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ECTA, Cefic update emissions guideline

In October, ECTA and Cefic published a revision to their Emission Calculation Guideline.

The new guidance has been released to help companies in the chemical sector better calculate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transport and logistics operations. Aimed particularly at smaller organisations that might not have in-house expertise, the guidance offers practical examples, clarifies calculation methods, and highlights common mistakes to make the process more accessible.

The updated guideline is the result of a joint effort between Cefic and ECTA. It builds on the original Emission Measuring Guideline first published in 2011 and reflects the major developments in emissions reporting that have taken place since then.

Over the past decade, new standards such as EN 16258:2012 and frameworks like the Global Logistics Emissions Council (GLEC) Framework, launched in 2016, have reshaped how emissions are measured and reported across industries. The revised document helps demonstrate how chemical sector stakeholders can align with these internationally recognised methodologies.

It aims to clarify the methodology presented in the GLEC Framework, the globally recognised standard for calculating and reporting GHG emissions from logistics and freight transport, including a specific module that covers transport and logistics activities directly linked to the chemical industry.

The guidance initially focuses on road freight and intermodal transport for both packed and bulk shipments, with future updates planned to expand the scope to rail, inland waterways, and short sea shipping.

The two trade bodies underlined that the document is intended for information and guidance purposes only. It does not replace the official GLEC Framework, relevant standards, or regulatory requirements.

Cefic and ECTA collaborated in 2021 with Smart Freight Centre to develop the Module 5 of the GLEC Framework for the European chemical industry. The scope of the GHG emission calculation covered in Module 5 included the transport and logistics activities directly related to the chemical industry supply chain.

The primary focus was the transport and logistics operations for which companies are contractually responsible, which are primarily the transport of finished goods to their customers. By the inclusion of

The updated guide builds on the original Emission Measuring Guideline first published in 2011

emissions reporting according to Module 5 in the 2022 revision of SQAS, everyone within the chemical industry is becoming more familiar with the calculation and reporting requirements.

"Greenhouse gas emission accounting is not an end in itself and, if we agree with the phrase 'what gets measured gets done', we can treat the calculations and an understanding of the current level of greenhouse gas emissions as the starting point for the reduction initiatives that are vital in achieving European climate targets," the guidance states.

The push for further standardisation of logistics emission accounting methodologies resulted in the new ISO standard (ISO 14083:2023) in 2023 and a corresponding revision of the GLEC framework (GLEC 3.0)4 to bring it in line.

Also, GLEC Module 5 for chemicals transport in Europe was revised accordingly. This has brought with it some changes in terminology as the industry now looks to measure emissions from a transport chain within different transport operating categories. A transport chain is defined as 'the point where the freight leaves its last point of production or transformation to the point where freight reaches its first non-transport related operation'.

The SQAS questionnaires have been revised and are being used in assessments from September 2025 onwards.

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Digital guidelines

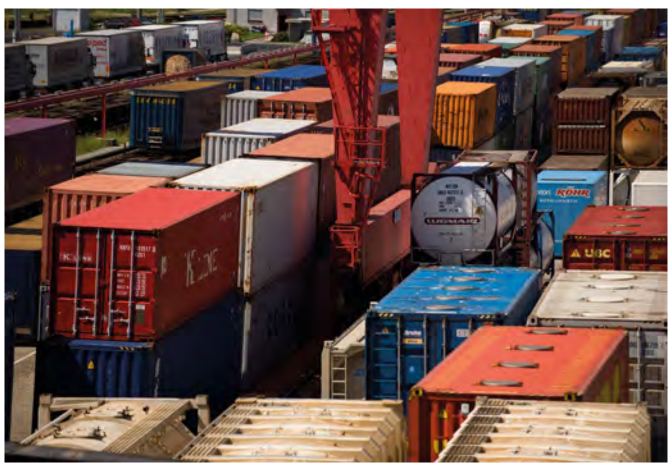
At the same time, three other new Best Practice Guidelines were published following work by ECTA, Cefic, ERFA and UIRR. They are:

General principles for standardized digital data sharing in intermodal freight transport. This guideline aims to pave the way towards an integrated and standardised digital ecosystem in the intermodal sector. Subsequent intermodal freight digital guidelines will zoom in on specific freight flows or specific digital collaboration flows between railway undertakings, combined transport operators and terminal operators.

Standardized digital booking, gate-in and gate-out. This zooms in on the data standards themselves and refers more specifically to the booking and gate-in & -out intermodal processes. Besides the quality of the given data in the booking, the timing, the processing and the format are relevant factors for the planning of capacity and communication. In the intermodal sector, the EDI standard of Ediges via the Datahub KV4.0 of DXI can be recommended.

Standardized digital data sharing in intermodal freight transport: This is a joint initiative of ECTA, ERFA and UIRR with the objective to promote the modal shift of chemical substances from road to rail. This guideline aims at providing a path towards an integrated standardised digital ecosystem for intermodal freight.

www.ecta.com
https://cefic.org



Digital data sharing is a joint initiative of ECTA, ERFA and UIRR to promote the modal shift of chemicals

Ultra light tanks for VdB

The High Volume Ultra Light tank container was developed some years ago in collaboration with Van Hool

As announced last year, Van den Bosch is investing in new tank containers from manufacturer Van Hool.

The updated High Volume Ultra Light tank container is being delivered in a series of 100 units. The first 10 have now been added to the fleet.

"This tank container has been upgraded in various ways to improve safety further and limit damage," said Antony van Lierop, manager of VdB's technical department. "The biggest change is the ladder, which is attached at a different angle at the rear of the container to create more foot space. The container is also equipped with a safety line that runs across the container. Drivers can now hook up from the ladder position and raise the folding handrail."

"The box has also been raised and made more compact to limit damage," Van Lierop continued. "In addition, the customs covers have been fitted with chequer plate and the construction of the steam connections has been modified to prevent damage. The spill box outlet taps have also been positioned higher for the same reason. Finally, the latest container has a new GPS system from Mecomo. In short: plenty of innovation!"

The High Volume Ultra Light tank container was developed some years ago in collaboration with Van Hool. With a capacity of 35,500 litres, maximum insulation value and low weight, it is ideal for transporting liquids with a low density, such as oils and fats. The container is also equipped with under-controls and a single point of sealing to prevent unnecessary work at height.

"With the purchase of these containers, we are strengthening our position in the market and can further expand our activities in Europe," commented Emiel van Haren, operations director of the liquid bulk division. "The first impression is good and the modifications are paying off. The improvements are the result of practical experience and discussions with our drivers. A good example of how co-operation and innovation go hand in hand."

www.vandenbosch.com

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FORT VALE

Leschaco strengthens DG logistics in Bremen

The Leschaco Group has expanded its logistics infrastructure with the commissioning of a new chemical multi-purpose facility in the Bremen Industrial Park.

The group sees the move as reinforcing its capabilities in the LCL (less than container load) and GCL (global contract logistics) segments, particularly in the handling of hazardous materials.

The new logistics centre covers a total area of around 20,500 sqm and offers over 12,000 pallet spaces in the contract logistics section, as well as 6,500 additional spaces in CFS operation. An integrated container packing station, 27 loading ramps and 9,500 sqm of block storage space complete the modern infrastructure for flexible logistics solutions.

It is equipped with a barcode-based warehouse management system, SOLAS VGM certification, and optimised workflows for export, import, cross docking, and storage. These features ensure high levels of process transparency, operational efficiency, and regulatory compliance.

A key differentiator of the site is its dedicated hazardous goods infrastructure. Twelve standalone storage units outside the main building provide an additional 2,000 sqm for the secure handling of chemicals and dangerous goods, including lithium-ion batteries. The facility complies with WGK and LGK classifications and has been awarded the DGNB Gold certification for sustainable construction — highlighting its energy efficiency and environmental performance.

"The new distribution warehouse in Bremen is designed for dual use as a container freight station and warehouse. It represents a significant milestone for our LCL and GCL product lines," said Sebastian Haebler, head of global contract logistics at Leschaco.

"Its location between the ports of Hamburg, Bremerhaven, and Wilhelmshaven, combined with our new site in Moerdijk, Netherlands, enhances supply chain flexibility and proximity to Europe's key logistics corridors."

Kai Chladek, head of global product management LCL, added: "This facility significantly enhances our LCL service offering, particularly for hazardous cargo. With its advanced infrastructure and integration into our global network, we are well-positioned to deliver reliable, compliant, and scalable solutions to our customers across industries."

The new Bremen facility is part of Leschaco's broader strategy to align infrastructure investments with evolving customer needs, regulatory requirements, and sustainability goals - ensuring long-term competitiveness in the global logistics landscape.

www.leschaco.com

A key differentiator of the site is its dedicated hazardous goods infrastructure

China tank industry addresses future trends

Earlier this summer, the China Container Industry Association hosted the 'Fifth China Tank Container Co-operation, Development and Chemical and Liquid Food Logistics Technology Application Conference' in Nantong, Jiangsu Province.

More than 200 representatives from the fields of tank operations, leasing, production, inspection, and servicing, gathered to discuss the application of and future trends in tank container logistics.

They were joined by experts from China National Railway Group, China Customs Society, Transportation Supervision and Administration Department of the State Railway Administration, and the China Petroleum and Chemical Industry Federation.

The conference aims to promote the application of tank containers in multimodal transport, and promote close co-operation between logistics and cargo owners.

The conference was presided over by Hao Panfeng, deputy secretary-general of the China Container Industry Association.

Jiuding International Logistics reported on its website that the company participated as an industry representative and shared the latest technological achievements and strategic outlook at the meeting.

The conference promotes the application of tank containers in multimodal transport and close co-operation between logistics and cargo owners

Song Manyuan, general manager of the company's tank container technology and management centre, delivered a speech on 'Tank Technology Innovation under the New Economic Situation'. He introduced that in the new economic situation the transport of liquid chemicals shows that characteristics like small batches, multiple batches, flexibility, demand for customisation (such as compartmentalised transport and temperature control), real-time data tracking, and personalised loading and unloading services have surged.

The company has enabled real-time monitoring of tank temperature, humidity, pressure, liquid level, vibration and other sensors.

In the future, he said, tank sensors will move towards higher precision, lower power consumption and greater miniaturisation. Jiuding is conducting further into how the Chinese tank sector can better accommodate customer demands.

At the same time, the conference released the first development report of the whole industry chain for tank containers in China.

Jiuding CEO Huang Jinhui participated in the release ceremony for the 'China Tank Container Industry Development Report (2024)'. The report brings together first-hand data from more than 50 industry leaders, covering key areas such as tank production, market operation, leasing services, and aftermarket maintenance, and systematically researching and judging future development trends of the industry.

www.djdlogistics.com

'Partnering with COSCO VTG is a huge milestone for MRI Intermodal Software'

MRI for Shanghai COSCO VTG

Shanghai COSCO VTG Tanktainer has chosen MRI Intermodal Software's Monitor4000 to power its tank container operations.

The move is about streamlining processes, enhancing compliance, and staying ahead in a fast-moving global market through real-time visibility across the supply chain, the tank logistics provider says.

