

UNITISED TRAFFIC REPORT – Q2 2022

ABOUT THE IMDO

The Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) is Ireland's dedicated development, promotional and marketing agency for the shipping and shipping services sector. The IMDO is the Irish government agency which provides support to national and international maritime businesses in Ireland. It is the aim of the IMDO to be the focal point for maritime business in Ireland. The IMDO provides government and industry with a range of information and reporting across the sector and works with international businesses to help them set up or expand in Ireland.

Along with quarterly economic analysis and academic research, the IMDO produces an annual statistical bulletin on the Irish shipping market; The Irish Maritime Transport Economist. This is Ireland's most comprehensive source of national maritime traffic data. Past editions of the Irish Maritime Transport Economist are available from the IMDO [website](#).

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NOTES

1. **UK Landbridge:** The UK Landbridge is a term used to describe a route to market that connects Irish importers and exporters to international markets via the UK road and ports network. It is a strategically important means of access to the single market that has been favoured by traders in high value or time sensitive goods because it offers significantly faster transit times than alternative routes. The reintroduction of customs controls as a consequence of Brexit increases transit times and places additional costs on Irish businesses that undermines their competitiveness in accessing international markets.
2. **RoRo (Roll-on Roll-off):** RoRo involves vessels designed to carry wheeled cargo, such as cars, trucks, semi-trailer trucks, trailers, etc., that can be driven on and off the ship on their own wheels, or using a platform vehicle, such as a self-propelled modular transporter.
3. **LoLo (Lift-on Lift-off):** LoLo involves a specific ship that engages in the transportation of containerized freight, that is loaded and unloaded by ship-to-shore cranes.
4. **TEU:** The twenty-foot equivalent unit (often TEU or teu) is a unit of cargo often used to describe the capacity of container ships and container terminals.
5. **RoPax:** The sector that uses vessels capable of carrying passengers, passenger vehicles, and RoRo freight
6. **Ireland / ROI:** Republic of Ireland
7. **NI:** Northern Ireland
8. **GB:** Great Britain
9. **ROI – EU:** RoRo services operating between Dublin, Cork or Rosslare Europort, and a mainland European Port that is inside the European Union
10. **ROI – GB:** RoRo services operating between Dublin, Cork or Rosslare Europort, and a port in Great Britain.
11. For **Data requests**, please contact the IMDO team.

UNITISED TRAFFIC GROWTH IN Q2 2022 (Vs Q2 2021)



ROI RORO: +3%

NI RORO: -4%



ROI LOLO: +2%

NI LOLO: -9%



ROI Tourist Passengers: +482%

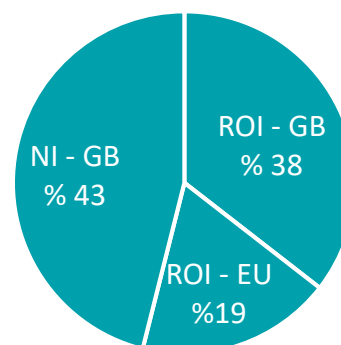
NI Tourist Passengers: +70%



ROI – EU RoRo: +4%

ROI – GB RoRo: +2%

All Island RoRo Share



Executive Summary

At the midway stage in 2022, unitised traffic volumes - made up of finished goods such as food, clothing and manufactured products - are performing strongly.

In the Roll – On / Roll – Off (RoRo) market, Dublin Port, Rosslare Europort and the Port of Cork handled a combined total of more than 600,000 units in the first half of the year. This represents 2% growth on 2019, or pre-pandemic, volumes, and means that the RoRo market is now on track to surpass 1.2 million units in 2022, a record annual total.

In the Lift – On / Lift – Off (container) market, traffic volumes are currently at record levels. Dublin Port, the Port of Cork and the Port of Waterford handled 595,000 Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units (TEU's) in the first half of 2022. This represents 11% growth compared to 2019, or pre-pandemic levels, and 1% growth from 2021. The second quarter of 2022 recorded a total volume of over 311,000 TEU's, the highest quarterly total on record. Like the RoRo market, the LoLo market is also on course to record 1.2m TEU's in 2022, surpassing the annual record set in 2021 of 1.18m TEU's.

Following the end of the Brexit transition period on January 1st 2021, the IMDO reported on the significant impact this event had on the structure of the unitised freight market on the island of Ireland. Eighteen months into the post-Brexit era, these impacts remain unchanged. The following paragraphs encompass the main shifts that have occurred in unitised freight markets in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Direct Demand

The demand from Irish importers and exporters for RoRo services on direct routes between a port in the Republic of Ireland and a mainland European port (e.g. Cherbourg, Rotterdam) rose dramatically. In 2021, the volume of RoRo traffic on these direct services rose by an unprecedented 94%, from 198,000 units per year, to 383,000. This trend has continued into 2022. One in three RoRo units now travels on a direct route between Ireland and a mainland European port, compared to approximately one in six pre-Brexit.

Since the end of the Brexit transition period, RoRo operators have responded to this demand by introducing unprecedented levels of capacity on direct routes. Incumbents announced increases in fleet size, vessel capacity, as well as intensification of existing schedules. In addition, several new routes were introduced.

The momentum behind this increase in direct capacity has also continued into 2022. In July, Finnlines, a subsidiary of the Grimaldi group, launched a new RoRo route between Rosslare and Zeebrugge. This investment by another new entrant to the Irish RoRo market reemphasizes the persistent nature of this 'direct demand.'

Intra – Modal Competition

In the LoLo market, the majority of services from ports in the Republic of Ireland are already on direct routes to mainland European ports, such as Rotterdam and Antwerp. Like RoRo operators, LoLo operators have therefore benefitted from the post-Brexit increase in demand from Irish importers and exporters to access EU ports directly, without the need to adhere to new customs requirements at UK ports.

As a result of this change in demand from Irish importers and exporters, intra-modal competition within the unitised freight market (i.e. RoRo Vs LoLo) has increased significantly post-Brexit. Services offered by both operators can be effective substitutes for one another, providing access to central European shipping hubs, meaning operators in both markets compete for similar business.

Loss of Landbridge

Beginning in early 2021, the IMDO has documented the significant declines in RoRo traffic between ports in the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain (i.e. ROI – GB). This traffic has consistently been between 15% and 20% below pre-Brexit levels, and this remains unchanged in 2022. This has been driven by the following three factors.

First, a decline in the demand from Irish importers and exporters to make use of the UK road and ports network as a means to access markets in mainland Europe, a route commonly known as the UK Landbridge. This has been the predominant cause of the decline in ROI – GB traffic. This UK Landbridge traffic has, in large part, moved to the direct EU services described above.

Second, a decline in the demand of Northern Irish importers and exporters to make use short sea RoRo services between Republic of Ireland ports and UK ports, particularly Dublin Port, as a means of accessing markets in Southern England and Wales. This can be referred to as the Irish Landbridge. This Irish Landbridge traffic has moved to RoRo services between Northern Irish ports and ports in Great Britain, (i.e. NI – GB), driving record volumes on these routes, and causing further losses for Irish port traffic.

Lastly, the relocation of distribution hubs from Great Britain to mainland European countries has amplified the reduction in ROI – GB traffic. Following the end of the Brexit transition period, several large retail companies with Irish stores have relocated distribution warehouses from areas such as southern England, to areas such as northern France and the Benelux region.

In all of the cases described, the imposition of customs declarations and customs checks on trade between the EU and the UK has underscored these shifts in Irish freight traffic patterns.

Conclusions

The IMDO has noted in previous reporting that Brexit has fundamentally altered the composition of Irish maritime freight traffic. At the midway point in 2022, this remains the case. Direct demand in RoRo and LoLo markets is at record levels, with more new RoRo routes added in the second quarter of 2022. RoRo traffic on GB routes continues to record declines of between 15% and 20%, with no immediate signs of a return of Northern Irish traffic or UK Landbridge traffic to pre-Brexit levels at Irish ports.

Overall, unitised freight traffic in Ireland is strong, given the many challenges faced over the past two years. However, economic headwinds such as inflation, high energy costs, elevated containership freight rates, and persistent port congestion at major hubs have meant that the outlook for global seaborne trade is increasingly negative. Despite the extremely high levels of uncertainty, the Irish maritime sector has, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, proven its considerable resilience and adaptability to changing global circumstances. These characteristics may be required again in the latter half of 2022.

1. All Island Roll-on / Roll-off (RoRo) Market

In the following section, the performance of RoRo traffic in Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI) ports will be detailed. Part (i) will discuss the volumes of RoRo traffic recorded in the second quarter of 2022, while part (ii) will discuss the first six months of the year (Jan – Jun), also referred to as H1. Overall, this section will show that RoRo traffic in ROI ports is strong, surpassing 600,000 units in H1 for the first time on record. In Northern Ireland, volumes are below 2021, but are holding onto much of the gains made following the end of the Brexit transition period, wherein NI ports benefitted from increased demand from NI based importers and exporters wishing to avoid custom controls at Irish ports.

(i) Q2 2022

Table 1 details the volumes of RoRo traffic recorded on the island of Ireland in the second quarter of 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Table 1: All - Island RoRo Units, Accompanied & Unaccompanied, Q2 2020 – Q2 2022¹

	Q2 2020	Q2 2021	Q2 2022	Growth Vs 2021	Diff Vs 2021
	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	(%)	RoRo Units
Cork	172	1,377	3,493	154%	2,116
Dublin	225,045	249,949	255,890	2%	5,941
Rosslare	28,481	46,860	46,339	-1%	-521
ROI	253,698	298,186	305,722	3%	7,536
NI	171,484	239,128	230,464	-4%	-8,664
All - Island	425,182	537,314	536,186	0%	-1,128

Republic of Ireland

In Q2 2022, the volume of RoRo traffic in Republic of Ireland (ROI) ports grew by 3% when compared to the same period in 2021. In Northern Ireland (NI) ports, RoRo traffic fell by 4%. Overall, RoRo traffic growth for the island of Ireland in Q2 2022 was 0% when compared to Q2 2021.

At 305,722 units, this is a strong performance for RoRo freight traffic at ROI ports. It represents the third largest quarterly volume for this traffic on record, outpaced only by the two Brexit stockpiling quarters in the latter half of 2020. In addition, RoRo freight traffic in Q2 2022 is 5% above that of Q2 2019, or, pre-pandemic levels.

Dublin Port RoRo traffic grew by 2%, adding just under 6,000 units. This is a robust performance for the port, but it remains below the volumes recorded in the second quarter of 2018 and 2019, which averaged approximately 260,000 units per quarter. At Rosslare, volumes declined by 1% when compared to Q2 2021, recording 46,339 units. Between 2018 and 2020, quarterly RoRo traffic at Rosslare averaged approximately 30,000 units. The port has therefore held on to significant post-Brexit gains, wherein it benefitted from a surge in demand for direct services to mainland European

¹ For more information on the breakdown of Accompanied & Unaccompanied RoRo Traffic, please contact the IMDO team.

ports. Lastly, in Cork, 2022 RoRo traffic volumes are performing exceptionally well. The Q2 2022 volume of almost 3,500 units is a record for the port, and is entirely driven by direct services to mainland European ports².

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, a quarterly total of more than 230,000 RoRo units remains a very strong performance by historical standards. RoRo volumes through the Northern Irish ports of Belfast, Larne and Warrenpoint rose significantly post-Brexit, as haulage and logistics companies based in Northern Ireland made greater use of RoRo services from NI ports, and less use of RoRo services from ROI ports, as a means of accessing markets in Great Britain. These shifts are detailed extensively in the IMDO's annual report for 2021.³

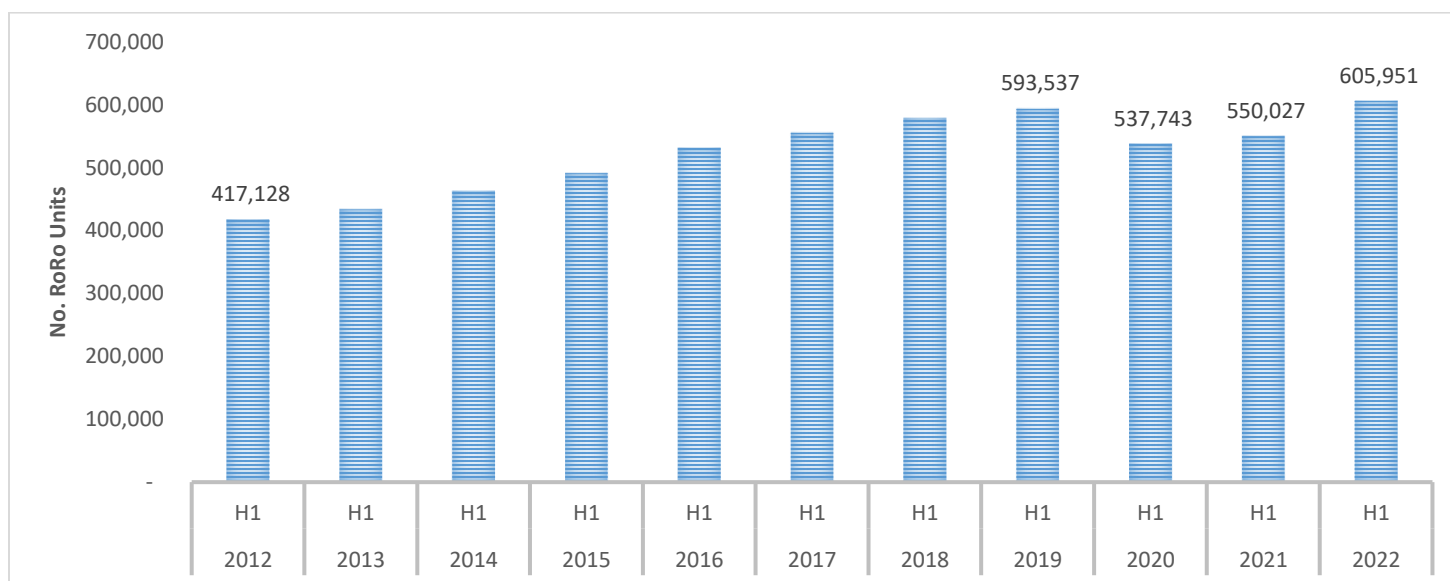
In 2019, a record year for NI RoRo traffic up to that point, volumes through the three aforementioned ports averaged roughly 213,000 units each quarter. In 2021, this quarterly average rose to 232,000, a 9% increase over 2019. In all, the Q2 2022 total of 230,464 is in line with NI RoRo traffic trends for the post-Brexit era.

