC (Mediterranean Shipping Company)	20.6%
■ Gemini Cooperation (Hapag-Lloyd, Maersk)	21.6%
■ Ocean Alliance (CMA CGM, Cosco, Evergreen, OOCL)	28.4%
■ Premier Alliance (ONE, HMM, Yang Ming)	11.5%
■ Shipping companies not part of an alliance	17.9%

THE GEMINI COOPERATION IN A NUTSHELL

- 2 partners: Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd
- approx. 340 ships on the East-West route
- 3.7 million TEU capacity
- 29 mainliner services
- 29 shuttle services
- 87 ports
- over 6,000 port-to-port combinations



EUROPEAN COOPERATION FOR OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY

At the North Sea Summit in January 2026, energy ministers put together a comprehensive package of initiatives. These include:

- **9.5 billion euros to be invested** in production capacity by 2030
- Around **91,000 new jobs**
- **Reduction in electricity production costs** in offshore wind farms by **30 per cent** by 2040



Major shipping port

Almost **290 shipping companies** and approx. **1,800 ships** ...

making Germany the **sixth largest** shipping nation in the world ...

... and ranking **third** for container ships.

WELCOME TO THE TIGHTROPE WALK!

If collaboration works, it can generate synergies. However, the result may be the complete opposite if there are no clear structures or mutual trust between partners. Marc-Oliver Hauswald, board member of the association Logistikportal Niedersachsen, and Sven Hermann, Chairman of LogistikLotsen für die Metropolregion Nordwest, report on their experiences regarding this demanding balancing act.

“Networks help companies to adapt and increase their resilience.”



LOGISTICS PILOT: How strong is the cooperation trend in the logistics and maritime sectors?

HERMANN: There has been an exceedingly strong trend towards cooperation in the logistics and maritime industry. Shipping companies, port operators, logistic service providers and loading agents are faced with high costs and the pressure to improve efficiency, while investments in digitalisation, sustainability and resilience continue to rise. For smaller and medium-sized companies, it is difficult to cope with these challenges alone. Consequently, cooperation is less an option and more a necessity to retain a competitive edge in the future, too.

HAUSWALD: As far as I'm concerned, the idea of cooperating and networking with other companies is gaining ever more importance in the logistics and maritime sectors. After all, the competition with international locations and service providers makes it necessary to continually review where it makes sense to cooperate

with other market participants, in order to provide holistic and competitive solutions for optimising transport chains.

LOGISTICS PILOT: Why are cooperation and networks key?

HERMANN: Nowadays, cooperation and networks are crucial because value chains have become more complex, global and dynamic. As such, only a handful of companies can provide the expertise, technologies and resources by themselves. By forming partnerships, know-how can be pooled, innovations can be implemented more quickly and market access gained more easily. Networks increase a company's resilience and the ability to adapt, such as in instances of supply bottlenecks or geographical risks.

HAUSWALD: From an economic perspective, cooperation and strategic alliances result in a combination of factors, including risk reduction, generation of synergy effects and transfer of knowledge. In Lower Saxony, for instance, where many medium-sized companies are closely intertwined with the global market, cooperation and strategic alliances help to tap into new know-how, digital infrastructures or joint investments, such as in digitalisation, or in sustainable technologies.

LOGISTICS PILOT: How are companies successfully managing to be competitors on the one hand, while

SVEN HERMANN

Chairman of LogistikLotsen für die Metropolregion Nordwest

MARC-OLIVER HAUSWALD

Board member of the association of Logistikportal Niedersachsen and Managing Director of Container Terminal Wilhelmshaven JadeWeserPort-Marketing

standing side by side as partners in networks on the other?

HERMANN: Nowadays, companies are finding it easier to tread a fine line between competition and cooperation, which is often referred to as “coopetition”. Nevertheless, it’s still a challenge. This balancing act is successful where there are clear rules, transparent goals and contractual frameworks. Companies frequently cooperate in areas prior to the competitive stage. Trust plays a crucial role here as well as professional governance management, in order to manage any conflict of interests. Whoever controls this balancing act, can achieve efficiency gains together, without giving up their strategic independence. By contrast, insufficient clarity or a power imbalance can soon put an end to such partnerships.

