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Gdynia cracks the complexity of building a ferry terminal from scratch

SOON TO ENTER THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE, THE BRAND-NEW FERRY TERMINAL IN THE PORT OF GDYNIA, POLAND, IS SET TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN EUROPE'S CARGO AND PEOPLE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE. AT PRESENT THE PORT AREA SPECIALIZES MAINLY IN HANDLING CONTAINERIZED AND BULK CARGO.

The Port of Gdynia lies in an ultra-strategic location on Poland's Baltic coast, at the crossing point of two emerging European transport corridors. On sea, the port complements one of Europe's 'motorways of the sea' connecting the countries on the Baltic Sea with Scandinavia and the countries around the North Sea. On land, it is at the northern end of the Baltic-Adriatic corridor. Connecting the Baltic coast with the wider Mediterranean area, one of the nine key trans-European transport corridors.

At the crossroads of European goods and people transport

The port already plays an important role in the flow of goods on the continent and the Polish as well as the local economy. Soon, Gdynia will also be known as a full-scale ferry terminal in people transport. This will be built from scratch on the existing quay and will be connected to the existing and recently upgraded road and rail infrastructure.

Gdynia's Port Authority says: 'The creation of this new ferry terminal will make it possible to handle the much larger passenger ferries that are now becoming the standard. Transshipment capacity of the port in terms of roll-on/roll-off and ferry transport is expected to increase significantly, allowing the Port of Gdynia to maintain its universal nature and competitive edge while further developing its role in the Baltic cargo markets in a sustainable manner.'

Over the past five years, Bilfinger Tebodin has kept the ball rolling throughout the design stage of the project, from conceptual design through to geotechnical surveys, cost estimates, environmental impact reports, project outline, design approval and permitting.

Communication and innovation

Lech Paszowski, Project Manager for Bilfinger Tebodin: 'Communication has been key throughout the design stage. Creating a terminal from scratch is a complex business, not just because of the massive scope of activities, but also the number of parties involved: our immediate client, possible ferry operators, customs, the Maritime Office, Border Guard, and so on. Also, during a five-year period of careful planning there are inevitably fluctuations in economic outlooks, which also have an impact on the strategic decision-making. Part of our role has been to keep all parties correctly informed and sustain the momentum of the project.' ■

Once completed the terminal will offer several innovative features, such as onshore power supply for vessels (the first of its kind in Poland), along with sewage and water connections. The berthing area will be able to accommodate vessels up to 250 meters in length. Most notably, the docking area will feature a double roll-on/roll-off ramp, which means a much faster loading and unloading process: cargo will be rolling on and off ferries on two levels at the same time.



Lech Paszowski