

Maritime Freight Transport Market Size & Share Analysis - Growth Trends and Forecast (2026 - 2031)

> **Industry:** Freight Forwarding & Multimodal (Logistics & Supply Chain)
> **Source:** https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/global-maritime-freight-transport-market(https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/global-maritime-freight-transport-market)
> **Scraped Date:** 2026-09-17

Executive Market Summary

Market Metric	Details
Base Market Size	USD 632.36 billion
Projected Forecast (2031)	USD 632.36 billion
Growth Rate (CAGR)	5.43 %
Largest Market Region	N/A
Fastest-Growing Region	N/A

Market Visualizations & Infographics

! [Major players in Maritime Freight Transport industry](images/chart_2.png)

! [Maritime Freight Transport Market (2025 - 2030)](images/chart_3.png)

! [Maritime Freight Transport Market: Market Share by Cargo Type, 2025](images/chart_4.png)

! [Maritime Freight Transport Market: Market Share by End-User Industry, 2025](images/chart_5.png)

! [Maritime Freight Transport Market](images/chart_6.png)

! [Maritime Freight Transport Market Concentration](images/chart_7.png)

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Comprehensive Research Analysis

Overview Points List Flex 49 Share Feature End

Market OverviewStudy Period | 2020 - 2031 |
Market Size (2026) | USD 632.36 Billion |
Market Size (2031) | USD 823.57 Billion |
Growth Rate (2026 - 2031) | 5.43 % |
Fastest Growing Market | Asia Pacific |
Largest Market | Asia Pacific |
Market Concentration | Medium |
Major Players*Disclaimer: Major Players sorted in no particular order

Market Overview

Maritime Freight Transport Market Analysis by Mordor Intelligence
The Maritime Freight Transport Market size was valued at USD 599.78 billion in 2025 and estimated to grow from USD 632.36 billion in 2026 to reach USD 823.57 billion by 2031, at a CAGR of 5.43% during the forecast period (2026-2031).

Sustained expansion springs from resilient global trade volumes, the rerouting of vessels around congestion and conflict zones that inflates ton-mile demand, and the accelerating shift of cargo toward South-South corridors that intensify intra-Asian flows[1]“China’s Pinglu Canal Investment,” Carnegie Endowment, carnegieendowment.org. Compliance with the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) adds USD 206 per metric ton to operating costs in 2025 but simultaneously accelerates fleet renewal toward low-carbon tonnage, supporting long-run competitiveness[2]“Compliance Costs of Alternative Fuels,” Sustainable Ships, sustainable-ships.org. Alliance realignments such as the Gemini Cooperation between Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd recalibrate slot allocation across East-West lanes, raising schedule reliability targets to 90% and sharpening service differentiation. Digital freight platforms that now govern more than 80% of container transactions provide real-time capacity balancing, cut average dwell time by 12%, and help carriers monetize empty repositioning legs.

Key Report Takeaways* By cargo type, dry bulk captured 28.65% of the Maritime freight transport market share in 2025, while liquid bulk is advancing at a 4.02% CAGR through 2031.

* By end-user industry, manufacturing & consumer goods held 27.55% of the Maritime freight transport market size in 2025, whereas pharmaceuticals & healthcare are expanding at a 5.49% CAGR to 2031.

* By geography, Asia-Pacific commanded a 37.65% revenue share of the Maritime freight transport market in 2025 and is forecast to post a 5.02% CAGR to 2031.

Key Market Trends

Market Trends and Insights
Drivers Impact Analysis of Maritime Freight Transport Market*
Driver | % Impact on CAGR Forecast | Geographic Relevance | Impact Timeline |
Surge in South-South intra-Asian trade corridors | +1.2% | Asia-Pacific core, spill-over to Middle East | Medium term (2-4 years) |
Near-shoring drives short-sea feeder demand | +0.8% | North America & EU, regional corridors | Short term (≤ 2 years) |
EU-ETS on maritime emissions reshapes fleet economics | +0.6% | Europe & EU waters, global fleet impact | Long term (≥ 4 years) |
Digital freight platforms enable real-time capacity matching | +0.4% | Global, concentrated in major trade lanes | Medium term (2-4 years) |
Alternative fuels adoption lowers long-term OPEX | +0.3% | Global, early adoption in Europe & Japan | Long term (≥ 4 years) |
Suez diversions & Panama expansion boost ton-miles | +0.9% | Global, particularly Asia-Europe routes | Short term (≤ 2 years) |
Source: Mordor Intelligence |

