

14.02.2023

## The Port of Barcelona breaks its all-time traffic record with 71 million tonnes moved in 2022

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- **The economic results turn their back on the pandemic, growing above the turnover and cashflow figures of 2019, and provide financial strength to undertake major projects to be developed in the coming years.**
- **Key traffic segments, such as passengers and vehicles, are on their way to recovery.**
- **Containers achieved results similar to the previous year, against the backdrop of a slowdown in international maritime traffic.**

The Port of Barcelona has passed the 70.9 million-tonne mark in total traffic during 2022, representing growth of 6.9%, marking a new record: following the strong recovery of the previous year, this year saw an increase on the previous record figure of 67.8 million tonnes that was achieved in 2018. In 2022, all traffic segments experienced positive results, except for containers, which remained at the same levels as 2021 (-0.3%), and exceeded 3.5 million TEUs, which is a good result when compared to the ports in the surrounding area.

Dry bulk closed the year at 4.5 million tonnes, up 2% on 2021, made possible by the increase in potash (+53%) and common salt (+10.3%), both of which are linked to the new Iberpotash terminal, and cereals and meal (+64%).

Liquid bulk stood at 15.6 million tonnes, an increase of 26.9%. At 12 million tonnes, hydrocarbons, which are the main item, grew by 34.5%, driven by petrol (+113%) and LNG, at 3.9 million tonnes (+39.1). The LNG facilities at the Port of Barcelona, some of the largest in Europe, have become strategic warehouses for supplying this fuel to the continent.

In the case of full container traffic, which best reflects the state of the economy, the Port of Barcelona has mirrored the slowdown in international maritime traffic, although to a lesser extent than in other ports in the region. Import containers (+3.4%) and transit containers (+4.5%) remained positive and broke a new record, while export containers were down 5.9%.

China, the Port of Barcelona's principal market, reduced its imports by 29.5%, while exports grew 1%. Conversely, countries such as the United States or India increased their traffic by over 10%.

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Car traffic performed very well, with 591,015 units moved, representing an increase of 18.4%. This is a very good result, particularly within the context of the uncertain situation in the automotive industry: new registrations in Spain closed 2022 with a drop of 5.4%, according to ANFAC data. Several factors, such as the closure of the Nissan factory and the supply crisis, led exports of new vehicles to close the year down by 7.9%. Conversely, imports (+63%) and transits (+145.7%) grew strongly. "This is not the result of the increase in demand; it is due to new brands choosing the Port as their maritime and land distribution hub for their vehicles manufactured in various markets and which are distributed from here to the rest of Europe", explained Port of Barcelona General Manager José Alberto Carbonell.

It is worth mentioning the growth in electric vehicles, resulting from the Port's commitment to serving this type of traffic, which already represent almost 20% of total imports, and have made China the main source of vehicle imports, relegating Japan to second place.

Passenger traffic continued to recover following the stoppage caused by the COVID pandemic. Ferry traffic, at close to 1.6 million passengers (+62%), was in excess of the 2019 figures, thanks mainly to the increase in passengers with the Balearic Islands (Morocco did not open its borders to passengers until May 2022). Conversely, last year's figure of 2.3 million cruise passengers is still well below the 3.1 million recorded in 2019.

### **Economic results**

The Port of Barcelona closed financial year 2022 with turnover of €181 million, a year-on-year increase of 20% and 5% above the year before the pandemic, when it stood at €172 million. It should be noted that this record figure, 50% of which is provided by containers and liquid bulk traffic, would have been higher had the Port not launched its Recovery Plan for the period 2021-2022 to mitigate the effects of COVID on port activity.

Operating results were €54 million, an exceptional figure during this financial year due to incorporating provisions and atypical income for historical disputes. EBITDA stood at €104 million and outturn was €63 million, up 66% year on year.

Long-term bank debt was cut by €18 million, currently standing at €124 million; operating cashflow stood at €101 million and cash and banks represented €231 million, a very significant figure since, in an uncertain economic environment, it guarantees the Port of Barcelona sufficient financial robustness to undertake the major projects that will be rolled out over the next few years. These projects are mainly concentrated "in wharf electrification; updating port infrastructures; new railway accesses and improvements to the Old Port", said Port President Lluís Salvadó, who quantified "the investments we will undertake in these areas during the next two years at around €300 million. These

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are projects that we have either just put out to tender and will start already, or that we will put out to tender during this year”.

The Port of Barcelona's sound economic results are accompanied by a notable increase in the contributions it makes to the Spanish port system. In the words of Miriam Alaminos, Deputy General Manager and head of Economic-Finance: “The Port of Barcelona is the main contributor to the State's port system through the various existing solidarity instruments. In 2022, we increased our contribution by 55% to €16.5 million”.

You can find the presentation of the 2022 results at:

<https://www.portdebarcelona.cat/Resultats2022>

**PHOTOS:** José Alberto Carbonell, General Manager of the Port of Barcelona; Lluís Salvadó, President, and Miriam Alaminos, Deputy General Manager and head of Economic-Finance.



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