HAUSWALD: Many companies in Lower Saxony are successfully striking a balance between cooperation and competition. Nevertheless, this remains a challenge in the long term. The maritime industry and the logistics sector have proven in the past that they are relatively “inflexible”. Generally, habits are hard to break and treading new paths frowned upon. The advantages must be obvious and measurable in economic terms – by all concerned. If this is the case, a high degree of trust, reliability and a good measure of courage are needed for successful cooperation.

LOGISTICS PILOT: What is on your “cooperation agenda” in 2026?

HERMANN: I had my first taste of cooperating successfully this year with the continuation of the “Project Logistics Master Class” series in early January, which took place with BHV – Bremischen Hafen- und Logistikvertretung. With numerous representatives from loading agents and logistics partners, we worked together to come up with ideas for optimising risk and contract management as well as future cooperation on AI projects. This will be resumed in March at Logistics-Connect – the congress and networking highlight of the year. In addition, we’re currently having talks with bremenports and VDMA about a cooperation to organise a kind of workshop of the future in spring, where we intend bringing together apprentices, students of dual vocational and training courses as well as young skilled workers from industrial and logistics companies to explore tomorrow’s world of work together.



“The advantages must be measurable in economic terms for all concerned.”

HAUSWALD: As far as JadeWeserPort is concerned, we’d like to develop new transport routes with partners from the hinterland, especially the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region with its approximately 14 million inhabitants, and vice versa. Initial meetings with representatives from the world’s largest inland port in Duisburg have proven promising. Now we need to delve deeper into this topic. The most important gateway for the quantity of goods coming from Asia is the Port of Rotterdam as Europe’s logistics hub, from where enormous amounts of goods are transported, mainly by barges but also by rail, along the Rhine to the Rhine-Ruhr region. With the right partners on our side, we would like to provide the greatest possible support to steer part of this volume through JadeWeserPort in future, in line with the motto “more containers for Germany”. Likewise, strengthening our connections to Eastern Europe is planned. A few weeks ago, we were able to present our port location in Budapest, thanks to local cooperation partners there. In 2026, we’re planning a similar event in Prague with the help of local network partners. (bre) 



Michael Nintemann, DUK, (left) and Timo Siebahn, epas, combine sea and inland logistics for project cargo.

GROWING IN PARTNERSHIP

Project cargo requires space, transshipment expertise and someone to take charge. Ems Ports Agency and Stevedoring Beteiligungs GmbH & Co. KG (epas) in Emden and Dörpener Umschlaggesellschaft für den kombinierten Verkehr (DUK) in Dörpen demonstrate how a seaport and an inland port, along with an inland facility, can work hand in hand to the benefit of customers and service providers alike.

Sometimes networking at trade fairs really pays off. Last year at the transport logistic fair in Munich, Jan Remmers, Managing Director of Anker Schifffahrts-Gesellschaft, introduced Timo Siebahn, Managing Director of Ems Ports Agency and Stevedoring Beteiligungs GmbH & Co. KG (epas) since 2022, to Michael Nintemann, Managing Director of Dörpener Umschlaggesellschaft für den kombinierten Verkehr (DUK).

Both bring experience in different areas of logistics to the project. epas, a provider of port and logistics services, has operated on 20-hectare premises at the north and south quays in Emden since 1993, with a focus on vessel clearance as well as project and heavy goods logistics. DUK has been managing an intermodal transport facility with container transshipment and warehousing in Dörpen since 1989.

This initial introduction soon led to concrete plans. “We were already in talks with a customer who was interested in warehousing hundreds of cable drums for underground cable installation with us but we didn’t have enough space for that in Emden,” recalls Siebahn. And that is how the idea came about of partnering with DUK on projects that would have been too big for epas alone – with access to a 20,000-square-metre warehouse in Dörpen.

