

No bottom in sight for free-falling trans-Atlantic rates



Trans-Atlantic weekly capacity in the first half of 2023 was up 25% year over year while demand was down 13.6%. Photo credit: Hapag-Lloyd.

Greg Knowler, Senior Editor Europe | Sep 5, 2023, 10:54 AM EDT

Trans-Atlantic westbound rates have fallen further below pre-pandemic levels — with no bottom in sight — as excess capacity and weak US import demand continue to burden last year's most profitable trade lane.

It has been a dramatic turnaround from the record rate levels set last year with prices from North Europe to the US East Coast reaching a peak of \$8,032 per FEU in May 2022, according to rate benchmarking platform Xeneta. The spot rate of \$638/FEU on Tuesday was down 57% compared with the same day in pre-pandemic 2019.

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