



Wallenius SOL – Industrial RoRo Carrier

WALLENIUS SOL was founded seven years ago as a joint venture between Wallenius Lines and Svenska Orient Linien (SOL) in 2019. In April 2026, it was announced that Wallenius Lines will acquire SOL's shares and become the sole owner of the company.

The company operates a fleet of seven RoRo vessels across three services, primarily connecting the Bothnian region with continental Europe and the United Kingdom. Its main cargo consists of industrial goods such as paper, steel, vehicles, and project cargo.

The two largest RoRo vessels, "Baltic Enabler" and "Botnia Enabler", are currently among the most Sustainable ships with low emissions operating in the northern Baltic Sea. Wallenius SOL has also increased its paper volumes through a new contract with Holmen Paper and a new connection to the port of Kiel.

RoPax spoke with CEO Elvir Dzanic about recent developments and future growth plans.

RoPax: You will get a new owner structure by 100 % Wallenius how is your opinion?



CEO Elvir Dzanicand

Elvir Dzanic: For Wallenius SOL, this means a clear ownership structure and long-term conditions to continue developing the business in line with our plan. We will maintain our focus on customers, partnerships along the value chain, and our role as an industrial pioneer within sustainable maritime infrastructure in Northern Europe.

RoPax: How was 2025 overall for Wallenius SOL?

Elvir Dzanic: Overall performance was satisfactory, though not exceptional. We achieved significant growth of approximately 45% compared to 2024, despite the overall market remaining flat. This indicates that we successfully gained substantial market share in the Bothnia region.

More than half of this growth resulted from the acquisition of shipping company Mann Lines, while the remaining increase was driven by organic business development. A key contributor to our organic growth was the launch of a new container service to the Bothnian area in January 2025. As a result, we now handle around 45,000 TEU of overseas containers for major carriers such as Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd, positioning us as a reliable feeder service provider for deep-sea carriers operating in the Bay of Bothnia.



South Enabler

In addition, we recorded growth in northbound traffic, reflecting a noticeable modal shift from road to sea. Many trailers that previously used alternative routes through Finland are now transported via our services. A similar trend can be observed in southbound traffic: timber that was historically moved by truck is increasingly shipped on our vessels. This development also brings clear environmental benefits.

RoPax: Some operators report a shift from sea to road due to ETS.

Elvir Dzanic: We are seeing the opposite.

RoPax: Is this also due to your LNG vessels and lower CO₂ emissions?

Elvir Dzanic: Lower emissions are certainly a contributing factor, but distance also plays an important role. We operate significantly further north than many of our competitors, which gives us a structural advantage. Even with the EU ETS in place, sea transport remains the more competitive option over longer distances. If you have bigger volumes that is definitely the case.

“BALTIC ENABLER” AND “BOTNIA ENABLER” A SUCCESS STORY

RoPax: Your LNG vessels “Baltic Enabler” and “Botnia Enabler” have now been in service for three years. Are you satisfied with their performance?

Elvir Dzanic: This is particularly relevant for the Bay of Bothnia. Initially, the vessels were considered too large for this trade. Significant adjustments were required not only on our side but also from ports, pilots, and tug operators. Port infrastructure had to be upgraded to safely accommodate vessels of this size.

The transition took around two years, but the ships are now operating very efficiently. From a technical perspective, they have even exceeded our expectations. As with any new technology, especially LNG there

were some initial challenges, but these have largely been resolved. During the winter of 2025–2026, we were able to operate with more than 80% biogas usage. In the past, very low temperatures limited the use of gas, but we have now successfully overcome these technical constraints.

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In addition, we have implemented shore power capabilities. The vessels were already prepared for this, and we have since installed transformers to accommodate the different electrical frequencies used in ports. The first successful shore power test was conducted in Travemünde in April.

RoPax: The port of Travemünde is becoming an important hub for you?

Elvir Dzanic: Our strategy over the past two years has been to develop Travemünde as a central hub connecting North Sea ports such as Zeebrugge, Tilbury, and Antwerp with the Baltic region. To support this, we have significantly expanded our presence there, from three weekly calls at the beginning of 2025 to around eight departures per week today, with eight to nine expected by Q4.