(ii) H1 2022 (Jan – Jun)

Republic of Ireland

Figure 1 illustrates the performance of ROI RoRo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last ten years.

Figure 1: ROI RoRo Units, H1 2012 – H1 2022



In Figure 1, the recovery in RoRo traffic volumes following the financial crash of 2008 is evident between 2012 and 2019. This is consistent with the recovery in the Irish economy more broadly. As RoRo traffic generally involves the movement of finished goods (e.g. food, electronics, clothing), these maritime traffic flows closely follow consumption levels in the Irish economy. Figure 1 therefore illustrates the negative impacts of COVID-19 and Brexit on RoRo freight volumes in 2020 and 2021. COVID-19 suppressed traffic due to widespread lockdowns and reductions in economic activity. Brexit suppressed RoRo traffic due to a loss of traffic to Northern Ireland ports [see Section 1 (i)], as well as some modal shift to the LoLo (container) market. The LoLo market predominantly serves mainland European ports, and has therefore

² There are currently no RoRo services between the Port of Cork and ports in Great Britain

³ [The Irish Maritime Transport Economist \(IMTE\) Vol 19](#)

benefitted from the movement away from the use of the UK Landbridge⁴ that has occurred post-Brexit, and towards direct continental services.

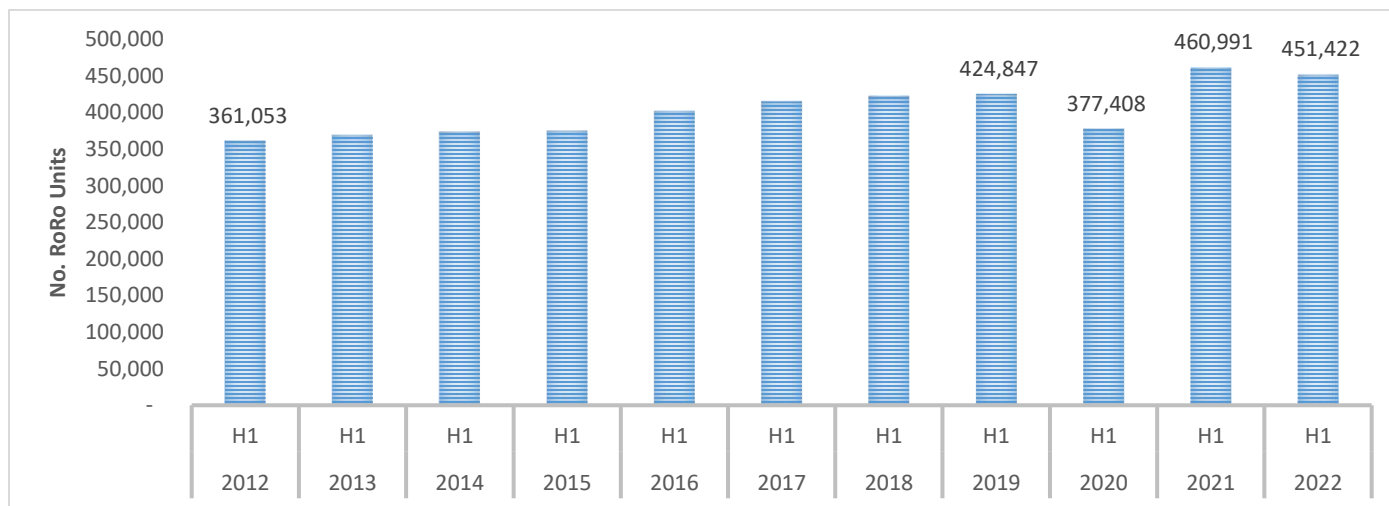
Given the disruption caused by COVID-19 and Brexit, 2019 has been a benchmark year for Irish RoRo traffic, where 593,537 units were handled in the first six months, and 1.19m units were handled for year in total. In 2022, RoRo traffic has exceeded this benchmark for the first time. In H1 2022, RoRo traffic is 2% above H1 2019, 13% above H1 2020 and 10% above H1 2021. The growth compared to 2020 & 2021 was expected, and is explained by the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Spring of 2020 and the pre-Brexit stockpiling effect in early 2021⁵.

At 605,951 units, the total RoRo traffic recorded in the first half of 2022 therefore represents a record performance for Irish ports. RoRo traffic is now on track to exceed 1.2m units for the first time. As the second half of each year is, on average, 4% higher than the first, a total in the region of 630,000 units is expected over the next six months. This strong performance is reflective of the exceptional resilience in the Irish maritime sector. In the past three years, shipping operators in the RoRo market have faced a significant loss in revenue due to the loss of tourist passengers⁶, increases in the cost of materials and fuel, increased intra-modal competition (i.e. LoLo Vs RoRo), and the introduction of customs controls on trade between ports in Ireland and Great Britain. Had COVID-19 and Brexit not occurred, the RoRo sector would likely have surpassed 1.3m units in 2022. Despite this, the volumes so far in 2022 are strong, and this sector's resilience will be required once more to face the current inflationary pressures⁷.

Northern Ireland

Figure 2 illustrates the performance of RoRo traffic at Belfast, Larne & Warrenpoint (i.e. NI ports) in the first six months of the year, for the last ten years.

Figure 2: NI RoRo Units, H1 2012 – H1 2022



As was clear from the trajectory of ROI port traffic illustrated in Figure 1, the upward momentum in NI RoRo traffic is evident in Figure 2 between 2012 and 2019, following the financial crash. Like ROI ports, NI RoRo traffic reached its H1

⁴ See Notes for a description of the UK Landbridge

⁵ For more detail on the impact of the pre-Brexit stockpile, see Section 1.2 of the IMDO's annual report, found [here](#).

⁶ Many RoRo operators use vessels capable of carrying passengers, passenger vehicles, and RoRo freight. These are known as RoPax operators.

⁷ [Consumer Price Index August 2022, CSO](#)

peak in 2019, recording 424,847 units. The negative impact of COVID-19 is clearly evident then, in 2020, as H1 traffic fell by 11%.

As highlighted in part (i), the end of the Brexit transition period brought with it a surge in demand for NI RoRo services, as haulage / logistics companies and importers and exporters based in Northern Ireland made greater use of RoRo services from NI ports, and less use of RoRo services from ROI ports, as a means of accessing markets in Great Britain. This traffic largely represents trade intra-UK trade between Northern Ireland and Great Britain that had been making use of the frequent short sea services from Dublin to ports such as Holyhead, Heysham and Liverpool, and to a lesser extent, short sea services from Rosslare Europort to Fishguard and Pembroke. This route can be referred to as the Irish Landbridge.

As a result of this movement, NI RoRo traffic in H1 2021 was 22% higher than 2020, and 9% higher than 2019. In H1 2022, NI traffic declined by 2% from its 2021 peak. However, much of this decline in 2022 is attributable to the disruption caused by P&O ferries' business restructuring in March 2022, an event which led to a significant loss of traffic at the port of Larne. Larne's volumes have yet to reach 2021 levels, and have declined by 26% compared in H1 2022 compared to H1 2021. The majority of this traffic went to Belfast, helping the port achieve a record quarterly volume of 165,000 units in Q2 2022. Belfast now accounts for 70% of the NI RoRo market, compared to an average of 66% in 2021.

Overall, despite the shifts between ports, NI RoRo traffic is largely holding on to post-Brexit gains.

Table 2 details the volumes of RoRo traffic recorded on the island of Ireland for the first six months (H1) of 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Table 2: All - Island RoRo Units, Accompanied & Unaccompanied, H1 2020 – H1 2022

	H1 2020	H1 2021	H1 2022	Growth Vs 2021	Diff Vs 2021
	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	(%)	RoRo Units
Cork	901	2,332	6,146	164%	3,814
Dublin	480,753	455,465	506,067	11%	50,602
Rosslare	56,089	92,230	93,738	2%	1,508
ROI	537,743	550,027	605,951	10%	55,924
NI	377,407	460,991	451,422	-2%	-9,569
All - Island	915,150	1,011,018	1,057,373	5%	46,355

2. Post-Brexit Traffic Patterns: EU & GB RoRo Traffic

In this section, part (i) will detail the performance of RoRo traffic on routes between ports in Republic of Ireland and Great Britain (ROI – GB). Part (ii) will detail the same on direct routes between Republic of Ireland and mainland European ports (ROI – EU).

Section 2 will show that, at the midway point in 2022, the post-Brexit trends that have been evident since January 2021 are remaining persistent. ROI – GB RoRo traffic is consistently between 15% and 20% below pre-pandemic levels, while ROI – EU RoRo traffic is consistently double its pre-pandemic levels. One third of all ROI RoRo traffic now travels on direct EU routes, compared to 17% before the end of the Brexit transition period. These changes are driven predominantly by factors such as; a reduction in the use of the UK Landbridge⁸; a loss of traffic to NI ports; a relocating of retail distribution centres from southern England to northern France and Benelux regions.

The rise in traffic on ROI – EU routes has been accomplished due to unprecedented increases in capacity, brought about by an intensification of schedules by incumbent operators, as well as several new entrants to the Irish market. As a result, the Irish RoRo is more competitive and has more route options for importers and exporters when compared to pre-Brexit schedules. However, the majority of Irish RoRo traffic is still with ports in Great Britain, and trading on these routes is now more cumbersome.

(i) GB RoRo Traffic

Table 3 details the volume of RoRo units carried on ROI – GB and NI – GB services between Q2 2020 and Q2 2022.

Table 3: All - Island RoRo Units, GB Routes, Q2 2020 – Q2 2022

		Dublin - GB	Rosslare - GB	ROI - GB	NI - GB
Total Q2	Q2 2020	187,360	21,845	209,205	171,484
	Q2 2021	181,996	17,013	199,009	239,128
	Q2 2022	186,120	16,143	202,263	230,464
	<i>Growth Vs 2021 (%)</i>	2%	-5%	2%	-4%
	<i>Growth Vs 2020 (%)</i>	-1%	-26%	-3%	34%

In quarterly and annual⁹ reporting throughout 2021 and 2022, the IMDO has detailed the post-Brexit trend in RoRo freight traffic on ROI – GB routes. Beginning in January 2021, this traffic has recorded significant losses.

This has been driven predominantly by a loss of UK Landbridge¹⁰ traffic, a route to European markets that makes use of the UK road and ports network. The imposition of customs checks and declarations on this route has increased both journey times and the administrative burden, reducing the competitiveness of the Landbridge. Speed has historically been a key selling point for the Landbridge, as highlighted in a 2018 report by the IMDO¹¹. The effect has been to make direct services to mainland European ports more attractive for Irish importers and exporters.