“For us as a port company, goods need to be handled quickly,” emphasises Siebahn. “Vessel clearance is our bread and butter.” The collaboration benefits both. “We wanted the business, of course. As their main business operations had fallen to some degree, DUK had the space required – a perfect synergy,” explains the managing director of epas. “This means our partner can grow with us.”

“The partnership demonstrates how a seaport and an inland facility can work hand in hand,” says Nintemann. “epas brings valuable strength in project logistics and vessel clearance, which we complement with additional space and operational capacity in the hinterland.” Together, they have been able to implement larger and long-term projects.

First joint project

For the partnership, the two companies signed a cooperation agreement, which was soon followed by a contract for the first joint project. From 2027 to 2029, a total of 800 cable drums with a combined weight of 60 to 80 tonnes will be warehoused in Dörpen, which



epas has the necessary expertise and technical equipment to handle cable drums at the south quay in Emden, but not enough space. In future, the company will use space in Dörpen for large-scale projects.

serves as a hub for epas. “The benefit for us is that we don’t have to start from scratch, but can use an existing infrastructure,” Siebahn explains. A key component of it is inland transshipment, a process made all the more efficient and dramatically simplified by reach stackers specially developed for DUK. Furthermore, the two partners have the necessary experience with larger projects.

“This development demonstrates what extraordinary collaboration between sea and inland ports can look like,” adds Nintemann. “The success of the project depends on us being able to build on existing infrastructure and proven project expertise.” The available space, technical equipment and processes are already designed for heavy and bulky goods and will be able to accommodate the planned volumes from the start of the project. “This experience in the setup is a key benefit of the partnership,” says Nintemann.

“Shortly before finalising the cable drum project, we were able to acquire another contract for smaller parts for onshore wind farms,” says Siebahn, delighted. He sees further potential in the warehousing of rotor blades, as the facility can accommodate and handle out-of-gauge (OOG) cargo – sea freight too large for shipping containers – as well as standard, flat rack and half-height containers. “Our aim is initially to utilise the full capacity of the existing space – and then pursue balanced investment growth.” In future, another 60,000 square metres could be added to the space currently available. →

FACTS

EMS PORTS AGENCY AND STEVEDORING BETEILIGUNGS GMBH & CO. KG (EPAS)

ESTABLISHED

1994

HEADQUARTERS

Emden

AREA OF BUSINESS

Port and logistics services, including shipping agency services, terminal operations, stevedoring, warehousing, project and heavy goods logistics, freight booking and chartering, off-shore services, customs clearance and the handling of dangerous goods.

AREA

200,000 square metres

CLEARANCE

More than 700 ships a year

EMPLOYEES

Over 100

TRANSSHIPMENT SALES IN 2024

Approx. 15 million euros

LOGISTICS STORY

These services target customers with projects in nearby Dörpen and projects with good accessibility through inland ports – for example, in North Rhine-Westphalia. The Emden seaport can also be taken into account. According to Siebahn, two to three round trips a week are planned for the approximately 90-kilometre route between Emden and Dörpen, adding that there is no need for customers to worry about higher costs resulting from double transshipment. “Our prices are in line with the market when you consider total transport costs,” explains the epas managing director.

Complementary areas of expertise

Siebahn considers the key strength of the partnership in the fact that DUK itself specialises in transshipment and has the necessary expertise. Focussing on a seaport has other reasons. “We have project experience with large corporations and are certified according to ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 27001 – and in line with the Safety Culture Ladder, which evaluates a company’s culture of safety,” emphasises Siebahn. This includes the epas tender management team drawing on many years of experience in handling larger tenders.

