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Russian Rail Freight Falls in 6-Year First – Vedomosti

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Containers are pictured at the Khovrino Terminal and Logistics Center in Moscow. **Anton Novoderezhkin/TASS**

Russian freight traffic by rail fell for the first time in six years last month as Western sanctions and China's virus lockdown disrupted supply chains, the Vedomosti business daily reported Thursday.

Shipments by train in April 2022 totaled 512,100 TEU, the standard measurement for cargo meaning Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit — marking a 6% decrease from April 2021.

It was the first month-to-month decline since January 2016, when shipments totaled 495,000 TEU, Vedomosti reported, citing the Moscow-based Institute of Natural Monopolies Research (IPEM).

Industry experts linked the drop to disruptions in export supply chains from unprecedented western sanctions imposed on Russia as punishment for its invasion of Ukraine.

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China's Covid-19 lockdown compounded the challenge by limiting Russia's ability to find alternative supplies, Mikhail Burmistrov, head of the market research group Infoline-Analytics, told Vedomosti.

Categories including structural steel, cars and engines saw train shipments drop by 13% to 47%.

State monopoly Russian Railways, whose data IPEM's research is based on, disclosed cumulative railway container transportation figures for January-April which saw 6% growth to 2.2 million TEU.

IPEM's deputy director Vladimir Savchuk said imports accounted for 30% growth and domestic transportation for 8% during that period, while transit and exports decreased by 4% and 2% respectively.

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