⁸ See Notes for a description of the UK Landbridge

⁹ See Section 1.2 of the IMDO's annual report; [The Irish Maritime Transport Economist \(IMTE\) Vol 19](#)

¹⁰ See Notes for a description of the UK Landbridge

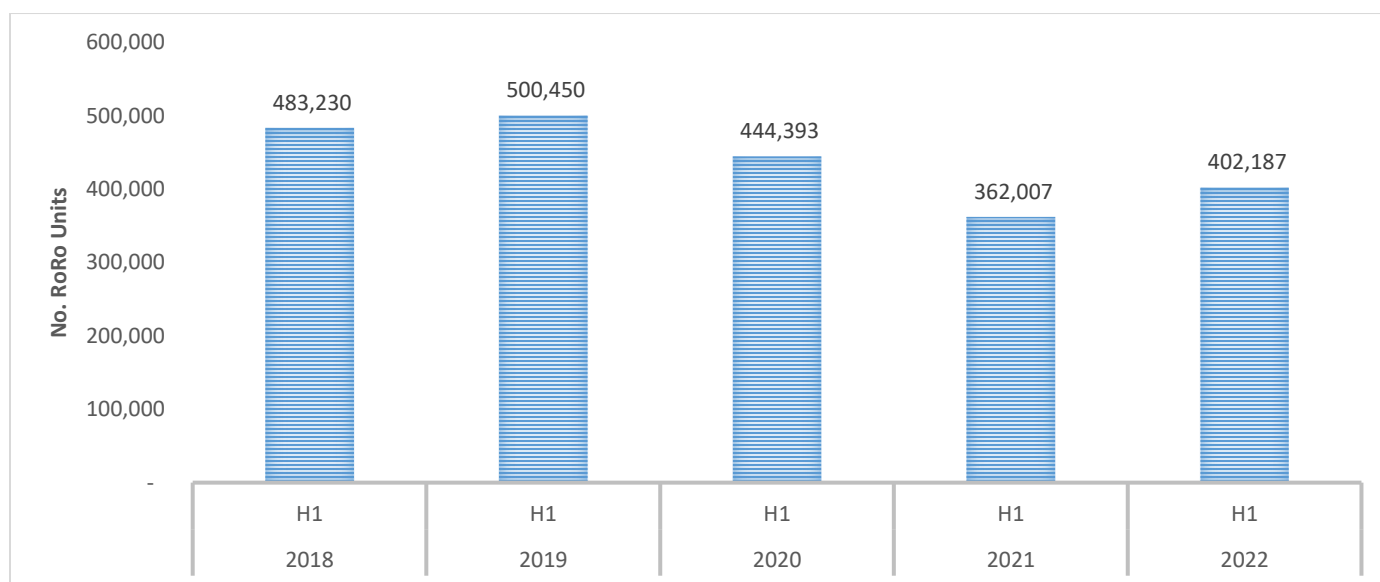
¹¹ [The Implications of Brexit on the Use of the Landbridge, IMDO 2018](#)

The decline in ROI – GB traffic has also been driven by a shift in traffic away from ROI – GB routes, towards NI – GB routes, as haulage and logistics companies based in Northern Ireland are now making greater use of RoRo services from Belfast, Larne & Warrenpoint, and less use of RoRo services from ROI ports, as a means of accessing markets in Great Britain (See Section 1 for more detail).

Between 2018 and 2019, RoRo traffic on ROI – GB routes averaged 247,000 units per quarter. In the post-Brexit era, 2021 and 2022, quarterly volumes have averaged approximately 200,000 units.¹² ROI – GB volumes have consistently been between 15% and 20% below pre-Brexit levels. Q2 2022 remains consistent with this trend, as it represents a decline of 17% when compared to Q2 2019. Although ROI – GB traffic in Q2 2022 is 2% higher than Q2 2021, there remains no clear momentum towards a return to pre-Brexit volumes.

Figure 3 illustrates the performance of ROI-GB RoRo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last five years. In the first half of 2019, ROI – GB traffic grew to 500,450 units. H1 2022 represents the first sustained period of trading wherein there were no disruptions related to either the COVID-19 pandemic or Brexit stockpiles. As such, this is the best sample yet, of post-pandemic, post-Brexit demand for RoRo traffic on GB routes. The result is that traffic has fallen by close to 100,000 units, or 20%, from the 2019 level.

Figure 3: ROI – GB Quarterly RoRo Traffic, H1 2018 – H1 2022



The Irish RoRo market however, remains dynamic and highly competitive. As familiarity with the new Brexit trading arrangements increases, a return to UK landbridge traffic may materialize. As of the midway point in 2022, the post-Brexit decline in ROI - GB traffic has so far remained persistent. The IMDO continues to monitor these trends closely.

¹² Excluding Q1 2022, wherein the worst of the pre-Brexit stockpiling effect was evident on traffic volumes. 162,998 units were handled in this quarter.

(ii) EU RoRo Traffic

Table 4 details the volume of RoRo units carried on ROI – EU ferry routes between Q2 2020 and Q2 2022.

Table 4: Republic of Ireland RoRo Units, EU Routes, Q2 2020 – Q2 2022

		Cork - EU	Dublin - EU	Rosslare - EU	ROI - EU
Total Q2	Q2 2020	172	37,685	6,636	44,493
	Q2 2021	1,377	67,953	29,847	99,177
	Q2 2022	3,493	69,770	30,196	103,459
	<i>Growth Vs 2021 (%)</i>	154%	3%	1%	4%
	<i>Growth Vs 2020 (%)</i>	1931%	85%	355%	133%

In quarterly and annual¹³ reporting throughout 2021 and 2022, the IMDO has detailed the post-Brexit trend in RoRo freight traffic on ROI – EU routes. Beginning in January 2021, this traffic has recorded unprecedented increases. This has been driven predominantly by the arrival of traffic that previously employed the UK Landbridge as a route to European markets. As highlighted in part (i), the imposition of customs controls & checks on the UK Landbridge has made direct services to mainland European ports more attractive for Irish importers and exporters.

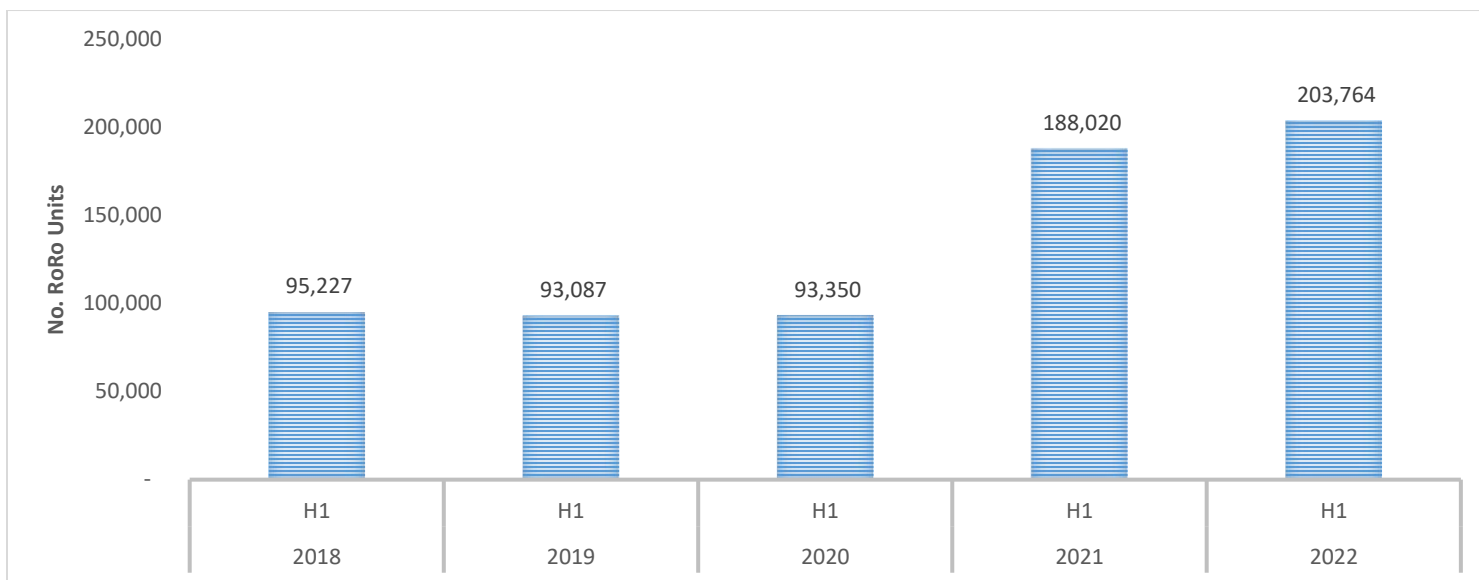
It should be noted however, that RoRo traffic on the UK Landbridge represents trade between Ireland and the European Union that is captured within ROI – GB freight traffic statistics. Importantly, increases in ROI – EU traffic do not automatically imply greater Ireland – EU trade, but rather, a reconfiguration of the supply chains of Ireland's importers and exporters.

Another factor driving increases in ROI – EU RoRo traffic is the relocation of distribution hubs from Great Britain to mainland European countries such as France, Belgium and The Netherlands. The IMDO monitors industry activity closely, and frequently engages with Irish shipping market stakeholders. Following the end of the Brexit transition period, several large retail companies with Irish stores have relocated distribution warehouses from areas such as southern England, to areas such as northern France and the Benelux region. This has accelerated the overall trend of rising ROI – EU direct RoRo traffic.

As of Q2 2022, the rise in ROI – EU RoRo traffic remains consistent. As shown in Table 4, EU RoRo traffic grew by 4% when compared to Q2 2021. When compared to Q2 2019, ROI – EU traffic rose by 115%.

Figure 4 illustrates the performance of ROI-EU RoRo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last five years. As highlighted in Section 1 (i), H1 2022 represents the first sustained period of trading wherein there were no disruptions related to either the COVID-19 pandemic or Brexit stockpiles. As such, this is the best sample yet, of post-pandemic, post-Brexit demand for RoRo traffic on direct EU routes. The result is that direct RoRo traffic has more than doubled compared to pre-Brexit levels. At 203,764 units, this total for the first half of 2022 is 8% than the total volume recorded on direct routes for the whole of 2019 (187,817).

¹³ See Section 1.2 of the IMDO's annual report; [The Irish Maritime Transport Economist \(IMTE\) Vol 19](#)

Figure 4: ROI – EU RoRo Traffic, H1 2018 – H1 2022


In all, post-Brexit volumes on direct RoRo routes remain resilient, with no clear trend towards a reversion to pre-Brexit levels. As highlighted in IMDO reports throughout 2021, this unprecedented increase has been accomplished due to the significant increases in capacity on direct services brought about by a combination of greater schedule intensity by incumbents, and the arrival of two new entrants to the Irish market. The Irish RoRo market is therefore more competitive, and has more choice for importers and exporters, when compared to the pre-Brexit era.

3. Republic of Ireland RoRo Ports

Section 1 detailed the performance of RoRo traffic at ROI and NI ports for both Q2 2022 and H1 2022. Section 2 described the trends within the ROI – GB and ROI – EU sectors, which have both recorded significant changes post-Brexit. In this section, the performance of the individual ROI ports (Dublin, Rosslare and Cork) will be analyzed.

For Dublin Port, this analysis will show that it is yet to reach pre-pandemic levels of RoRo traffic. However, given Dublin's loss of GB traffic on the UK Landbridge; the loss of traffic to NI ports; and the increase in inter-modal (RoRo Vs LoLo) and inter-port competition, volumes remain resilient. In all, the post-Brexit loss of GB traffic at Dublin Port has outweighed the rise in EU traffic. As a result, Dublin's share of the ROI RoRo market has declined from approximately 89% to 83%.

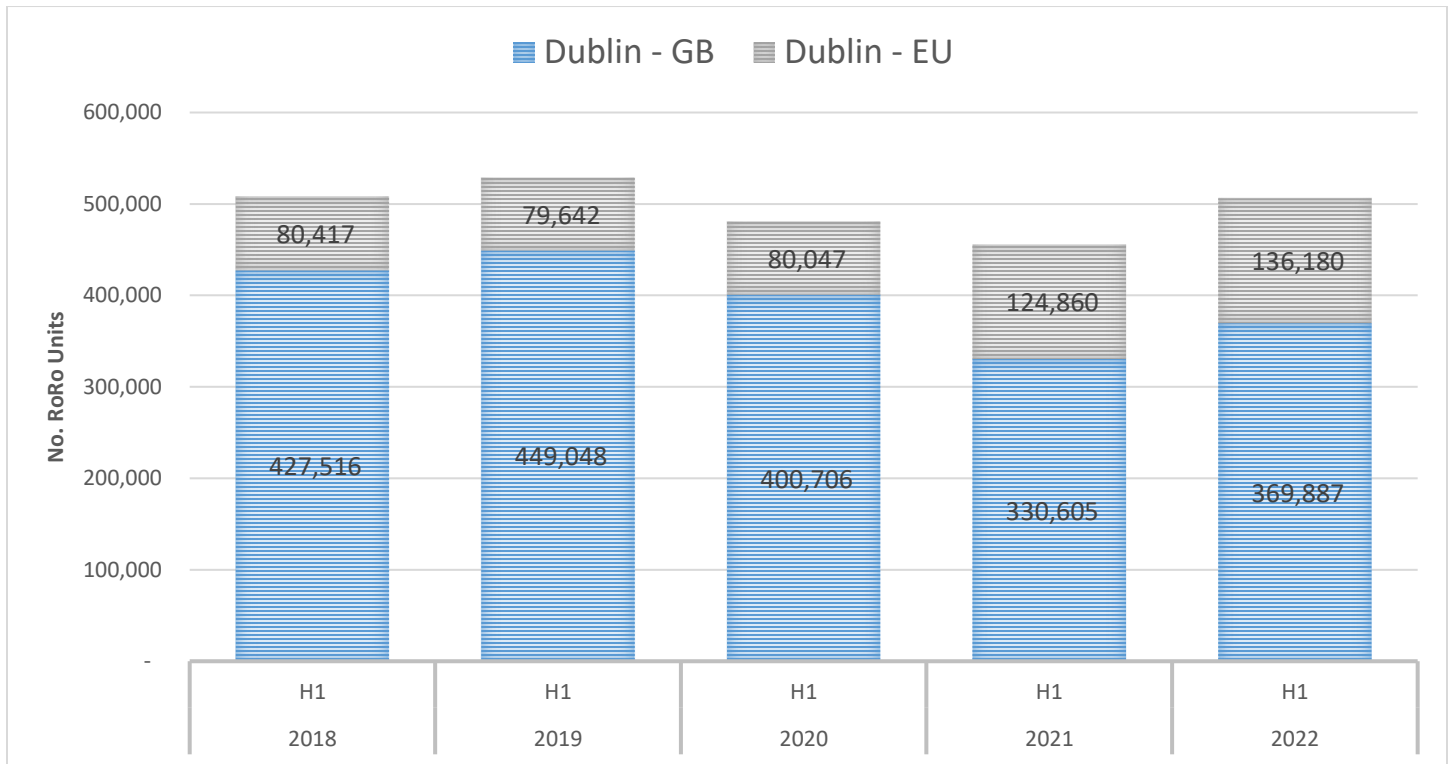
For Rosslare, this analysis shows the substantial impact that Brexit has had on port volumes. Total port traffic has risen by 51% when compared to 2019, and EU traffic now holds a two thirds share of Rosslare's volumes, compared to 20% pre-Brexit. There have been significant declines in GB traffic at Rosslare, but these have been outweighed by the rise in EU volumes. Consequently, Rosslare's share of the ROI RoRo market has risen from approximately 11%, to 16% post-Brexit.

