



More than 46 Million Tonnes Moved by Ports of General Interest

Port traffic grew by 4.6% in the month of March

- **Francisco Toledo, president of Puertos del Estado: “the first quarter data confirm the progressive recovery of port traffic.”**
- **All types of goods, except for liquid bulk and forms of presentation, experienced increases during March.**

26-04-2021 (Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda) The 46 ports of general interest of the State handled 46,378,257 tonnes during the month of March, an increase of 4.6% on the 44,333,047 tonnes handled in the same month last year. All types of goods, except liquid bulk and forms of presentation, experienced growth during the month of March, with conventional general cargo (+10.6%), roll-on/roll-off traffic (+10.2%), container traffic (+9.2%), and even solid bulk, which in previous months had suffered large declines, having risen (+9.2%). With these data, the accumulated figure for the first quarter of 2021 stands at 129.3 million tonnes, a decrease of -3% compared to the same quarter in 2020.

Francisco Toledo, president of Puertos del Estado, has expressed his optimism in relation to how the forecasts for the recovery of port traffic are being fulfilled: the most difficult part of the pandemic is falling behind; now it is time to focus on the work we will have to face until the end of the year, and above all to think about the progress of port initiatives, to provide the best service to both goods and passengers.

General cargo, the largest cargo group with 23.8 million tonnes in March, and an increase of 8.7% over March of the previous year, continues to lead the growth of port traffic, driven by conventional cargo (+10.6%) along with the strength of containerised cargo which, with 16.8 million tonnes, grew by 7.9%. In the annual accumulated figure, general cargo, with 67.1 million tonnes, accounts for 53% of the total and is growing at a rate of 2.6%, with a strong increase in construction materials (+20.2%)



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and machinery (+9%), which is evidence of the progressive recovery of two key sectors of the Spanish economy.

Solid bulk, with 7.1 million tonnes in March and an increase of 9.2% over March 2020, exceeded 19.6 million tonnes in the first quarter. Coal traffic continues to fall (-23.4%), due to the change in the energy model promoted by the European Union, but this is offset by increases in iron ore traffic (+40.2%), animal feed and fodder (+23.9%), non-metallic minerals (+10.9%) and cement (+6.7%).

Liquid bulk, the only type of cargo to have decreased, with 14.4 million tonnes, fell by 3.5 per cent in the month of March, totalling 39.8 million tonnes in annual cumulative terms. In this group, the sharpest decreases have been in petrol traffic (-23.5%), fuel oil (-13.5%) and crude oil (-11.8%), mostly due to the mobility restrictions imposed by the emergency state. However, some products such as diesel (+7.7%), and to a lesser extent biofuels (+1.9%), experienced growth.

Cargo in transit, which represents a third of the total cargo moved by the ports, exceeded 12.6 million tonnes in the month of March, an increase of 0.3%. In the cumulative figure for the year there were nearly 37.2 million tonnes, which highlights the important role played by the Spanish ports as logistics “hubs” between continents.

Container traffic, the most used means of transport for general cargo, since more than 73% of cargo travels in containers, with 1,470,889 TEUs (20-foot containers), grew by 9.2%, and accumulated 4.3 million TEUs in the first quarter.

Passenger traffic, which reached 720,519 in March, down 24.7% compared to March 2020, is still awaiting recovery. Mobility restrictions have led to a plummet in cruise traffic, except in the Canary Islands, where some lines have been restarted, falling up to 90% compared to 2020.

On the other hand, vessel traffic grew by 0.9% during the month of March, reaching 9,752 vessels operating in our ports.



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