Maritime transport statistics - short sea shipping of goods at port level

Statistics Explained

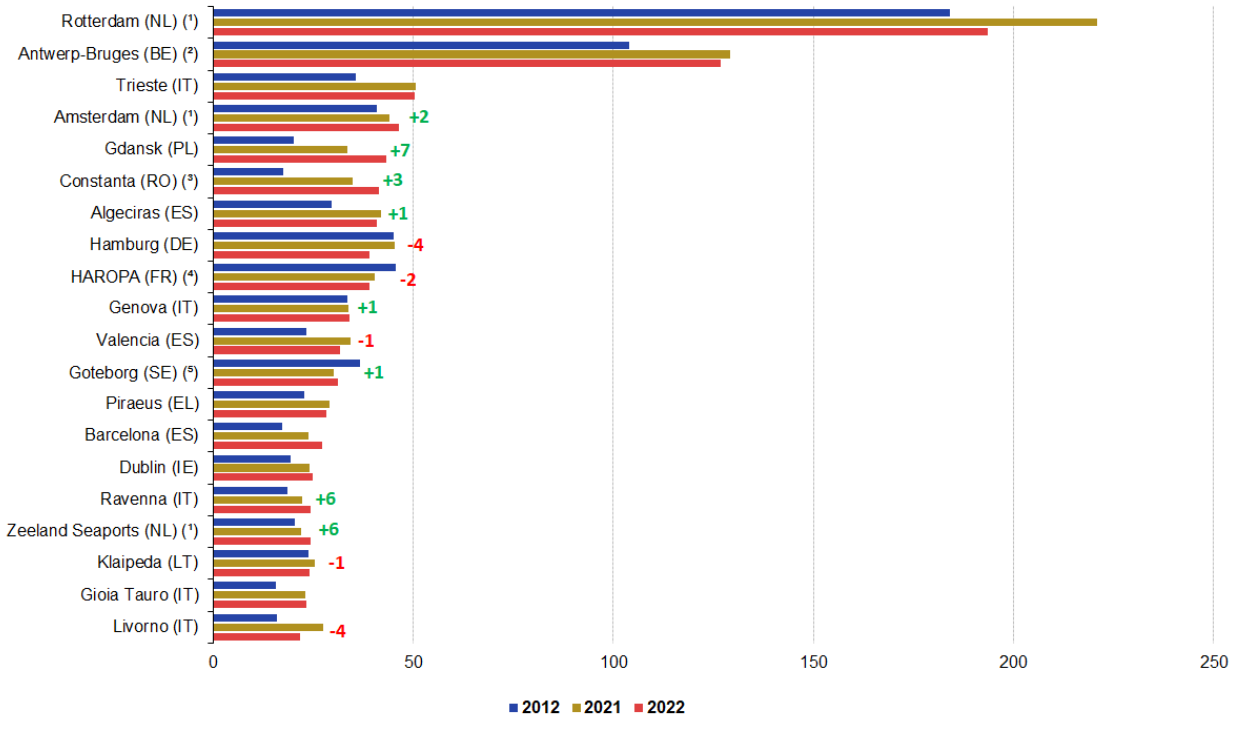
Data from March 2024.
Planned update of the article: 25 March 2025.

" Rotterdam remained the largest EU port for short sea shipping in 2022. "

" The top 20 EU ports accounted for 42 % of EU short sea shipping in 2022. "

" In 2022, the top 5 ports for containers handled 38 % of the total short sea shipped container goods in main EU ports, in terms of gross weight of goods. "

Top 20 short sea shipping EU ports, 2012, 2021 and 2022
(million tonnes)



Note: The number presented indicates the number of positions lost or gained compared to 2021. When no number is displayed, it means that the port maintained the same position compared to 2021.
(¹) Break in time series from 2021 due to methodological improvement in the data reported by the Netherlands.
(²) Starting from 2022, the ports Antwerpen and Zeebrugge have been merged and the data are reported under the new port name Antwerp-Bruges.
(³) 2012: contains a significant share of declarations to and from unknown ports (see methodological notes).
(⁴) Starting from 2022, the ports Le Havre and Rouen have been merged and the data are reported under the new port name HAROPA.
(⁵) 2021-2022: contains a significant share of declarations to and from unknown ports (see methodological notes).
Source: Eurostat (online data code: mar_sg_am_pw)

eurostat

Top 20 short sea shipping EU ports, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pw)

This article presents recent short sea shipping (SSS) statistics in the European Union (EU) ports, covering the transport of goods between main ports in the EU Member States and ports situated in geographical Europe or in non-European countries on the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea. The results are broken down by type of cargo. Unlike statistics presented in the article Maritime transport statistics - short sea shipping of goods , the figures at port level presented hereafter do not estimate the seaborne transport of goods between the main EU ports and their partner ports in the short sea shipping area (where double-counting is excluded), but present the handling of short sea shipped goods in the main EU ports.