“Working on projects like that with regional partners that couldn’t do it on their own is a win-win situation for everyone involved,” says Siebahn. It also



DUK has operated an intermodal transport facility with container transshipment and warehousing in Dörpen since 1989 and currently has 20,000 square metres of warehouse space.

provides opportunities to learn from one another. “But overall responsibility lies with us – as the partner to and single point of contact for customers,” he is quick to point out. A successful logistics concept like this requires close coordination, clear interfaces and defined internal and external contacts. “Good communication within the network is a must,” says the managing director. “When it works, it offers plenty of opportunities with limited risk.” (cb) □

FACTS

DÖRPENER UMSCHLAG-GESELLSCHAFT FÜR DEN KOMBINIERTEN VERKEHR (DUK)

ESTABLISHED

1989

HEADQUARTERS

Dörpen

AREA OF BUSINESS

Intermodal transport, container transshipment and warehousing, container services, buying and selling containers, port transshipment, freight forwarding and customs clearance

EMPLOYEES

30

TURNOVER IN 2024

Approx. four million euros



epas has operated in a 20-hectare area at the northern and southern quays in Emden since 1993, focussing on vessel clearance as well as project and heavy goods logistics.

More information:

www.epas-empden.de
www.dukdoerpen.de

E-FUEL FROM THE TREATMENT PLANT

ICODOS celebrated a world premiere in March 2025 with the Mannheim 001 production facility and a new technology that produces sustainable marine fuel from wastewater and electricity.

Since then, enquiries have been pouring in at the climate tech start-up in Mannheim.



We're rethinking methanol," says David Strittmatter, co-founder and CEO of ICODOS. The demonstration facility uses a patented process for efficiently purifying biogas extracted from wastewater and transforming this – along with electricity and green hydrogen produced using electrolysis – into climate-neutral e-methanol. "This technology will revolutionise the shipping industry because the green methanol can be used as a sustainable fuel. However, it can also be further processed to create sustainable aviation fuel or for use in the chemicals industry," says Strittmatter, emphasising the wide range of opportunities.

The idea for the project stems from research at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), from which ICODOS emerged in 2022. The two ICODOS founders – David Strittmatter and Dr Vidal Vazquez – and their 20 employees specialise in producing fuels and chemicals from renewable sources of energy like biogas and CO₂ in combination with renewable electricity. "For the project in Mannheim, we use the immense potential of treatment plants. There are around 9,000 of those in Germany alone and more than 75,000 throughout the EU. In this way, we plan to produce five million tonnes of sustainable methanol and methanol derivatives by 2035, while reducing CO₂ by up to five million tonnes. At the same time, we intend to establish ourselves as a market leader in this segment over the next ten years," says Strittmatter confidently.

And the extraordinary response has proven him right. Many companies in the shipping and chemicals industries have approached ICODOS to learn about opportunities for collaboration. ICODOS is also partnering with EU project Poseidon, which demonstrates how to use e-methanol for decarbonisation in the shipping sector

In March 2025, Volker Wissing, Germany's former Federal Minister for Transport, (2nd from left) inaugurated the Mannheim 001 facility in the presence of the two ICODOS founders, David Strittmatter (left) and Dr Vidal Vazquez (3rd from right).

and whose proficiency has already been exploited by engine manufacturers Winterthur Gas & Diesel and Isotta Fraschini Motori as well as shipbuilding company Fincantieri. "We're also in the process of developing a modular power-to-e-methanol plant in Mannheim for Poseidon, which is expected to begin operations in the middle of the year," says Strittmatter.

ICODOS has already won several awards for its concepts and projects, including the Mannheim Start-up Award (MEXI) for innovative e-methanol production in 2023, and was named one of eleven Top Innovators in Carbon Capture and Utilisation by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2024. [\(bre\)](#)



"We're rethinking methanol."

David Strittmatter, co-founder and CEO of ICODOS

More information:

www.icodos.com

WIND OF CHANGE TO CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES



Unfortunately, sexism is alive and well. Comments like “Unloading the dishwasher is a woman’s job” and “All you have to do to get your way is bat your eyelashes” are still all too common at many companies today. The ENERCON Women’s Network has put together a comprehensive package of measures to prevent these from taking hold at ENERCON.

