



## Results 2020: traffic is down but the port remains solid

Calais – 26 January 2021: 2020 has been a complicated year for Port Boulogne Calais, which had to deal with both the pandemic that led several European countries to restrict their nationals' movements, which had a very negative impact on tourism, as well as the completion of Brexit at the end of the year, with uncertainty over the terms of the UK's exit from the common market, particularly for the fishing sector.

In this exceptionally difficult context where French ports have been severely affected, Port Boulogne Calais has shown its resilience by retaining top spot for French fish auction venues and leader for cross-Channel freight traffic.

### The Boulogne area has mobilised to deal with the health crisis

In the ranking of French fishing ports, during a very chaotic year that started with several weeks of bad weather, the port of Boulogne-sur-Mer managed to maintain first place in terms of tonnage and value with **27,859 tons of recorded sales**, representing a decrease of **12%** compared to 2019 and **65 million euros** in turnover (down 19%). It's a decline that's certainly been kept under control in view of the situation regarding all the fishing ports on the French coast, which have been severely impacted by the Covid-19 health crisis. The fish auction also remains the leading French auction in terms of tonnage, with **19,118 million tons (down 7%)** but third in value with **41.9 million euros**, or a reduction of **9%**.

After the first days of lockdown in March due to the pandemic, which put a stop to all fishing vessels, the strength of the premier fishing port in France was the almost immediate mobilisation of all players in the sector. They coordinated to organise themselves to adapt to the market by adjusting daily the quantities caught, allowing the correct prices to be maintained and avoiding unsold fish.

However, the closure of the Italian and Spanish markets had a strong impact on the sale of certain species, particularly squid.

In the second half of the year, the sensible practice of fishing vessels spreading their catches evenly over the week helped maintain a good price level, especially for scallops.

Nevertheless, volumes per boat saw significant reductions in the last quarter of **20%** and **12%** over the year, with the fleet of small vessels (gillnetters and crab boats) being the most severely impacted.

As for remote selling, meanwhile, its share continues to grow, reaching **one third** of total auction sales (up to 47% in August) compared to 13% in 2019, benefiting this year from the "Covid" effect which has resulted in a lack of supplies in French auctions, while at the port of Boulogne, the well-organised local sector has allowed continuity of daily supply.

## **The port of Calais suffered from the collapse of tourism but remained solid on freight**

### ***Tourist traffic hit hard***

The Covid-19 health crisis and subsequent restrictions on the movement of people between European countries have had a significant impact on tourist traffic through the port of Calais.

In 2020, the port suffered a loss of more than 5 million passengers, with just **3,269,237 passengers** (1,447,799 without HGV drivers), a drop of **61%**, and nearly 1 million vehicles with **447,127 units**, representing a loss of **70%** of its traffic. Coach traffic also saw an even larger drop of **84%**, with 11,065 units.

### ***Remarkable performance for heavy-goods traffic in this challenging environment***

The port of Calais faced an exceptional double challenge in 2020: the Covid-19 health crisis, which undermined many industrial sectors in Europe and, consequently, the transport of goods, and the Brexit deadline at the end of the year, which sees the creation of a new customs border between Europe and the United Kingdom.

While the economy in Europe was almost at a standstill due to the pandemic, the port of Calais absorbed relatively heavy freight traffic within this context, with **1,662,217 lorries**, down by **8%** for a total of **38,561,773 tons**.

The months of April and May, at the height of the crisis, were particularly difficult because of the health measures taken by the European states; there was a decline over the two months of 25% and 20% respectively.

From June, traffic picked up again to reach its peak in the last three months of the year, which saw an exceptional influx due to over-storage by the UK's industrial sectors in anticipation of Brexit coming into force on 31 December 2020. An average of **44,000 trucks** passed through the port of Calais each week in the last month of the year, with **7,792 lorries** on 16 December alone, an absolute record for that month.

### ***A year of growth for the rail motorway terminal***

Traffic involving unaccompanied (driverless) trailers transferred from road or rail to the sea lost, as did other traffic, nearly **6 points** in 2020, with **37,323 units**. However, the last quarter saw very strong activity and a record-breaking December, with an increase of more than **127%** compared to 2019.

The rail motorway terminal, meanwhile, experienced a year of growth in 2020. At the end of the year, boosted by the Brexit effect, the number of unaccompanied trailers heading to and from the port of Calais

travelling on the rail motorway operated by VHA increased by **11%** (18,661 trailers), even though the Calais-Orbassano (Italy) line was suspended for five months.

The possibility offered to hauliers by the port of Calais to switch from accompanied to unaccompanied mode according to market needs continues to bear fruit, contributing to the development of modal shift.

The port of Calais remains strong in the face of competition, maintaining its status as a leader for cross-Channel freight with 44.7% market share in the Channel.

### **A drop in traffic for the cargo terminals of Boulogne and Calais**

In Boulogne, activity is down slightly by **3%** compared to 2019 (**681,622 tons**). Quicklime still accounts for a significant portion of volumes handled, with 32% of total traffic. The volume of limestone continues to decline with xxx tons (down 23%), while clinker, which was down in the first half of the year, saw a strong increase in imports in September with the arrival of two large vessels of 23,500 and 7,000 tonnes.

The Calais terminal in turn saw traffic decrease by **9%** compared to 2019, with a total of **517,721 tons**. Petroleum coke is down 39% (32,280 tons). As for traffic in rocks and pebbles, it increased by 39%. The sugar terminal also returned to form in 2020, with export traffic of 18,500 tons of sugar.

Over 2020, total cargo activity of Port Boulogne Calais was down by **5 points**, with a total of **1,199,343 tons**.

<b>Key figures 2020</b>	
<b>Total goods (cross-Channel + cargo): 39,761,116 tons</b>	
<b>Cross-Channel activity:</b>	<b>Fishing activity:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 38,561,773 tons of goods</li><li>• 1,662,217 freight units</li><li>• 3,269,237 passengers</li><li>• 447,127 tourist vehicles (<i>cars, coaches</i>)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tonnage: 27,859</li><li>• Total value: €65.1 million</li><li>• Average price per kilo: €2.34</li></ul>
<b>General Cargo activity:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total traffic: 1,199,343 tons (Boulogne: 681,622 t, Calais: 517,721 t)</li></ul>	

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