The top 20 EU ports accounted for 42 % of EU short sea shipping

The top 20 ports accounted for 42 % of the total short sea shipped goods handled in the main EU ports in 2022. Rotterdam remained the largest EU port for short sea shipping, handling a total of 194 million tonnes of short sea shipped goods in 2022. Among the other top three ports, Antwerp-Bruges[1] handled 127 million tonnes of short shipped goods in 2022 and Trieste handled 50 million tonnes (Figure 1).

Half of the top 20 EU ports registered a growth in 2022 compared with 2021. Among them, Gdansk reported the highest increase, with +28.9 %, followed by Constanta (+18.6 %), Barcelona (+13.9 %), Zeeland Seaports (+10.8 %) and Ravenna (+10.1 %). By contrast, Livorno, Hamburg and Rotterdam reported the highest drops, with -21.5 %, -13.9 % and -12.4 %, respectively, over the same period.

[1] Starting from the first quarter of 2022, the ports of Antwerpen and Zeebrugge have been merged and the data are reported under the new port name Antwerp-Bruges.

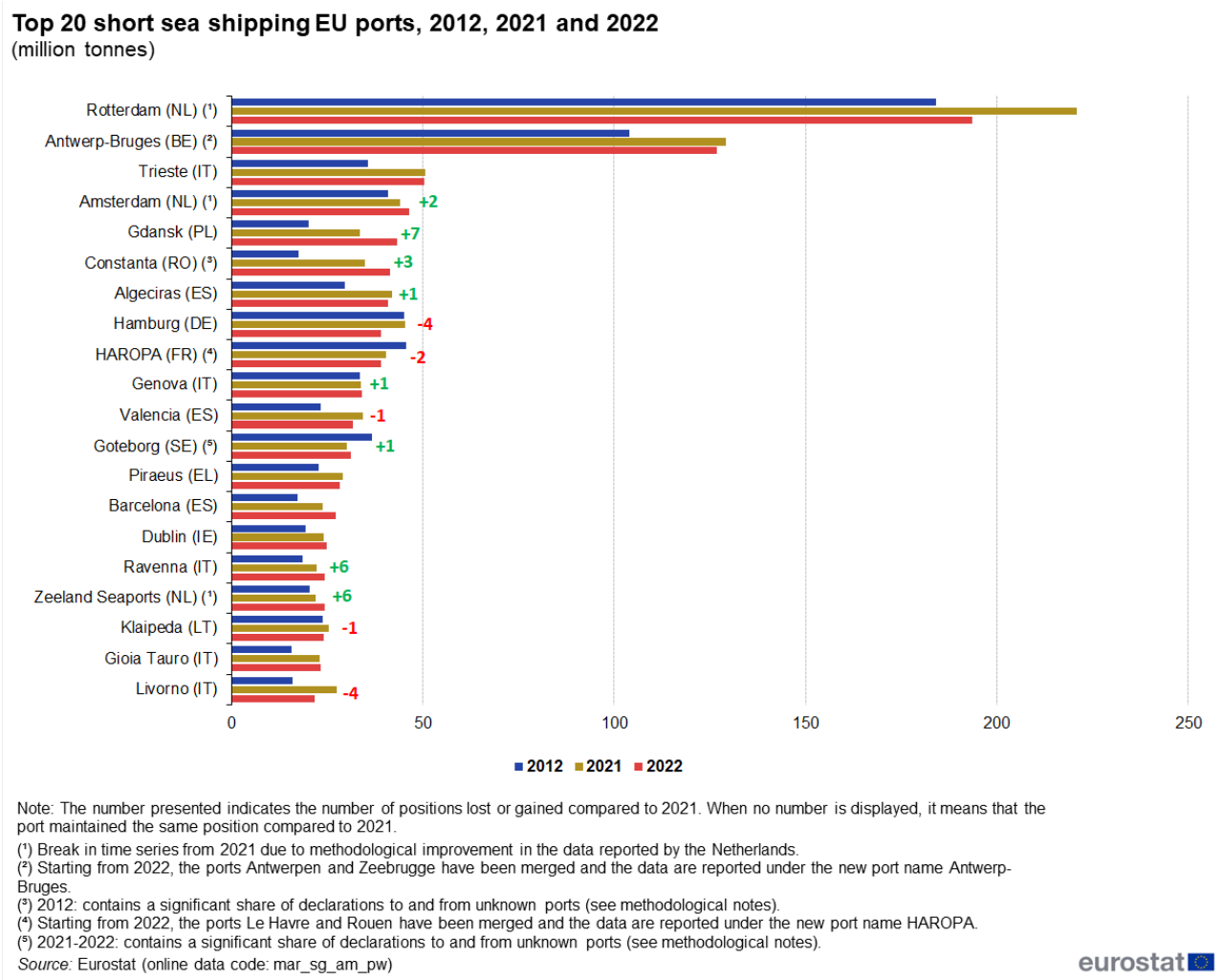


Figure 1: Top 20 short sea shipping EU ports, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pw)

Seven of the main deep sea hub ports, Rotterdam, Antwerp-Bruges, Amsterdam, Hamburg, HAROPA[2], Valencia, and Barcelona, handled more deep sea shipping than short sea shipping of goods. By contrast, all the other top 20 ports for short sea shipping handled more short sea than deep sea shipped goods (Figure 2). In particular, 98 % of the goods handled in the port of Dublin were short sea shipped.

