



Irish Maritime
Development Office



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute

UNITISED TRAFFIC REPORT Q2 2026

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ABOUT THE IMDO

The Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) operates within, and is part of, the Marine Institute. The IMDO provides development, promotional and marketing support to the shipping and shipping services sector. It is the aim of the IMDO to be the focal point for national and international maritime businesses 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.

The IMDO Economics team provide quarterly economic analysis, academic research, and regular policy advice to the Department of Transport relating to the Irish shipping market, ports and Irish trade. The IMDO is centrally involved in the review of National Ports Policy in 2026. 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. **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.
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **RoPax:** The sector that uses vessels capable of carrying passengers, passenger vehicles, and RoRo freight.
5. **Pax:** RoRo passengers.
6. **Ireland / ROI / Irish:** 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 Q2 2026 (Vs Q2 2025)



ROI RORO: +5%
NI RORO: +0%



ROI LOLO: +2%
NI LOLO: +8%



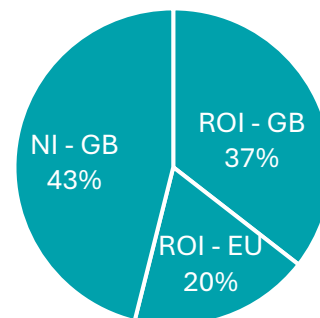
ROI Pax: -9%
NI Pax: -6%



ROI – EU
RoRo: +7%

ROI – GB
RoRo: +4%

All Island RoRo Share



Comment

Unitised traffic on the island of Ireland recorded growth of 3% during the second quarter of 2026. RoRo volumes in the Republic of Ireland increased by 5% year-on-year. In Northern Ireland, RoRo throughput was steady at 234,981 units (234,069 Q2 25). The port of Cork recorded strong growth of RoRo throughput (+29% + 542 units) in Q2. The rate of growth on ROI-EU routes exceeded growth on ROI – GB routes in Q2 (+7% vs +4%). The distribution of All Island RoRo remains in line with previous quarters.

An additional RoRo service commenced this quarter at the port of Larne. The new Larne – Isle of Man service is operated by the Isle of Man Steam Packet company on vessel Ben-My-Chree. According to the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, the Larne service will operate three times per week year-round. During the peak season, two additional weekly services to Dublin will increase the company's total number of sailings to the island of Ireland to five per week¹.

LoLo traffic continued its upward trajectory in Q2 2026². ROI ports handled 345,567 TEU in Q2, a 2% increase relative to the same quarter last year. When viewed over a longer horizon, second quarter LoLo volumes have risen from approximately 310,000 TEU in Q2 2022 to almost 346,000 TEU in Q2 2026. This is the highest Q2 LoLo total recorded by the IMDO and reflects a consistent expansion rather than a sudden shift. In Northern Ireland, Belfast port recorded robust LoLo growth of 8% (+4,453 TEU).

Taken together, Q2 2026 continues the pattern observed in recent years: a stable RoRo market and a steady upward trend in LoLo traffic supported by robust consumption in the Irish economy.

The domestic economy is forecast to continue growing, although the outlook remains subject to considerable uncertainty. According to the Central Bank of Ireland's latest Quarterly Bulletin³, Modified Domestic Demand is projected to increase by 3.3% in 2026. Growth is expected to be supported by strong investment, particularly in AI and data-centre-related capital goods, offsetting weaker consumption as higher energy prices weigh on household incomes. Employment is forecast to grow by 1.2% in 2026, while unemployment is projected to rise modestly to 5.1%. HICP inflation is forecast to increase from 2.1% in 2025 to 3.5% in 2026, largely reflecting higher energy prices associated with the conflict in the Middle East and disruption to the Strait of Hormuz.

Passenger volumes declined at both NI and ROI ports in Q2 2026. NI ports handled 557,814 passengers, falling below the Q2 2019 level of 586,247 after surpassing it in Q2 2025. Passenger throughput at ROI ports also remained below its pre-pandemic level, approximately 90,000 passengers short of the 756,438 recorded in Q2 2019. Passenger vehicle traffic declined year-on-year by 7% at ROI ports and 5% at NI ports. The IMDO will continue to monitor these trends as part of its quarterly assessment of Ireland's maritime sector.

¹ [Isle of Man Steam Packet Company](#)

² For more information on recent trends in Irish LoLo traffic, see [Irish Maritime Transport Economist 2026 \(Volume 23\) | IMDO Irish Maritime Development Office](#)

³ [Central Bank of Ireland](#)

Roll-on / Roll-off (RoRo)

Table 1 and Table 2 illustrate the volumes of RoRo traffic handled at ports across the island of Ireland in the second quarter of 2025 and 2026. These tables show total RoRo volume, encompassing both accompanied and unaccompanied RoRo traffic.