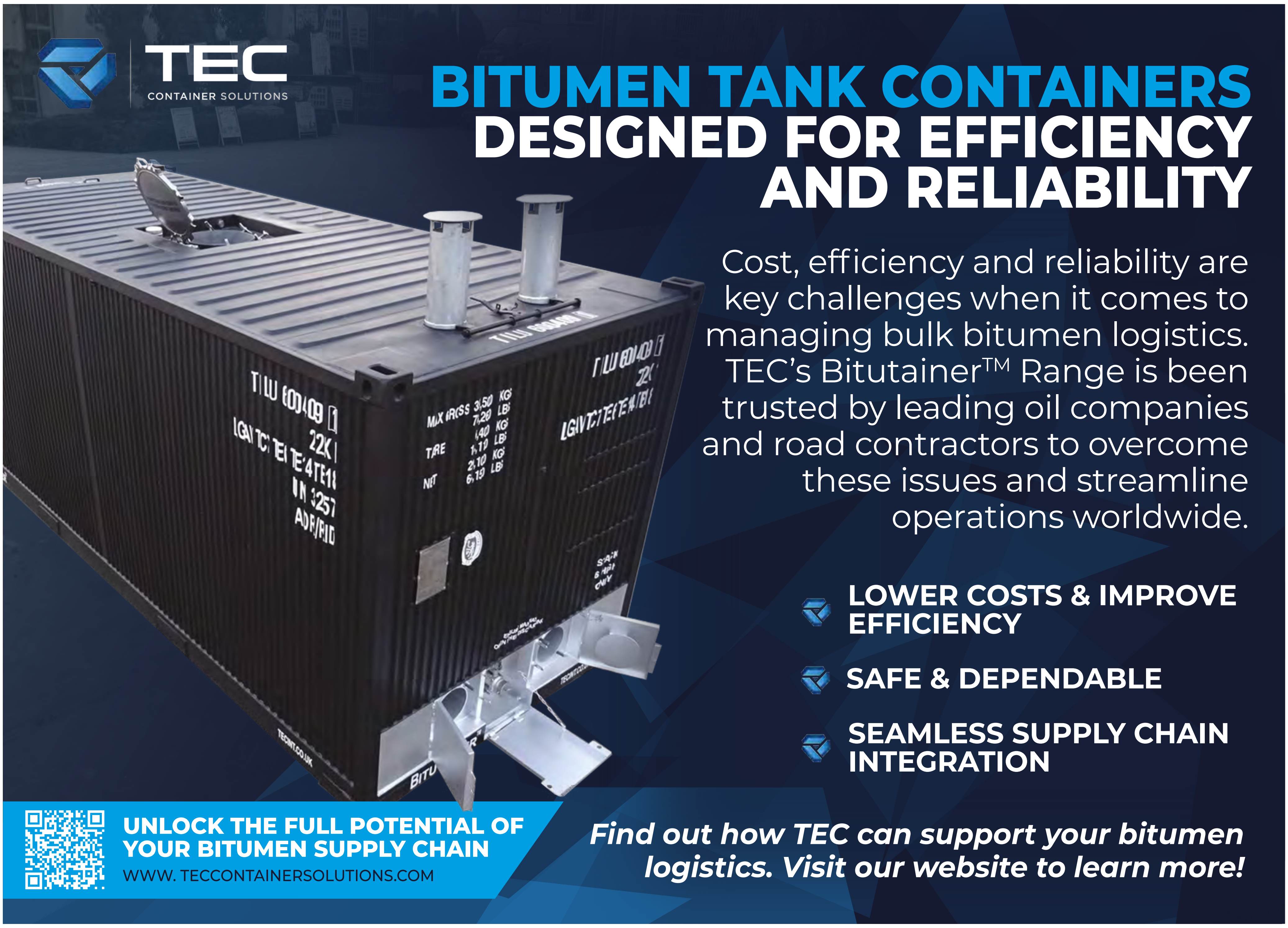
MRI says its software is built from the ground up for tank operators and handles everything from demurrage tracking and document automation to financial integration, allowing teams to spend less time buried in administration and more time focusing on growth.

Implementing a scalable solution means that as the business grows, the foundations are already in place. MRI provides built-in customisation, smooth data migration, and a responsive helpdesk which means your operations stay agile as your business grows. The platform provides teams with the tools to cut complexity and boost accuracy.

"Partnering with COSCO VTG is a huge milestone for MRI Intermodal Software, we're excited to support them with streamlining operations, reducing manual work, and setting new benchmarks in the industry," said Richard Shaw, MRI's managing director.

Shanghai COSCO VTG Tanktainer is a joint venture between Chinese shipping giant COSCO Shipping Logistics and Hamburg-based VTG.

www.mriintermodal.com



The transfer to Masterbulk took effect on 1 October

EOC completes transfer to Masterbulk

In September, Belgian chemicals company EOC Logistics completed the transfer of its logistics operations to Masterbulk, based in Ghent.

The decision, originally announced in June, was made so that Oudenaarde-headquartered EOC could strengthen its focus on its core activities: innovating, producing and selling high-quality chemical products.

The logistics sector is evolving rapidly, with increasing demands for flexibility, sustainability, and transparency. At the same time, regulatory and technological challenges continue to grow.

Thus, logistics has become a specialised field requiring dedicated expertise and continuous investment.

"At EOC, we are committed to quality and efficiency in everything we do," explained Gerard Marsman, CEO of EOC. "We believe that working with a partner whose core business is transport logistics, enables us to serve our markets better by focusing on innovation, production and customer centricity within our area of expertise: chemistry."

The transfer to Masterbulk took effect on 1 October. The logistics firm has a fleet of 90 specialised trailers and all EOC Logistics employees have been fully transferred to Masterbulk.

The staff will continue working at the same facilities in their current roles in Oudenaarde and Evergem to ensure continuity.

"With this acquisition Masterbulk is reaching a new milestone in our growth path where, as at EOC Group, specialisation and quality are prime driving forces," commented Filip Slock, Masterbulk's CEO.

EOC Group is a family-owned company active in the chemical sector since 1948. The company produces a broad range of chemical products, including adhesives, compounds, emulsions, latex, polyurethanes, surfactants, and thermoplastic elastomers.

It has 13 production sites in Europe and Asia and more than 700 employees worldwide.

Founded in Ghent in 1997, Masterbulk serves the intermodal bulk transport sector with logistics and technical services. The company specialises in transporting dry bulk containers, tank containers (hazardous and non-hazardous liquids), and intermodal units.

https://eocgroup.com
www.masterbulk.eu

Sino-Swiss award for Bertschi

To celebrate the outstanding business achievements of Swiss companies in China and commemorate the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and China, the Sino-Swiss Business Awards ceremony and gala dinner was held in Beijing on 27 August.

This prestigious event, hosted by the Chinese Swiss Chamber of Commerce and co-presented by the Swiss Embassy in China, unveiled the winners of the five major awards for 2025.

After the impartial evaluation process, Bertschi stood out among numerous outstanding enterprises and was honoured with third place for the 'Sustainable Development Award for SMEs'.

The accolade not only recognises Bertschi's significant contributions to the field of sustainable development but also affirms its efforts in environmental safety, social responsibility, and economic resilience.

Since its inception in 2013, the Sino-Swiss Business Awards have been dedicated to recognising Swiss and Chinese enterprises that have made exceptional contributions to promote business relations between the two countries.

The 2025 awards mark the seventh edition of this event, continuing to focus on SMEs and large enterprises that excel in innovation, sustainable development, digital transformation, talent development, and Sino-Swiss business co-operation, showcasing the achievements of Swiss and Chinese companies in bilateral economic collaboration.

This year introduced a new Legacy Award, granted to companies with a strong Swiss brand identity — whether wholly Swiss-owned or operated by a Swiss management team — that have been continuously operating in China for more than 20 years.

www.bertschi.com

General manager Bertschi China Jemmy Wu receives the award on stage

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Equity injection for Logtrans

The long march of private equity into the logistics sector continues.

This summer, Paris-based MBO+, through its MBO Buyout 5 fund, acquired a majority stake in Logtrans, a specialist in port logistics solutions and road transport of dangerous goods in France and across Europe.

Taken over in 2012 by Philippe Woerhel, Logtrans has developed a unique model that combines operational performance with expertise in high value-added niche segments.

Logtrans offers a comprehensive range of services including short-haul container transport, transport of dangerous goods, explosive products and ISO tank containers, port traction and warehousing.

Thanks to its location in the ports of Le Havre and Fos-sur-Mer, the company has built a strong reputation based on the quality of its services, securing the loyalty of more than 200 customers. In addition, Logtrans places significant emphasis on environmental issues in its strategy, as evidenced by its investment in a fleet biofuel-powered trucks.

The company has 25 ADR tractors and 50 ADR chassis. In Port of Le Havre Logtrans operates under the name Transports Zurcher.

The transaction aims to support Logtrans in implementing its ambition for both organic and external growth and to establish itself as a leading player in port logistics solutions in Europe. The company's development will be based on two main areas : strengthening its niche expertise (transport of explosives, nuclear products, pharmaceuticals, etc) and expanding its geographical footprint to new ports in France and elsewhere in Europe.

Logtrans offers a range of services including short-haul container, dangerous goods and tank containers

"We are very proud of Logtrans' success, which is above all a testament to the dedication of its teams," said Philippe Woehrel, CEO of Logtrans. "The commitment and high standards have enabled the company to build a solid and sustainable foundation.

"Today, Logtrans is at a key turning point in its development, which requires the support of a financial partner to accelerate its growth. That is why we have chosen to partner with MBO+ with whom we share a common vision of the company, the same high standards in the way we work, and strong human values. This partnership therefore marks a defining moment for Logtrans and is an essential lever for realising our ambitions.".

"We are very pleased to support the development of Logtrans, which benefits from a strategic positioning, a differentiated operating model, and a continuously growing port market. We will support the group and its teams in making Logtrans the French leader in container transport, in particular through the implementation of a key account approach and a targeted M&A strategy," commented Olivier Delrieu and Alexandre Chaton, partners in charge of buyout strategy for MBO+.

https://logtrans-services.fr/

Book & Claim allows customers to benefit from real, traceable CO2 reductions

'Book & Claim' advancing DH Green Corridors

Den Hartogh is taking another step towards sustainable logistics with the introduction of its Book & Claim system for trucking lanes.

This certified approach allows customers to benefit from real, traceable CO2 reductions within Den Hartogh's expanding network of Green Corridors.

At the heart of the system lies the principle of mass balance, ensuring renewable and conventional fuel are managed together transparently. For Den Hartogh, this involves ISCC-certified HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil), a renewable diesel alternative that is physically used within its own fleet. Every litre is accurately tracked and verified, ensuring that what is allocated as 'renewable' to customers truly represents real fuel consumption and impact.

The Book & Claim process is independently audited by Normec Verifavia and fully aligned with the latest Smart Freight Center standards. This certification provides customers with full confidence that every CO2 certificate corresponds to genuine, verifiable renewable fuel use.

By combining this method with its operational expertise, Den Hartogh enables customers to achieve measurable emission reductions.

The new system also plays a key role in the development of Green Corridors, where all partners across the transport chain contribute to verifiable sustainability results. Den Hartogh covers the pre- and post-carriage with physical HVO through mass balance, while deepsea partners apply certified Book & Claim for the ocean leg.

By linking these elements under one transparent framework, each shipment clearly shows its CO2 reduction share from both road and sea transport.

www.denhartogh.com

Future-proofing supply chains

Geopolitical volatility, shifting trade flows, and increasing strategic pressures are forcing Europe's petrochemical industry to rethink the fundamentals of its global supply chains.

What once prioritised scale and efficiency must now be redesigned for resilience, agility and long-term competitiveness. At this year's EPCA Annual Meeting, a session was devoted to providing Practical Insights for Future-Proofing Supply Chains

Hans Augusteijn: 'It used to be that sometimes there would be one big disruptive event, but now many seem to be happening at the same time'

Hans Augusteijn, president, Stolt Tank Containers (STC), was first up. He emphasised the unique position of the company being part of the Stolt Nielsen Group, and so able to work closely with its storage arm Stolthaven and tanker division Stolt Tankers.

The main theme of his presentation was how to manage supply chains in these volatile times. He pointed to major disruptions, such as the Red Sea closures, the drought in the Panama Canal, and tariff changes. But there are also other smaller issues that add to the pressure on global supply chains.

"It used to be that sometimes there would be one big disruptive event, but now many seem to be happening at the same time," he commented.

In the European market, companies need to have a resilient supply chain, but it is also key that they remain competitive, as building too much buffer into your network normally leads to extra cost.

STC is trying to accomplish three main things with its customers: more flexibility, especially in a volatile environment; scalability, as scale matters when it comes to resilience; and visibility, both in planning and getting real insights into cargo flows.