[2]Starting from the first quarter of 2022, Le Havre and Rouen have been merged and the data are reported under the new port name HAROPA.

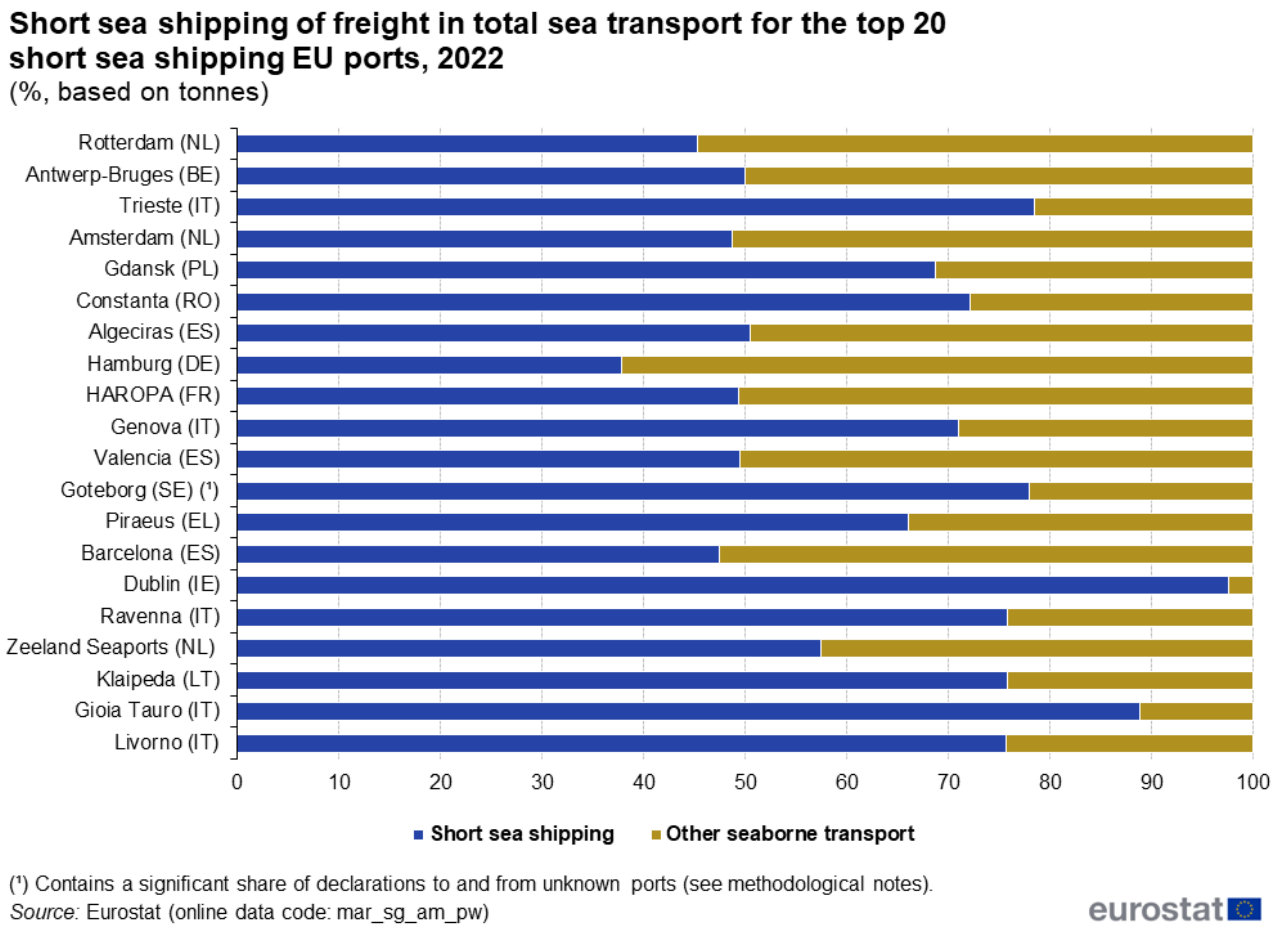


Figure 2: Short sea shipping of freight in total sea transport for the top 20 short sea shipping EU ports, 2022 (%, based on tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pw)

Rotterdam handled 13 % of the total short sea shipped liquid bulk goods reported by the main EU ports in 2022

At 108 million tonnes, Rotterdam handled 13 % of the total short sea shipped liquid bulk goods reported by the main EU ports in 2022, by far the largest volume of short sea shipped liquid bulk for any EU port (Figure 3). With 22 million tonnes, Amsterdam recorded a substantial increase (+16.9 %) in 2022, compared with 2021.