Review: early in 2024, a group of female employees from ENERCON, the manufacturer of wind turbines, launched a new global women’s network, the ENERCON Women’s Network. Just under two years later, the

community already has around 700 members – both women and men. “The initiative is an important step in strengthening female prospects at the company and boosting diversity,” says Katharina Hirsch, Senior Manager Corporate Strategy at ENERCON and a spokeswoman of the women’s network. “We firmly believe that the company can achieve the best results when different perspectives and experiences challenge each other,” she adds, emphasizing that executive management and the Human Resources (HR) department fully support the initiative.

ENERCON CEO Udo Bauer is quick to agree: “People are at the heart of everything our company does. Equal opportunity regardless of gender, age, cultural background, disability and orientation should be a given – from both an ethical and economic point of view.” According to Lea-Maria Sandker, Head of Global HR: “As part of the ENERCON sustainability

“We can only create a sustainable culture together.”

Katharina Hirsch, Senior Manager Corporate Strategy at ENERCON





strategy, we're working on several initiatives to promote diversity and equal opportunity. The women's network serves as a valuable sparring partner and provides access to women's perspectives."

The network is clearly structured, with a core team of four people at the top who manage all the activities in coordination with the management and HR. Below them there are four working groups – antidiscrimination and inclusion, career development, networking and events, and work-life balance – which are in charge of concrete projects and key responsibilities. The two levels maintain contact with each other and the members at all times. "Our aim is to create a visible community that enables the knowledge and experience to be shared as well as strengthening women at our company," explains Hirsch.

Events held at the headquarters in Aurich in May and in Lisbon in November were two of the network's most important activities last year. More than 90 participants enjoyed a programme comprising workshops,

expert talks, a group lunch and key notes by Udo Bauer, Heiko Juritz (COO) and Lea-Maria Sandker.

An awareness campaign on discriminatory language at the workplace, which was linked to a digital Advent calendar, received a great deal of attention in late 2025 and is the source of the quotes used at the beginning of the article. Every day from 1 to 24 December, the network also provided exciting background information as well as recommendations for how women should respond in such situations – for example, by setting clear boundaries, demanding accountability and addressing the inappropriate behaviour directly.

Hirsch recalls a conversation with a male colleague who, during a tender process, said, "We need a strong man in this position." "He didn't mean anything by it," says Hirsch. "I always respond immediately to comments like this in a friendly way – ideally with a pinch of humour and without making accusations." In that situation, Hirsch asked the colleague in question if a strong woman would be too strong for the position. In her experience, this usually results in a brief silence, followed by a moment of realisation and then an engaging and often clarifying conversation. This demonstrates what many psychological studies have found: language influences the way we think and our decisions, often without our knowledge. Terms and

formulations have an impact on how we perceive roles, abilities and opportunities – and thus the reality we create together.

For this reason, the women's network is eager to involve men to a higher degree. "We view ourselves as an inclusive network that invites everyone to work on solutions together. It's not about 'women against men'. On the contrary. Men are part of our work environment, and in most cases they support us," says Hirsch. "But they often have a different perception of the challenges women face every day. And that's why we're interested in creating awareness and sensitivity as well as including their perspectives and ideas when it comes to implementing measures. After all, it's only by working together to affect change that we can create a sustainable culture."

The ENERCON Women's Network has also been expanding its activities beyond the company's borders. For example, it joined the women of new energies (w.one) network last year, allowing female ENERCON employees to take advantage of coaching by external mentors. "Together, we're committed to improving visibility and equal opportunity for women in the renewable energies sector," says Hirsch.

Looking to the future, ENERCON and the Women's Network have set their sights on some quantitative aims. As part of the company-wide sustainability strategy, the management have committed themselves to increasing the percentage of women in management roles to 25 per cent by 2030. With women currently accounting for approximately 17 per cent of company staff and around twelve per cent of management, the company has a lot of work ahead of itself. Building on the momentum of this collaboration, all the participants also want to create conditions for sustainable structural changes that ultimately allow them not only to achieve their aim but also create a culture that boosts diversity over the long term. (bre) □

Parents can work in special "family rooms" at ENERCON as their children play.