Finally, for the port of Cork, this section will show that RoRo freight volumes are at unprecedentedly high levels. The introduction of two post-Brexit RoRo services that operate direct to mainland European ports has helped Cork's freight traffic to reach over 6,000 units in the first half of 2022, a record for the port. Cork's share of the ROI RoRo market, although small, has risen from 0.5% in 2019 to 1% in 2022.

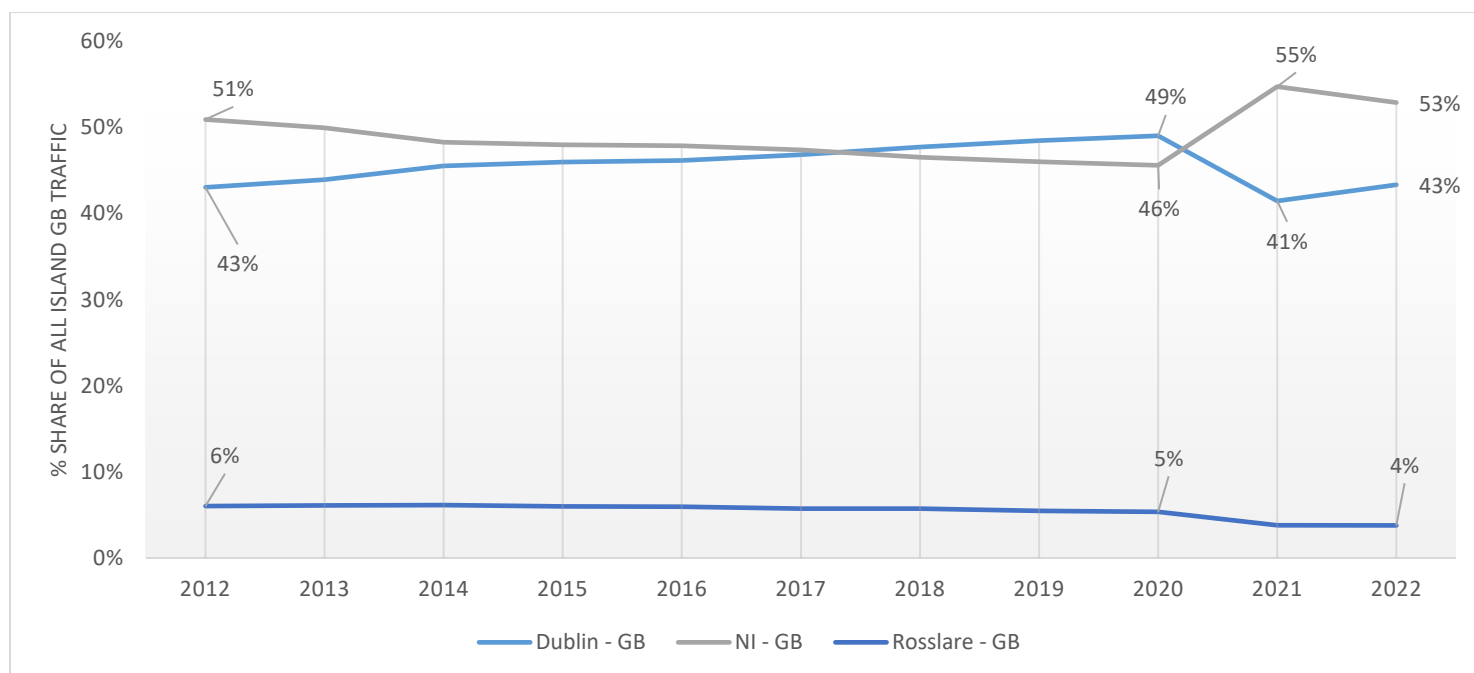
(i) Dublin Port

Figure 5 illustrates the performance of Dublin – GB and Dublin – EU RoRo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last five years. As evident in Figure 5, combined RoRo traffic at Dublin Port is just 4% below 2019 levels, wherein 528,690 units were handled in the first half of that year. Dublin is therefore yet to reach pre-pandemic, pre-Brexit levels of RoRo traffic. Despite this, Dublin Port is on track to surpass one million RoRo units in 2022, as it did in the years 2018 to 2020. Given the aforementioned decline in the use of the UK Landbridge, and the loss of traffic to Northern Irish ports, this represents a robust and resilient performance in the wake of significant and unprecedented challenges.

The makeup of Dublin's RoRo traffic is significantly different post-Brexit. In line with the post-Brexit trends outlined above, direct EU traffic now holds a much greater share of Dublin's RoRo traffic, while GB traffic holds a smaller share. When compared to 2019, the share of GB traffic at Dublin Port has fallen from 85% to 73%, while the share of direct EU traffic has increased from 15% to 27%.

Figure 5: Dublin Port RoRo Traffic, H1 2018 – H1 2022


As illustrated in Figure 5 however, GB traffic still represents almost three quarters of Dublin’s total RoRo traffic volume. Dublin Port competes with Belfast, Larne, Warrenpoint and Rosslare Europort to satisfy demands from importers and exporters on the island of Ireland who wish to access markets in Great Britain, or who wish to make use of the UK Landbridge. Post-Brexit, this task has become more difficult, and Dublin has lost some share of all-island GB traffic. Figure 6 below illustrates the shares of GB traffic on the island of Ireland held by Dublin, Rosslare, and Northern Irish ports for the past decade.

Figure 6: Percentage Share of All – Island GB Traffic held by Selected Ports, 2012 – 2022


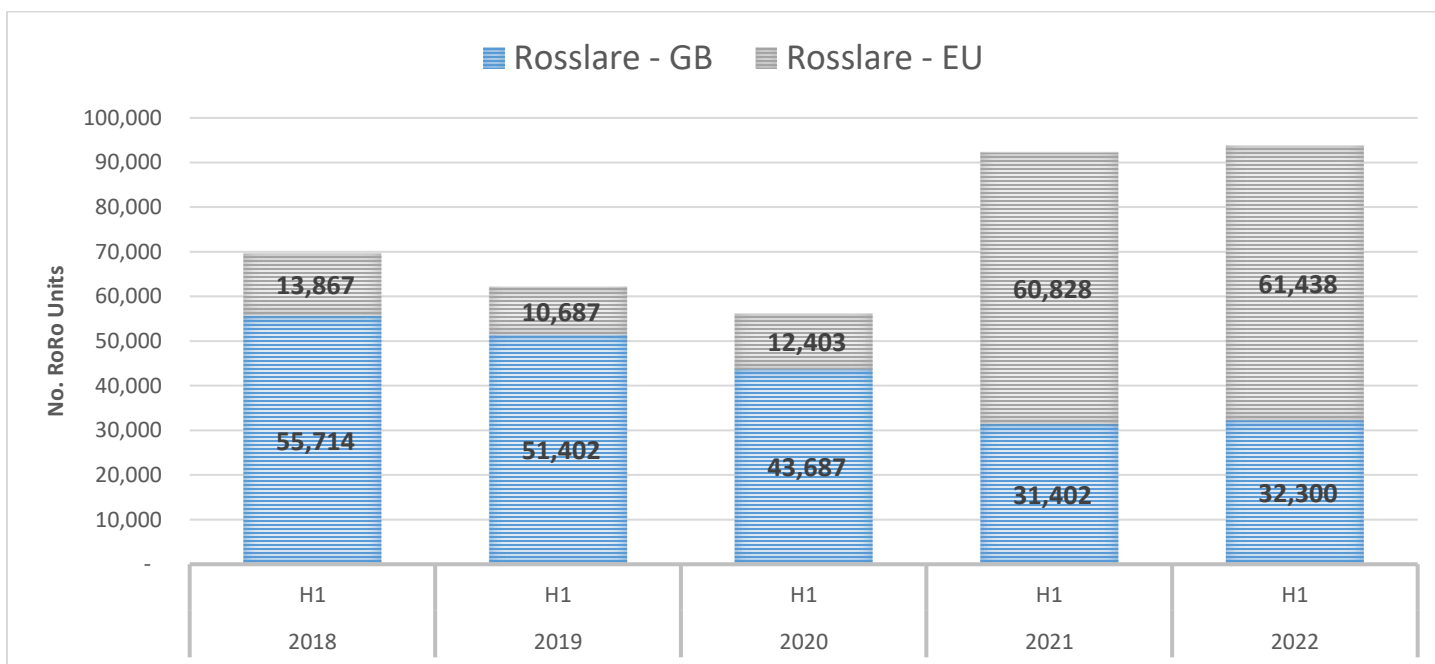
As shown in Figure 6, Dublin Port gradually and consistently grew its share of GB traffic from 43% in 2012, to 49% in 2020. This fell back to 41% in the first year of the new Brexit trading arrangements, and now sits at 43% for the first half of 2022. As a result, Northern Irish RoRo ports have increased their share of all island GB traffic as importers and exporters based in Northern Ireland increasingly chose NI – GB routes as a means to access GB markets, thus avoiding any custom checks and declarations on ROI – GB routes. This, coupled with the loss of UK Landbridge traffic to direct RoRo services, means that Dublin no longer handles the largest share of GB traffic on the island of Ireland. However, as mentioned above, the Irish RoRo market is currently extremely competitive and this may change over the short term.

The share of GB traffic held by Rosslare Europort has fallen from 5% in years leading up to the end of the Brexit transition period in 2021, to 4% in the 18 months since. Of the decline in ROI – GB traffic that occurred between H1 2019 and H1 2022, which totaled roughly 98,000 units, Rosslare accounted for 19% of this decline. This is despite the port accounting for an average of 11% of GB traffic for much of the past decade. Rosslare Europort has therefore recorded a disproportionately high decline in GB traffic post-Brexit. Consequently, Dublin Port now accounts for 92% of the ROI – GB market, compared to approximately 89% before 2021.

(ii) Rosslare Europort

Figure 7 illustrates the performance of Rosslare – GB and Rosslare – EU RoRo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last five years. As is clear from Figure 7, the most significant impact of Brexit on Irish RoRo traffic has occurred at Rosslare Europort.

Figure 7: Rosslare Europort RoRo Traffic, H1 2018 – H1 2022



When Rosslare RoRo volumes in H1 2022 are compared to those of 2019, Rosslare’s total RoRo traffic has grown by 51%, equivalent to an additional 31,649 units. Behind this change was a rise in traffic on direct EU routes worth an additional 50,751 units, which was offset by a decline in traffic on GB routes equivalent to 19,103 units. Consequently, traffic on GB routes fell from representing approximately 80% of Rosslare’s total RoRo in the years leading up to 2021, to 34% in the 18 months since that point. Over the same period, the share of traffic on direct EU routes rose from roughly 20%, to 66%.

As mentioned in Section 3 (i), Rosslare Europort has recorded a disproportionately large decline in GB traffic post-Brexit. The aforementioned decline in Rosslare – GB traffic (19,103 units) is out of step with the share of GB traffic held by the port. Conversely, the rise in EU traffic of over 50,000 units was also disproportionately high. Overall, ROI – EU traffic rose by 110,677 units between H1 2019 and H1 2022. The increase in EU traffic at Rosslare accounted for 46% of this growth, despite the port representing just 14% of ROI - EU traffic in the years preceding Brexit.

