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**INTERTANKO Seafarers Survey:  
Making your way at sea**

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**INTERTANKO**

# **INTERTANKO Seafarers Survey: Making your way at sea**

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# Executive summary

Initiated by INTERTANKO's Human Element in Shipping Committee (HEiSC), the Association launched an online survey in 2023 to better understand why people seek a career at sea, their living conditions on board and if experiences matched expectations.

In achieving those aims, the survey also uncovered some interesting findings that could generate recommendations for the whole industry. The responding seafarers mostly shared the same likes, concerns, hopes and problems regardless of age, nationality or ship type.

Much is made of the differences between nationalities, often based on stereotypes, but this is not evident in the survey's findings. Whilst minor differences were seen on some issues, the lived experiences of the seafarers are very similar, which included an unexpected discovery on the high level of satisfaction with life and work on board. One area where significant differences are found is that of gender. This is discussed in further detail in the relevant section, but for those women who responded to the survey, they exhibited greater motivation to reach higher management positions, were more likely to study for further qualifications and recommend the career to others.

A series of recommendations have been highlighted, relating to working and living conditions, recruitment and retention of seafarers.

The full summary of findings from the survey is detailed below.

## The survey

The survey responses represented a snapshot of the industry, not all seafarers' views. However, with more than 5,400 seafarers participating, it represents a large proportion of seafarers primarily serving on tankers and can be seen as a good reflection of seafarers serving on Members' vessels.

## Demographics

The demographics of the respondents make it clear that there is a difference between the tanker industry and the general seafarer population. Filipino, Indian and Greek nationals make up over two-thirds of all respondents and the survey was primarily aimed at junior officers (who made up nearly 70% of all respondents), which provides a unique insight into the motivations of those junior officers serving on tankers.

## Going to sea

The main reasons behind people choosing to go to sea are financial and professional. Very few differences are found between nationalities, which indicates that designing recruitment campaigns around nationalities is of limited value. Instead, strategies should emphasise financial incentives, reaffirming concurrently that a career in seafaring commands respect and is recognised as a legitimate profession. It is a common misconception that the decision to pursue seafaring often stems from familial traditions, with survey findings suggesting that other factors might be more influential in choosing this career path.

## Training

Responding officers are in the main happy with the training received at nautical colleges. Greek nationals reported issues with the provision of simulators and this will need to be addressed. Women seafarers reported encountering some difficulties with colleges not addressing the needs of all genders. At a time when the industry is facing a shortage of trained seafarers, the problems seafarers face in gaining training berths is unfortunate and companies will need to look to increase the provision of sea time.

## Living conditions

Respondents identified poor recreational facilities onboard and reported poor sleep quality. However, cabins, whilst often being perceived negatively, were viewed positively by respondents. Mentoring is seen as the most important issue, and companies should prioritise providing policies to support mentoring. Access to the

internet is of great importance across every age and nationality group and its provision is no longer a luxury that any shipping company can avoid.

### **Misconduct and gender issues**

The issue of gender diversity on board is key to making the shipping industry a safe and inclusive workplace for all seafarers. While women do report facing certain levels of misconduct, they do on the whole still regard ships as safe places to work. We feel that more should be done to encourage women to seek seagoing careers and any issues surrounding misconduct, potential or actual, should be addressed and treated with the utmost importance. However, misconduct, harassment and discrimination are not just an issue of gender, as far too many seafarers also suffer issues due to their nationality.

### **Working conditions**

A very positive outcome is the finding that close collaboration among ship staff is prevalent and satisfaction with contract length is high. Less positive is the finding that officers are sometimes overwhelmed by the workload, irrespective of ship type, and this should be of concern. There is a notable difference of opinion in this area between nationalities, so companies should address this issue seeing as it is considered by some to be one of resilience. With over 40% of officers reporting cultural difficulties affecting their working relationships, this is also something that needs to be addressed hand in hand with the perceived discrimination previously identified.

### **Safe working conditions**

Overall, the picture is very good, with some 98% of respondents believing they work on safe ships, with 85% saying they have no issues raising questions over safety. Overall, safety looks good, and this is reflected in wider accident, SIRE and Port State Control statistics. Nonetheless, concerns emerge regarding the adequacy of rest hours.

### **Seafarer wellness and satisfaction**

There are positive findings on the happiness of seafarers and, when taken together with the many other measures in this survey, seafarers seem to be a relatively content group of workers, irrespective of nationality.