Inevitably, digital tools are seen as vital to predicting and executing the shipments of product, but, in addition, all players in the supply chain need to come together to make this happen.

He gave an example of a previously steady Asia to US flow that was disrupted by a sudden change in tariff policy.

The cargo was already on the water, but because of a tariff issue the products would have become uncompetitive.

So, Stolt got together with the customer and managed to divert the traffic into another location where it was still market competitive.

"The way we work together with our customers and partners is to build in that flexibility because in order to do this you need to make sure that you can get together quickly and that there is capacity available in your network to divert products."

Careful buffers

In scalability, he reiterated you cannot have buffer everywhere in the supply chain because that gets very expensive.

He gave the example of the Red Sea closures. "We had to reroute product around the Cape of Good Hope. But actually, by early engagement we could get the assets in the right place, optimising the network and scaling it."

This is largely down to working with customers to identify potential choke points that are critical to the supply chain and if necessary deploying extra capacity to those points. "An adjustment is better than a crisis," he stated.

In another example, as Stolt Nielsen operates with both ISO tanks and parcel tankers the group can discuss with customers the best mode of transport. This is where visibility comes in, even if it means sometimes the ISO tank is not the best option.

"We really need to open our mind to ask what's actually best for the customer," he said. "In one recent case, we actually moved product to another mode of transport because that was better for the customer. So, for me as president of the tank container division, that was not so good, but for our customer it was very good."

The case in question was an import leg into Europe for product sourced in Germany, the US Gulf and Saudi Arabia and numerous import locations dotted around Europe.

For years, the customer had used tank containers because it thought that was the easiest way to do it as it involved expediting smaller quantities to many locations.

However, on closer examination the customer was struggling to keep the product moving and also to be competitive in some of these lanes.

"So, when we got together with the customer, we looked at the data using Stolt Nielsen's optimisation processes and asked how would you feed the European market from a mode-agnostic viewpoint?

"We figured out that the better way is to feed product into a hub in Rotterdam and carry the regional distribution for North Europe from there. We could also do the same in Barcelona. So, instead of moving ISO tanks there were some flows which were big enough to consolidate into one for Southern Europe and one for Northern

Europe.

"In this case we achieved quite a significant cost saving out of it, but because of some congestion in Europe on the container side we were also able to offer a more reliable product delivery for the customer."

He added that with rapid developments in artificial intelligence (AI), network visibility is improving all the time.

"So, in summary, to create supply chain resilience – through flexibility, scalability, and visibility - you have to sit down as stakeholders in the supply chain, share the pain points, share the data, share the expectations, work on it, plan for it, and then adjust for it," Augusteijn concluded.

Dow perspective

Tabita Verburg, area president Dow Benelux, France, Iberica, UK and Nordics, gave a perspective on making local value chains competitive and future-proof.

She started with the simple questions of whether Europe can continue to compete over the next 20 years with the US and Asia, and whether there be still local manufacturing in the European chemical industry.

"I think there will be and future-proofing supply chains will at least be part of the success for European chemical producers in the future," she stated.

Integration, not least the cluster concept, has historically has been the strength of the chemical industry, Verburg pointed out, and the European chemical industry is very integrated.

"We have these amazing industry parks or chemical clusters like Ludwigshafen Antwerp, Terneuzen, etc, built close to the sea or major rivers," she continued.

"Infrastructures like on site utilities and co-product sharing have made the chemical industry in Europe very strong."

However, over the past 10 or so years that competitive position has started to change, particularly in the light of new developments in Asia and North America. While Europe was still optimising its crackers in existing production plants, Texas, for example, saw brand new cracker facilities built to exploit shale gas along with new integrated chemical facilities.

"So, we might have been sleeping a bit," she quipped.

Verburg then pointed to a study by Cefic on the current competitive situation in the chemicals industry.

Essentially, Europe faces several competitive disadvantages compared with the US and China, for example, energy costs, environmental and regulatory costs, labour costs and productivity.

Other strengths have helped Europe to remain competitive,

Tabita Verburg: 'It's going to be tough, we will need to take a lot of action'

particularly logistics and capital costs, alongside innovation, human capital and, crucially, "the supply-demand ecosystem".

"However, if we do nothing, if we don't take action, all these (strengths) could become (weaknesses)," she stated. "If we are continuously to invest in our strengths I think there is a future-proofing for European supply chains and for our manufacturing here."

Three scenarios

She went on to talk about three scenarios where the future of supply chains and the chemical industry in Europe could benefit.

First, resiliency. Referring to Hans Augusteijn's mention of the Red Sea crisis, Verburg said having local manufacturing in Europe helped Dow considerably at the time. "We were not dependent on other continents, we had local manufacturing and local supply chains that we could build on."

Another important new geopolitical reality is also in the defense sector. When Dow talks to governments, it is very important for them to keep a chemical industry in Europe. They want to make sure chemical producers will stay, because they don't want to be dependent on imports from other countries for this vital sector.

"Another important opportunity that I see in this regard is not just producing molecules in Europe, it's also about the infrastructure that the defense industry and governments make available," she stated. "That's an opportunity for all of you to consider. How can we build that together with the new supply chains of the future? If there is a lot of investment for defense, how can we benefit from that?"

Circularity

Then there is the closed loop supply chain, ie, circularity. This is something that will happen, Verburg asserted.

"Probably a lot of you are already considering this, but for us this is a very important element in future-proofing supply chains in Europe.

"Linear models will change and we will need to make much greater use of our waste in new production and then using the waste again to produce molecules. If you want to create this materials ecosystem by actually putting waste into the system you must also create new supply chains."

This is partly down to regulation and partly due to individual strategies where sector actors want to do something useful with waste. It helps the industry to be become less dependent on feedstocks from other parts of the world. But putting that all back into the system and creating a new material ecosystem means supply chains have to become more local.

"You want to make sure that you can use, say, local municipal waste, everything that is in your environment to keep costs down."

Dow is currently building a closed-loop system in Terneuzen where it is working closely with the whole cluster to see what kind of waste is available, how can it be brought into the system, and how can Dow make new molecules out of this resource.

Finally, she referred back to the key assets of human capital and innovation.

"It is very important that look at our people, they are the core of everything. I think supply chain professionals, as I've seen them, are always very agile and adaptable. However, we probably need to step up a bit now with upskilling and reskilling, making sure you understand what's going, looking at supply chains in a different way as we talk about the new infrastructure needs of defense and circular ecosystems. Here, the adaptability and agility of supply chain professionals are going to be critical."

Digital technology will also be crucial. The opportunity in Europe is to have a digital ecosystem, ie, an open system where all stakeholders communicate with each other.

"That's going to be the strength of the future of supply chains because that will make us agile in order to deliver real value and productivity, and that's going to be the real differentiator for the coming years.

"It's going to be tough, we will need to take a lot of action, specifically working with our partners to make this happen. But with this effort, I hope we can really future-proof European supply chains for the chemical industry," Verburg concluded.

https://epca.eu

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On a one-way journey

For decades container leasing was something of battleground between shipping lines and cargo owners, and their equipment leasing suppliers.

Disputes over maintenance and repair (M&R) costs, repositioning expenses and demurrage charges often turned hostile.

This was partly down to the relatively high cost of a single container which obliged each party to a contract to squeeze as much value as possible out of their equipment.

However, the mass production and commoditisation of containers in the past 20 or so years lowered this pressure and forced the leasing industry to innovate, and one such innovation is the one-way lease.

As it says on the tin, the customer leases a container for a one-way trip by paying the usual freight charges to the container owner for transporting the cargo. At the same time, the container owner gets to move its container without incurring the costs of empty repositioning.

One-way leasing has conventionally been seen as a niche industry in global container shipping. However, Osmo Lahtinen CEO of Finnish company OVL Container believes this is all about to change.

The global supply chain has seen numerous upheavals in recent years, he argues, and a growing stack of empty containers that cannot make their way home from, say, American ports are likely contributing to an expanding global mismatch in supply and demand, adding to a potential crisis, which, some say, is hiding in plain sight.

For these reasons, the ever-changing world of global logistics is facing many new demands that an often conservative container shipping industry must adapt to just keep up, including greater use of technology, fleet availability and flexibility, as well as solutions that benefit the bottom line.

This might explain why Lahtinen has seen a recent uptick in interest in one-way leasing. He is not surprised, however, and argues that one-way leasing may just be the best way forward.

"The one-way container leasing industry is highly equipped to handle the new requirements of the market and the supply chain, not least in terms of, say, fleet accessibility, the utilisation of AI and the continued green transition," Lahtinen says.

"However, this requires breaking away from being considered a niche solution. This means that we, as specialists, must subvert expectations and misconceptions about the service. Not least among those, who still think it is primarily a tailor-made solution at a high-end price."

OVL is part of a highly specialised generation of emerging one-way leasing companies, including One Way Lease and Titan Containers, that are spearheading a change within container shipping, where the 'same-old, same-old' no longer will suffice.

Right now, uncertainty is stalling the industry's momentum, according to Maritime Analytica, and that uncertainty is driven by high freight costs, digitalisation and sustainability investments. More of the same will not fix it, says Lahtinen. And this means that 'next practice' must now become best practice.

"While we try to embody one-way leasing done right today, we are now more than anything determined to help embody what will be 'next practice' in container shipping, as a whole. This means embracing digital technology such as AI, while investing in an accessible depot network as well as a reliable fleet of green containers. And all this, without slapping on a premium price tag, because – and let us be honest – price is still king with increasing port fees, inflation, and geopolitical risks," Lahtinen adds.

Container xChange indicates that one-way leasing is likely under 5 percent of the total market.

To try and encourage greater take-up, OVL launched OVL Partner during the summer.

This is a partnership scheme designed "to transform the economics of ocean freight". It is effectively a loyalty scheme, under which the more a customer ships with OVL, the more it benefits.

"One-way leasing is vastly different than conventional container shipping," says Lahtinen. "We are among a few one-way leasing specialists that are challenging industry conventions and embodying industry 'next practice'. A part of defining what is next is embracing new business models; and the one-way model allows us to do that.

"By leveraging our young fleet (mostly under two years old), digital booking tools, and deep market expertise from Helsinki to Shanghai and Chicago to Hamburg, we're able to pass operational savings directly on to loyal partners," he adds.

OVL's fleet includes most container types, from standard 20ft to 40ft high-cubes. It can also offer tank containers.

www.ovlcontainer.com

www.mimu-tankleasing.com

One-way leasing is vastly different than conventional container shipping

Specials for Teck

CS Leasing has successfully delivered another group of special use containers to Canadian mining firm Teck Resources Limited for the latter's global mining operations.

The leasing company is proud of its track record of collaboration with its client network in designing, building and delivering intermodal containers around the world.

CS Leasing's engineers work hand-in-hand with market participants to ensure the right equipment for complex logistics programmes.

Teck's primary operations are in copper and zinc mining with plays in Canada, the USA, Peru and Chile.

In September, Teck announced it had reached an agreement to merge with UK-South African mining giant Anglo American.

CS Leasing offers range of special containers for dry bulk goods, such as 20ft bulkers and half-heights.

www.cslintermodal.com

CS Leasing's engineers work hand-in-hand with market participants to ensure the right equipment for complex logistics programmes

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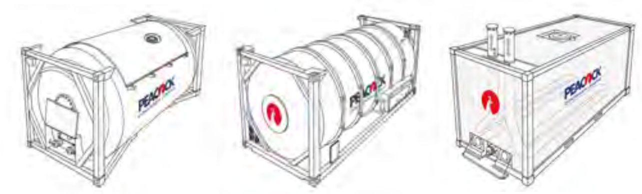

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CSA offers various cleaning options, including disinfecting, steam cleaning and kosher cleaning

Upgrade for CSA Amsterdam

Biodiesel producer Argent Energy's depot division Cleaning Services Argent (CSA) has upgraded its truck tank cleaning facility at Port of Amsterdam.