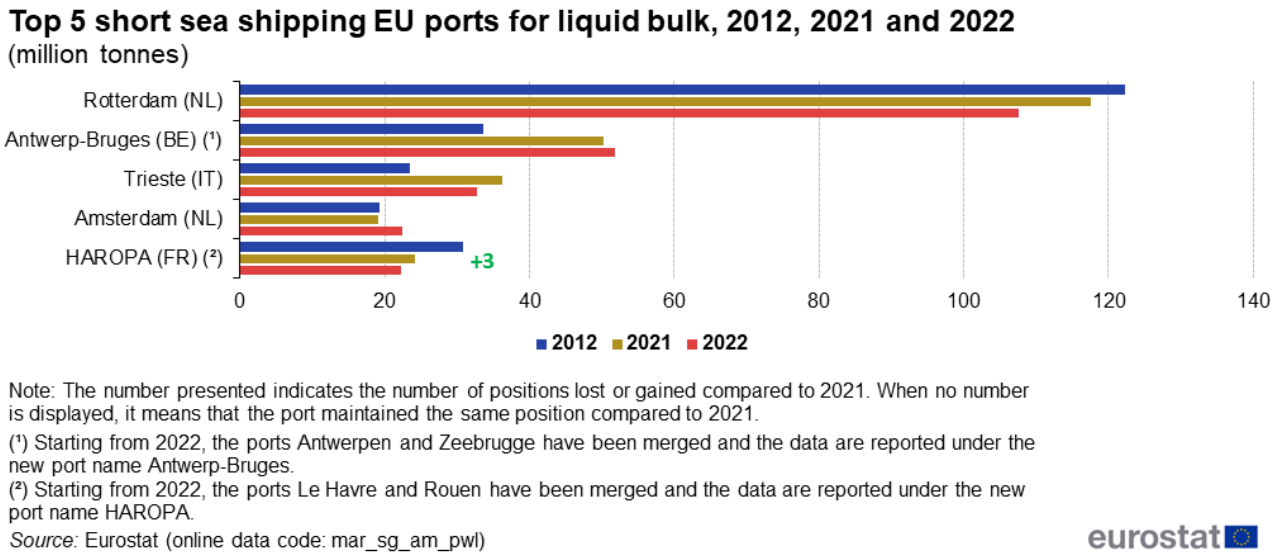


Figure 3: Top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for liquid bulk, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwl)

In 2022, the share of short sea shipped liquid bulk on the total sea transport of liquid bulk was particularly pronounced in the port of Trieste, with 78 % (Figure 4).

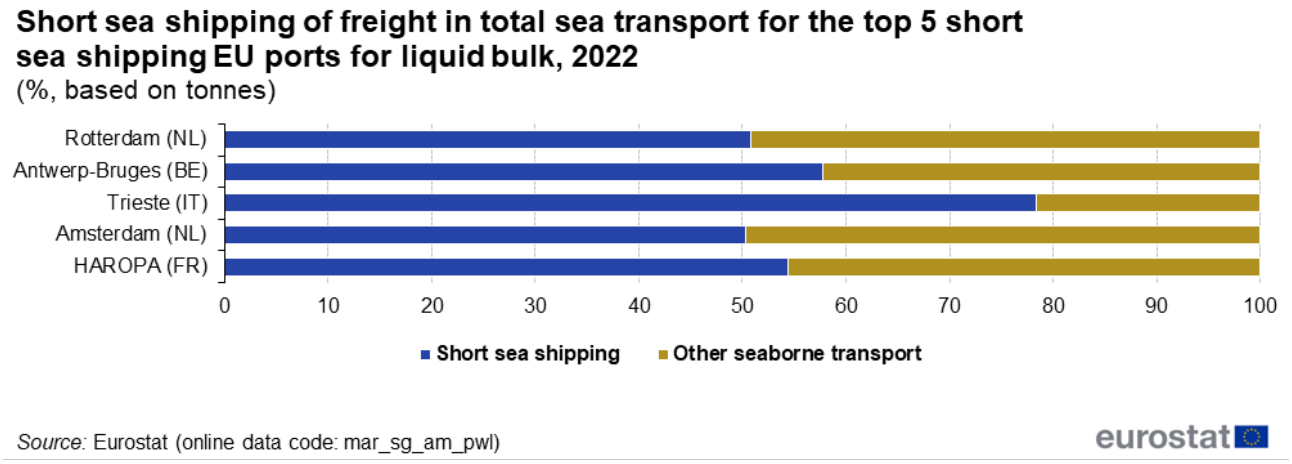
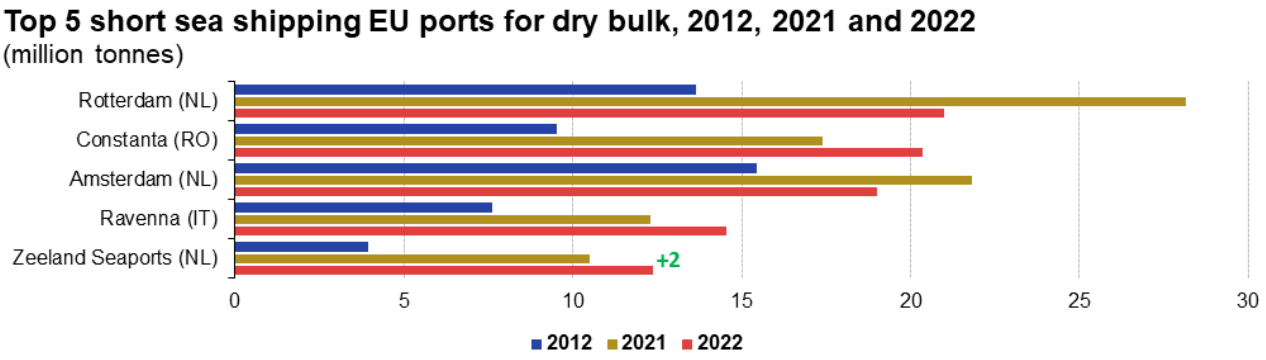


