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Dear Readers,



Is 15 a big or a small number? "It depends," every respected lawyer and astrophysicist would reply. With this issue, we're celebrating our 15th anniversary, and compared to our colleagues from the International Transport Journal and their 80th birthday, the milestone we've just reached is relatively humble. In turn, The Guardian will celebrate its bicentenary in two years' time, while The Bible has been in print since the mid-15th century, whereas Plato and Aristotle put their 'pens' to 'paper' more or less one thousand years earlier. On the flip side, the troubled print media had seen a numerous flash in the pan titles, "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow," as the late lamented David Bowie sang, in the light of which our decade and a half sounds like we were set up in the Stone Age.



Caspar David Friedrich – The life stages, photo: Wikimedia Commons

I've been with the company for around nine years, seeing it change, and actively marking out its editorial course since a few years now, all in order to stay on target with what's happening in the transport & logistics world, naturally, to the benefit of our readers. When I embarked on the journey, we had a static, lacking virtually any updates website, which, even in those days, looked antiquated. Our ro-ro & ferry and container maps were smaller, and their 'digital version' meant they were burnt on CDs. It took a couple of extra years to produce the first yearbooks. You've read that correct, what's today known as the Baltic Yearbook used to be split into different publications, each of them devoted to a separate sub-market (so, in hindsight, 'less is more' was the true innovation here, a notion I'd like to share free of charge with anyone carrying to listen, Google Ads' clients, among many). I recall it was excruciatingly difficult to assemble these alongside the standard issues of our journal, which, at the same time, grew in size, added new columns, and were extended with new supplements – the New Silk Road Map being probably the one I'm most proud of. We also raked in a few international awards, the first and, up-to-date, the only editorial team from the Baltic to do so.

I'm extremely happy that so many of you, our readers and partners, have trusted us over the years, supporting our work and, hopefully, receiving in return a satisfying bang for your buck. A Big Thank You for plying the waters, rolling on the rails, and burning the rubber with us!

The anniversary edition is a bit different than our usual run of the mill. Sure, the content is the same, as we always try to source top quality reads. Just go to, i.e., pgs. 32-34 to see how the Increased use of LNG might not reduce maritime GHG emissions at all, hence confront any ideas you may have about gas-run ships; pgs. 18-21 to make out what bananas have got to do with logistics (apart from transportation, of course!); or pgs. 60-61 to read in what way digitalisation can make truck drivers' lives more stress-free. I, on my part, took the historical-anniversary opportunity to analyse the ways technological developments can impact future employment, particularly in the transport industry. That said, the graphic layer of the whole issue had been given a twist. I sincerely hope you'll like how the first pages look. Who knows, maybe this extraordinary layout will become, well, ordinary.

I never forget to highlight the issue's Transport miscellany, but it'll be different this time around. Believe it or not, but the anniversary edition is my real debut as the author of the Heritage corner (passing over a "piece" about the regional transport & logistics-related coats of arms, which, in fact, was more of a map, additionally co-authored with a colleague). It had been real pleasure writing about the steamer Saltsjön, built back in 1925, which, after many long years of hard work and numerous adventures, has found a peaceful harbour provided by her new owners from Wallenius Lines. The Saltsjön's story is a reminder that things (and I hope persons, too) can find meaningful 'employment' also past their prime, granted they bump into caring individuals.

Przemysław Myszka

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Motorship's Propulsion & Future Fuels Conference 2019, 19-21 November 2019, DE/Hamburg, www.propulsionconference.com
The conference will explore a range of topics such as final steps to 2020, innovations in NO_x and SO_x abatement, electrifying the Merchant fleet and data-driven efficiencies.



Offshore North Sea & Europe Congress 2019, 20-21 November 2019, NO/Stavanger, www.szwgroup.com
Offshore North Sea & Europe Congress 2019 event aims to be the timeliest offshore event platform for global stakeholders to success in and around Norway, by exploring new offshore investment potentials in the region, revealing untapped resource from current geoscience studies, introducing pricing and development strategy, updating latest progress of on-going and planned offshore projects, showcasing innovative and digital technologies to enhance E&P efficiency, together with unlimited opportunities for international peers to network with local governors, regulators, operators, investors and suppliers for future cooperation



European Silk Road Summit, 26-27 November 2019, NL/Venlo, www.silkroadsummit.eu
Rail traffic between Europe and China has rapidly gained popularity in recent years. What started as a single connection on the New Silk Road is now an extensive network with connections such as the Middle Corridor and the multimodal route via Kaliningrad. This offers benefits for Europe; products subjected to sanctions find their way to China, and the ports are taking a position. Around 250 logistics specialists will attend this conference. You will meet logistics providers, operators, shippers, forwarders, from the Netherlands and other countries involved. You will gain knowledge about the latest developments, understand the routes and connections and know-how to take the business opportunities currently.



