



NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release: Contact Ben Hackett +44 (20) 79932824 or Sönke Maatsch +49 (421) 2209632

Global Port Tracker: North Europe Trade Outlook

**“First outlook for 2013:
container handling in North Range ports expected to grow at a meager 1%”**

28 March 2013

For Immediate Release

After having reached levels of slightly less than 40 million TEU in each 2008, 2011 and 2012, box-handling in the North Range ports is currently expected to finally break the 40-million-TEU threshold in 2013 – though it is expected to be a close call. On the back of the weak economic performance of the Eurozone economies particularly at the end of 2012, total box handling in the Hamburg-Le Havre range came in slightly short of the 2011-figure (39.9 million TEU), reaching only 39.7 million TEU in 2012. With regard to the near future, Mr. Hackett cautions: “do not expect the Northern European economies to recover from their economic doldrums.” With consumers reluctant to spend their income in times of economic doubts, imports are expected to stagnate throughout 2013 altogether. Hence, Hackett Associates’ and ISL’s latest Global Port Tracker: North Europe Trade Outlook expects container-handling in the North Range ports to increase at a meager 1.0 % in 2013, reaching a volume of 40.1 Million TEU.

The weak consumer demand in the European economies also heralds further woes for the already ailing liner shipping companies: starting already at the end of 2011, the import of laden containers began to develop gradually slower than the export of laden containers, demanding for a higher share of the unprofitable empty repositioning. “In 2012, some four million empty TEUs were discharged in the North Range ports, an increase of 13 per cent over 2011. In 2013, we anticipate that this number will grow by another 14 per cent to 4.5 million” says ISL’s economist Sönke Maatsch.

Different dynamics are expected in the individual North Range ports. Rotterdam and Antwerp are expected to outperform the market average slightly, growing at rates of around 4 % and 3 %, respectively. Hamburg and Le Havre are expected to grow in line with the general market average whilst it is anticipated that the ports of Bremen/Bremerhaven and Zeebrugge are set to miss out on the growth dynamic. Particularly in Bremen/Bremerhaven, which did extraordinarily well in 2011 (+21.0 %) and 2012 (+3.4 %), some of the market shares acquired in the previous years had gotten lost at the turning of 2012/2013, setting the port up for a volume loss between 7 and 8 % compared with the record year 2012.

The Global Port Tracker: North Europe Trade Outlook provides a six-month projection plus an additional two quarter forecast of inbound and outbound container movements in TEUs for the region's six major container ports – Le Havre, Zeebrugge, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Bremen/Bremerhaven and Hamburg.

Hackett Associates LLC provides expert consulting, research and advisory services to the international maritime industry, government agencies and international institutions.

Contact: ben@hackettassociates.com

The Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics (ISL) is based in Bremen and is one of the leading institutes in maritime research, consultancy and know-how transfer. The Maritime Economics and Transport department is active in a wide range of consulting activities.

Contact: maatsch@isl.org

www.globalporttracker.com