Figure 4: Short sea shipping of freight in total sea transport for the top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for liquid bulk, 2022 (%, based on tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwl)

Rotterdam was the EU's largest port for short sea shipping of dry bulk goods

At 21 million tonnes in 2022, Rotterdam was also the EU's largest port for short sea shipping of dry bulk goods, despite a large fall by 25.5 % compared with the previous year (Figure 5). Amsterdam also reported a substantial fall by 12.8 % over the same period. By contrast the three other ports of the top 5 recorded substantial increases: Ravenna (+18.3 %), Zeeland Seaports (+17.7 %) and Constanta (+17.0 %).



Note: The number presented indicates the number of positions lost or gained compared to 2021. When no number is displayed, it means that the port maintained the same position compared to 2021.

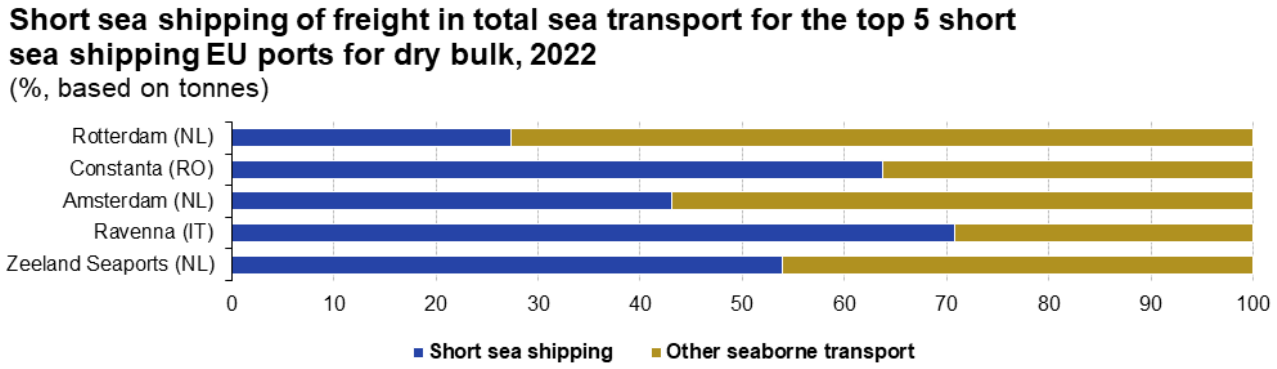
(¹) Starting from 2022, the ports Antwerpen and Zeebrugge have been merged and the data are reported under the new port name Antwerp-Bruges.

(²) Starting from 2022, the ports Le Havre and Rouen have been merged and the data are reported under the new port name HAROPA.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: mar_sg_am_pwb)

Figure 5: Top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for dry bulk, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwb)

In 2022, the share of short sea shipped dry bulk on the total sea transport of dry bulk was higher than 50 % in Ravenna (71 %), Constanta (64 %) and Zeeland Seaports (54 %). In Rotterdam, the share was 27 % while in Amsterdam it was 43 % (Figure 6).



Source: Eurostat (online data code: mar_sg_am_pwb)

Figure 7: Short sea shipping of freight in total sea transport for the top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for dry bulk, 2022 (%, based on tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwb)

The top 5 ports for containers handled 38 % of the total short sea shipped container goods in main EU ports, in terms of gross weight of goods

Antwerp-Bruges and Rotterdam were the EU's two largest ports for short sea shipped goods in containers with each 40 million tonnes in 2022 (Figure 7). Altogether, the two ports represented 21 % of total short sea shipped goods in containers reported by the main EU ports in 2022. These two ports recorded substantial decreases in 2022 compared with 2021: Rotterdam by 17.3 % and Antwerp-Bruges by 10.6 %). Gioia Tauro was the only port in the top 5 to increase over the same period (+1.7 %).