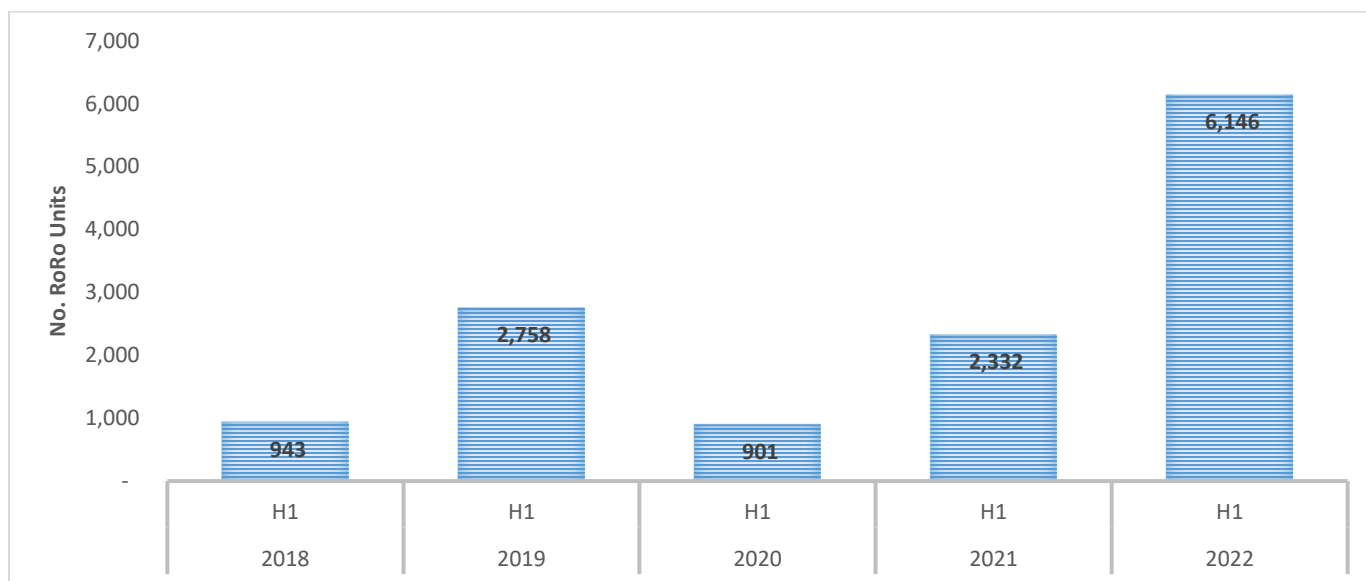
As a result, Rosslare’s share of not only ROI – EU traffic, but total ROI RoRo traffic has increased. Rosslare now accounts for 31% of ROI – EU traffic, and 16% of total ROI RoRo traffic, increases of 17% and 5% respectively. Post-Brexit, Rosslare’s growth has been entirely driven by increases in traffic on direct services, and offset by declines in GB traffic.

The momentum of RoRo traffic on Rosslare – EU routes was strengthened in July of this year, as Finnlines, a subsidiary of the Grimaldi group, launched a new RoRo route between Rosslare and Zeebrugge. This investment by another new entrant to the Irish RoRo market reemphasizes how much the increased demand for direct EU routes is remaining persistent. Investments such as these have also resulted in increased inter-port competition, as Dublin, Rosslare and Cork seek to attract more capacity to accommodate this demand.

(iii) The Port of Cork

Figure 8 illustrates the performance of Cork's RoRo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last five years. As there were no RoRo services between Cork and GB ports during this time, all of the below traffic represents direct traffic between Cork and mainland European ports (i.e. Cork – EU).

Figure 8: Cork RoRo Traffic, H1 2018 – H1 2022



As is clear from Figure 8, RoRo traffic at the port of Cork is performing exceptionally well. The total for H1 2022 was 6,146, which is a record for any six-month period at the port. In the latest quarter, Q2 2022, 3,493 units were handled, an unprecedented quarterly total. As a result of these increases, Cork's share of the ROI RoRo market has risen from an average of 0.2% in the years preceding Brexit, to 0.7% post-Brexit.

Like Dublin Port and Rosslare Europort, Cork has benefitted from the post-Brexit increase in demand for direct services that has been detailed above. Compared to H1 2019, RoRo volumes at Cork rose by 123%, or 3,388 units. This growth was able to be accommodated largely due to the addition of two new services to the port post-Brexit. RoRo operator CLdN began a weekly service between Cork and Zeebrugge in late 2020, while Grimaldi now operate a triangular service between Cork, Antwerp and Zeebrugge. Both of these additions to Cork's RoRo schedule are in direct response to the post-Brexit changes in demand from Irish importers and exporters. Their impact on Cork's RoRo freight volumes is evident in Figure 8.

5. LoLo Market

In the following section, the performance of LoLo traffic in Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI) ports will be detailed. Part (i) will discuss the volumes of LoLo traffic recorded in the second quarter of 2022, while part (ii) will discuss the first six months of the year (Jan – Jun), also referred to as H1. Overall, this section will show that LoLo traffic in ROI ports is at record levels, while this traffic at NI ports is below average for recent years.

The factors underpinning the growth in ROI LoLo traffic are discussed, which are; robust post-pandemic demand, increased demand for manufactured goods, and post-Brexit demand for direct services.

It should be noted that in the global containership market, freight costs, as measured in timecharter rates,¹⁴ remain at exceptionally high levels. The average daily charter rate (6 – 12 months) for feeder containerships ranging in size from 350 TEU to 2,750 TEU¹⁵, have increased at an exceptionally fast pace. Those wishing to purchase space on containerships face prices six times greater than pre-pandemic levels.

The fact that Irish LoLo traffic has continued to exhibit growth during this period of unprecedented increases in global freight costs is reflective of the resilience and reliability in this market that is essential to Irish economic activity.

(i) Q2 2022

Table 5 details the volume of LoLo TEUs handled on the island of Ireland between Q2 2020 and Q2 2022.

Table 5: All - Island LoLo TEUs, Q2 2020 – Q2 2022:

LoLo	Q2 2020	Q2 2021	Q2 2022	Growth Vs 2021
	TEUs	TEUs	TEUs	(%)
Cork	65,424	74,443	74,374	0%
Dublin	172,654	218,594	223,584	2%
Waterford	12,325	12,286	13,485	10%
ROI	250,403	305,322	311,443	2%
NI	50,355	67,013	60,671	-9%
All - Island	300,757	372,334	372,114	0%

Republic of Ireland

As presented in Table 5, LoLo traffic in Republic of Ireland ports grew by 2% in Q2 2022 compared to the same period in 2021, to 311,443 TEU's. This is the highest quarterly volume of LoLo TEU's ever recorded by the IMDO. It surpasses the previous peak, set in Q2 2021, of 305,322 TEU's, and is 24% higher than the average Q2 volume recorded between 2016 and 2020.

Post-Brexit, LoLo services have recorded a substantial increase in demand, and 18 months on, LoLo operators are holding on to these gains. As detailed in the IMDO's annual report¹⁶, the vast majority of LoLo services on the island of

¹⁴ The time charter rate of a vessel is used to measure the daily revenue of a vessel. It is calculated by measuring a ship's revenue, from freight rates, minus expenses. Expenses are mainly made up of fuel and crew. Time charter rates are a useful way for ship-owners to assess the earnings performance of a vessel.

¹⁵ This range of containership vessel size was chosen as it is most relevant to Irish ports.

¹⁶ See Section 1.3 of the IMDO's annual report; [The Irish Maritime Transport Economist \(IMTE\) Vol 19](#)

Ireland are direct to continental EU ports such as Rotterdam and Antwerp. From here, many goods are transferred to much larger vessels and continue to countries outside the European Union, such as the USA and China. LoLo traffic from the island of Ireland therefore also operates as a feeder service into large European maritime hubs.

The factors that have driven a surge in ROI – EU RoRo traffic are applicable to the Irish LoLo market. Shipping services offered by both sectors can be effective substitutes for one another, providing access to central European markets and shipping hubs. Shipping operators in the RoRo and LoLo markets therefore compete for similar business. Like RoRo operators, LoLo operators have benefitted from the demand from Irish importers and exporters to access EU ports directly, without the need to adhere to new customs requirements at UK ports. As a result of this change in demand, intra-modal competition (i.e. RoRo Vs LoLo) has increased significantly within the Irish unitised freight market post-Brexit.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, Q2 2022 LoLo traffic declined by 9% when compared to the same period in 2021. In 2021, the second quarter was particularly strong for LoLo traffic at Belfast and Warrenpoint, as it encompassed a ‘bounce back’ period of recovery following pandemic related economic restrictions in Q1 2021. Before the pandemic, NI LoLo traffic for Q2 2019 was 62,943 TEU’s. The volume for Q2 2022 is 4% below this figure.

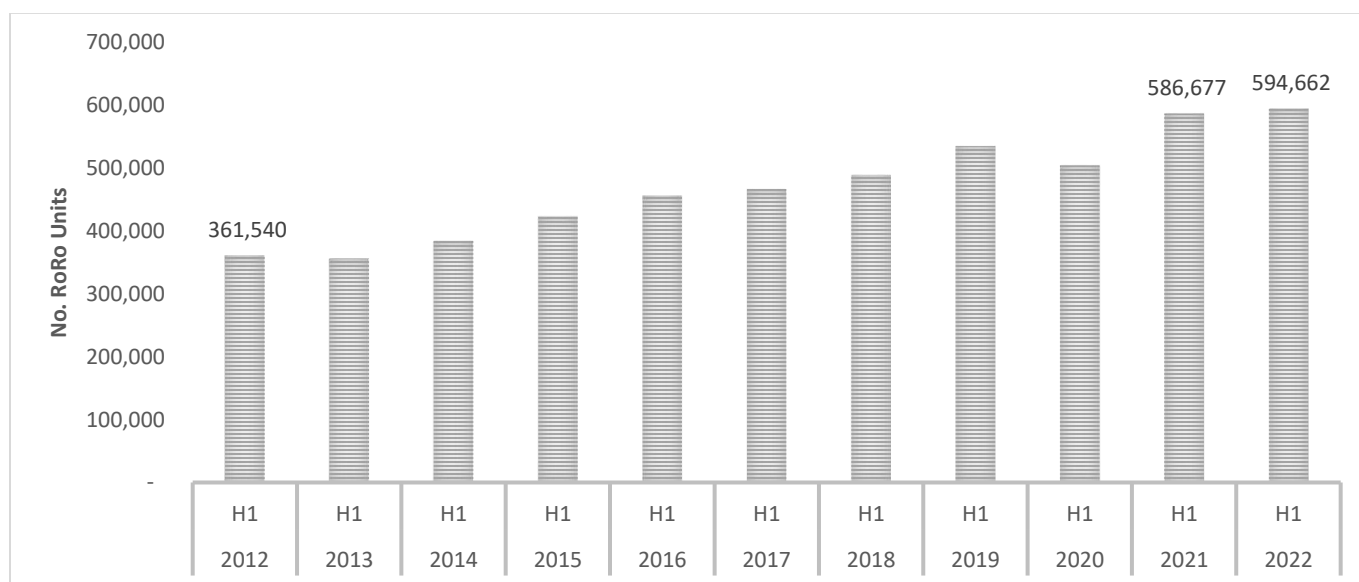
In all, excluding the pandemic period in 2020, growth in LoLo traffic at NI ports has been flat for several years, consistently average roughly 60,000 TEU’s per quarter for the last decade.

(ii) H1 2022 (Jan – Jun)

Republic of Ireland

Figure 9 illustrates the performance of ROI LoLo traffic in the first six months of the year, for the last ten years.

Figure 9: ROI LoLo TEU’s, H1 2012 – H1 2022



In line with Figure 1 in Section 1 (ii), Figure 9 show the recovery in maritime traffic following the financial crash of 2008. Between 2012 and 2019, LoLo traffic grew consistently, reflecting the steady growth in the Irish economy during that time. As detailed in Section 1 (ii), unitised traffic, such as RoRo and LoLo, generally involve the movement of finished

goods (e.g. food, electronics, clothing), meaning these maritime traffic flows closely reflect the trend in consumption levels within the Irish economy.

Figure 9 presents volumes for the first six months of each year. As such, the effect of the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 is clear, wherein H1 LoLo traffic declined by 6% compared to 2019. The recovery however, between H1 2020 and H1 2021, was swift, as TEU volumes grew by 16% over that period.

The strong recovery in the LoLo market from COVID-19 in 2020, and the record growth totals since the end of the Brexit transition period, have been driven predominantly by three main factors.

First, as highlighted in the IMDO's annual report¹⁷, unaccompanied unitised freight, which is unitised freight that does not require the use of a driver while on a maritime voyage, recorded shallower declines and a faster recovery from the waves of pandemic restrictions. This was driven by health & safety issues, coupled with restrictions on the travel of international freight drivers. As a result, the recovery in LoLo traffic, and unaccompanied RoRo traffic, from the pandemic was strong.

Second, beginning in late 2020, there was global surge in demand for durable (physical) goods. This was driven in part by a rebounding of economic activity during phased re-openings. In addition, the closure of the service economy drove a substantial increase in the demand for everyday household items, as incomes that were unaffected by the pandemic were redirected. The majority of the world's manufacturing originates in Asian economies. Ireland's links to these products is predominantly through Far East – Europe container trade lanes, from which Irish importers and exporters employ smaller, feeder containerships to travel between their large European hubs and Irish ports. As a result, Irish LoLo traffic benefitted from this considerable increase in demand for physical merchandise.

