Shanghai's Global Maritime Standing Rises as China's Ports Handle Growing Trade Volumes

Shanghai rises to second among the world's leading maritime cities, while China's ports handle 13.6 billion tonnes of cargo in the first nine months of 2026

Ranking of Top Maritime Cities* (2026, Chinese cities highlighted)

Ranking	City	Change from 2024
1	Singapore	-
2	Shanghai	+2
3	London	-
4	Rotterdam	-2
5	Tokyo	+2
6	Oslo	-1
7	Busan	+3
8	New York	-2
9	Hamburg	+1
10	Copenhagen	-1
Chinese maritime cities in the top 50		
11	Hong Kong	+1
17	Beijing	-1
18	Taipei (China)	+18
26	Ningbo	-2
30	Guangzhou	-5
31	Shenzhen	-8
36	Qingdao	-8
42	Xiamen	-9
43	Dalian	-9

Shanghai: A Global Maritime Leader

Shanghai ranks 2nd among the world's maritime cities and 1st in maritime technology, combining port scale, shipbuilding capacity and technological innovation.

51.5 mn TEUs handled in 2025 (world's busiest container port)

1.36 bn gross tonnage (GT) in vessel calls in 2026 (4th globally)

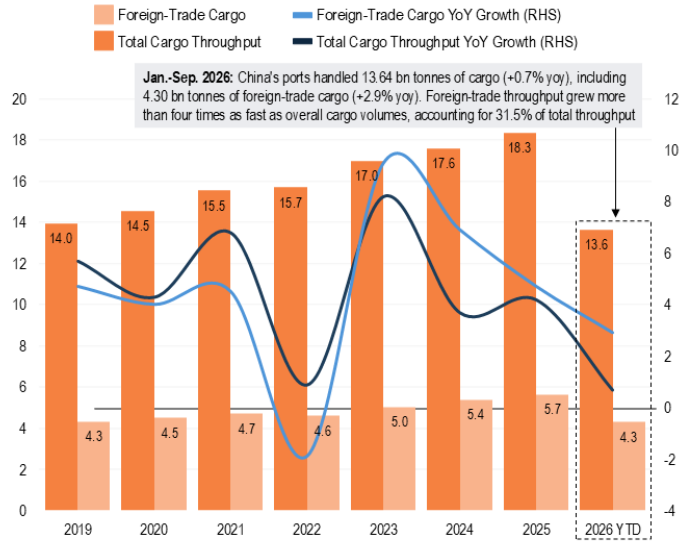
11.7 mn compensated gross tonnes (CGT) shipyard deliveries, 2025-2026 (2nd globally)

USD 4.8 bn in shipbuilding output value, 2025-2026 (2nd globally)

1,322 maritime patents held by Shanghai-headquartered firms (1st globally)

17 maritime technology start-ups headquartered in Shanghai (joint 2nd globally)

China Port Cargo Throughput, tonnes bn and YoY Growth, % (RHS) (2019-Sep. 2026)



Note: *Ranking combines objective and subjective indicators to assess the 50 leading maritime cities across five pillars: Shipping, Maritime Finance & Law, Maritime Technology, Ports & Logistics and Attractiveness & Competitiveness.
Source: "The Leading Maritime Cities of the World" (Menon Economics and DNV, 2026), National Bureau of Statistics of China, China Ministry of Transport, ANDAMAN PARTNERS Analysis

A new global assessment of the world's leading maritime cities ranks Shanghai second, behind Singapore, highlighting China's growing influence not only in moving goods around the world, but also in building ships, developing technologies and providing the infrastructure that makes global trade possible. Shanghai also ranks first globally in maritime technology.

Shanghai's maritime credentials are undeniable. The port handled 51.5 million containers (TEUs) in 2025, making it the world's busiest, while the city also leads globally in maritime patents. Beyond Shanghai, eight other Chinese maritime centres, including Hong Kong, Beijing, Ningbo and Guangzhou, feature among the world's top 50 maritime cities.

The scale of China's maritime economy is equally striking. Chinese ports handled 13.64 billion tonnes of cargo in the first nine months of 2026, up 0.7% year on year. More significantly, foreign-trade cargo grew 2.9% to 4.30 billion tonnes, expanding more than four times as fast as overall throughput.

For global business, the picture extends well beyond China's export volumes. China is increasingly central to the infrastructure, industrial capabilities and technological innovation underpinning international shipping, even as global trade routes and supply chains evolve.

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