Unlike dry bulk segment, for instance, short sea shipping of goods in containers is concentrated around a limited number of main hub ports. In 2022, the top 5 ports for containers handled 38 % of the total short sea shipped container goods in main EU ports, in terms of gross weight of goods.

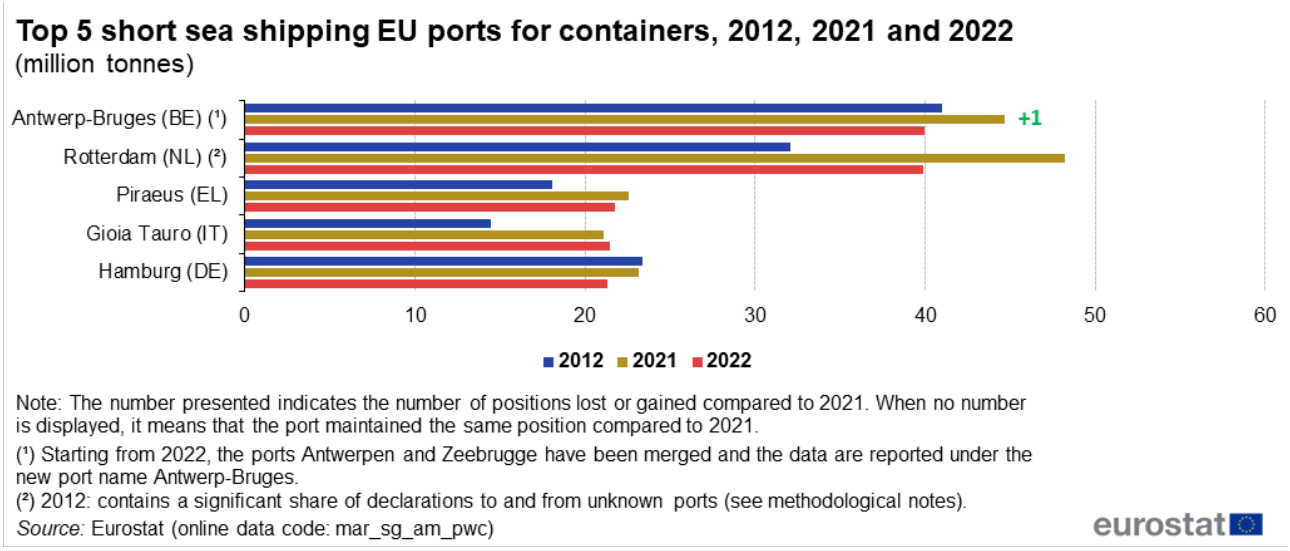


Figure 7: Top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for containers, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwc)

In 2022, the share of short sea shipped goods in containers on the total sea transport of goods in containers was below 50 % for Antwerp-Bruges, Rotterdam and Hamburg, while Gioia Tauro and Piraeus had shares of 88 % and 60 %, respectively (Figure 8).

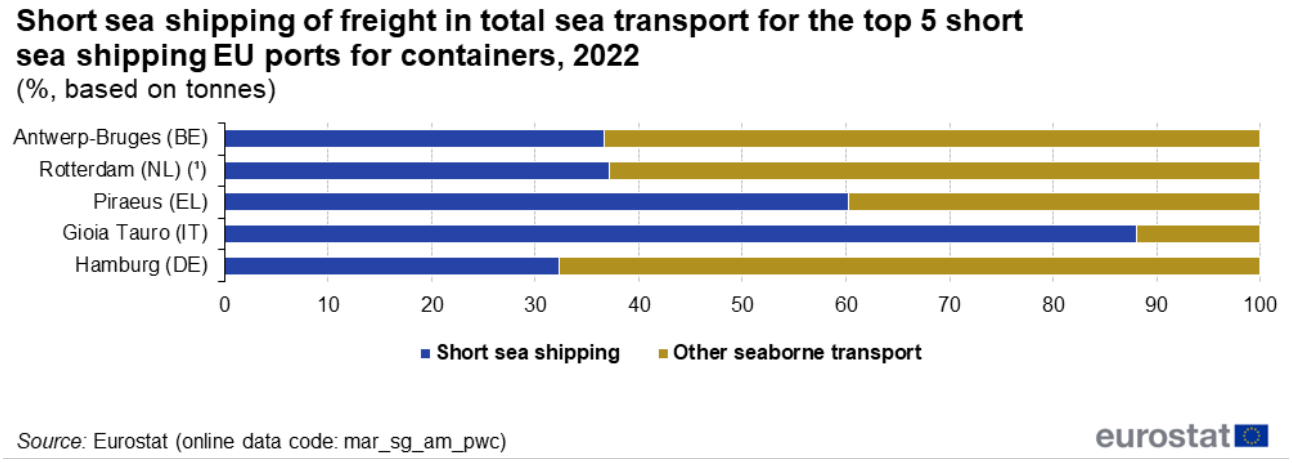


Figure 8: Short sea shipping of freight in total sea transport for the top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for containers, 2022 (%, based on tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwc)

