Port of Hamburg begins 2025 with positive numbers

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The Port of Hamburg recorded a strong throughput result in the first quarter of the current year, despite the challenging geopolitical and economic environment. This emphasizes the outstanding economic importance of the Port of Hamburg for Germany and Europe. More goods were moved across the quayside in almost all areas of the all-purpose port. Seaborne cargo throughput rose by 3.1 percent year-on-year to 28.3 million tons. Hamburg is, therefore, the only one of the three largest European ports with a positive trend in seaborne cargo throughput.

Best quarterly result for container throughput in three years

In the first three months of this year, the Port of Hamburg handled 2.0 million TEU (19.9 million tons). This corresponds to growth of 6.3 percent (+4.7 percent) compared to the same period last year. This shows the port managed to achieve the strongest relative growth of the major western ports.

Direct container traffic with India grows by almost 40 percent

The strong traffic with the Far East countries, which also led to an increase in container throughput, contributed significantly to this. The new liner services with the growth market of India also had a positive impact. At a total of 60,000 TEU, container throughput grew by 39.6 percent. Only Malaysia, with an increase of 50.6 percent to 54,000 TEU, showed stronger growth. There were signs of a recovery in throughput with China, the largest trading partner. At 597,000 TEU, this represented an increase of 11.3 percent. By contrast, trade with the USA showed the first effects of the Trump administration's measures. Many US warehouses were filled towards the end of last year. Container throughput in the Port of Hamburg for the USA trade lane was correspondingly lower in the first quarter. It fell by 19.0 percent to 145,000 TEU.

All-purpose port in demand: general and bulk cargo throughput remain stable

The Port of Hamburg also saw an upward trend in conventional general cargo. With an increase of 3.5 percent, throughput rose to 280,000 tons. Together with container throughput, general cargo throughput recorded an overall increase of 4.7 percent to 20.2 million tons.

From January to March 2025, throughput of bulk goods remained stable overall at 8.1 million tons (-0.8 percent). Throughput of grabbable cargo in the port declined (-5.8 percent) due to lower demand as a result of the energy transition; coal and ores correspondingly saw lower rail transport volumes, with 10.9 million tons (-5.7 percent) loaded onto the railways from January to March. Throughput of suction cargo fell by 14.3 percent, while liquid cargo performed very well with an increase of 23.6 percent.

Hamburg as a central throughput center between ship, rail and road

While transhipment traffic in particular has suffered from the geopolitical conditions in recent times, it has shown an upward throughput result at the beginning of the year with an increase of 15.3 percent to 723,000 TEU. The reasons for this are the addition of new liner services, from which volumes are transported onwards by feeder ship, and the possible acquisition of transhipment volumes as part of the restructuring of the shipping company alliances.

Hinterland traffic increased to 1.3 million TEU (+1.8 percent). In turn, this benefited the railways, which transported 645,000 TEU (+0.7 percent) according to preliminary figures.