European ports: an engine for growth
Europe has three ports in the list of the world’s 15 biggest ports: Rotterdam is the 11th biggest container port, Hamburg 14th, closely followed by Antwerp in 15th place.

12% of goods handled globally

Source: World Shipping Council
74% of EU trade goes by ship.

Ports in Europe are directly connected to 848 ports in the Far East and 629 in Central and South America.

Source: ESPO, European Port Performance Dashboard, 2012
Ports in the Mediterranean Sea handle the greatest amount of maritime trade exchanges between coastal regions in the EU, up to **28.4%** of the freight volumes in tonnes.

37% of the total intra-EU exchange of goods (in tonne-km) goes through the EU’s ports.

*Source: Eurostat* (tonne-km = moving 1 000 kg of cargo a distance of 1 km)
Projected increases in size for 2014 show the number of containers has more than quadrupled over the last 20 years.

Source: World Shipping Council
Some ships already have a capacity of 18,000 TEU. This is the equivalent to a train more than 108 km long or a road full of heavy goods vehicles from Paris to Rotterdam.

(TEU = twenty-foot equivalent unit, a measure used for capacity in container transportation)
Through its ‘Motorways of the Seas’ programme, the EU is investing in the ports and facilities that act as links in a Europe-wide transport network.

**Travelling from Gijón to Gothenburg by sea is 736 kilometres shorter than by land and reduces the resulting CO₂ and other emissions produced.**
A port in the logistics chain
The total quantity of freight handled in EU ports in 2010 was 3,641 million tonnes.

North Sea core ports dominated, with a relatively low share of freight being handled in ports along the Black Sea or in the outermost regions.

Source: Eurostat
An increase of one million tonnes passing through a port will give rise to an average of 300 more jobs.

By 2030 there will be 15% more jobs.
20% of traffic in the EU is handled by only 3 ports.

By 2030 traffic is predicted to rise by 50%.

Source: Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports, 2013
In 2012, **396 million people**, more than three quarters of the EU population, took to the seas as **passengers** on ferries and cruise ships.

*Source: Eurostat*