### **Prestige of the maritime profession**

Seafarers do not see overwhelming recognition for their efforts and service. This is a disappointing finding considering the considerable effort made to raise the profile of seafarers and their significant contribution to keeping the world functioning during the pandemic. The role of the seafarer should receive greater promotion by all stakeholders within the industry so, despite the efforts already made, more is to be done to make this happen.

### **Future perspectives**

Seafarers, irrespective of nationality, demonstrate a commitment to their profession and aim to seek a long-term career combining sea and shore. Female officers expressed by far the greatest desire to stay, to gain promotion, study for higher qualifications and ultimately work ashore.

For those looking to leave the sea, the push factors of salary, living conditions, and ship management did not have a significant effect, with the main pull factors being family and better opportunities as to why seafarers aim to come ashore.

### **Summary**

While the survey highlighted certain concerns related to harassment, extensive working hours and heavy workload, it did not find significant evidence of dissatisfaction among seafarers regarding salary, living conditions or contracts. Overall, most seafarers expressed satisfaction with their maritime careers, showed a keen interest in attaining advanced professional qualifications, and displayed an inclination to eventually transition their careers to shore-based roles.

## **Recommendations**

The survey highlighted a series of issues with recommendations for the recruitment and retention of seafarers, outlined below.

### **Recruiting talent**

People seek financially and professionally rewarding careers and so the industry should focus on highlighting this to potential seafarers and then delivering on it.

Common recruitment strategies should be developed irrespective of nationality and familial background within the industry.

The survey revealed that female respondents exhibit a strong drive to ascend through the ranks and expand their career horizons. This underscores the shipping industry's desire to intensify efforts in recruiting more women. Implementing positive inclusive recruitment strategies and fostering a culture that values diversity are critical steps to achieving this. By promoting an environment that supports the ambitions of women seafarers, the industry can not only enhance its workforce diversity but also benefit from a broader range of perspectives and skill.

### **Training and sea time**

The survey highlights a number of training issues, and the Hellenic government should investigate issues raised relating to the provision of simulators in their colleges.

Colleges should investigate the issues and barriers faced by women within their colleges. This could include providing correctly sized personal protective equipment, better accommodation and culture within the establishment.

Provision of sea time is a significant concern and the industry associations and other stakeholders should work together to devise solutions, taking into account the employment requirements of the flag State, the State of nationality of the cadet and the labour conditions within the MLC, with the aim of offering berths to those seafarers in need of sea time.

### **Working and living conditions**

Trainee and junior officers should be paired with mentors, and mentoring schemes should be adopted across companies.

Companies should identify peak workload periods and investigate means to reduce the load and ensure seafarers are mentally prepared for those periods to avoid being overwhelmed.

Zero-tolerance policies for harassment should be developed, implemented, and enforced.

Access to the internet is a necessity and must be provided to all seafarers.

### **Prestige and image**

The role of the seafarer must receive greater promotion by all stakeholders within the industry and governments should assist in following through on their designation of seafarers as key workers.

### **INTERTANKO Human Element in Shipping Committee**

INTERTANKO should develop specific guidance and best practice to support Members and the wider industry in addressing these recommendations.

# Making your way at sea

## Introduction

Seafarers are the industry's backbone and were crucial in keeping the world going throughout the pandemic. INTERTANKO's Human Element in Shipping Committee (HEISC) has worked on many welfare issues for seafarers both before and after the pandemic, however, what is becoming clearer is that the world of work is facing a period of great change and the shipping industry is not immune. The survey sought the views of primarily junior seafarers to ensure the industry met their expectations and, if not, how to adapt to suit them better. This work is to ensure that what we do matches what is needed so that the recruitment and, most importantly, the retention, of seafarers continues.

Following a webinar with several hundred serving seafarers, INTERTANKO launched a survey to gain insight into some broad issues:

- Why do people choose a career at sea?
- What are conditions like on board?
- Does the employment and service match the ambitions of the seafarers?
- How can the industry improve what is on offer?