HEAVY GOODS SEEK DIGITAL BROKERAGE

The HeavyBoost digital brokerage platform brings together cargo and free return transport capacity to minimise empty runs in heavy goods transport. The IT of the online platform, which received the BHV Project Logistics Award last year, was developed by Hanseatische Software-Entwicklungs- und Consulting GmbH (HEC), a company based in Bremen.

Hheavy loads that unload their cargo and then return empty do not make environmental or economic sense. In the past, however, optimising empty runs required a lot of work and were therefore only possible to a limited extent. Like many others in the industry, Olaf Beckedorf, Chairman of the Board of the Mintraching-based BigMove heavy goods network, had long been eager to change that. A chance encounter at a trade fair nearly eight years ago came at just the right moment.

“In 2018, Heiko Müller and I met at SMM Hamburg, the world’s leading trade fair for the maritime industry,” says Beckedorf. During a walk in the Planten un Blomen park, which is not too far from the exhibition centre, it quickly became clear to both that they complement each other perfectly. “We can do it all, except for digital,” says Beckedorf. And that is precisely what the IT experts can do at Hanseatische Software-Entwicklungs- und Consulting GmbH (HEC), a Bremen-based company founded in 1988.

Digital platform tackles empty runs

A project company was therefore founded in 2019 to promote IT. The first element produced was the HeavyBoost digital platform for reducing empty runs, which was developed under the leadership of HEC logistics IT consultant Müller and his team in Bremen. “For highly efficient companies, the share of empty runs is around 18 to 20 per cent. According to estimates, it’s normally around 50 per cent.” The idea behind it is that a participant can register an underutilised run to find cargo for the return journey.

Standardised orders with permanent authorisation, which accounts for around 80 per cent of vehicles, and loads of up to 60 tonnes can be pooled. This includes full loads, larger or special cargo, and very small loads. Calculations are based on axle configurations, ensuring that the system can clearly determine which vehicle type is capable of transporting the cargo in question. With the aid of this form of standardisation, vehicles can be matched with exactly the right cargo.

“We deliberately kept the number of parameters small – with date, starting point, destination and vehicle class,” explains Müller. That also prevents companies from taking contracts away from each other on the platform. A dynamic matching algorithm analyses the data in real time and continuously calculates suitable journey combinations, thus reducing the number of unnecessary and empty runs. “You could say we’re the eHarmony for heavy goods transport,” say Beckedorf with a grin.

Suitable journeys in real time

If a logistics company registers an empty run from Berlin to Munich, for example, the algorithm searches for compatible cargo along this route, as well as suitable partial routes like Hanover to Ulm. “This reduces empty kilometres either partially or entirely,” adds Beckedorf. The result is greater efficiency in the transport fleet and lower operating costs. “The platform represents an investment in digital competitiveness,” highlights Müller.



Heiko Müller, logistics IT consultant at Hanseatische Software-Entwicklungs- und Consulting GmbH (HEC), (left) and Olaf Beckedorf, Chairman of the Board of BigMove, developed the HeavyBoost brokerage platform for heavy transport together.

Logistics companies do not require any additional IT. “We’ve developed an interface to freight forwarders’ transport management systems,” says Müller. The more orders there are in the system, the greater the likelihood of a match. The number of orders fluctuates significantly. “We have between 1,000 and 2,000 orders in the system each week, which has a significant impact on the matching rate,” explains Müller. “The average is ten per cent.” There is no system to monitor whether these runs actually take place. “Our portal merely suggests potential matches. We’ve designed it to be an open, low-barrier service, in order to leave the responsibility in the hands of the companies.”

Development of the platform required a six-figure investment and was also a very time-consuming process, as everything had to be designed and developed internally. “For the first three years, three of us got together for several hours every week,” recalls Beckedorf. Between 3 and 15 people were involved in the project. Communication with dispatch staff and management was essential to identifying actual demand.