Lastly, as discussed above in Section 5 (i), The factors that have driven a surge in ROI – EU RoRo traffic are applicable to the Irish LoLo market. As a result, LoLo operators have benefitted from the demand to access EU ports directly, without the need to adhere to new customs requirements at UK ports.

It is difficult to untangle the contribution made by each of these three factors which have driven LoLo traffic to record levels over the past two years, beginning in the second quarter of 2020. However, Clarkson's Intelligence Network (a maritime research agency) have reported that, as expected, global seaborne container trade declined by 2.5% in the first half of 2022¹⁸. In addition, after recent downgrades, global container trade growth is forecast to be just 0.2% in 2022, as economic headwinds such as inflation begin to slow economic activity. The more the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on container trade begin to dissipate, the more the consistent growth recorded in Irish LoLo traffic is likely to be underpinned by increased intra-modal competition arising from Great Britain's exit from the EU.

Overall, Irish LoLo traffic is on track to surpass 1.2m TEU's in 2022 for the first time. This would represent 3% growth compared to 2021, wherein a record annual total was recorded.

Northern Ireland

LoLo ports in Northern Ireland (Belfast and Warrenpoint), have not recorded the significant post-Brexit increase in demand for LoLo services that have been clear in Dublin, Cork and Waterford since January 2021. 2021 was a strong year for NI LoLo traffic, but much of this is attributable to a strong post-pandemic recovery. From IMDO analysis, as well as discussions with stakeholders, the post-Brexit increase in LoLo traffic has been stronger in ROI ports compared to NI ports.

¹⁷ See Section 1.2D of the IMDO's annual report; [The Irish Maritime Transport Economist \(IMTE\) Vol 19](#)

¹⁸ Clarkson's Research; Container Intelligence Quarterly, Third Quarter 2022

Table 6 details the volumes of LoLo traffic recorded on the island of Ireland for the first six months (H1) of 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Table 6: All - Island LoLo TEUs, H1 2020 – H1 2022:

LoLo	H1 2020	H1 2021	H1 2022	Growth Vs 2021
	TEUs	TEUs	TEUs	(%)
Cork	118,964	137,207	144,440	5%
Dublin	359,946	425,181	425,521	0%
Waterford	25,145	24,290	24,701	2%
ROI	504,055	586,677	594,662	1%
NI	106,015	129,817	122,607	-6%
All - Island	610,070	716,493	717,269	0%

6. Republic of Ireland LoLo Ports

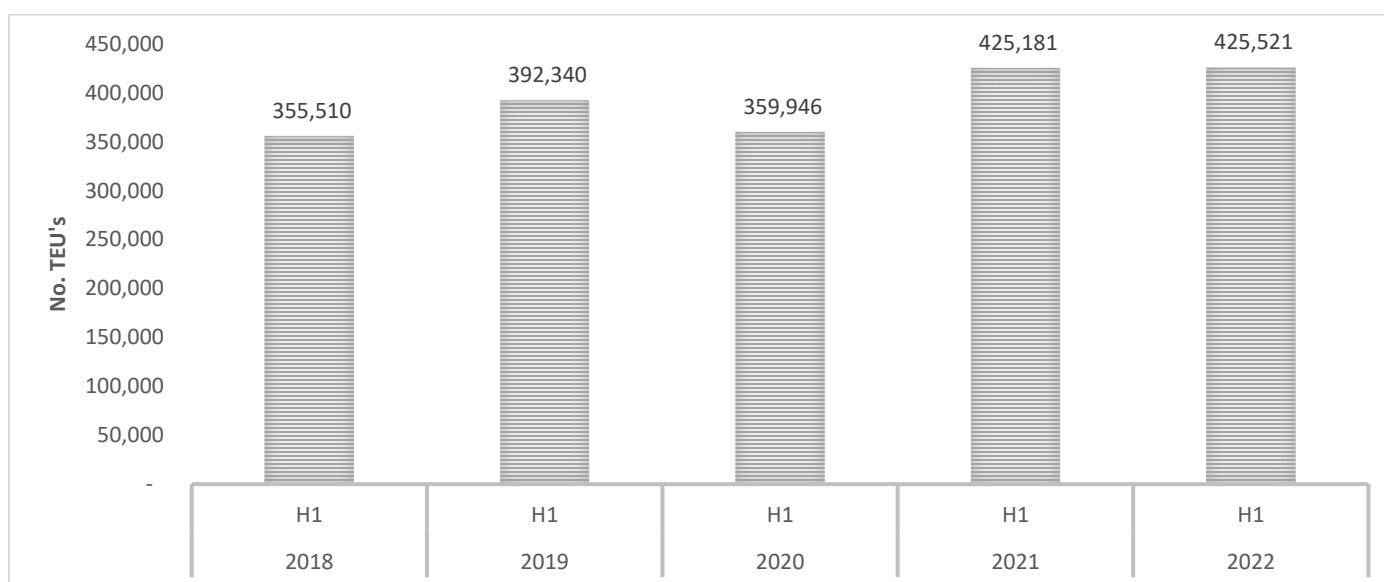
In this section, the performance of the individual LoLo ports, Dublin, Cork and Waterford, will be analysed. It will show that LoLo traffic at all three ports is extremely strong, with post-Brexit growth from 2021 persisting into 2022.

For Dublin Port, LoLo traffic is now 8% above 2019, or pre-pandemic levels. For Cork, the same figure is 20%, and is 10% for Waterford. In response to the increase in demand for direct services, LoLo operators have added capacity in the form of either extra sailings, increased vessel size, or the launching of new services. Examples of these responses are provided.

(i) Dublin Port

Figure 10 illustrates the performance of LoLo traffic at Dublin Port in the first six months of the year, for the last five years.

Figure 10: Dublin Port LoLo TEU's, H1 2018 – H1 2022



As evident in Figure 10, Dublin Port recorded approximately 425,000 TEU's of LoLo traffic in the first half of both 2021 and 2022. The volume recorded in H1 2022 is a record high for the port for the first half of a year. In addition, this is 18% above the volumes recorded in 2020, and 8% above 2019, or pre-pandemic levels.

Like in the Irish RoRo market, many LoLo operators have responded to the post-Brexit increase in demand for direct services by increasing capacity either through larger vessels, more intense schedules, or launching new services. For example, operator Samskip began a new service between Dublin and Amsterdam in early 2021¹⁹, while operator Eucon increased capacity by 17% through the deployment of a larger vessel²⁰.

LoLo capacity can be more dynamic than RoRo capacity, as vessels are usually chartered rather than owned by operators. However, these investments have been made at a time of unprecedented rises in containership freight rates. As discussed in Section 5 (ii), LoLo operators have had to deal with six-fold increases in the price of containership

¹⁹ [Samskip launches direct container services between Amsterdam and Ireland](#)

²⁰ [Eucon expanding fleet for 2021](#)

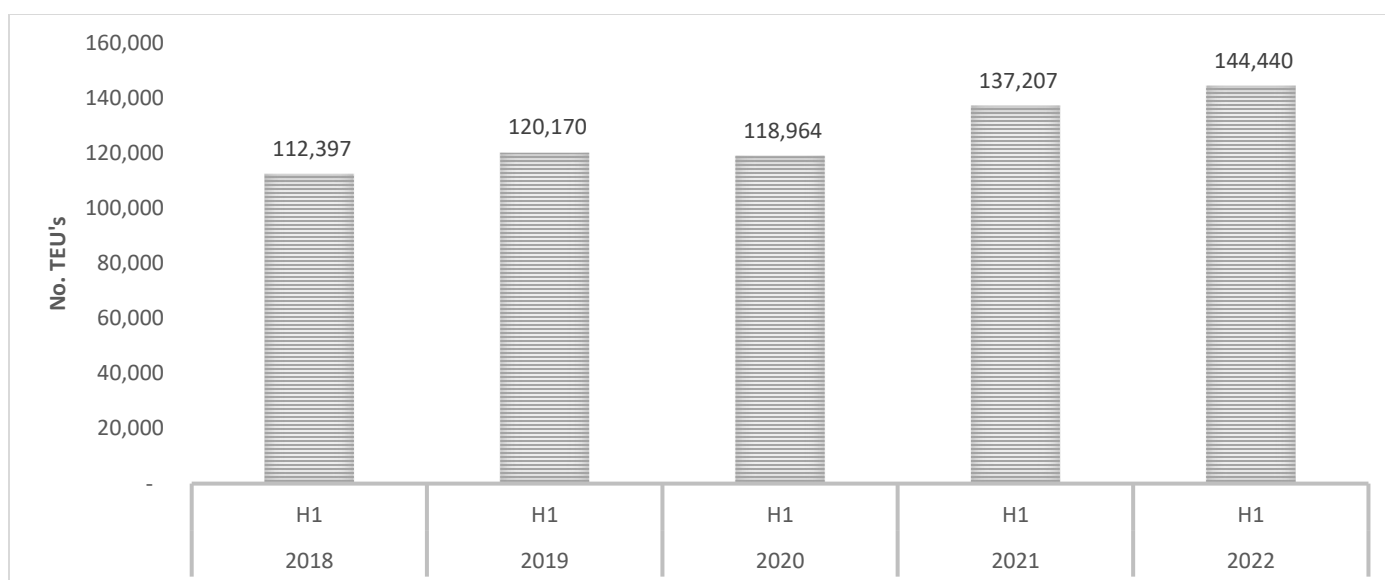
capacity compared to pre-pandemic levels. This global issue has been felt by Irish importers and exporters, who face rising costs as a result.

Despite these challenges, LoLo operators at Dublin Port continued with plans to respond to the rise in demand for direct access to continental Europe. In doing so, they have grown TEU volumes by just under 10% compared to pre-pandemic levels. This is a considerable achievement by operators in a market defined by rising costs for the past 18 months. It is reflective of the adaptability and resilience of the Irish maritime sector to provide Irish traders with a route to international markets.

(ii) The Port of Cork

Figure 11 illustrates the performance of LoLo traffic at the Port of Cork in the first six months of the year, for the last five years.

Figure 11: Cork LoLo TEU's, H1 2018 – H1 2022



As evident in Figure 11, the Port of Cork recorded 144,440 TEU's of LoLo traffic in the first half of 2022. This total is 5% above H1 2021, and 20% above 2019, or pre-pandemic levels. This is an exceptionally strong performance for this traffic, and is underscored by the post-Brexit increase in demand for direct services, as well as the robust post-pandemic recovery throughout 2021.

As in Dublin Port, LoLo operators in Cork have responded to the post-Brexit increase in demand for direct services by increasing capacity. For example, in June 2021, operator ICL celebrated its first year in service as Ireland's only direct containership service to the US East Coast. Announced midway through 2020, in anticipation of the end of the Brexit transition period, the service has reported strong traffic growth since commencing operations²¹.

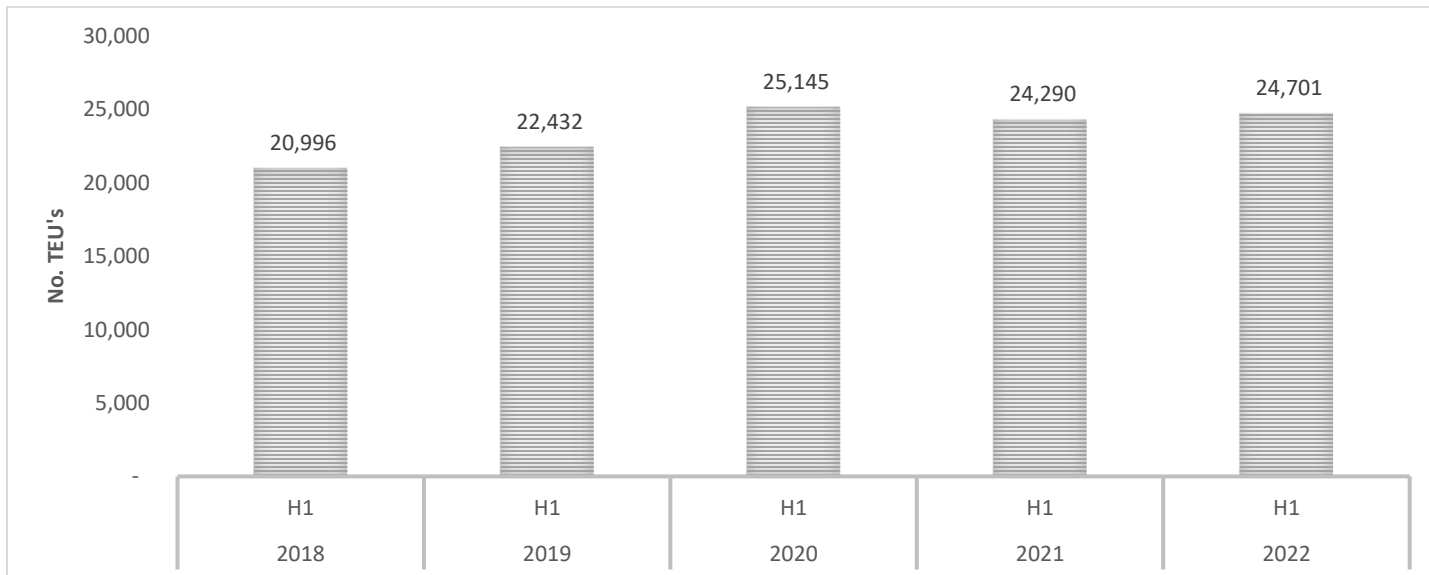
In all, when compared to both Dublin and Waterford, Cork's LoLo traffic has grown at the fastest rate from pre-pandemic levels. When combined with the momentum behind Cork's RoRo traffic, as described in Section 3 (iii), it is clear that post-Brexit unitised trade at Cork is currently strong and growing consistently.