Now the modernisation programme has been completed, the company aims to meet growing demand for efficient logistics solutions in and around the Dutch port.

The facility is located directly across from Argent's biodiesel plant and just minutes from the main terminals.

Thanks to this location, hauliers can have their trucks and tankers cleaned quickly and professionally, whether transporting liquid or powder products.

The highly automated facility is spread over four lanes. Trucks serviced here typically transport foodstuffs, which makes strict control of the cleaning processes and compliance with quality standards absolutely essential. As a result, all cleaning is carried out in accordance with the strictest quality standards. To guarantee optimal product safety, the tanks are sealed immediately after cleaning, and a certificate is issued to the client.

CSA offers various cleaning options, including disinfecting, steam cleaning and kosher cleaning. Two of the wash lines are equipped with automated cleaning systems that clean according to a secured program that monitors proper completion and prints the dates on a cleaning certificate.

In addition to upgrading the facility, CSA recently opened a new coffee corner for drivers. Free coffee is offered with every tank cleaning operation.

The coffee corner complements the existing amenities, which include showers, toilets and a comfortable waiting area.

"With this addition, CSA aims to further improve drivers' comfort during the cleaning process," a spokesman said.

https://cleaningservices-amsterdam.nl

KN's strategic South Coast move

Belgium's Katoen Natie has reached an agreement to buy Irish bulk logistics company South Coast Logistics.

The acquisition will strengthen Katoen Natie's position in the Irish and international logistics markets and support the group's long-term growth strategy, the Belgian group stated.

South Coast Logistics, established in 1975, operates from Fermoy, Dublin, and Cork and is active in sectors such as food, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals and fuel.

The company offers transport solutions and holds permits for the transport of nearly all EWC codes, both domestically and internationally.

In 2024 South Coast unveiled a "groundbreaking" Inland Port Terminal at Ballycoolin, Dublin, for which it has secured planning permission.

This state-of-the-art facility is the first of its kind in Ireland, the company said, and will operate as an Upper Tier Seveso site, regulated by the Health & Safety Authority (HSA).

The terminal will offer a comprehensive range of services, including storage for more than 220 laden and empty TEU, tank container lifting, washing, heating, repair, maintenance, and logistical support — all within a single, fully integrated and regulated site.

"Given Ireland's status as an island nation, we face unique challenges such as reliance on shipping schedules, weather disruptions, and customs complexities," commercial director Richie O'Flynn explained at the time.

"The new Inland Port Terminal allows our customers, including tank container operators and multinational companies, to adopt a proactive approach to stock management, ensuring consistent production and business continuity. This development solidifies South Coast's role as the leading versatile and dedicated multi-faceted service provider in Ireland."

Within Ireland, the Fermoy headquarters is home to a fleet of 45 vehicles servicing the South-West of the country, as well as the Cork Inland Port Terminal (CIPT).


In 2024, South Coast unveiled its "groundbreaking" Inland Port Terminal at Ballycoolin

Some 15 trucks service the North-East of the country out of Dublin, as well as hosting truck, tank and container maintenance facilities.

South-West Ireland is served by around 15 trucks based in Cork City, while Galway is home to a fleet of four trucks servicing the North-West of the country.

The company also has offices in Poland and Croatia.

South Coast also offers flexitank logistics services including, flexitank purchasing, expert loading and unloading to prevent product contamination. The company complies with international regulations and safety standards and can carry out disposal of used flexitanks locally in Ireland. Specialised equipment for flexitank deliveries can be hired.

Katoen Natie also runs a network of state-of-the art cleaning operations. Facilities include tank and silo cleaning, high-pressure cleaning and vacuum operations. All facilities are EFTCO-certified and provide ECD documents. The group specialises in the cleaning of non-hazardous products.

www.katoennatie.com
www.southcoast.ie

Faris Al-Shali

New GM for Kanoo

Faris Al-Shali has been appointed general manager at Kanoo Tank Services.

Al-Shali's promotion represents the culmination of an eight-year tenure with the Sahreej team, during which he has demonstrated consistent professional advancement and operational excellence.

His career trajectory within the organisation reflects a comprehensive understanding of the company's operations. Beginning as a chemical technician, he progressed through successive roles including safety officer, HSE manager, and dangerous goods adviser, before assuming his current position as general manager.

During his tenure, Al-Shali has been instrumental in implementing multiple international standards and certifications, including SQAS, ISO45001, ISO14001, ISO22301, and ISO37001. His professional development has been further enhanced through specialised training, including completion of Hazardous Cargo Advisor certification through the Scottish Qualification Authority in partnership with the UK Department of Transport, as well as earning a Harvard Certificate of Specialisation covering finance, strategy, and business readiness.

In his new role, Al-Shali will concentrate on expanding the Sahreej brand while diversifying product lines. His focus encompasses short, medium, and long-term expansion plans for facilities in Jubail, Dammam, and Jeddah, with particular emphasis on maintaining close oversight of financial performance metrics.

The new general manager will be supported by a dedicated management team comprising technical and operations manager Sarfaraz Selani and finance manager Nonie Luza. This leadership structure is designed to create what the company describes as an excellent management team positioned to elevate Sahreej to greater operational heights.

The appointment reflects the company's confidence in Al-Shali's ability to drive continued growth across multiple dimensions, including reputation enhancement, product line expansion, and volume increases.

www.sahreej.com

Salt River site for UCD

In South Africa, Grindrod subsidiary United Container Depots (UCD) has officially opened its new depot in Salt River, Cape Town.

The depot, less than 3km from Port of Cape Town, marks a significant expansion of UCD's national footprint and strengthens Cape Town's role as a trade gateway.

The Salt River site, leased from Transnet Properties, underwent development to prepare it for full container handling. The depot now offers capacity for 5,000 TEU. It is equipped with 240 reefer plugs, on-site reefer preparation, and staging areas, important for South Africa's key exports such as citrus and grapes.

With Phase 1 of the development now complete, planning has already commenced for the development of Phase 2. Since the depot is rail-linked to Port of Cape Town, the construction of the private rail sidings in Phase 2 would offer exporters a seamless logistics solution while reducing pressure on already congested port roads.

"Containerised cargo is integral to global trade and integral to Grindrod's strategy of creating cost-effective and efficient customer solutions," said Xolani Mbambo, CEO of Grindrod Limited. "We are not just opening a depot, we are opening opportunities for exporters, importers, farmers, manufacturers, and communities."

Speaking at the event, the Provincial Minister of Agriculture and Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer said: "This is a proud and exciting moment for me and for maritime logistics in the Western Cape, and takes us a step closer to the day when maritime logistics through Port of Cape Town is globally competitive and growing to unlock quality of life and business opportunities for all.

"The opening of the United Container back-of-port facility affirms the Western Cape Government's Growth for Jobs Strategy — a strategy that aims for breakout economic growth, creating jobs, confidence, hope, and opportunities to thrive. The Western Cape intends to become a regional investment destination of choice in Africa. We anticipate 220,000 net new jobs, with 20,000 likely to be created in the Cape Town port's container logistics ecosystem. We also expect to triple exports to R450 billion by 2035."

UCD has over 40 years of experience in servicing and handling containers for major shipping lines. Together with depots in Johannesburg and Durban, UCD provides a full suite of container logistics solutions, including storage, repairs, reefer services, warehousing, bulk minerals handling, and transport, with a combined capacity of nearly 13,500 TEU nationwide.

Grindrod was awarded the concession to build and operate the container terminal in Richards Bay earlier this year.

www.grindrod.com

The new Esparreguera location replaces the former Martorell facility

Lavaderos opens near Barca

Spain's Lavaderos Europa recently opened a new tank cleaning facility in Esparreguera, near Barcelona.

The relocation and expansion mark an upgrade over the company's previous Martorell site, delivering advanced capacity, enhanced services and improved driver amenities.

Situated in the Polígono Industrial Magaroles, the new facility features five modern cleaning lines capable of servicing up to seven tanks simultaneously.

Designed to handle a wide range of needs from food-grade to chemical tank cleaning, it incorporates cutting-edge technology to ensure both efficiency and environmental compliance.

"Our goal with this new facility is to raise the bar for quality, speed and customer experience in tank cleaning," said a spokesperson for Lavaderos Europa. "Esparreguera enables us to meet the growing demands of our clients with greater flexibility and sustainability."

Key features include five high-tech cleaning lines for simultaneous services and being specialised in chemical, food-grade and container cleaning. The facility also incorporates water recycling systems and eco-friendly cleaning agents.

The new Esparreguera location replaces the former Martorell facility, expanding the company's footprint.

The proximity to Barcelona's major transport routes ensures fast turnaround times and easy access for hauliers servicing Spain's booming manufacturing and export sectors.

The launch of the Esparreguera station aligns with Spain's increasing emphasis on quality, hygiene and traceability in tank cleaning, driven by stricter regulations and customer expectations.

Lavaderos Europa's investment is seen as a proactive step to maintain leadership in the market and support compliance with the latest European Cleaning Document (ECD) standards.

With increased capacity and streamlined operations, the new facility is expected to reduce downtime for tank operators and help logistics companies optimise their routes and schedules.

For drivers, the improved amenities provide a much-needed upgrade in comfort and convenience during often long-haul journeys.

Zodiac expands in Nhava Sheva

In India, Zodiac Tank Container Terminals recently inaugurated an additional 1.2 ha of fully paved yard space at its Nhava Sheva (Mumbai) facility.

This expansion increases the total storage yard capacity to 3.6 ha, enabling the terminal to accommodate up to 1,250 TEU.

With this development, Zodiac says it now operates the largest ISO tank container terminal and depot facility in India. Further growth is already planned, with an adjacent 1.2 ha plot currently under development. Scheduled for completion in 2026, this will bring the site's total capacity to just under 5 ha.

Operational for the past four years, Zodiac Tank Container Terminals remains the only facility in India accredited with IMS certifications ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, and ISO 45001:2018. The company provides a range of services for all types of tank containers.

www.zodiacterminals.com


Zodiac added 1.2 ha of fully paved yard space at Nhava Sheva

Kanoo Tank Services Sahreej

Jeddah Depot

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Location: SHAMS Container Terminal, Al Moulysaa, Al Khumrah Al Saif Beach Road, behind Guazain Roundabout, Jeddah 22623, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.Postal Address: PO Box 1805, Al-Jubail 31951, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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www.sahreej.com

Drilling down into wine distribution

As wine production stays localised and demand expands globally, distribution has taken on an increasingly critical role in the value chain

In recent years, the international trade in wine has seen remarkable growth; around 100 million hectolitres with a total value of more than €35 billion.

Wine consumption has become a global phenomenon, yet production remains concentrated in relatively few regions, predominantly along the 40th parallel in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. So, as production stays localised and demand expands globally, distribution has taken on an increasingly critical role in the value chain. Despite this, distribution in trade remains one of the least-examined elements in wine studies.

To this end, France-based trade body the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) released its Statistical Thematic Focus for 2025 The *Global Trade in Wine: Role and Relevance of Re-exportation Hubs* which OIV claims is first-ever comprehensive estimate of global wine re-exports revealing how these flows shape today's interconnected wine economy.

The global trade in wine now represents over 47 percent of total world wine consumption, the study finds. This shift highlights wine's transformation from a primarily domestic product to a globally traded commodity.

However, while the trade's value has steadily increased — even after the economic crises of 2009 and 2020 — its volume has remained stable over the past 12 years and has even declined slightly in recent years.

This stagnation raises concerns about the wine sector's future prospects, especially amid uncertain demand trends. Nevertheless, an in-depth analysis of individual product lines, target markets, and consumer segments reveals substantial opportunities for expansion.

International trade in wine now accounts for around 100 Mhl annually, with a total value of approximately €36 billion and an average price of €3.60 per litre. A portion of this trade involves wine re-exports (ie, exports of wine that was previously imported), a practice often done by countries with little or no local production but with a favourable trade environment.

