

World Shipbuilding

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INNOVATION PROVIDES KEY TO SURVIVAL FOR TURKISH YARDS

WHILE SOME HAVE TURNED TO SHIPREPAIR, OTHER TUZLA BAY SHIPBUILDERS HAVE RETRAINED THEIR SIGHTS ON HIGH-VALUE NICHE VESSELS, WRITES GILLIAN WHITTAKER IN ATHENS

No one would deny that Turkish shipbuilders were hard hit by the economic crisis that struck in 2008 but, equally, there is no doubt that the owners of the country's yards have sought to introduce innovative ways of rebuilding their business

TODAY MANY FACILITIES in the Tuzla region outside Istanbul are either working at much reduced capacity or have turned their attention from building ships to shiprepair.

The Association of Turkish Shipbuilders (Gisbir) records a drop in employment from 33,480 in 2007 to 17,000 last year – a slight uptick from the 16,000 it registered in 2012.

But in spite of this apparent slump, the energetic efforts of some Turkish yards have seen them break into high-value niche markets.

Samnar, one of two specialist tug builders in the country, this year delivered the world's first LNG-fuelled tugboat, contracted by Norway's Bukser og Berging AS.

Other yards have expanded from building hulls to high-value pelagic trawling boats, freezer trawlers, platform support vessels (PSVs) and seismic support vessels for Northern European clients, many of them Scandinavian.

Some have switched to naval projects, of which 15 are believed to be underway, and others to the construction of industrial projects.

Gisbir says that, in July 2014, there were just 43 vessels under construction in Turkey totalling 303,000 dwt. This compares with a figure that in 2007 was said to stand at 656 ships.

Yavuz Kalkavan of the Besiktas group, which in addition to its shipping interests has also built up Besiktas Shipyard in the Yalova area across Izmit Bay from Tuzla, disputes Gisbir's tally and says he believes there are now closer to 80 newbuilding projects at Turkish yards, plus some 40 tugs.

FOCUS ON FOREIGN ORDERS

Around a dozen yards lead the competition for foreign orders that now make up about 85% of the total orderbook.

Among them is Kalkavan's own Besiktas yard, which currently has an orderbook of four seismic support vessels for Faroe Islands-based shipowner PF Thor, with deliveries starting from the third quarter this year, one pelagic trawler for Ytterstad Shipping of Norway and one live-fish carrier.

Ares Besiktas, a joint venture between Ares Shipyard and Besiktas, has been awarded a project to build 17 fast patrol boats for Qatar.

Cemre Shipyard is another Yalova-based yard that has made a name for itself among foreign owners. Having started out building hulls, it progressed to turnkey projects and this year has delivered two PSVs, a construction vessel and a wind farm support vessel, all in co-operation with Norway's Havyard, as well as the *Osterbris*, a purse seiner and trawler for Osterfjord Torangsvaag, also of Norway.

In its latest scoop, Cemre commercial manager Sinan Kavala reveals that the yard recently signed a contract for four wet-fish trawlers with Icelandic owner Samherji HF for delivery in 2016.

Before the end of this year, it will deliver one wind farm support vessel, one purse seiner, one trawler and a PSV, while for 2015 delivery it has orders for one anchor handling tug supply (AHTS) icebreaker and one live-fish carrier for Havyard and two seismic support vessels for Norfield.

"Turnkey projects are being increased at the yard day by day.



Turkish Shipbuilders' Association (Gisbir) secretary-general Suheyl Demirtas (above) and chairman Murat Kiran. Photos: GISBIR



Sadan Kaptanoglu of the Kaptanoglu group. Photo: GILLIAN WHITTAKER

We are aiming at more sophisticated subsea projects in the near future," Kavala said.

Tersan Shipyard was named the 2013 export leader in Turkey's ship and yacht-building sector, with six deliveries, including a medium-size PSV delivered to Norwegian operators.

Sakir Erdogan, who handles business development for the yard, says that on delivery the vessel was hired by Statoil and has been working for the Norwegian major for more than a year.