## The survey

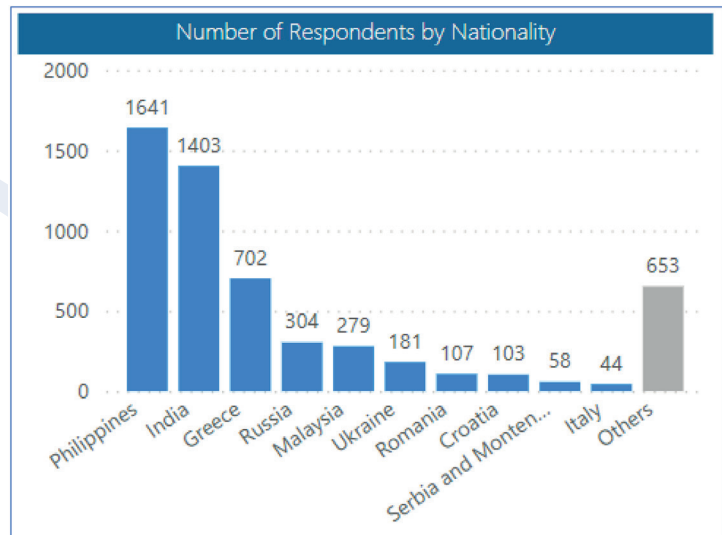
The online survey ran for several months in the first half of 2023. The survey was hosted on INTERTANKO's website and promoted by Intermanager and Intercargo. Whilst seafarers from all ship types responded, the primary respondents are from the tanker industry and this represents a suitable snapshot of the industry. INTERTANKO makes no claim that the survey responses represent all seafarers' views, however, it is a large number and therefore represents a significant proportion of seafarers primarily serving on tankers. As a result, inferences can be made from the information and recommendations made to the industry. However, caution should be exercised when undertaking the analysis as some of the samples are small and drawing firm conclusions from such small numbers would be inappropriate.

The report consists of the following sections:

1. Demographics of the survey
2. Going to sea
3. Training
4. Living conditions on board
5. Working conditions
6. Safety at work
7. Seafarer wellness and satisfaction
8. Prestige of the maritime profession
9. Misconduct and discrimination
10. Future perspectives
11. Conclusions, proposals.

## 1. Demographics

Some 5,475 seafarers completed the survey, of which 5,315 are male and 136 female. A further 24 preferred not to say. Therefore, female respondents represent 2.5%, which is in line with the industry average, with 79% serving on tankers and 21% on other ship types. The top 10 nationalities represent 4,822 respondents; just under 90%. Of the main nationalities, the top three are Filipino, Indian and Greek, making up over two-thirds of all the respondents. When also including Russian and Ukrainian seafarers<sup>1</sup>, the proportion increases to 77%. There are significantly more Filipino seafarers than other nationalities in the general population of seafarers, however, Indian seafarers are well represented and comprise 26% of the survey, which compares to 30% for Filipinos.



Whilst Chinese seafarers are known to make up a significant proportion of the world's seafarers, only 1% are included in this survey. This indicates how seafarers on board tankers have different demographics than the general seafaring population. Conversely, Russian and Ukrainian seafarers comprised 9% of respondents, broadly in line with the industry average.

The survey was aimed at junior officers and those ranks (2/O, 3/O, 4/O, 3/E, 4/E, 5/E and cadets) made up 67% of all responses. This compared with senior officers (Capt, C/O, C/E, 2/E) making up 21%. Related to rank, is age; 41% of respondents were aged 30 or below, 38% were aged 31 to 40 and 21% over 40. Of the junior officers, 53% were 30 or younger, 28% were 31 to 40 and 19% are over 40. From this we can see that over 80% of junior officers who responded were under 40.

When gender is introduced, and it should be borne in mind the huge disparity between numbers, men are more evenly distributed across the age range, with women being disproportionately younger than the men. This age discrepancy is reflected in the rank differentials.

	Total number	% 18-30	% 31-40	% 41+	% Junior officers
Female	136	69	23	8	80
Male	5,315	40	34	26	67

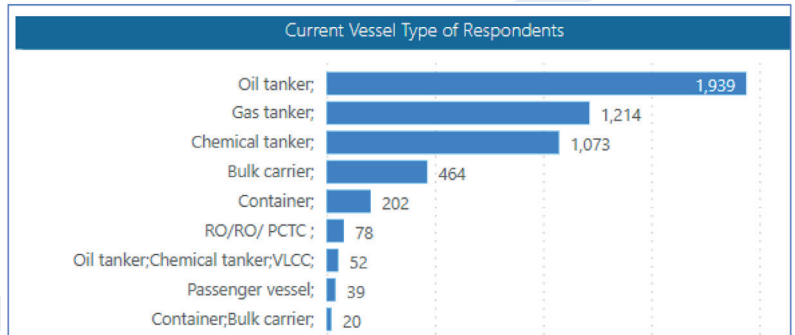
Age and rank distribution by gender

Various theories could account for this discrepancy. One perspective might suggest that women tend to end their seagoing careers earlier than men, while another interpretation could indicate that historically fewer women were seafarers and the current trend demonstrates a growth in their participation. Nonetheless, this survey doesn't provide conclusive reasons for this disparity, and any hypotheses remain speculative.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of the analysis of this survey, the nationalities of Russian and Ukrainian have been placed together due to their historical ties and the manner in which many shipowners have recruited and placed them together on board ships. Further, this survey is not influenced by political considerations and is reflective of the professionalism of the seafarers involved who continue to serve together in harmony on board.