All this hard work was ultimately rewarded with the BHV Project Logistics Award in 2025. Beckedorf is already thinking ahead. “We’re assessing the idea of European and global expansion.” And in the future, artificial intelligence (AI) should help identify cargo hotspots. (cb)

FACTS

HEAVYBOOST

Platform for automating journey optimisation and preventing empty runs in heavy goods logistics

START

2019

HEADQUARTERS

Wustermark
(Brandenburg)

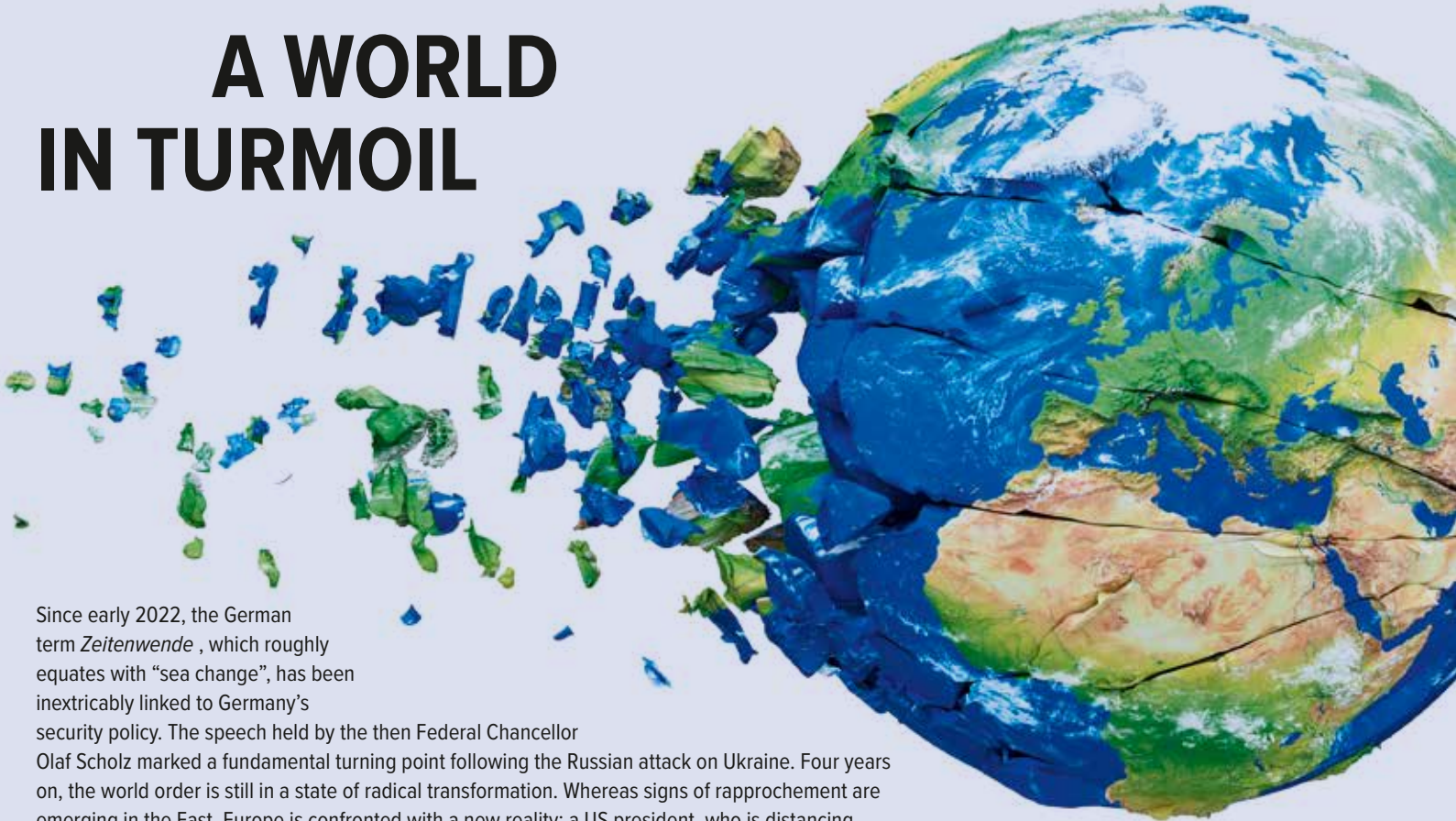
More information:

www.heavyboost.ai
www.hec.de

Following presentation of the BHV Project Logistics Award at HEC in 2025 (left to right): Petra Lüdeke, BHV Managing Director, Heiko Müller, HEC logistics IT consultant, and Olaf Beckedorf, Chairman of the Board of BigMove.



A WORLD IN TURMOIL



Since early 2022, the German term *Zeitenwende*, which roughly equates with “sea change”, has been inextricably linked to Germany’s security policy. The speech held by the then Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz marked a fundamental turning point following the Russian attack on Ukraine. Four years on, the world order is still in a state of radical transformation. Whereas signs of rapprochement are emerging in the East, Europe is confronted with a new reality: a US president, who is distancing himself from transatlantic partnerships, is causing widespread bewilderment with protectionist tariff barriers.

Amid this upheaval, Germany is looking for strategies to counteract these geographical and economic challenges. Germany’s northern seaports are assuming a key role here. They need to prove that they are hubs for global trade and energy transition as well as to reinforce their resilience as critical infrastructure. Whether this entails hybrid threats, drones or cyberattacks, the dangers are manifold as never before. Which levers need to be pulled now? Major stakeholders in the maritime industry present their views in the next issue of LOGISTICS PILOT. (bre) □

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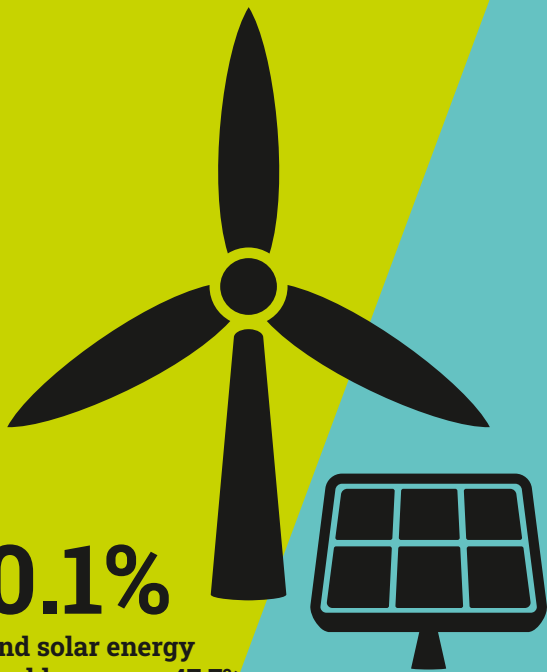
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The male gender is usually used in LOGISTICS PILOT for depicting persons in general or people-related nouns in order to simplify legibility. These terms apply in principle to all genders in the sense of gender equality. Any abbreviation used in this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

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30.1%

Wind and solar energy
Total renewable energy: 47.7%

WIND AND SOLAR SURPASS FOSSIL ENERGY

In 2025, the percentage of wind and solar energy surpassed fossil fuels for the first time in the EU.

“In times of political turmoil and, no later than 2022 when we painfully experienced our dependence on energy imports, I heartily welcome Europe’s move towards independence from fossil fuels. Every year, Germany spends more than 70 billion euros on importing fossil fuels. However, the latest figures show that Germany and Europe are making good progress in reducing this spending and that the economy is in a position to procure energy from renewable resources at a fair price. We are now running a full throttle to expand rapidly.”



29%
Fossil fuels



23.3%
Nuclear power

Tilo Nahrath

is the founder and director of RE Source Projects. As part of his voluntary activities for the Federal Association of Logistics (BVL), he is spokesman for the focus group “Power of Logistics”.



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