This flow through intermediary countries adds complexity to trade statistics, as the same wine may be counted multiple times before reaching its final destination. So, the study sought to provide a reliable estimate of re-exports within the global trade in wine.

To quantify re-exports, countries were grouped based on their production and trade profiles. Using available data on wine production, consumption, imports, and exports from 2018 to 2023, OIV estimated that re-exports account for 13.3 percent of global trade in wine, equivalent to 14 Mhl.

In value terms, this represents €4.6 billion out of €33.7 billion, or 13.5 percent of trade value, with an average price of €3.26 per litre, just slightly above the global average of €3.21 per litre.

To understand the main reasons behind re-export, the study analysed 14 re-exporting countries, encompassing a variety of profiles: large producers re-exporting wines from other origins, traditional distribution hubs serving neighbouring countries, and premium-focused distributors.

These cases show how free trade, low regulatory barriers, good commercial relations and efficient logistics drive re-export activity, with specific countries specialising in high- or low-end wines depending on the overall regional demand.

The re-export of wine is shaped by a combination of logistical, economic, and regulatory factors that vary across regions and market segments.

A primary driver is the strategic geographic positioning of re-export hubs, which facilitates efficient access to neighbouring or hard-to-reach markets. Countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, and Singapore benefit from advanced port infrastructure and streamlined logistics that support rapid redistribution.

Established distribution networks and wine merchant traditions are also influential — particularly in the UK and Germany, where strong bottling infrastructure enables the re-export of both bulk and premium wines. Regulatory environments further support re-export activity, with low customs duties, simplified procedures, and free trade agreements making Hong Kong SAR, Singapore, and Macao SAR attractive re-export platforms.

Access constraints

Specific market access constraints also drive re-export flows. Thailand serves as a regional channel to Myanmar and Cambodia, while Latvia and Lithuania act as re-export platforms within Eastern Europe, supported by geographic proximity and established trade corridors.

In several countries — including Denmark, the UK, and Australia — the ability to add value through bottling and repackaging imported bulk wine plays a central role in supporting competitive exports.

Additional drivers include tax advantages, shifts in global supply chains, and structural changes in trade relationships — such as Brexit — which have contributed to rerouted flows through alternative hubs like Belgium.

Finally, evolving consumer demand and external market shocks shape re-export dynamics. The growing appetite for premium wines in Asia has reinforced the strategic role of high-value centres like Singapore and Hong Kong SAR, which specialise in the distribution of sparkling and super-premium wines.

Meanwhile, trade disruptions — such as tariffs affecting Australian exports — have temporarily redirected flows through intermediaries like Macao SAR, illustrating how re-export hubs rapidly adapt to global trade shifts.

In summary, the study highlights some key insights into the complexities of global wine trade, emphasising the crucial role of distribution in shaping global market dynamics.

These insights include:

- *Complex trade flows.* Total wine exports reported by producers give an accurate overview of global trade volume but hide the indirect routes taken by many shipments. Some of this wine is counted multiple times as it moves between intermediary countries before reaching final consumers, underscoring the importance of distinguishing re-exports to understand trade flows fully.
- *Distribution's central role.* In a sector where production traditionally receives the most attention, distribution is a critical, yet often underrated factor in wine's economic sustainability. Access to robust distribution networks influences market reach and profitability, impacting both grape producers and wine manufacturers. While wine production is undoubtedly essential, the ability to effectively distribute it to reach the final consumer is equally, if not more, critical to the industry's economic viability.

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- *Non-producing distributors.* A significant share of the trade in wine is controlled by distributors rather than producers. OIV's analysis of case studies reveals many re-export hubs are dominated by independent distributors who capitalise on strategic positioning and logistics to supply regional markets. This separation between production and distribution highlights the structural complexity of the global wine economy.

In conclusion, re-exports represent a significant and often underexamined segment of international wine trade. Their growing role introduces distinct distribution dynamics that warrant deeper attention. Strengthening and optimising these distribution networks — particularly in response to shifting consumption patterns and global trade realignments — will be essential for ensuring resilience, expanding market access, and securing long-term growth in the wine sector.

POWERHOUSE BRITAIN

The UK ranks among the top global wine re-exporters, with annual re-exports estimated at 57.5 Ml, valued at €550.8 million.

While its exports predominantly comprise non-sparkling bottled wines, the average price of €9.58 per litre reflects its specialisation in premium segments. The UK's export markets are divided into two distinct groups: high-value, low-volume destinations, such as Hong Kong SAR and Singapore; and high-volume, low-value markets like Ireland and the Netherlands.

A third group of markets comprises large wine-producing countries that also serve as notable destinations for UK exports. These countries, including Spain and France, are possibly receiving wines that were originally exported from them to the UK, now being reimported.

Together, these segments illustrate the UK's dual role in serving both premium international clients and regional demand for entry-level wines, reinforcing its position as a pivotal wine re-export hub.

The UK's historic position as a leading wine importer, paired with its large domestic market, efficient bottling infrastructure, and strong network of wine merchants, supports its role as a significant re-export hub across diverse market segments. This longstanding tradition, though now challenged by Brexit, exemplifies the central role of distribution in the global wine value chain.

The UK has specific drivers of re-exports.

Efficient bottling for bulk imports. The UK's bottling infrastructure allows for efficient processing of bulk imports, which are then distributed as low-cost wines both domestically and to high-volume markets such as Ireland, Denmark, and the Netherlands.

Distribution of premium wines. The UK's longstanding wine merchant tradition and specialised distribution channels support the export of premium and super-premium wines to high-value markets like Hong Kong SAR and the USA.

Return flows of imported wines. Some of the wine imported by the UK is later returned to its original suppliers in wine-producing countries such as France and Spain. This pattern may reflect cyclical trade practices or return arrangements between UK distributors and their suppliers.

The UK's bottling infrastructure allows for efficient processing of bulk imports

Wine bulks up in Amsterdam

The 17th edition of the World Bulk Wine Exhibition (WBWE) takes place on 24-25 November at RAI Amsterdam.

Organised by Vinexposium, WBWE is the world's leading gathering for the bulk wine and spirits' sector.

"The bulk wine market is a strategic lever for the industry, at the crossroads of competitiveness, flexibility and sustainability. With the World Bulk Wine Exhibition, Vinexposium has broadened the event's scope and strengthened its impact, creating a meeting point where buyers and producers find practical solutions and shape the sector's future together," said Rodolphe Lameyse, CEO of Vinexposium.

For more than 15 years, WBWE has supported the structuring and growth of the bulk wine and spirits market, which has now become an essential segment. Bulk accounts for around one third of the global wine market by volume, confirming its central role in international trade. In the face of economic and environmental challenges, bulk stands out as a sustainable and competitive solution, embraced both by major international buyers and by premium brands.

Bringing together more than 240 producers from 25 countries and buyers from more than 60 countries – covering 70 to 80 percent of the global bulk trade – WBWE is a key meeting point to develop new markets and strengthen business exchanges.

Spain, France, Italy, Chile, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and the United States, the world's leading bulk producers, are returning in 2025. They will be joined by Mauritius, Lebanon and Panama for the first time, broadening the diversity of the offering and underlining the event's international scope.

The exhibition presents a comprehensive showcase: AC wines, organic or fortified wines, spirits, and an expanded range reflecting the rise of low- and no-alcohol alternatives and innovation in RTD.

WBWE highlights packaging innovations that lower carbon impact and logistics costs, meeting the sector's demand for efficiency and sustainability.

https://worldbulkwine.com

SA going big on big bags

Big things are happening in South Africa's packaging world.

The FIBC market is experiencing a surge, projected to grow from R820 million this year to a R1.42 billion by 2031, a 9.2 percent growth rate.

At the heart of this story is Vereeniging, a city in Gauteng province that sits at the crossroads of the steel, mining, and agriculture industries. It is also home to Vaal Bulk Bags.

Vereeniging is more than just a city in Gauteng. It is a hub of industrial innovation with direct access to the Vaal River corridor. The location offers proximity to mining operations that need safe, large-scale FIBC usage, as well as close ties to agriculture, where farmers rely on standard builder's bags for crops, seeds, and fertilisers.

It also benefits from a skilled workforce and local manufacturers who are producing top-quality polypropylene bulk bags for both domestic and export use.

That is why Vaal Bulk Bags has become the go-to supplier and distributor of bulk packaging solutions in the region.

In October, Vaal Bulk Bags announced expanded manufacturing capacity to address the growing demand for cost-effective, environmentally sustainable bulk packaging across South Africa.

The expansion enables the company to maintain its in-stock inventory while delivering fast turnaround times for custom FIBC orders across the region.

Vaal is positioning itself to capitalise on this growing market expansion by maintaining ready-to-ship inventory and offering customised solutions for diverse industrial applications.

"South African industries require reliable, cost-effective packaging solutions that can withstand the demands of heavy-duty applications while supporting environmental sustainability goals," said the company's operations director. "Our expanded capacity ensures that customers across construction, agriculture, and mining sectors have immediate access to high-quality FIBCs without compromising on customisation options or delivery speed."

Vaal's Vereeniging site offers proximity to mining operations that need safe, large-scale FIBC usage

Vaal stocks a comprehensive range of FIBCs bags, including standard builders bags and specialised containers up to 2m in height. The company offers various filling configurations including valve top, skirt top, and open top designs to accommodate different material handling requirements. All products use polypropylene construction that provides durability, weather resistance, and multiple-use capability before replacement is required.

"The flexible and reusable nature of bulk bags makes them an economically and environmentally superior choice compared to traditional rigid containers," the operations director continued. "Our customers benefit from lower per-unit costs, reduced storage space requirements when bags are not in use, and the ability to recycle materials at specialised polypropylene recycling facilities throughout South Africa."

The bags' lifting loop design facilitates easier material handling and transport, while their collapsed storage capability reduces warehouse space requirements. The lower cost per unit stored, combined with environmental benefits from recyclability and multiple-use longevity, makes bulk bag solutions increasingly attractive to budget-conscious industrial operators, Vaal maintains.

https://vaal-bulk-bags.co.za

Reconditioned IBCs will not only be used by BASF, but also by other customers in the region

Mauser opens at BASF Spain

Mauser is expanding its reconditioning and recycling footprint in Spain with the opening of a new on-site facility at the BASF location in Tarragona.

The investment strengthens the partnership between BASF and Mauser shaping packaging supply to achieve economic and ecological savings.

Equipped with state-of-the-art, resource-efficient technology, the site reconditions IBCs and produces high-quality post-consumer resin (PCR) material from industrial plastic packaging that has reached the end of its life cycle.

By operating directly within the BASF site, the facility is claimed to enhance freight and operational efficiencies, reducing carbon emissions for both companies and maximising manufacturing synergies.

"This new facility represents a significant step forward in our commitment to sustainability and service excellence," said Michael Steubing, president at Mauser International Packaging Solutions. "Our partnership with BASF allows both companies to drive innovation, improve speed to market, and better support the collection and reuse of reconditioned packaging in the region."

Reconditioned IBCs will not only be used by BASF, but also by other customers in the region, offering a more sustainable packaging solution. Additionally, the site holds BAM 11027 (reconditioning) and BAM 14817 (cross-bottling) certifications from the German Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (BAM, Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfung), thus ensuring the facility meets specific standards for the safe transport and handling of dangerous goods.

"By operating within customer sites, we can ensure the highest quality and safety standards while leveraging synergies such as advanced water treatment and green energy services," said Frank Burger, Mauser's head of SHEQ.

The Tarragona facility is part of Mauser's broader commitment to sustainability, which includes investments in the range of US$1 billion to drive sustainable operations, reduce environmental impact, and empower employees. Key initiatives include the Infinity Series, the Recover Syst-M programme, and plastic recycling and reconditioning services, which help reduce carbon emissions and divert waste from landfills.

www.mauserpackaging.com

3-skid steel pallet from Schütz

At this year's Fachpack in Nuremberg, Schütz presented its 3-skid steel pallet, that the packaging manufacturer claims as having optimal conveyor properties.

