

Euroports – the newest port operating group in Europe

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Euroports is a relatively new name in the European port sector. The company is headquartered in Luxembourg and owns a wide network of port terminals throughout continental Europe. In a very short time it has grown to be the most diverse port operator in Europe – both in terms of the range of geographic port locations it is present at, and in the wide range of cargo types that it handles.

The Euroports network

The Euroports network is still relatively young, having only been assembled over an intense three-year period. Euroports made its first acquisition in the summer of 2006, the specialist container terminal WCT in Meerhout, Belgium. A period of high activity followed, particularly during the second half of 2007, when a number of industry-leading port businesses such as Westerlund, Manuport, Tarragona Port Services and Terminal Rinfuse Italia were acquired and brought together to create one of the largest port groups in Europe.

The company will continue expanding to complement its current portfolio either through bolt-on acquisitions or by developing new 'greenfield' terminal concessions.

The present Euroports portfolio consists of eight principal business units operating from 17 port terminals. A further four terminals are currently under development.

Euroports has a strong focus in Belgium where the company has four terminal sites in Antwerp plus further terminals in Ghent, Liege, Charleroi and Meerhout. The rest of the Euroports portfolio covers Finland, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria and even China.

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Commodities

Euroports has a strategy to operate a portfolio of port operations across a wide spectrum of product types – i.e. it has positioned itself as a general port operator, rather than focusing solely in one niche cargo sector. Across its business, Euroports handles products as diverse as steel, paper, pulp, timber, sugar, animal feed, fertilizer, industrial minerals, liquid bulks, coal, coke, clinker, ro-ro and containers. From within this wide spectrum of cargo types Euroports has market-leading positions in the forest products, specialty dry bulks, and heavy dry bulk sectors.

Ownership

Euroports is a European company headquartered in Luxembourg and run by a team of port industry professionals. The business is lead by CEO Nick West, formerly of P&O Ports. Nick is joined by colleagues Richard Jennings as CCO and Julian Walker as Operations Director who bring extensive industry experience from ABP, PD Ports, P&O Ports and the container sector. The company is owned by three international infrastructure investors – BBI Babcock & Brown Infrastructure, Paris-based Antin Infrastructure (sponsored by BNP Paribas) and Milan-based Arcus European Infrastructure Fund.

Pan-European approach

Euroports is now further developing its unique portfolio by bringing together all of its businesses under the Euroports brand and adopting a pan-European approach to the market. Commercially it has already developed pan-European relationships with several of its key clients, which typically include quarterly high-level business reviews and planning sessions to complement the regular discussions continuing at the individual port-asset level. The company adopts an open and flexible approach in its dealings with clients and prospective business partners, believing that the traditional port-client relationships need to be challenged so that both parties can develop mutually beneficial partnerships over the long-term. In the current difficult economic environment this approach has already proved to be beneficial, as clients who are struggling to meet their forecasts at one port have found that the corporate relationship encourages them to try and compensate into other regions.



Support activities

Euroports is supporting its core terminal network with a variety of support activities to provide its customers and business partners with greater choice and supply chain flexibility. These extra activities include logistics, barges, rail, and freight forwarding. Importantly, the company has developed a neutral network of inland container terminals and common container-barge planning systems in the Benelux and France that provide 'extended gate' deliveries.

Best practice

The unique Euroports portfolio is enabling the business to strive for "best in class" service standards in every aspect of its service offering – taking the best practice from one port and replicating this around the rest of the portfolio in areas such as health & safety, environment, operations, engineering and procurement. This approach is also leading to career enhancement prospects for many of its managers who move from having a country management role to taking-on a pan-European responsibility.

ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

Based in Luxembourg, Euroports manages a portfolio of European concession port companies. The dedicated Euroports management team ensures operational efficiencies and synergies are achieved and driven through a single coherent ports strategy. Euroports is owned by a consortium of institutional investors.

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Westerlund is an Antwerp based port operator specialising in forest products, general cargo, ro/ro and containers. Westerlund operates marine terminals in Antwerp (Belgium), Rouen (France) and Changshu (China) together with a rapidly expanding Logistics business.



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