Polish LNG Conference, 28 November 2019, PL/Warsaw,
During this year's edition of the Polish LNG Conference, we will take a closer look at Poland's role on the regional LNG scene. The conference will focus on achievements in the Polish LNG sector in the last year, its current situation, and possibilities for future expansion. Within the sessions we will gain information about the aspects of road and maritime transportation. We will also pay attention to various technological innovations, groundbreaking ideas and future investments planned for the LNG sector. The meeting will gather policymakers, technology experts, logistics professionals, port representatives and LNG suppliers from all over Europe. Apart from that we will also have delegates from outside of Poland. The conference is organized by the Polish LNG Platform – its aim is to promote LNG as a cleaner alternative fuel for sustainable transport, maritime, industry and household sectors in Poland.



International Rail Forum & Conference 2020, 1-3 April 2020, CZ/Prague, www.irfc.eu
The International Railway Forum & Conference (IRFC) is one of the leading events in the international railway calendar and will bring together top executives and decision makers, rail and logistics professionals, customers, influential politicians and institutions from across Europe. The 7th biennial IRFC will take place in Prague on 1-3 April 2020 (Wednesday–Friday) in the Clarion Congress Hotel Prague and will be organised by OLTIS Group.



Maritime Transport Efficiency Conference, 18-19 May 2020, CH/Geneva, www.mte-conference.com
The purpose of the Maritime Transport Efficiency Conference (MTEC) is to highlight solutions, present innovations, and to bring together the main actors involved in an approach to improve the efficiency of maritime transport.

The graphic features a blue background with a white geometric pattern of intersecting lines. On the left, there are four circular portraits of people. On the right, the Tideworks Technology logo is displayed, consisting of a stylized 'T' inside a circle. Below the logo, the text 'TIDWORKS TECHNOLOGY' is written in a sans-serif font. The main text 'Partnering to Shape the Future' is written in a large, bold, white serif font. At the bottom right, the number '20' is written in a large, bold, white serif font, with a small 'T' inside the zero.



The Baltic bulk market in 2018

by Marek Błuś and Przemysław Myszka

Generally speaking, the region's port bulk market was flat last year. What was lost on the liquid side, was regained on the dry front. That said, while the entire bulk segment advanced by 0.3% on the result from 2017, its share shrank by 2.15 percentage points in relation to the whole cargo throughput of the Baltic Sea region's seaport sector, all "thanks" to the development of the general cargo submarket, particularly break-bulk. Consequently, liquid bulk is no more the most widely traded commodity in our part of the globe (though this might change as quickly as with 2019's end, the difference between it and general cargo was paper-thin last year). On a year-on-year basis, Poland and Finland advanced the most, by double-digits, the former both in liquid and dry bulk turnover, the latter in dry. To the contrary, the handling of bulk in German Baltic seaports fell down considerably over the same period.



The golden ratio?

by Marek Błus

Shipbuilding fans didn't have it easy last year. All because the 2018 output went down across the board: the overall global production contracted by 13% year-on-year, European – by 17% yoy, and that of the Baltic Sea region – by 22% yoy. With 58.1 million gross tonnage (GT), the total completion level have fallen below the GT 60m level for the first time since 2007 (GT 57.5m). Bearing in mind the all-time high of GT 102m scored in 2011, one question immediately pops up: what on Earth happened?

Well, supply and demand, more or less. It seems there are currently enough ships to take care of the global seaborne trade; hence deliveries of newbuildings have slowed down. Europe's abandonment of big vessel production was pronounced last year by the slumps in Romania and Croatia, the two last cargo tonnage strongholds in this corner of the world (Tab. 1). The two tankers which emerged from the Spanish shipyard Navantia (keen on military production) didn't change the trend.

Two-to-one for paxes

On the other hand, the remaining European speciality, namely cruise ships, has been languorously growing. It takes something more than slipways and docks to put together these floating hotels – factories of cabin modules are needed, as a matter of fact, as well as sometimes quite extravagant, not-yet-so-widely-tested technologies, all in order to make their propulsion, environmental care, and passenger experience state of the art for decades to come. This has resulted

in late equipment deliveries, postponed trials, and finally, handover delays.

Many years have to pass until a yard's productivity reaches new heights. By way of example, the Meyer Turku shipyard, traditionally floating out one cruiser per year, will finish two this year, following the completion of a four years-long and capital-heavy investment programme (the facility has been part of the Meyer Group since 2014). In contrast, the newcomers from MV Werften, having three plants along the German Baltic coast in their