²¹ [Direct Container Service from Cork to US Celebrates its First Year in Operation](#)

(iii) Waterford

Figure 12 illustrates the performance of LoLo traffic at the Waterford Port in the first six months of the year, for the last five years.

Figure 12: Waterford LoLo TEU's, H1 2018 – H1 2022



As evident in Figure 12, the Waterford recorded 24,701 TEU's of LoLo traffic in the first half of 2022. This total is 2% above H1 2021, and 10% above 2019, or pre-pandemic levels.

In 2020, Waterford avoided the precipitous declines caused by the pandemic that were recorded at other ports, and a record total of 50,845 TEU's were recorded in that year. In 2021, LoLo traffic was just below this, at 49,739 TEU's. Based on IMDO analysis, Waterford will likely record at, or just below 50,000 TEU's again in 2022. This is a robust annual volume that is 14% above the average annual total recorded between 2015 and 2019, and will be roughly equal to the highest annual total recorded for LoLo traffic at the port.

Overall, in the 18 months post-Brexit, growth in LoLo traffic is strong, but has not exhibited the same pace of growth as either Dublin or Cork.

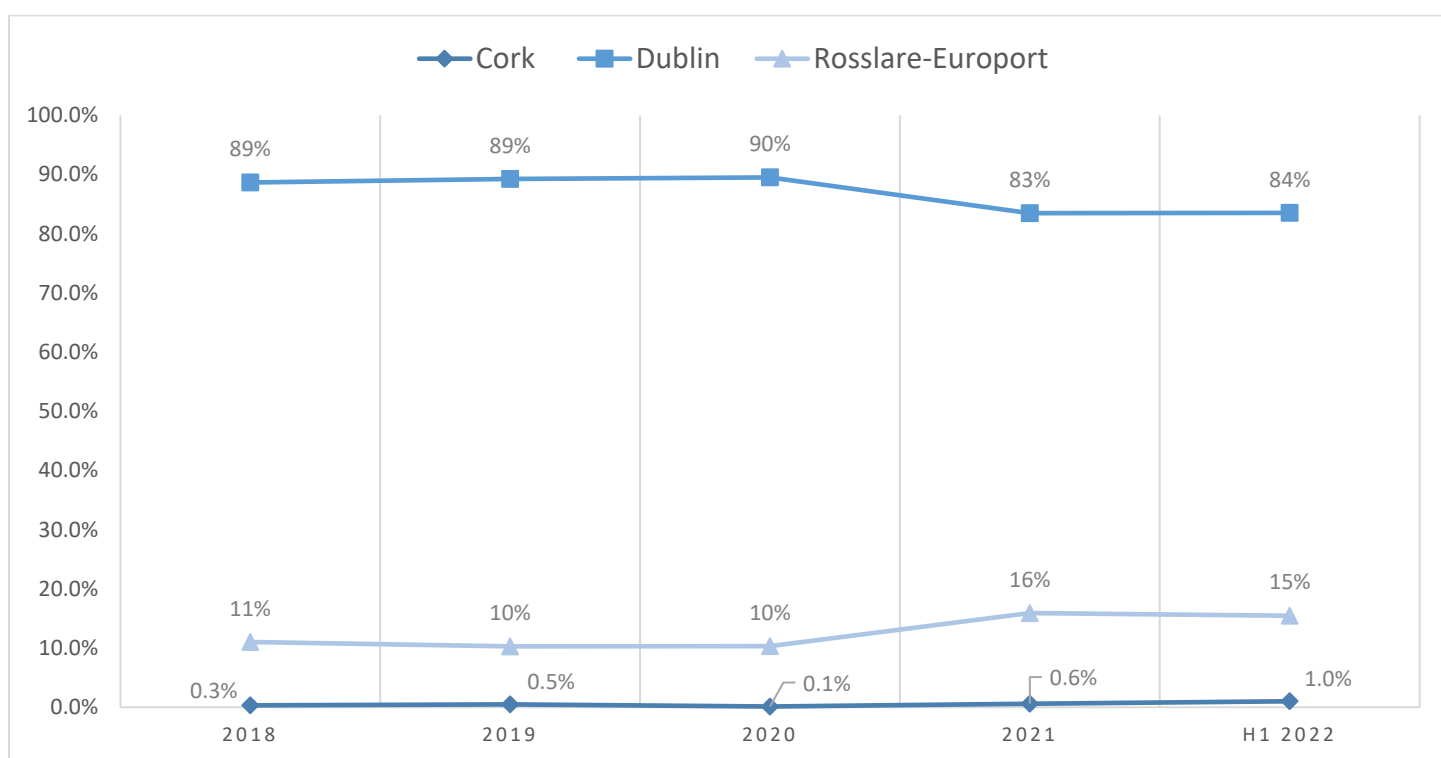
7. Unitised Market Shares

Given the significant changes that have occurred in both the RoRo and LoLo markets following the end of the Brexit transition period, this section provides several graphical illustrations of the changes to market shares that have occurred between ports, between routes (i.e. EU Vs GB) and between ROI and NI.

Where relevant, the graphs presented will provide pre-Brexit (pre-2021) shares with post-Brexit (post-2021) shares. The most striking changes have come in the split between EU and GB traffic in the Irish RoRo market, whereby EU traffic now accounts for 1 in 3 units handled at ROI ports, compared to roughly 1 in 6 pre-Brexit.

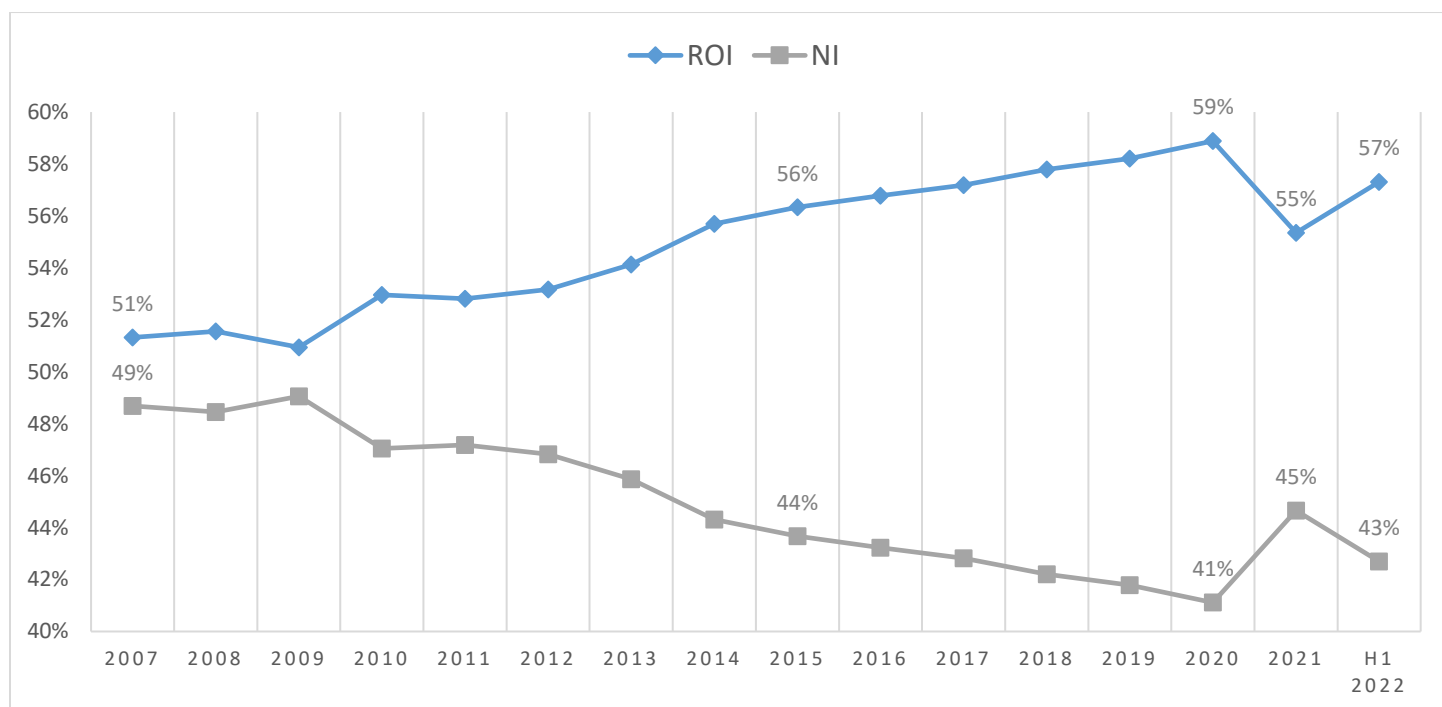
Each graph will stipulate whether the data refers to all-island shares, that include Northern Irish ports, or just Republic of Ireland shares.

Figure 13: Share of ROI RoRo Traffic, 2018 – H1 2022



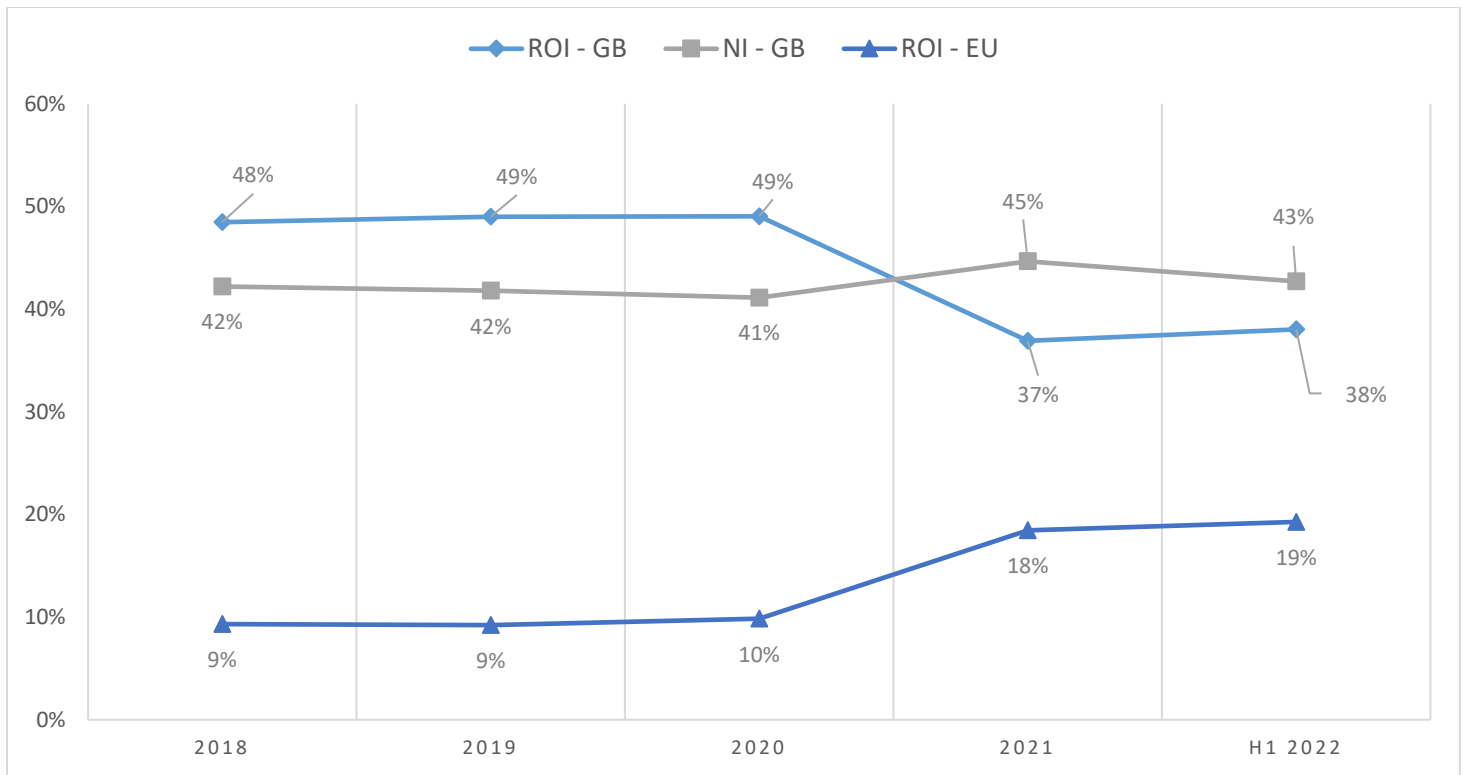
Between 2010 and 2020, the share of ROI RoRo traffic held by Dublin Port gradually increased from 85% to 90%. As a result, Rosslare Europort's share fell from 14% to 10% during that period. In the space of 18 months, Brexit has significantly altered the spread of RoRo traffic between these ports. This is the lowest share Dublin port has held since before the financial crash of 2008. For Cork, although relatively small, the 1% share held in 2022 is the highest recorded by the IMDO. Brexit, and the increased demand for direct services to mainland Europe, underscores the increases at both Rosslare and Cork.

