



Lübecker Hafen-Gesellschaft records positive development

Despite challenging economic conditions, the RoPax business of Lübecker Hafen-Gesellschaft (LHG) continues to develop steadily. Intermodal traffic and connections to the Baltic Sea region in particular are providing positive momentum.

LHG Managing Director Prof. Jürgens is therefore generally satisfied with the development and sees good prospects for the terminal operator in RoRo and RoPax traffic in the coming years as well. RoPax spoke with him about the developments.

RoPax: Prof. Jürgens, looking back at the past year 2025, how did the RoPax business develop?

Prof. Jürgens: Overall very positively. We saw a particularly encouraging development in the intermodal sector, where we were able to grow significantly against the rather weak market trend in this segment. In the first year of our significantly expanded Baltic Rail Gate facility, we already achieved growth of over four percent. This shows that the investments and the new infrastructure are being very well received. This applies above all to the extended tracks and a new, third handling crane. We handled around 130,000 units intermodally in 2025.

RoPax: Has this positive trend continued in the first months of the current year?

Prof. Jürgens: Yes, the trend is continuing. The final figures are not yet available, but we have made a good start to the year. One area that is developing particularly well is traffic with the Baltic states. I honestly did not expect this level of momentum. We have now established several connections

and have been able to significantly expand our network as a result.

RoPax: What exactly has changed in Baltic traffic?

Prof. Jürgens: We now have four scheduled connections to the Baltic region. These include the direct service by TT-Line from Travemünde to Klaipėda and the Stena Line connection to Liepāja, which now operates six departures per week. The offering is complemented by additional connections to Estonia with the shipping companies Transfennica and Wallenius SOL. At the same time, exchanges with our Baltic partners have intensified further. Several delegation trips were initiated, including a trip to Lithuania together with the Mayor of Lübeck, political discussions were launched, and events such as the German-Latvian Port Day were held. We also recently hosted a high-level business delegation from Estonia at ministerial level.

RoPax: Where is this growth coming from, despite the difficult circumstances surrounding the sanctions against Russia?

Prof. Jürgens: A key factor is the shift of transport from road to sea. Many shipments that were previously handled entirely by road are now switching to intermodal solutions via sea. This saves CO₂

and aligns with the sustainability goals of many companies. Switching from road to ship and rail reduces CO₂ emissions by 70 to 80 percent. That is a compelling argument.

RoPax: At the same time, ports in Denmark are reporting displacement effects from the new Danish toll system for traffic to Norway, which is increasingly being routed via southern Sweden. Is this already making itself felt in your throughput figures?

Prof. Jürgens: Partly yes. New toll systems are changing transport chains. Some traffic is shifting more strongly via Trelleborg, for example. This is also connected to new intermodal offerings. Here too we benefit from the fact that the market is increasingly thinking in terms of combined transport.

RoPax: How is the overall development of traffic from Lübeck looking?

Prof. Jürgens: Finland remains a very strong market for us. The forest products sector continues to be challenging. Industrial production is declining, and we naturally feel that in the port. Our storage areas are well filled, but what matters is how quickly the goods move out again. On the other hand, we are seeing good development in traffic to northern Sweden and northern Finland, and the use of the Skandinavienkai as a hub by Wallenius SOL.

RoPax: From 2028, the first new Finnlines vessel will arrive with twice the passenger capacity of the current ships. How is LHG preparing for the increased passenger volumes?

Prof. Jürgens: We are already seeing significantly rising passenger numbers today and are actively preparing for the larger passenger volumes. This includes providing sufficient capacity for passengers who want to park their car at the terminal for a short trip. We are also continuously expanding our offering for the growing number of bus passengers. In the terminal, we have created more seating in the waiting area and a dedicated area for children.

We also regularly invest in space, processes and facilities to meet the growing requirements. We are currently planning to create more space at the quayside facilities on the terminal by relocating the workshop and service building. At the same time, we see further development potential on the terminal: when existing structures are optimised, new areas for handling and logistics become available. This creates the foundation for further growth.

RoPax: Thank you for the conversation.