With its special geometry, Schütz says the pallet is "significantly superior" to classic steel skid pallets and ensures safe transport even for the heaviest, high-density loads.

The significantly wider side skids and the new additional centre skid offer a decisive advantage over the conventional steel pallet, Schütz claims. Together, they increase the surface contact by around 900 percent, which significantly reduces the ground pressure per square centimetre and ensures optimum load distribution.

The embossed steel skids with ribbed design also provide a particularly high degree of resistance to deformation. This means that even the heaviest loads and high-density goods can be moved safely and reliably.

The 3-skid steel pallet has minimal deflection, even when fully loaded. At the same time, its universal accessibility with forklift trucks and hand pallet trucks enables convenient handling inside the warehouse. The lowered threshold facilitates lateral entry, while the nesting properties of the pallets allows space-saving stacking.

The Schütz 3-skid steel pallet provides safe transport in automated warehouses

30 years in Poland

Meanwhile in Poland, the company has been marking 30 years of Schütz Polska.

For more than three decades, Schütz has been supplying sustainable packaging from its facility in Poland - a milestone that was celebrated in the form of a jubilee event in Żory on 10 October.

Around 150 guests representing business, politics and the international partner network accepted the invitation to celebrate the success story and take a look at the latest investments at the facility.

Schütz entered the Polish market as early as the mid-1990s and was soon handling its swiftly growing customer base from Warsaw. A decisive step was marked by the opening of the plant in Żory in 2017. Since then, Schütz Polska has continuously invested in expanding the production facility – most recently in a new production area and a new warehouse with an area of approximately 5,000 sqm.

This expansion created additional space for the production and storage of Foodcert and Cleancert packaging supplied by Schütz in accordance with FSSC 22000 system certification, thereby ensuring maximum conformity with all foodstuff requirements in terms of material, process and product.

Furthermore, the roof of the building has been prepared for installation of a photovoltaic system with commissioning planned for late December 2025. The solar power generated on site will cover a significant proportion of the location's energy requirements.

In the future, Schütz will also be producing Green Layer IBCs in Żory. In this product line, the middle of the three inner container layers consists of high-quality regranulate, which Schütz manufactures itself. If a customer also opts for a pallet and corner protectors made of recycled plastic, the IBCs can feature a total recycled content of up to 70 percent. This sustainable material composition, which is fully in line with the circular economy, enables significant CO_2 savings without compromising on safety or quality. As part of the expansion of the Green Layer production area, two additional raw material silos will be installed for storing Schütz regranulate and guaranteeing continuous supply.

Veit Enders, member of the Schütz Group's management board, and Michal Szygula, general manager of Schütz Polska, emphasised in their speeches the strategic importance of the location for supplying Eastern Europe. The great importance of the circular economy was also reflected in the presentation of the company's globally unique complete solutions. Representatives of local authorities, including Waldemar Socha, President of the City Office in Żory, and Andrzej Zabiegliński, member of the management board of KSSE – Special Economic Zone, praised the commitment by Schütz in the region and the positive effects on economic development.

www.schuetz.net

Akona debuts branded stand at Pack Expo

Material handling company Akona Process Solutions chose Pack Expo Las Vegas in September to unveil its all new US stand, bringing together its portfolio of processing and material handling equipment brands under one identity for the first time.

As a regular Pack Expo exhibitor, Akona reinforced its presence by showcasing Cablevey, Kason, Marion and Spiroflow, alongside Automation by Akona.

The stand showcased a functioning Cablevey conveyor unit, a horizontal fluidised mixer and a large display screen featuring a new full system animation.

The exhibition followed Akona's new website launch, which offers a detailed view of the company's expanded portfolio. The site showcases Akona's shift from four leading brands into a unified solutions partner, making it easier for customers to explore technologies, system capabilities and application expertise all in one place.

Ryan Long, North American sales director, said: "Pack Expo provides a platform to show how Akona supports customers with integrated solutions. By uniting our brands under a single name, we can demonstrate the value of working with one partner for process challenges. Our new website and revamped stand both reflect that commitment, bringing together expertise, capability and customer focus."

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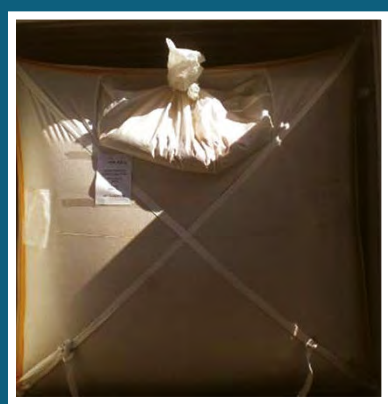

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Chem distributors shape the 'new now'

The European Association of Chemical Distributors (Fecc) Annual Congress 2025 took place on 10-12 September in Hamburg, Germany.

Fecc said the event welcomed a record-breaking attendance of roughly 240 participants from 24 countries and even four different continents.

The 2025 Congress motto was 'Shaping the New Now' and was marked by an inspiring programme, which focused on some of the most burning trends and topics in the entire chemical value chain, as well as feedback from previous congresses.

The aim was to provide more takeaway facts and figures, diversify the agenda to cater to a wide range of interests, invite high-profile speakers, and create numerous and exceptional networking opportunities.

Masterclass

The congress kicked off with a Chemical Masterclass on 'The European (Petro-) Chemicals Industry – Current Challenges Vs Opportunities In The Increasingly Volatile Market Environment' with ICIS.

The session featured two expert contributions from ICIS: Leslie Bottomley, managing consultant, and Egor Dementev, EMEA analyst team lead, plastic recycling & sustainability, who shared their views on the state of the European chemical industry and the future of plastics recycling.

Bottomley's presentation, 'European Chemical Industry Outlook', reminded the audience that the European chemical industry remains the second largest producer worldwide – "not dead yet" – but also warned of significant challenges ahead.

Trade was a central theme. The USA remains the main export destination for EU chemical producers, and while free and fair-trade benefits all actors, tariffs were described as a lose-lose measure that should be avoided.

He also outlined the European Commission's Chemical Industry Action Plan, which is structured around four key pillars: strengthening resilience and global trade; Sourcing energy and supporting decarbonisation; creating lead markets and boosting innovation (with a focus on green chemicals); and simplifying legislation.

Complementary initiatives such as the Critical Chemicals Alliance, the Circular Economy Act, and the Omnibus simplification package were also mentioned. He praised the EU's leadership in sustainability and green technologies, but cautioned that energy costs and energy security remain decisive factors for competitiveness.

His conclusion was clear: while current EU measures are a "good start", further and faster government support will be needed if Europe is to build a sustainable and profitable chemical industry.

Circularity & Recycling

Egor Dementev's presentation, 'Plastics Circularity & Recycling', focused on the future of plastics recycling, with particular attention to the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR).

He described the regulation as ambitious but uncertain, with challenges linked to implementation, enforcement, and scope (eg, the treatment of bio-based materials and imports). He noted that regulation is already fragmenting the packaging sector and that many brand owners are struggling to meet the recycling targets.

For polyolefins, the difficulties are even greater, as no scalable recycling technologies exist today. Europe also remains dependent on imports for PP and other polymers, raising further concerns about competitiveness.

A large part of his presentation was dedicated to chemical recycling, which he characterised as a promising, but still nascent, technology. While it has the potential to complement mechanical recycling and provide additional recycling capacity, its growth is currently hindered by: unclear and complex regulation (eg, how to calculate recycled content); high costs and long investment cycles; lack of infrastructure, especially in waste collection.

According to Dementev, significant scale-up is only expected after 2030, once the technologies mature and policy frameworks are clarified. In the meantime, recycling companies (many of them SMEs) face the same macroeconomic pressures as the rest of the industry, with high energy and production costs posing existential risks.

Commission view

Emmanuelle Maire, head of unit at the European Commission, Directorate-General Environment, Unit B1 – Circular Economy, Sustainable Production and Consumption, opened the keynote speeches session of the Congress.

Her presentation on 'Balancing Europe's environmental ambitions with competitiveness' covered the new European Commission's initiatives (2024-2029) and new political guidelines focusing on sustainable prosperity and competitiveness in the EU, encapsulated in: The Competitiveness Compass (January 2025); The New Clean Industrial Deal for energy-intensive industries and clean technologies (February 2025); A European Chemicals Industry Action Plan (July 2025).

After a short description of the state of play of the EU chemical industry - the main challenges of the "industry of industries" and its end-markets – she outlined the four main pillars of the European Chemicals Action Plan: strengthening resilience, securing energy supply and decarbonisation, lead markets and innovation, and simplification (Chemical Omnibus: focus on CLP, Fertilising Product Regulation and Cosmetics Product Regulation).

During the Q&A session, it was stated that after the Draghi Report in 2024, "the body still has to follow the head", that is, this wake-up call still needs to percolate through all the different layers of stakeholders.

Most importantly, the new approach calls for speedy implementation, as was exemplified by the fact that a harmonised recycling system across the EU still remains a challenge. Feedback to a question addressed to the audience clearly revealed the shift to competitiveness, superseding sustainability as the most important point on the business agenda.

Resilience

The next slot featured a presentation on 'Resilience as Destination', by Jörgen Sandström, head of the Transforming Industrial Ecosystem Program at the World Economic Forum.

In his analysis, he distinguished between:

- Volatile supply chains: geopolitical shocks and uncertainty are making global supply chains unpredictable for all.
- Policy pressure: new regulations and industrial policies can undermine Europe's competitiveness if not shaped by industry know-how.
- Social fragmentation: the success of the chemical distribution sector depends on strong communities and talent, "but we risk losing social trust and support".

On how challenges can be turned into opportunities, he outlined recommendations on how disruption can become an advantage.

For example, 'agility wins': adapting quickly and diversifying gives us a real competitive advantage.

'Sustainability equals innovation': regulation can inspire more efficient and cleaner technologies, driving progress if we engage proactively.

'Procurement power': aggregated demand and public procurement can create markets for clean solutions and a stronger European industry.

Finally, he wrapped up his findings on how to put resilience to work in three steps: Collaborate to lead - effective leadership involves shaping standards and working together across value chains and with governments; Data builds resilience - robust data, digital tools, and real-time monitoring enable us to be more adaptable and prepared for risk; Empower people: Upskilling teams ensures that we meet any challenge and keep talent in Europe.

Next Level Logistics

During the Congress there were several sessions covering a range of important topics. Of particular interest to *Bulk Distributor* readers was one on Next Level Logistics in the midst of geopolitics, tariffs and other turmoil.

The session featured four statement presentations and a panel discussion. It began with Line Pauli Andersen, vice president, divisional lead industrial, DSV Road, who first described the development of her company from a haulier to a global player by creating a worldwide network through organic growth as well as M&A.

She then explained what 'Shaping the New Now' means for DSV Road and how it is managed within her company, breaking the situation down into three parts: assets/scarce resources, AI/automation leading to scalability, and, sustainability.

In the second presentation, Hans Augusteijn, president at Stolt Tank Containers, outlined three strategic priorities from the liquid logistics side: global supply chain resilience; visibility that drives action; and, close collaboration.

The third presentation, provided by Johannes Berg, director of corporate affairs, HHLA, focused on increasing resilience and

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competitiveness by harnessing the power of networks.

For the new now and the future, it is essential to increase the predictability of arrival and collaboration enabled by HHLA's six fields of expertise: network partner, logistics hub operator, automation expert, driver of innovation, solution provider, and, driver of sustainability.

The final presentation of this session was given by Patrick Hore, global vertical lead chemicals at Maersk, who put forward three key questions:

- Supply chain diversification: how to leverage global networks to secure supply for distributors?
- Supply chain resilience: how to increase supply chain optionality, control, and compliance for distributors?
- Sustainability: How to help distributors reduce carbon costs in their supply chain?

In the ensuing panel discussion, three key strategies were highlighted: building global supply chain resilience, creating visibility that drives action, and strengthening collaboration with partners.