Figure 14: Share of All – Island RoRo Traffic, Republic of Ireland Vs Northern Ireland Ports, 2007 – H1 2022



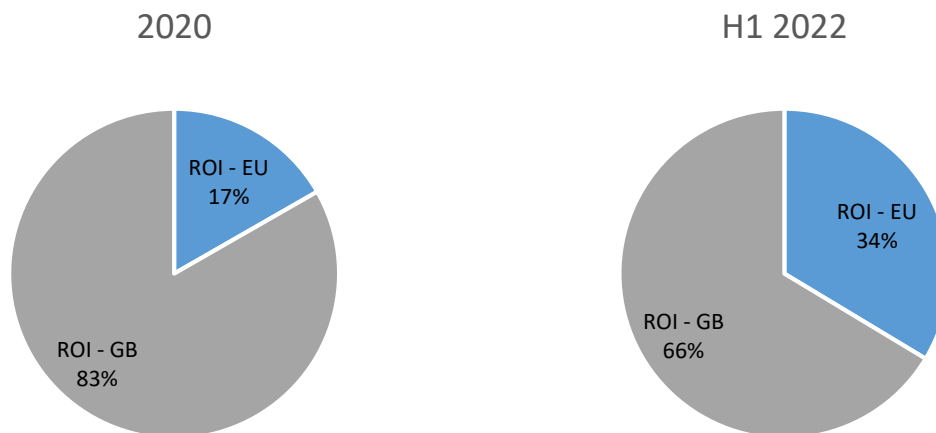
As evident in Figure 14, consistent growth in the share of all – island RoRo traffic held by ROI ports has been interrupted by the advent of Brexit. As described in Section 1 and 2, this has been driven by the loss of traffic from Irish ports to Northern Irish ports. The improvement in shares held by ROI ports in 2022 should be understood in the context of the untypically large decline in traffic at the Port of Larne, which was driven by the disruption caused by P&O Ferries in March 2022.

Figure 15: Share of All – Island RoRo Traffic by Route, 2018 – H1 2022



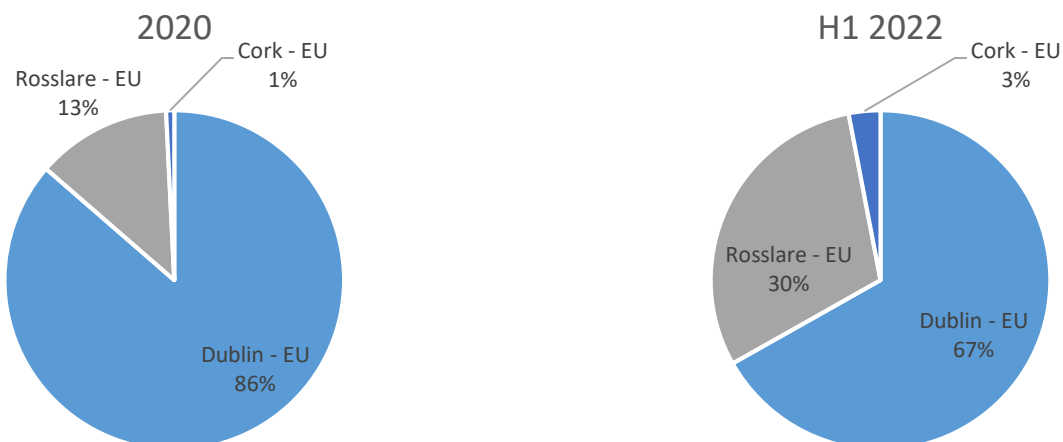
In 2022, almost 1 in 5 RoRo units that arrives or departs the island of Ireland is on a direct service to mainland Europe. This is compared to roughly 1 in 10 before prior to 2021. On routes to Great Britain, there is now a greater volume of RoRo traffic on NI – GB routes compared to ROI – GB, beginning in 2021. This is the first time this has occurred since 2012.

Figure 16: Share of ROI RoRo by Route, 2020 Vs H1 2022



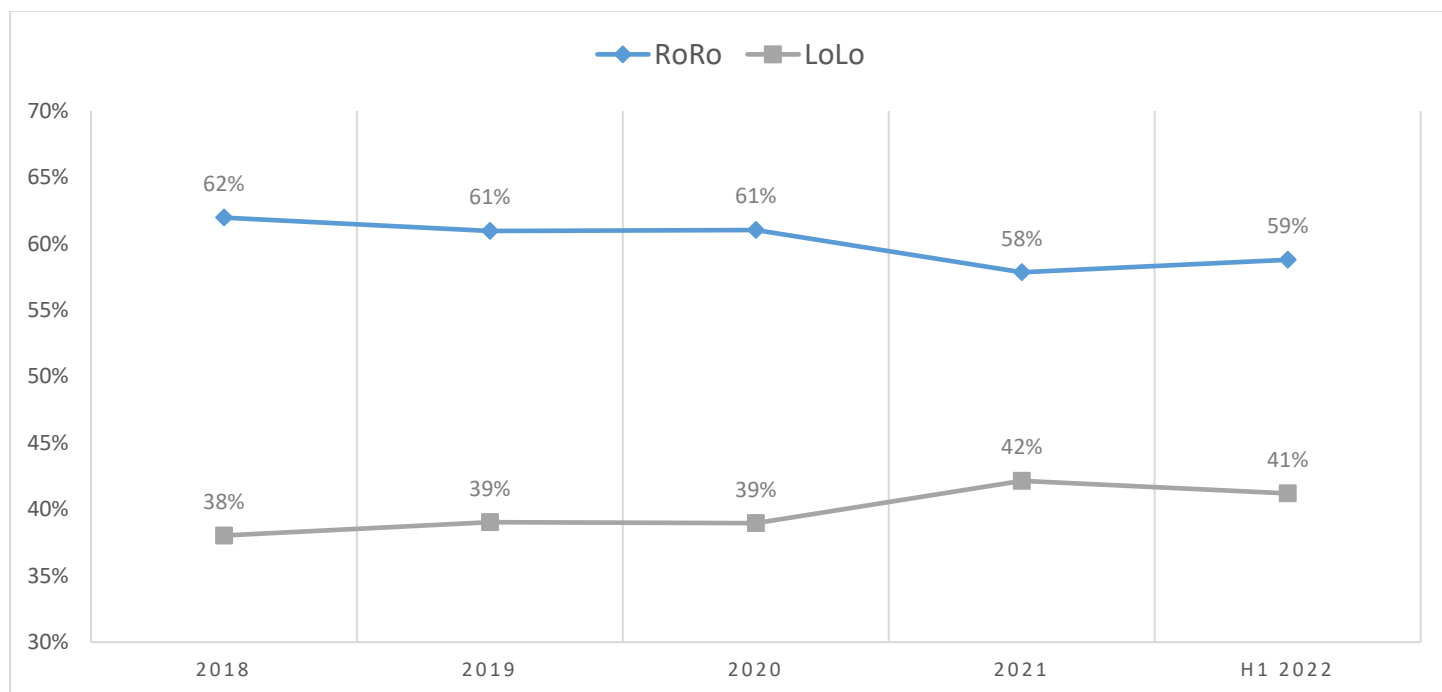
The most striking impact of Brexit has been on the composition of the Irish RoRo market when broken down by route. One third of all ROI RoRo traffic now travels on a ferry service direct to a mainland European port. As detailed in Section 1 & 2, this has been driven by a reduction in the use of the UK Landbridge, the competitiveness of which has been reduced due to the imposition of customs controls at UK ports. In addition, the relocation of distribution centres by large retailers from Southern England to Northern France and the Benelux region has amplified this trend. As noted previously by the IMDO, this shift does not itself imply greater trade between Ireland and the European Union. Rather, it is indicative of the significant reorganization of Irish supply chains, whose reliance on the UK road and ports network has significantly reduced post-Brexit.

Figure 17: Share of ROI – EU Traffic, 2020 Vs 2021



The volume of ROI – EU RoRo traffic has roughly doubled between 2020 and 2022, from just under 200,000 to a possible 400,000 in 2022. Rosslare Europort now handles 30% of this greatly increased volume, while Dublin Port holds a two thirds share. The Port of Cork has also increased its share, from 1% to 3%. In 2021, Rosslare Europort captured 50% of the increase in ROI – EU traffic, despite holding a share of approximately 13% - 14% in preceding years. As a result, Rosslare captured a disproportionately high volume of the increased ROI – EU traffic. This has been driven by significant increases in capacity by both incumbent operators and new entrants.

Figure 18: Intra – Modal Competition, RoRo & LoLo Shares of Unitised Traffic, 2018 – 2022



When converted to tonnes²², LoLo and RoRo traffic can be compared in terms of the overall unitised traffic market at ROI ports. Between 2010 and 2020, RoRo traffic represented, on average, 62% of unitised traffic in the Republic of Ireland. Post-Brexit, this fell to 58%, and currently stands at 59%. This shift highlights the increase in intra-modal competition within the unitised traffic market. More detail on this trend is discussed in Section 5.

²² In order to establish a common denominator, LoLo and RoRo volumes can be expressed in tonnage terms, whereby 1 Twenty-Foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) = 10 tonnes, and 1 RoRo Freight Unit = 14 tonnes

8. Passenger Market

Table 7 details the volume of passengers that travelled through Irish and Northern Irish ports between Q2 2019 and Q2 2022.²³ 2019 is included as this provides a pre-pandemic benchmark against which the recovery in maritime passenger traffic can be measured.

The period between April and June each year is the second busiest for maritime passenger volumes, after the peak summer months of July, August and September. As shown in Table 7, a full recovery in Irish maritime passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels has yet to fully materialize. The Port of Cork however, recorded a 20% rise in passenger volumes in Q2 2022 compared to Q2 2019, an extremely positive result for this maritime sector. This was driven by a twice weekly service between Cork and Roscoff, operated by Brittany Ferries. Dublin Port recorded a passenger total that was 20% below Q2 2019 levels, while the decline at Rosslare was 10%.

Q2 2022 represents the first busy passenger period wherein no major travel restrictions were in place. When compared to Q2 2019, the volume of passengers at ROI ports fell by 16%, or 111,677 passengers. In all, this is the closest the Irish passenger market has come to fully reaching pre-pandemic levels.

In Northern Ireland, passenger numbers in Q2 2022 were 19% above that of Q2 2019, or pre-pandemic levels. Since the spring of 2021, Northern Irish ports have been handling a volume of passengers that is above 2019 levels. This is driven by intra-UK travel on routes such as Larne – Cairnryan, Belfast – Cairnryan and Belfast – Liverpool.

Table 7: All - Island Passenger Numbers, Q2 2019 – Q2 2022

	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021	Q2 2022	Growth Vs 2021	Growth Vs 2019
Cork	37,272	-	322	44,549	13,735%	20%
Dublin	507,015	51,909	79,271	404,509	410%	-20%
Rosslare	166,881	14,722	23,467	150,434	541%	-10%
ROI	711,168	66,631	103,060	599,492	482%	-16%
NI	500,420	83,799	351,811	597,410	70%	19%
All Island	1,211,588	150,430	454,871	1,196,902	163%	-1%

Table 8 details the volume of passengers that travelled through Irish and Northern Irish ports between for H1 2019 to H1 2022.

As shown in Table 8, for the first 6 months of 2022, ROI ports remain 19% below pre-pandemic levels. The growth versus the summer of 2021 however, is very positive. As mentioned above, Cork is now operating above pre-pandemic levels, the first ROI port to do so. In all, the full recovery in Irish passenger travel is yet to materialize, but Q2 2022 represents the closest this sector has come to pre-pandemic levels.

²³ In order separate the volume of tourist passengers from commercial passengers (such as drivers, crew etc.), some estimates are included in Table 7. These figures may be subject to revision in later IMDO reports.

Table 8: All – Island Passenger Numbers, H1 2019 – H1 2022

	H1 2019	H1 2020	H1 2021	H1 2022	Growth Vs 2021	Growth Vs 2019
Cork	41,454	1,631	581	45,211	7682%	9%
Dublin	740,133	240,884	127,887	566,708	343%	-23%
Rosslare	236,410	69,092	37,781	214,535	468%	-9%
ROI	1,017,997	311,607	166,249	826,454	397%	-19%
NI	751,888	301,900	497,457	891,041	79%	19%
All Island	1,769,885	613,507	663,706	1,717,495	159%	-3%