Antwerp-Bruges was the largest port for short sea shipped goods on roll-on and roll-off units

Antwerp-Bruges was the largest port for short sea shipped goods on roll-on and roll-off (Ro-Ro) units with 21 million tonnes in 2022 (Figure 9). Compared with 2021, all top 5 ports recorded decreases, except for Antwerp-Bruges where the increase was +2.0 %. Calais recorded the highest fall, with -27.6 %, followed by Lubeck (-8.0 %).

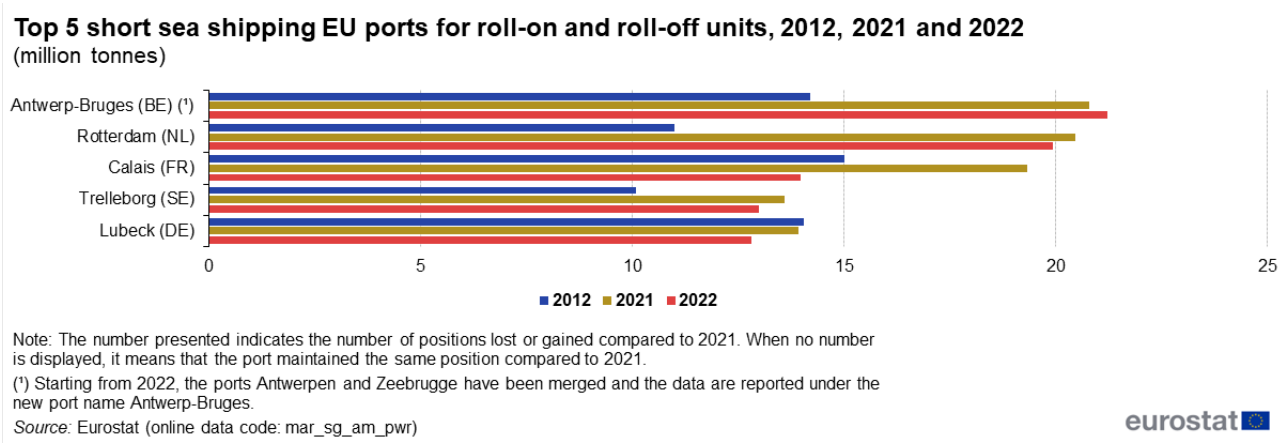


Figure 9: Top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for roll-on and roll-off units, 2012, 2021 and 2022 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwr)

In 2022, the goods on Ro-Ro units were exclusively short sea shipped in Calais, Trelleborg and Lubeck, while in Antwerp-Bruges and Rotterdam, short sea shipping of
goods on Ro-Ro units represented 89.1 % and 99.8 % of the total sea transport of goods on Ro-Ro units (Figure 10).

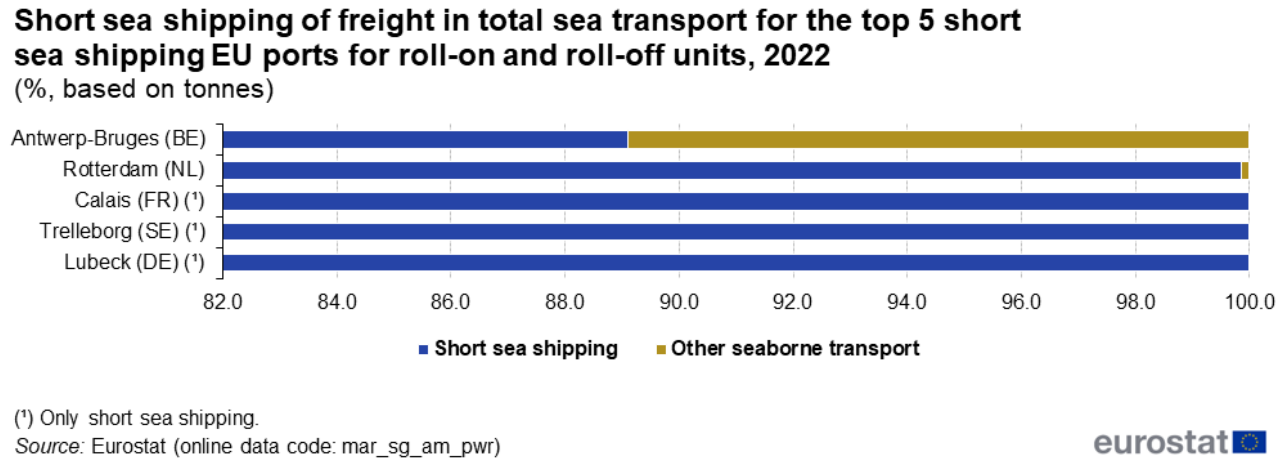


Figure 10: Short sea shipping of freight in total sea transport for the top 5 short sea shipping EU ports for roll-on and roll-off units, 2022 (%, based on tonnes) Source: Eurostat (mar_sg_am_pwr)