Competitive Landscape

Competitive Landscape

The Maritime freight transport market is moderately fragmented. MSC leads with 6.3 million TEU, growing 67% since 2020. The termination of the 2M Alliance frees MSC to deploy megamax vessels unilaterally, while the Gemini Cooperation between Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd pools 340 ships with a 90% on-time reliability target. ONE, HMM, and Yang Ming form the Premier Alliance, challenging established slot-

sharing norms and injecting fresh competition.

Strategic differentiation gravitates toward sustainability. Hapag-Lloyd's USD 4 billion order for 24 methanol-ready ships capable of 95% CO₂e cuts underpins its "Strategy 2030" goal. Maersk pursues net-zero by 2040 through 800,000 TEU of methanol dual-fuel newbuilds, supported by green-methanol procurement partnerships. Mitsui O.S.K. Lines' USD 1.715 billion buyout of LBC Tank Terminals diversifies revenue into chemical storage, insulating against pure freight-rate cyclicality.

Digital and cyber capabilities become decisive. CMA CGM invests USD 20 billion in U.S. logistics, rolling out AI-driven platforms that compress booking lead times. Hapag-Lloyd pilots blockchain to guarantee document integrity, reinforcing customer trust. Heightened cyber-risk pushes carriers to adopt ISO 27001 frameworks, adding compliance costs yet also raising competitive barriers. Regional specialists exploit white-space in high-growth niches; X-Press Feeders scales LNG-powered, 1,700 TEU tonnage for Baltic short-sea lanes, underscoring the agility advantages of smaller operators.

Maritime Freight Transport Industry Leaders* Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC)

- * A.P. Moller-Maersk

- * COSCO Shipping Lines

- * Hapag-Lloyd

- * Ocean Network Express (ONE)

- * *Disclaimer: Major Players sorted in no particular order

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Scope Methodology P Space

In this report, the maritime freight transport market is counted as revenue earned from moving cargo by sea across domestic and international routes, covering the main shipping service types used to carry bulk and unitized freight.

Scope exclusions: inland waterway and river barge freight is excluded from this market sizing unless it is clearly contracted as an ocean-leg shipment.

Segmentation Container

- * By Cargo Type* Containerized Cargo* Dry
- * Reefer

- * Dry Bulk Cargo

- * Liquid Bulk Cargo

- * General Cargo

- * Roll-On/Roll-Off Cargo

- * By End-User Industry* Electronics & Semiconductors

- * Chemicals & Petrochemicals

- * Food & Beverage

- * Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare

- * Retail & E-commerce

- * Others

- * By Geography* North America* United States

- * Canada

- * Mexico

- * South America* Brazil
- * Peru
- * Chile
- * Argentina
- * Rest of South America
- * Asia-Pacific* India
- * China
- * Japan
- * Australia
- * South Korea
- * South East Asia (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Philip
pines)
- * Rest of Asia-Pacific
- * Europe* United Kingdom
- * Germany
- * France
- * Spain
- * Italy
- * BENELUX (Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg)
- * NORDICS (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden)
- * Rest of Europe
- * Middle East and Africa* United Arab of Emirates
- * Saudi Arabia
- * South Africa
- * Nigeria
- * Rest of Middle East And Africa

Frequently Asked Questions

How big is the maritime freight transport market in 2026?

It is valued at USD 632.36 billion and is forecast to grow to USD 823.57 billion by 2031.

What is the projected CAGR for maritime freight transport through 2031?

The compound annual growth rate is 5.43%.

Which cargo type leads seaborne volumes?

Dry bulk holds 28.65% share, led by iron ore and coal flows into China.

Which region contributes the largest share of maritime trade?

Asia-Pacific accounts for 37.65% of 2025 revenue and remains the fastest-growing region.

What is driving growth in pharmaceuticals shipping by sea?

Temperature-controlled reefer technology makes ocean transport cost-effective for sensitive biologics, lifting the segment at a 5.49% CAGR.

How is regulation affecting fleet investment?

EU ETS compliance pushes owners toward dual-fuel newbuilds, accelerating green fleet renewal across major trades.