

# Croatia Shipping Report Q1 2016

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## Abstracts

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**BMI View:** We estimate positive growth in tonnage and box throughput at Croatia's largest port, the Port of Rijeka, for 2015. Although this will be slower than 2014 we forecast that in 2016 tonnage handled will increase faster and container throughput growth will remain strong. Croatia's main trading partners are other eurozone members meaning that trade is restrained by poor economic performance experienced in the region over recent years. Nevertheless Croatia's GDP will turn positive in 2015 following six years of negative growth and this also reflects developments in other European countries providing optimism for increased trade going forward.

### Growth To Stabilise At Port Of Rijeka

Our forecast for 2016 growth in terms of tonnes throughput is at 2.8%, close to our 2015 estimate of 2.7%. We estimate box handling growth remained stronger at an estimated 8.2% in 2015, to settle at 5.9% in 2016. The port has experienced important growth in container throughput since 2011 when International Terminal Services (ICTS) acquired a stake in the port and focused on its development as a maritime gateway, but we expect this to even out over the medium term and average at 4.9% between 2015 and 2019. Similarly, tonnage throughput will settle at around 3% with our forecasts indicating an average of 3.5% growth over the medium term. The recovering but depressed European economy is still holding back extensive trade expansion which is evident in other Croatian ports with the Port of Ploce's box handling estimated to contract by 2.3% in 2015 and 2.0% in 2016. An average GDP real growth of 1.4% forecasted over the medium term does not offer room for much optimism on strong expansion in Croatia's shipping industry in the coming years but remains a welcome projection as it follows six years of contraction with GDP growth averaging -1.2% in the previous five years.

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