An increasing share of cargo that previously moved by truck between Belgium, Estonia, and southern Finland is now transported via our vessels. For example, trailers and project cargo from Zeebrugge and Antwerp are carried on the NS1 service to Travemünde, where they are transhipped onto the NS3 service connecting Paldiski in Estonia and Turku in Finland. This hub concept has developed rapidly, with strong volume growth since the service started three months ago.

Our calls in Travemünde are mainly concentrated around the weekend. The NS1 service, operated by the two “Enabler” vessels, connects Pietarsaari with the North Sea via Travemünde. The NS2 service, operated by the T-ships Tavastland and Tundraland, also calls Travemünde on Sunday and Monday, linking Husum and Tilbury. In addition, the NS3 service operates weekly between Turku, Paldiski, Travemünde, and Bremerhaven.

Since converting NS3 into a weekly service with the RoRo vessel “South Enabler”, we now handle around 100 trailers per week between Travemünde, Turku, and Paldiski. Demand continues to grow, and in Q4 we will add another vessel following a long-term contract with the Holmen paper mill, which will also include calls at Kiel and Travemünde. Overall, we are responding closely to customer needs and continuously adapting our network to develop sustainable and efficient logistics solutions.



Tavastland

RoPax: Why did you include Bremerhaven in your network?

Elvir Dzanic: Primarily for industrial cargo from southern Finland. We transport goods from companies like Valmet, Wärtsilä, and Sandvik to Bremerhaven, where they connect to deep-sea RoRo and container services.

Northbound, we carry vehicles from manufacturers such as Jaguar, Mercedes, and Volkswagen.

“Our goal is to help our customers optimize their logistics by reducing the energy required to transport their cargo to market.”

RoPax: Wallenius now owns 100% of the shares in your company, and are you also working together on the consolidation of the cargo that goes into or out of Bremerhaven from Wallenius’ deep-sea vessels?

Elvir Dzanic: Our long-term strategy is to establish ourselves as a RoRo feeder operator alongside our core industrial cargo business. The goal is to develop services that can support major deep-sea operators such as Grimaldi, Wallenius Wilhelmsen, NYK, UECC, U-Core, K-Line, and Höegh.

In essence, we want to maintain strong, reliable services for our industrial customers while building a network that allows us to act as a RoRo feeder operator to and

from the Bay of Bothnia. This dual approach enables us to serve our core customers while also integrating into the wider deep-sea RoRo network. We are ambitious and focused on growth, supported by our strong owner who has extensive experience in developing industrial logistics solutions. Our industrial customers, particularly in paper, timber, and other sectors, remain at the core of our business. For them, the key priorities are reliability, the ability to manage volume fluctuations, and having the right vessels capable of operating in challenging conditions such as harsh weather and ice. Since we operate in regions with ice from rough November to May, this capability is essential.

Ultimately, our goal is to help our customers optimize their logistics by reducing the energy required to transport their cargo to market.

RoPax: By how much have you reduced emissions?

Elvir Dzanic: We measure emissions on a system level. Currently, we are at around 21 grams of CO₂ per ton kilometer. Before introducing LNG and LBG with the delivery of newbuilds Baltic and Botnia Enabler, we were close to 40 grams. We have effectively halved emissions within three years.

Our goal is to reduce this further to below 19 grams through improved energy efficiency, increased use of LBG, and shore power. The Enabler vessels have the possibility to come down to 10 gram ton kilometer. We always look to improve our operations and usage of fuels wherever we can. The optimization of the vessels and cargo volumes is always.

RoPax: How did you achieve these goals?

Wallenius SOL

South Enabler

Elvir Dzanic: We have taken several measures to reduce emissions. First, we redesigned our system to lower overall energy consumption. Second, we improved the vessels’ technical capability to operate LBG (Liquid Biogas), allowing us to increase their use. In addition, we introduced small things such as shore power connections in Travemünde.