Although pain points persist, for instance, the lack of intermodal options in Europe, it was stated that interregional flows increase, whereas intercontinental flows are rather flat. It was concluded that with the right digital mindset, increased scalability due to robots and enhanced automated processes, as well as the smart use of AI, logistics providers can support Europe's chemical distribution sector in staying both resilient and competitive while staying compliant (eg, Scope 3 Emissions).

The most important factors for gaining a competitive advantage in times of 'polycrisis' remain: close collaboration, the smart use of networks, and a strategic partnership approach.

Adapting to crises

Another session placed chemical distributors at the centre of the debate, exploring how the sector can adapt to global crises and seize opportunities through modernisation, partnerships, and talent development.

Christian Kohlpaintner, CEO of Brenntag from 2020 to August 2025, opened the session, setting the scene by acknowledging the global crisis in the distribution sector and the need for urgent adaptation.

He called for a rearrangement of industry and expansion of capacities in Europe. Companies, he stressed, must undergo

dramatic modernisation, including: stronger master data management, improved communication with suppliers, and developing compelling visions that attract top leadership talent.

He also pointed to the inevitability of consolidation within the next 10 years, noting that larger and more resilient entities will be better positioned to weather shocks and secure growth.

Madjar Navah, managing director and partner, Düsseldorf office of Boston Consulting Group, provided a strategic 'pulse check' on the current market environment. He described today's world as shaped by unbalanced multipolarity, economic battlegrounds, and global shocks.

Against this backdrop, he outlined five core beliefs for distributors:

- Uncertainty but resilience – adaptability remains a strength of the sector
- Outsourcing & cost management – third-party distribution continues to grow, though the outsourcing trend shows signs of slowing
- Strategic partnerships – long-term collaborations are becoming critical
- Sustainability divide – demand for sustainability is softening as cost pressures take precedence
- Capability transformation – AI, cybersecurity, and digital platforms are redefining how distributors operate.

Madjar concluded that companies must rewire their supply chains, cut cost-to-serve, scale digital and value-added services, and unlock people's advantages through talent and leadership development.

A panel discussion then gathered perspectives from leaders of global, regional, and emerging distributors.

Gina Fyffe (Integra Petrochemicals) emphasised the importance of recognising Integra as a true distributor with a strong international footprint across Europe, the US, Asia, and Latin America.

Stephan Glander (Biesterfeld) highlighted the perspective of a 100 percent family-owned business active in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Brazil — not yet global but growing steadily.

Liangyu Hawkes (Anstar Ltd), leading a young distributor established just seven years ago in the UK, shared the challenges and opportunities of small, agile players focused on the European market.

Marcus Jordan (IMCD) reinforced IMCD's role as a leader in specialty chemicals, with digitalisation as a cornerstone of its strategy.

Across the discussion, several key themes emerged: tackling inefficiencies and optimising operations is a priority for companies of all sizes; distributors must strengthen their position as a bridge between producers and customers, offering value-added services beyond logistics; data and education are critical to improving transparency and meeting customer needs; talent acquisition and leadership development remain decisive factors for long-term success; sustainability remains important across all scopes (1, 2, and 3), but the focus is shifting toward Product Carbon Footprints (PCFs) and the need for accurate data;

ultimately, customer service excellence will differentiate successful distributors from the rest.

Key takeaways from this session were that the distribution sector must modernise rapidly and prepare for consolidation within the next decade, while digitalization, AI, and data management will be decisive for enhancing efficiency, transparency, and value creation.

Distributors continue to serve as the critical link between producers and markets, helping customers navigate the complexities and regulations, and talent and leadership are central enablers for transformation.

Finally, sustainability remains relevant, though under economic pressure, with PCFs emerging as a key area of focus.

In 2026, the Annual Congress moves to Vienna, Austria, on 14-16 September, and will take place at the superb Hilton Waterfront Hotel.

www.fecc.org

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Work starts on Maasvlakte Zuid yard

A new marshalling yard is set to take shape at Port of Rotterdam's Maasvlakte.

In October, Port of Rotterdam Authority, ProRail, and Swietelsky Rail Benelux kicked off construction of the new Maasvlakte Zuid (EMZ) yard.

The first project phase includes the construction of an initial set of six tracks designed for 740m-long trains, as well as several connections to the existing railway infrastructure. The second set of tracks will be commissioned in mid-2027. The remaining three sets of tracks will be implemented gradually after 2027, depending on forecasts for rail freight transport.

Following a preparatory phase by Swietelsky, construction of the first track bundle and the various connections as part of the new marshalling yard has now officially begun. Construction of the EMZ is necessary to facilitate the growth of rail freight traffic from the Maasvlakte to the European hinterland.

Container throughput in Port of Rotterdam is forecast to grow in the coming years. The import and export of containers is crucial for businesses and consumers in the Netherlands and Europe, and thus for European prosperity, the port stated.

To continue to transport the ever-growing flow of containers smoothly to the hinterland, Port of Rotterdam Authority, ProRail, and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management are investing in a sustainable and efficient rail infrastructure.

Citraben runs a fleet of 25 road tankers

A ceremonial meeting on the Maasvlakte took place in the presence of representatives from the City of Rotterdam, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, and the European Parliament.

The port authority says efficient and easily accessible international rail connections with short transit times between ports and industrial clusters are crucial for the economy and society and provide the Netherlands with an important competitive advantage.

"They are an important prerequisite for our seaports and thus for the Dutch economy. Thanks to the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) and, in particular, the rail freight corridors, more goods can now be transported by rail faster and with minimal delays – safely, reliably, and sustainably," a statement read.

Longer trains bring several advantages, hence the need to accommodate 740m combinations. They make it possible to transport more containers per trip, resulting in fewer train movements, lower emissions, and lower costs per freight ton. The current standard length is around 600m.

A number of infrastructure projects are planned for 2040 to improve the connection of the Maasvlakte to the network. Port of Rotterdam Authority is implementing these projects in several phases together with ProRail and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

In addition to the construction of the new marshalling yard with up to four bundles of six tracks each, the overall development includes the electrification of the distribution triangle and the outer contour, the adjustment of the C2 curve, and the installation of two through-tracks.

The construction of the EMZ is part of the port's efforts to promote more rail freight. In addition to its significantly lower CO2, NOX, and particulate emissions compared with road transport, rail freight makes a significant contribution to ensuring the port's accessibility – provided all modes of transport are used optimally.

This includes not only investments in new infrastructure but also a smarter and more efficient use of existing capacities. This requires a co-operative approach in which market participants and public institutions work together and continuously on improvements.

Digital solutions play a key role in this. Additional measures to relieve congestion on the road network and promote container transport by inland waterway also play an important role. ProRail and the port authority are committed to ensuring solid rail connections to the hinterland. This allows more containers to be shifted from road to rail – relieving congestion on the roads and offering a reliable alternative to inland shipping during low water levels.

www.portofrotterdam.com

Felix integrates Citraben

Spanish group Pañalón has completed the incorporation of a new company into its structure.

Pañalón subsidiary Felix Food Logistics formalised the acquisition of Citraben's transport business unit effective from 1 November.

Citraben, founded by Federico Segundo Abengoza several decades ago, is a located in Herencia, 150km south of Madrid. Citraben runs a fleet of 25 road tankers predominantly in La Mancha, Navarre and Catalonia, and has 25 employees.

"All the current equipment will remain in the company, ensuring continuity of operations and customer service," Felix stated.

The integration strengthens Felix's position in the liquid food transport sector in Spain and Europe. Executives emphasised that the operation is part of its growth and consolidation strategy in the specialised transport sector.

"Felix Food Logistics reaffirms its desire to continue growing in an orderly, solid and flexible manner, always maintaining personalised attention and excellence in service. With this acquisition, the company takes another step forward in its goal of accompanying its customers in their development and expansion projects," announces Felix CEO Antonio Montero.

www.citraben.es

Citraben runs a fleet of 25 road tankers

Customs status for Motril


The authorisation allows Hafesa to offer more agile logistics management

Spanish oil trading and storage company Grupo Hafesa has obtained authorisation as a customs warehouse for its Motril storage facility (DBA Motril Port), granted by the Regional Customs and Export Administration of Andalusia.

Motril thus becomes the first Hafesa facility to achieve this authorisation. The site, which already has significant storage and distribution capacity for energy products, has now consolidated its position as a leading logistics hub in the Mediterranean, complementing the company's network of centres on the Iberian Peninsula.

It grants Hafesa the ability to store goods from non-EU countries without the need for immediate customs clearance, allowing the products to remain in customs transit until their final destination.

This customs status, known as a 'Type C customs warehouse', is especially advantageous for trading companies that import and export, as it allows them to defer payment of customs duties and VAT until the goods enter the domestic market or are re-exported.

Obtaining this authorisation represents a milestone for the company, expanding its range of services to benefit its national and international customers. Thanks to this new status, DBA Motril Port will be able to offer more flexible, efficient, and competitive storage, tailored to the needs of each operator.

"This authorisation consolidates our commitment to our customers," said Diego Guardamino, CEO of Hafesa. "It allows us to offer more agile logistics management, adapted to the global context, and strengthens our capacity to respond to international trade operations in the energy sector."

From an operational perspective, the plant's new status improves cash flow and logistics planning for companies that import hydrocarbons or other energy products from outside the European Union, allowing them to maintain stock in Spain without incurring immediate tax obligations.

The group has implemented the traceability and electronic accounting systems (SILICIE) required by the Spanish Tax Agency for the management of Excise Taxes, and has control and security protocols that guarantee the integrity and transparency of all operations.

https://grupohafesa.com

Next step for Sing ammonia project

Storage group Advario announced that Keppel Ltd's infrastructure division consortium (comprising Advario, Keppel and Sumitomo Corporation) has been appointed by the Energy Market Authority (EMA) and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) to proceed to the next phase of Singapore's low- or zero-carbon ammonia power generation and bunkering project on Jurong Island.

The appointment is a milestone in Singapore's plan to build a cleaner and more sustainable energy future.

As the consortium's storage partner, Advario brings expertise in cryogenic storage to ensure the safe and efficient handling of ammonia. The project reflects a commitment to Singapore's decarbonisation agenda, especially in power generation and maritime bunkering.

Ammonia is emerging as a promising fuel of the future. It does not produce carbon dioxide when combusted and is relatively easier to store and transport. These qualities make it a strong candidate for decarbonising sectors such as power generation and shipping. When produced from renewable energy, green ammonia can play a key role in reaching net-zero emissions while also supporting global energy security.

Bas Verkooijen, CEO of Advario, said: "We are proud to have been appointed, together with our consortium partners Keppel and Sumitomo Corporation, by the EMA and MPA to provide a low- or zero-carbon ammonia solution on Jurong Island. This is a great example of the power of partnerships, as well as Advario's commitment to playing a frontrunner role in the energy transition."

Cindy Lim, CEO of Keppel's infrastructure division, added: "We are honoured to lead this trail-blazing consortium, paving the way towards a resilient, low-carbon energy future. Building on a successful pre-FEED study, we will continue working with our partners Sumitomo Corporation and Advario, while harnessing Keppel's deep engineering expertise and proven operating capabilities to deliver a cost-competitive, scalable ammonia value chain for zero-emission power generation and bunkering. When implemented, this would be among the world's first direct-ammonia combustion power plants — and Singapore's first — setting a new benchmark for clean fuel solutions and global decarbonisation."

Sumitomo Corporation has been intensively exploring ammonia bunkering since 2021, laying the groundwork for the solutions it is now advancing in partnership with Singapore's regulators.

"We deeply appreciate MPA's trust in us as a strategic partner in shaping the future of sustainable shipping," said Kazuki Yamaguchi, general manager, Maritime Energy Solution SBU.

