

Maritime brokers, escape from Genoa

In ten years there are 120 fewer



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Higher earnings push young people abroad. The expatriate: "The return? Always an option "

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Genoa – Only in Genoa in the last 10 years has the number of brokerage companies engaged in the rental and sale of ships almost halved, and highly specialized employees have passed **from 340 in 2010 to the current 220, 120 less**. The census of Federagenti, the national association of maritime agents and brokers is limited to the most important square in Italy, but the decline in activity, says President Alessandro Santi, is visible everywhere: in Naples, the other reference city for there **mediation in the shipping sector**, as well as in other ports of the country, where companies often offer agency and brokerage services together.

The younger ones leave for Switzerland (Lugano or Geneva), Monte Carlo, London or Singapore: "Certainly there is the economic factor – explains Mario Marocco, who seven years ago, at 34, **he left Genoa to move to Lake Geneva**, broker at Ifchor – In terms of taxation, there are quite substantial rates in Switzerland, but the cost of labor for companies is much lower. Another aspect is that of professional growth: today, for example, I am a chartering manager, I stayed in Switzerland but I changed city and profession. And then a certain attention to the sector: courses, greater updating of software ... Even if perhaps in recent years things have changed in Italy ». Would he come back? «Of course, it's always in the options: I won't rule it out in the future, perhaps taking advantage of **latest government incentives** to encourage brain recovery ... it is true that it is not a tool designed for shipping but rather for the world of research, but if it can be exploited, why not do it ... ».

The problem, explains Maurizio Gozzi, who took the opposite route, **leaving the international giant Clarksons** to set up on their own, is that the Italian brokers at a certain moment lacked the push: in the ports there are less and less energy bulk (coal *in primis*, but also crude oil and derivatives) which formed one of the most solid foundations of the business; then the loss of control by the Italian capital of strategic industrial activities such as that of the steel industry, until the reduction in the number of Italian shipping companies engaged in the transport of goods in bulk. "**The professional heritage is still there** – comments Gozzi – but the risk is that we are going to train people who will then work abroad, with the drying up of the Italian community ».

"With a country system – concludes Santi – that in a general scenario of shortening of strategic supply chains and increased control over them, has become unable to understand how vital it is to defend **some activities related to vital trafficking**By delegating, instead, the control to foreign players, the activity of the maritime brokers is also marking time, triggering an alarm that cannot go unheeded ».