Table 1:

Port	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	%	RoRo Units
Dublin	236,854	251,321	6%	14,467
Rosslare - Europort	57,482	57,608	0%	126
Cork	1,851	2,393	29%	542
Republic of Ireland	296,187	311,322	5%	15,135
Belfast	160,934	162,816	1%	1,882
Larne	44,533	44,644	0%	111
Warrenpoint	28,602	27,521	-4%	-1,081
Northern Ireland	234,069	234,981	0%	912
All-Island	530,256	546,303	3%	16,047

Table 2:

Port	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	%	RoRo Units
Accompanied	85,651	89,991	5%	4,340
Unaccompanied	210,536	221,331	5%	10,795
Republic of Ireland	296,187	311,322	5%	15,135
Accompanied	77,550	72,925	-6%	-4,625
Unaccompanied	156,519	162,056	4%	5,537
Northern Ireland	234,069	234,981	0%	912
Accompanied	163,201	162,916	0%	-285
Unaccompanied	367,055	383,387	4%	16,332
All-Island	530,256	546,303	3%	16,047

ROI – GB RoRo

Table 3 presents RoRo volume on ROI – GB routes. ROI – GB represents ferry routes between Dublin Port/Rosslare Europort, and Great Britain ports including Holyhead, Liverpool, Heysham, Pembroke and Fishguard.

Table 3:

Route	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	%	RoRo Units
Dublin - GB	177,312	186,793	5%	9,481
Rosslare - GB	18,775	17,861	-5%	-914
ROI - GB	196,087	204,654	4%	8,567

ROI – EU RoRo

Table 4 presents RoRo volume on ROI – EU routes. ROI – EU represents direct ferry services between Dublin, Cork and Rosslare Europort, and seven mainland European ports: Bilbao, Cherbourg, Dunkirk, Roscoff, Rotterdam, Santander, Zeebrugge.

Table 4:

Route	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	RoRo Units	RoRo Units	%	RoRo Units
Dublin - EU	59,542	64,528	8%	4,986
Rosslare - EU	38,707	39,747	3%	1,040
Cork - EU	1,851	2,393	29%	542
ROI - EU	100,100	106,668	7%	6,568

Lift-on / Lift-off (LoLo)

Table 5 presents the volumes of LoLo traffic handled at ports across the island of Ireland. It illustrates total LoLo volume, measured in twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), and encompasses both laden (full) and unladen (empty) LoLo volume. To see the breakdown between unladen and laden units, see Appendix.

Table 5:

Port	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	TEUs	TEUs	%	TEUs
Cork	74,968	78,841	5%	3,873
Dublin	249,137	252,559	1%	3,422
Waterford	13,535	14,167	5%	632
Republic of Ireland	337,640	345,567	2%	7,927
Belfast	55,116	59,569	8%	4,453
Warrenpoint	0	0		0
Northern Ireland	55,116	59,569	8%	4,453
All-Island	392,756	405,136	3%	12,380

Passenger Market

Ferry Passengers

Table 6 illustrates the volume of RoRo ferry passengers that travelled through Irish and Northern Irish ports. In the Irish RoRo ferry market, many operators employ a RoPax model, meaning they carry not only freight traffic but passengers and passenger vehicles.

Table 6:

Passenger No.	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	No.	No.	%	No.
Cork	42,273	39,976	-5%	-2,297
Dublin	511,217	482,756	-6%	-28,461
Rosslare-Europort	180,399	142,017	-21%	-38,382
Republic of Ireland	733,889	664,749	-9%	-69,140
Belfast	482,777	445,330	-8%	-37,447
Larne	110,974	112,484	1%	1,510
Northern Ireland	593,751	557,814	-6%	-35,937
All-Island	1,327,640	1,222,563	-8%	-105,077

Passenger Vehicles

The term ‘passengers’ refers to the volume of people travelling on RoRo ferries. The volume of passenger ‘vehicles’ is also an important consideration for shipping companies. Although many maritime passengers travel on foot, the majority travel on, or with, a domestic vehicle, such as a car, bus, trailer, caravan, etc. Such vehicles share RoRo capacity with freight traffic i.e. HGVs and unaccompanied trailers. Monitoring the level of demand for these vehicles is important for tracking available shipping capacity at Irish ports, which can fluctuate throughout the year.

Table 7 illustrates the volume of passenger vehicles, which includes cars, coaches, caravans, and similar tourist vehicles, that travelled through Irish and Northern Irish ports.

Table 7:

Passenger Vehicles	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
Port	No.	No.	%	No.
Cork	14,393	13,292	-8%	-1,101
Dublin	138,529	136,498	-1%	-2,031
Rosslare-Europort	70,727	57,631	-19%	-13,096
Republic of Ireland	223,649	207,421	-7%	-16,228
Belfast	110,115	101,862	-7%	-8,253
Larne	33,282	34,235	3%	953
Northern Ireland	143,397	136,097	-5%	-7,300
All-Island	367,046	343,518	-6%	-23,528

Appendix

Breakdown between Laden (full) and Unladen (empty) LoLo TEUs.

Laden LoLo	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	TEUs	TEUs	%	TEUs
Cork	56,572	60,179	6%	3,607
Dublin	182,375	185,810	2%	3,435
Waterford	9,057	9,430	4%	373
Republic of Ireland	248,004	255,419	3%	7,415
Belfast	43,936	46,696	6%	2,760
Warrenpoint	0	0		0
Northern Ireland	43,936	46,696	6%	2,760
All Island	291,940	302,115	3%	10,175

LoLo Unladen	Q2 2025	Q2 2026	% Ch	Diff
	TEUs	TEUs	%	TEUs
Cork	18,397	18,662	1%	265
Dublin	66,762	66,749	0%	-13
Waterford	4,477	4,737	6%	260
Republic of Ireland	89,636	90,148	1%	512
Belfast	11,180	12,873	15%	1,693
Warrenpoint	0	0		0
Northern Ireland	11,180	12,873	15%	1,693
All Island	100,816	103,021	2%	2,205