"Although it isn't filling the capacity of our huge shipyard, we have a rather good orderbook," Erdogan said. Worth a total of around \$400m, it includes one duplex stainless-steel tanker for German owner Gefo – a company for which it has already built two ships – and two 86-metre factory stern trawlers – one for German interests and one for UK owners, with delivery slated for this year.

There are more fishing and offshore vessels in the pipeline, says Erdogan. On the cards are one high-end multipurpose PSV, plus three options, for Tidewater in a set-up where its subsidiary, Troms Offshore, will operate the vessel; an offshore inspection, maintenance and repair (IMR) subsea vessel for Volstad Shipping, another return client; a 60-metre liner fishing vessel with process plant for Norwegian owner Leinebris; a factory stern trawler for Russian owners, an 83-metre factory stern trawler for Siltaq Trawl AS of Greenland; and a 3,000-cbm live-fish carrier for Bakkafrøst of the Faroe Islands.

All these projects are scheduled for delivery up to the first half of 2016.

Because it is one of the biggest yards in Turkey, Tersan continues to invest in order to boost efficiency, capacity and quality but also to keep up with new technologies. It recently purchased a robotic profile handling system from the Netherlands that Erdogan says immediately resulted in an increase in production efficiency.

Desan, the Kaptanoglu group's shipyard, dropped out of shipbuilding after delivering its last 6,400-dwt IMO-II tanker back in 2011 but has now contracted a PSV for what Sadan Kaptanoglu describes as "a first-class Norwegian account".

"Desan would also like to expand into shipbuilding together with their repair and maintenance services, therefore we are about to purchase another yard in Tuzla Bay in order to increase activities," Kaptanoglu said. However, because the deal has not yet been finalised, she was unable to reveal the name.

Another group that was earlier mainly involved in shiprepair and conversion is Gemak. On the construction side, it has stepped out of the classic mould and is involved in building segments for industrial projects. It has delivered four steel shafts of about 2,000 tons for the Izmit Bay Bridge to contractor IHI Cooperation.

Another project the yard is involved in is the third Bosphorus bridge. Gemak chief executive Birol Uner says Gemak is currently building complete steel decks of the bridge equalling some 47,000 tonnes of steel.

"We are able to handle such mega-construction projects by joining forces with our TGE yard, Neta fabrication yard and our new facility, Gemak-Altinova yard," Uner said.



The purse-seine trawler *Osterbris*, delivered by Cemre Shipyard in July 2014 to Norwegian owner Osterfjord. Photo: CEMRE



A panorama view of Turkey's Cemre Shipyard. Photo: CEMRE

Orhan Gulceker, chairman of Cemre Shipyard (left) and Kristjan Vilhelmsen of the Samherji Group shake hands on the signing of a contract for three wet fish trawlers to be built at Cemre Shipyard. Photo: CEMRE



Tersen Shipyard business development manager Sakir Erdogan (above) and Yavuz Kalkavan of Besiktas. Photos: DARRIN GRIGGS AND GILLIAN WHITTAKER



As one of the largest Sino-foreign joint-venture shipyards, Zhoushan IMC-YY shipyard is concentrating on high standard of ship-repairing and maintenance services, containing the types of most equally tankers, containers, car carriers and bulkers, and almost 20-30% for each type among totally about 150 vessels repaired from the worldwide famous shipowners per year in the shipyard. And now its staff is striving to promote technology oriented methods to achieve and set standard as green shipyard, in order to lead green ship repairing in China and enhance its position as a faithful partner of the global shipping industry & a first class provider of the services in ship-repairing and maintenance.

MAIN FACILITIES			
DOCK	Graving Dock	Size[m]	Crane[t]
	3000000WT	350X65	40*/25*1
	1000000WT	251X39	25*1
WHARF	Wharf	Size[m]	Crane[t]
	3000000WT	524.5X12[depth]	45*1/40*1/25*1
	2000000WT	250X12[depth]	80*1/45*1

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