By combining higher LBG usage, lower overall energy demand, and shore power, we aim to reduce emissions to below 19 grams.

RoPax: How do you stand with that concept compared to other operators?

Elvir Dzanic: I cannot say for certain, but according to the EU’s MRV data, the “Enabler” vessels rank among the lowest-emission ships with ice class 1A and 1 A super sailing under the European Union flag.

PAPER CORE BUSINESS**RoPax: How important is paper cargo today?**

Elvir Dzanic: Paper remains a core part of our business, but the type has changed. We no longer transport large volumes of magazine paper. Instead, we carry packaging materials such as cardboard, and products used in industrial applications.



Wallenius SOL

Botnia Enabler



Deck Container load are a good combination in RoRo traffic

Currently, we transport around 1.2–1.3 million tons annually. With new contracts, this could increase to 1.6–1.7 million tons.

RoPax: If you look to this Mann Line business, you have now also more activities with UK as before? How do you see the future in this market?

Elvir Dzanic: The UK and Germany are key markets. Germany remains the world's third-largest economy, and the UK is one of the largest economies in Europe. However, we have no ambition to become a trailer operator.

Our focus will remain on industrial cargo. To grow in markets such as the UK, we will continue to develop tailored solutions for commodities like paper exports to the UK and steel shipments leaving the UK. This is our niche and where our expertise lies. We understand our customers' need for reliable, robust services that are designed specifically for industrial cargo rather than competing with trailer traffic for space.

RoPax: When Finnlines removed his "Finneco" vessels from Travemünde, did you get some loads more to Finland?

Elvir Dzanic: Yes, we have noticed a slight increase in our statistics. While Finnlines may have left a small gap, we did not actively aim to fill it, nor were we fully aware of their plans.

When we acquired Mann Lines, we took over the service from Turku in southern Finland and decided to add a call in Travemünde. The main reason was to operate the vessel on a weekly rotation. Previously, the ship sailed all the way to the UK, which meant a round voyage of almost two weeks. By adding Travemünde and Bremerhaven, we were able to shorten the rotation and operate more efficiently.

Travemünde also allows us to trans ship cargo onto the T-vessels for onward connections to the UK, maintaining the link between Paldiski, Turku, and the UK.

“Our goal is to build long-term services and remain in the market for many decades.”

While we now also see around 80–100 trailers per week on the Turku–Travemünde route, this was not the primary reason for introducing the call.

RoPax: This sounds more efficient for the “South Enabler”.

Elvir Dzanic: It is. Because she is in this weekly round trip. And we don't lose the connection to UK because in Travemünde we trans ship both from Tilbury and to Tilbury.

RoPax: Are you satisfied with the “South Enabler”?

Elvir Dzanic: Yes. We are. It's a good vessel. Technically, we are looking and discussing

now with the yard that built the ship to make some more advancements on the ship, such as shore power connection.

RoPax: Are you looking also in new business?

Elvir Dzanic: We see ourselves as pioneers, constantly exploring new solutions together with our customers. Our goal is to build long-term services and remain in the market for many decades.

At this stage, we are still developing and refining our network in close cooperation with our customers. Over time, this will evolve into clearly defined routes where customers feel most comfortable. Some routes are already stable, while others will continue to grow.

RoPax: Do you have also a connection to Ireland, not by your vessel, but did you use loads from Ireland when you go to Zeebrugge?

Elvir Dzanic: Yes, we do. We have established a cooperation with CLdN where we utilize each other's vessel capacity. We book cargo on their ships, and they also place cargo on ours, allowing us to offer extended logistics solutions. As part of this cooperation, we handle cargo flows both to and from Ireland, including steel and other commodities.

RoPax: Are you investing further in sustainability?

Elvir Dzanic: Yes. This is a continuous work for us, its incorporated in all steps we take. We are exploring multiple improvements, including wind-assisted propulsion such as rotor sail. Our approach is to implement many small efficiency gains rather than waiting for one breakthrough. We are continuously optimizing both our existing fleet and our newer vessels. This is essential to remain competitive.

RoPax: Thank you very much for the interview.



Botnia Enabler