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The Port of Barcelona increased traffic by 3.5% in the first half of the year, confirming its capacity to adapt to complex global contexts

- **In the first half of the year, the Port moved ahead in the largest investment cycle of its history, making progress in accessibility, decarbonisation, innovation and developing high added-value economic activity.**
- **Radioelectric compatibility studies confirm that the development of the southern area of the Port is compatible with both current and future operations of Barcelona Airport.**

The Port of Barcelona closed the first half of 2026 with a positive trend in the main traffic indicators, confirming its ability to adapt to a complex global context. During these first six months of the year, the Port of Barcelona handled 35.87 million tonnes, up 3.5% year on year. Container traffic stood at 1.93 million TEU (+4.3%), with a notable increase in imports, which grew by 6.7% to reach 380,000 TEU. There were also increases in liquid bulk (+4.1%), dry bulk (+5.1%), vehicles (+6.5%) and ro-ro traffic (+2.8%).

The Port registered 2.44 million passenger movements (+4.1%). Ferry traffic also improved, marking an increase of 2.5%, while the number of cruise passengers visiting the city was up 3.4%, to just over one million.

Resilience in difficult scenarios

During the presentation of the results, Port of Barcelona General Manager Àlex Garcia highlighted the precinct's capacity to maintain a positive trend in an international context marked by geopolitical tensions and commercial uncertainty. Here, he stated that "traffic levels in the first half of the year demonstrate the Port of Barcelona's capacity to adapt and its resilience in the face of an increasingly complex global situation. Diversifying our markets, customers and logistics chains allows us to continue growing and maintain the competitiveness of our business sector."

One factor that has affected port traffic in recent months is the situation in the Persian Gulf and the tensions linked to the Strait of Hormuz. In spite of this context, the Port managed to continue to increase liquid bulk shipments by diversifying supply sources and the good performance of chemical products and biofuels.

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Àlex Garcia noted that “geopolitical tensions have once again highlighted the importance of having resilient and diversified logistics chains. The Port of Barcelona has proven its ability to adapt quickly to market changes and guarantee the supply of essential products for the economy.”

Automotive hub

The other major growth vector for the half-year was vehicle traffic. With 386,000 units shipped, the Port of Barcelona recorded an increase of 6.5%, particularly due to imports, which grew by 36%. This result continues to strengthen Barcelona's position as one of the main gateways into southern Europe for Asian manufacturers, particularly for electric vehicles. Currently 45% of imported vehicles are hybrids, plug-in hybrids or pure electric, while China accounts for 50% of all vehicle imports.

According to Àlex Garcia, the growth in vehicle traffic “confirms the transformation that the automotive sector is experiencing. The Port of Barcelona is consolidating its role as a benchmark logistics platform for the distribution of new electric vehicles to the Spanish and European markets, a position that reinforces our role as an international logistics hub.”

The positive trend in traffic occurred during a half-year in which many of the projects underway at the Port of Barcelona began to become visible. In just six months, significant progress was made in its logistical, energy and technological transformation; it has consolidated the largest investment cycle in its history and strengthened its role as a driver of both the economy and international trade.

Among the various projects that will define the port of the future, we can point to the tender for the key road junction of the new land accesses; the awarding of new berthing points for liquid bulk on the Energy wharf; the awarding of the electrical infrastructure that will make it possible to complete the electrification of the Adossat wharf and the partial delivery of several actions linked to the new railway accesses and the Nou Llobregat terminal. This group of infrastructures constitutes the basis for the future growth of the Port and the concentration of logistics activity in the southern area.

Port and airport, compatible infrastructures

Port of Barcelona president José Alberto Carbonell took advantage of his speech to announce a strategic advance for the future development of the southern area of the port area. The recently published results of the radioelectric compatibility studies carried out in recent months by technicians from the Port of Barcelona and state air navigation manager ENAIRE have concluded that the port activity planned for the future Catalunya and Jaume I wharves is compatible with both the current operations of the Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat airport and with the planned configuration after its expansion. This conclusion will enable the Port to move forward with the planned growth projects

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in its southern area, where much of the activity related to container traffic will be concentrated over the coming decades.

José Alberto Carbonell gave a very positive assessment of the results of the studies and highlighted that "this is a decisive step because it provides security and certainty about the future development of the Port. The conclusions of the studies clearly show that the growth of the airport and the development of the southern area of the Port are fully compatible and allow progress to be made on two strategic projects for the competitiveness and prosperity of Barcelona and Catalonia. Today we know that we can continue building the Port of the future with full guarantees."

The president of the Port of Barcelona also recalled that just one year ago, the agreement was signed with ENAIRE to purchase and install a primary and secondary radar, in a new location, involving an investment of €4.5 million by the Port of Barcelona.

This first half-year also helped to consolidate projects aimed at generating new economic activity and attracting investment to the territory. The most significant actions include the construction of the new Elian industrial plant, involving an investment of over €200 million; the start of the concession process for the future public multipurpose maritime terminal at the Príncep d'Espanya wharf, which has received three bids—from Manipuladora de Mercancías, Boluda Maritime Terminals and Andino Inversiones Global—; the authorisation of the new Baleària ro-ro terminal and the start of construction of the new ICO vehicle terminal, which aims to reinforce Barcelona's positioning as a logistics and automotive industry hub in southern Europe.

Leadership in energy transition

The Port of Barcelona's transformation is also advancing in the field of energy. During the period, progress was made in electrifying wharves, with the award of the OPS system for the future Cruise Terminal G and the electrical infrastructure necessary to power the terminals on Adossat wharf.

At the same time, the Port continues to strengthen its role as a benchmark energy hub in the Mediterranean by promoting alternative fuels and zero-emission mobility. To this end, the contract for building and operating the Port's first hydrogen plant was awarded, while one of the first operations to supply bioethanol to a container ship was recently performed.

Innovation and the blue economy

In this first half of the year, the Port of Barcelona also consolidated its commitment to innovation and the blue economy. January saw the laying of the first stone of the future BlueTechPort, a project mobilising €60 million that will become one of the main European hubs specialised in the blue economy, innovation and entrepreneurship.

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Initiatives carried out in this period included the agreement with AltaSea, in the Port of Los Angeles; developing the project for the first digital twin of the seabed of the Port of Barcelona, performed by the BCN Port Innovation Foundation; and the establishment of a strategic alliance with the Shanghai port authorities to move forward in areas such as digitalisation, safety, sustainable maritime corridors and alternative fuels.

One year into the roll-out of the cruise agreement

Coinciding with the first anniversary of the agreement between the Port of Barcelona and Barcelona City Council to transform cruise activity, José Alberto Carbonell took stock of this first year and announced the closure of Terminal C on the Adossat wharf, which will receive its last cruise ship on 30 October, and of the South Terminal of the Barcelona wharf, where the final cruise ship will dock on 31 December.

Over the past few months, the Port also made progress in electrifying the cruise terminals; developed the urban corridor of the seafront; reactivated the Cruise Sustainability Council and is finalising the study to evaluate mobility linked to this activity.

These actions all fit into the shared aim of moving towards a cruise model offering more added value, greater sustainability and better integration with the city.

To close the presentation of results, the president of the Port of Barcelona summarised the balance of the first six months of the year, assuring that “this year has clearly shown that the Port of Barcelona does not simply manage traffic. We are building the infrastructures, connectivity, energy solutions and innovation ecosystems that will guarantee the competitiveness of the Port of Barcelona and the economy as a whole over the coming decades.”

[Presentation of results for the first half of 2026](#)

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PHOTO. Port of Barcelona president José Alberto Carbonell, accompanied by General Manager Àlex Garcia.



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