Source data for tables and graphs

- Download Excel file

Data sources

The statistics in this article are based on data collected under Directive 2009/42/EC of 6 May 2009 on statistical returns in respect of carriage of goods and passengers by sea. The relevant data on port of loading and unloading of the goods is mainly collected for main ports , passengers by sea. The relevant data on port of loading and unloading of the goods are mainly collected for main ports, which are defined as ports handling more than one million tonnes of goods annually. Data are collected at level of statistical ports .

The short sea shipping (SSS) statistics present seaborne transport of goods between

- main ports in the maritime EU Member States

- main ports in the maritime EU Member States and non-EU partner ports situated in geographical Europe or in non-European countries on the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea.

As a result, this article covers short sea shipping of goods to and from main ports in the 22 maritime EU Member States (Czechia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia have no maritime ports). The partner ports are situated

- in the maritime EU Member States
- in the maritime EFTA countries Iceland and Norway
- in the maritime candidate countries Montenegro, Albania and Türkiye
- in the maritime potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina
- in the United Kingdom (European ports)
- on the Baltic Sea (Russia)
- on the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian territories, Syria, and Tunisia)
- on the Black Sea (Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine).

In addition to the maritime EU Member States, similar short sea shipping statistics are also available for seaborne transport to and from main ports in Norway, Montenegro and Türkiye.

The definition of short sea shipping is derived from the Communication of the Commission COM (1999) 317 on the development of Short Sea Shipping in Europe. As a result, the concept of short sea shipping includes both regular short sea shipping and feeder services (short sea shipping between ports in order for freight to be consolidated or redistributed to or from a deep sea service in one of the ports in a network (hub ports).

Please note that ports located in Morocco–West Africa, Egypt–Red Sea, Israel–Red Sea and Russia–Barents and the White Sea are not part of the European short sea shipping area.

Figures 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10: The category 'other seaborne transport' includes both deep sea shipping and transport with unidentified partner ports (unknown ports). It should be noted that the share of unknown partner ports in the total seaborne transport is less than 6 % in 2012, 2021 and 2022 for all the mentioned ports, with the exception of Constanta in 2012 (7 %) and Goteborg in 2021 (7 %) and 2022 (9 %). When looking at each type of cargo, this share is lower than 6 % for all ports, except Rotterdam for containers in 2012 (9 %).

Please note that data can be subject to revision and latest data are available in Eurostat's online database.

Context

The content of this statistical article is based on data collected under the EU maritime transport statistics Directive (Directive 2009/42/EC of 6 May 2009 on statistical returns in respect of carriage of goods and passengers by sea), which is a recast of the original Council Directive 95/64/EC of 8 December 1995.

The basic legal act (Directive 2009/42/EC) was amended by:

- Commission Decision 2010/216/EC of 14 April 2010 OJ L 94 of 15.4.2010 pp. 33-40
- Regulation (EU) No 1090/2010 of 24 November 2010 OJ L 325 of 09.12.2010 pp. 1-3
- Commission Delegated Decision 2012/186/EU of 3 February 2012 OJ L 101 of 11.4.2012 pp. 5-14.

The following legal acts include respectively the last official version of the list of ports and some dissemination aspects:

- Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2018/1007 of 25 April 2018 (Port list) OJ L 180 of 17.7.2018 pp. 29-71
- Commission Decision 2001/423/EC of 22 May 2001 (on dissemination) OJ L 151 of 07.06.2001 p. 41

See also

- Freight transport statistics - modal split
- Maritime freight and vessels statistics
- Maritime transport of goods - quarterly data
- Maritime transport of goods at port level - quarterly data
- Maritime transport statistics - short sea shipping of goods

Publications

- All transport publications online
- Key figures on European transport - 2023 edition

Database

- Transport , see:

Maritime transport (mar)

Maritime transport - main annual results (mar_m)
Maritime transport - short sea shipping - Main annual results (mar_s)
Maritime transport - passengers (mar_pa)
Maritime transport - goods (mar_go)
Maritime transport - vessel traffic (mar_tf)
Maritime transport - regional statistics (mar_rg)

Dedicated section

- Transport

Methodology

- Maritime transport (ESMS metadata file — mar_esms)
- Reference Manual on Maritime Transport Statistics
- Glossary for transport statistics - 5th edition - 2019

Responsible unit

- E3 Transport