"Achieving true scale and commercialisation, however, is a challenge that no single company can tackle alone – it demands bold collaboration across the entire maritime value chain. This spirit of collaboration is one we are also proud to share with our consortium partners, Keppel and Advario, as we collectively work towards building a clean ammonia ecosystem in Singapore that can serve as a model for the region and beyond."

https://advario.com


Ammonia is emerging as a promising fuel of the future

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20 Nov 2025
Dusseldorf, Germany
https://ecta.com

World Bulk Wine Exhibition
24-25 November 2025
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19th Annual GPCA Forum
8-11 December 2025
Bahrain
www.gpcaforum.com

StocExpo 2026
10-11 March 2026
The Ahoy, Rotterdam
www.stocexpo.com

PBLA Annual Meeting
17-19 March 2026
Madrid, Spain
https://pblaglobalnetwork.com

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Circulation: Lisa Lee, marketing@woodcotemedia.com, Tel:+44 (0)20 8687 4160
Publisher: Peter Patterson, peter@woodcotemedia.com, Tel:+44 (0)20 8648 7082

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Bulk Distributor is published by Woodcote Media Ltd
Woodcote Media Ltd, 124 Middleton Road, Morden, SM4 6RW. United Kingdom
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Carrier reshuffle boosts Hamburg, Valencia

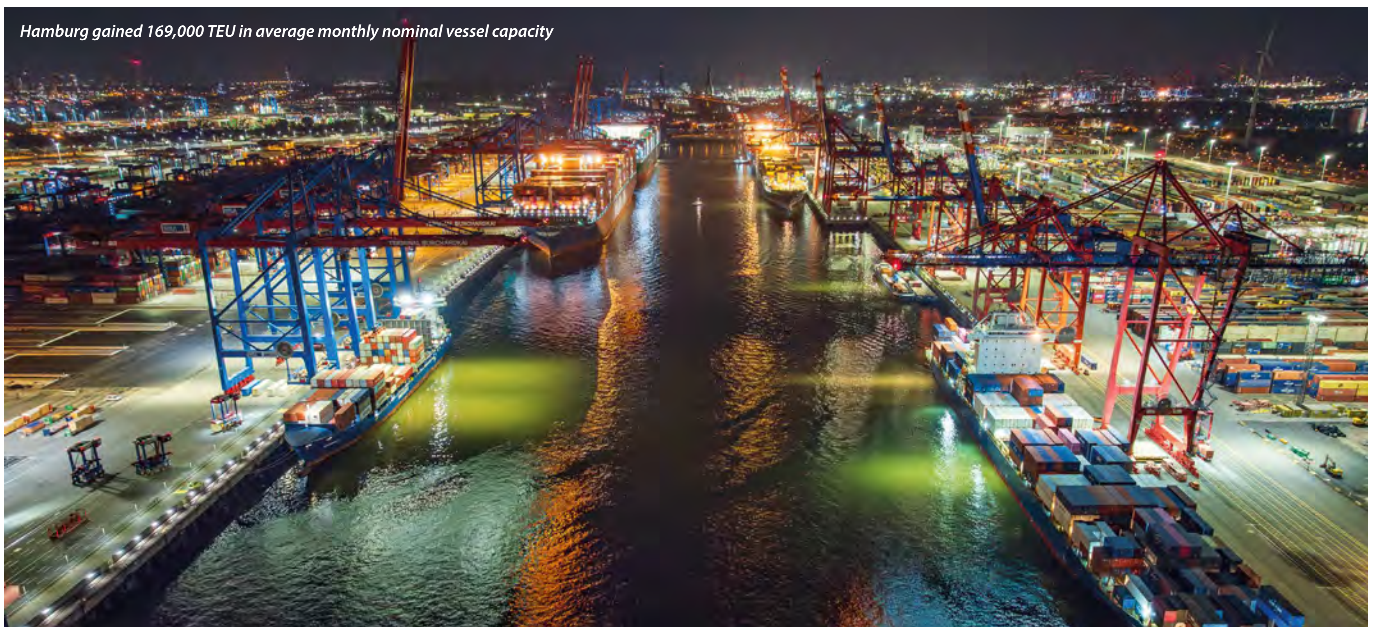
The 2025 carrier alliance reshuffle seems to have had significant impact on Europe's major container ports.

With the new service networks fully executed and stable as of July, analysis by Denmark-based Sea-Intelligence of the vital Asia-Europe trade lane reveals a significant consolidation of market power into hubs like Hamburg and Valencia, at the expense of established gateways such as Antwerp and Tangier.

To measure this shift, Sea-Intelligence analysed the total deployed TEU capacity directed to each major European port, comparing the post-reshuffle period of May-July 2025 against the 2024-FY baseline. This metric provided the clearest picture of the strategic realignment underway.

It is important to note, however, that the TEU figures refer to the vessel's nominal capacity – its theoretical maximum – which serves as a proxy for market size and deployed assets. This represents the maximum cargo opportunity directed to each gateway and is not a representation of the actual cargo volumes exchanged per call.

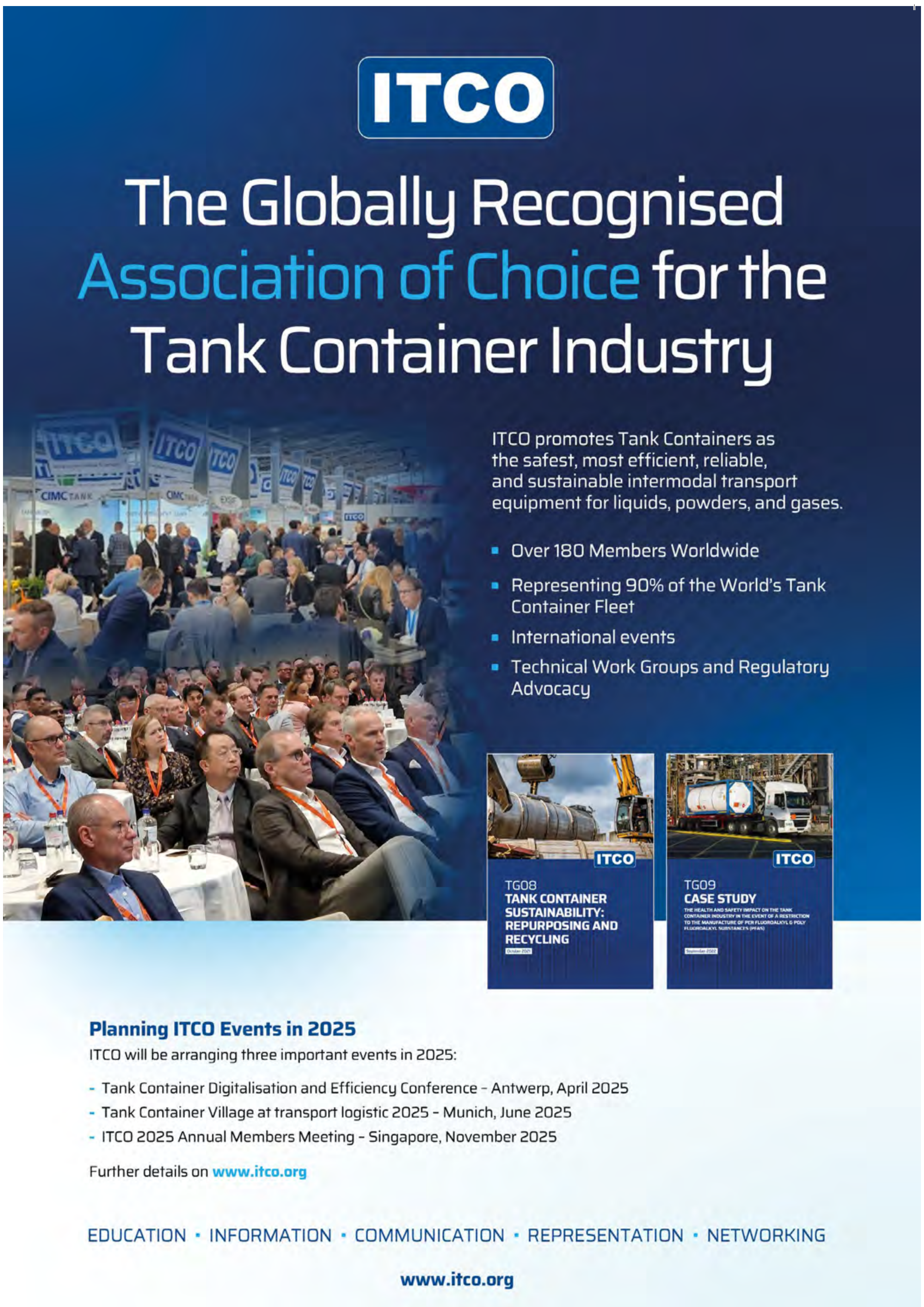
Sea-Intelligence's analysis revealed that the undisputed primary winner is Hamburg, which gained an enormous 169,000 TEU in average monthly nominal vessel capacity. This, along with the increase in port call frequency and vessel size has translated into a huge boost in its overall market power.


Hamburg gained 169,000 TEU in average monthly nominal vessel capacity

Valencia was the other clear winner, adding over 78,000 TEU per month in nominal vessel capacity and cementing its status as a rising power in the Mediterranean.

Conversely, the data reveals a significant strategic pivot away from several major hubs. Antwerp (-138,000 TEU) and the transhipment hub of Tangier (-122,000 TEU) both lost a significant volume of average monthly nominal capacity.

Rotterdam, on the other hand, remains in a league of its own, cementing its unshakable position as Europe's dominant gateway port.



Mixed picture for Antwerp-Bruges

In the first nine months of 2025, Port of Antwerp-Bruges handled 202.6 million tonnes of maritime goods, a decrease of 3.8 percent compared with the same period last year.

The throughput of general cargo, including containers, conventional general cargo and roro, rose by 1.3 percent, while dry and liquid bulk together declined by 12.8 percent. Following a solid first half of the year, container volumes eased from August onwards, partly as a result of the phase-out of former shipping alliances. Trade with the United States continues to be affected by ongoing uncertainty surrounding US import tariffs.

After a solid first half-year, container throughput declined 2.4 percent in the third quarter year-on-year. The first nine months saw modest growth, with tonnage rising 1.1 percent and TEU up 1.6 percent.

This slowdown is linked to the normalisation of container shipping alliances, which brought an end to the temporary overlap between calls in old and new alliances. This led to a clear reduction in congestion, with quicker turnarounds and smoother traffic to the hinterland.

Port of Antwerp-Bruges' market share in the Hamburg–Le Havre range dropped 0.7 percentage points to 29.8 percent in the first half of 2025, largely because of lack of terminal capacity. The bottleneck will be tackled through the ECA project (Extra Container Capacity Antwerp). Low container shipping schedule reliability and a series of strikes however continue to affect operational reliability.

Conventional general cargo trade remained status quo after nine months, thanks to a recovery in steel imports, although exports remained under pressure from weaker shipments to the US and Mexico. Meanwhile, the European Commission unveiled stricter rules to curb foreign steel dumping.

Liquid bulk declined 13.5 percent, hit by weaker petroleum derivatives exports to West Africa and persistent weakness in the European chemical sector. Volumes of biofuels and energy gases continued their growth. The decline in LNG traffic, resulting from the European ban on the transhipment of Russian gas, was partially offset by higher imports from the US. Recent announcements in the European chemicals industry underline the continued pressure on the sector.

Dry bulk (-8.9 percent) was primarily impacted by weaker fertiliser shipments, partly offset by increased imports from Russia and Morocco, the former ahead of the introduction of new EU duties. The roro sector grew by 3.3 percent, supported by rising imports of new cars from China – despite European import duties introduced at the end of 2024 – as well as higher volumes of trucks and used vehicles. China has now become the leading country of origin for new car imports.

Shipments to and from the US – the port's second-largest trading partner – grew by 15 percent in the first nine months of 2025. This growth was primarily driven by containers and liquid bulk. However, since the summer, the impact of US import tariffs has become apparent: exports fell in the third quarter, particularly for steel, which declined by more than a third compared to the second quarter.

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