The survey was aimed primarily at tanker officers, but Intercargo kindly distributed this to their members, so a wider range of ship types is seen. However, tankers do predominate.

Bulk carriers are the only non-tanker sector for which representative data may be used and the data has been passed to Intercargo for their use.

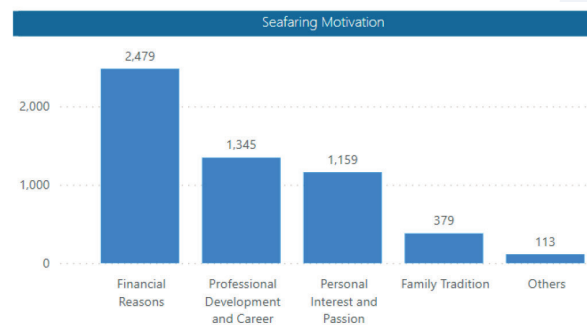
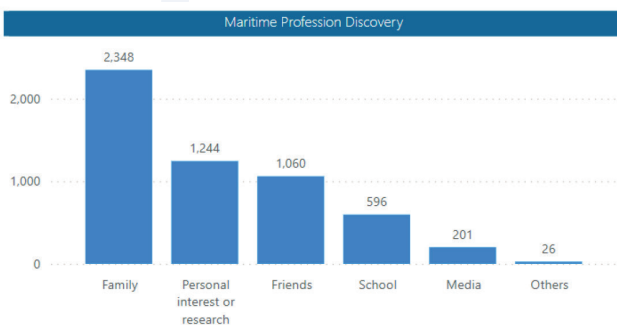


### Demographics – summary

The makeup of seafarers on board tankers deviates from that found in the general population of the industry. Indian seafarers are well represented within the officer cohort and Filipinos are under-represented in comparison. Further, the survey intended to gain an insight into the motivations of junior officers and with over two-thirds of responses from that cohort, that was achieved.

## 2. Going to sea

The motivation for anyone going to sea is key, particularly when one of the aims is to ensure that the career matches expectations. Having a family link was a factor for 43% of all respondents, however, only 7% identified a family connection as the motivation to go to sea. Other major ways to gain information about the sea was through personal interest or research (23%), through friends (20%), school careers services (11%), while a paltry 4% gained information from the media. This highlights the need for the industry to explore better collaboration with the media (with a focus on social media) to recruit from the population with no links to the sea. A campaign by our industry should be conducted that aims to highlight the sea as a career to those without links to the industry.



Information on future careers is important, but why people are motivated to go to sea is key. Some 45% of all respondents stated that the decision to go to sea was motivated by financial reasons, 25% for professional development and furthering a career, 21% for love and interest in the sea with 7% following a family tradition.

We can infer that a well-paid career is the primary motive. There is often a belief that family tradition is a key motivator to seeking a career at this, however, this did not appear to be the case for seafarers in this survey.

Taking the main nationalities of Filipino, Indian, Greek and jointly Russian and Ukrainian, some differences did come forward. Filipinos have a slightly greater interest in the financial rewards of seafaring and, conversely, financial rewards are less of a motivation for European seafarers. Greek seafarers have a greater interest in pursuing a career.

One of the most significant differences is that of family tradition. For Indian seafarers, its effects are very limited, however, for the Russian and Ukrainians, it is significant. The most striking feature is the similarities between the nationalities.



	% Financial	% PD and Career	% Love and interest for the sea	% Family tradition
Nationality				
All	45	25	21	7
Filipino	50	23	19	7
Indian	46	26	21	4
Greek	41	27	21	9
Russia &Ukraine	42	21	19	16
Male	46	24	21	7
Female	34	34	29	2

#### Motivation to go to sea

When gender is taken into account, the differences are very clear. Women are far less influenced by financial reward, with professional development and a career at sea being equally motivating. Similarly, professional interest and passion for the work are more important for women than for men. As far as family traditions, this holds comparatively less significance for women than for men.

The motivation to join particular tanker types was also explored:

Tanker type	% Financial	% PD and Career	% Love & interest	% Family tradition
All tankers	47	24	20	7
Oil	45	24	22	7
Gas	50	23	17	6
Product	47	23	21	7

The deviations for tankers from a nationality viewpoint are not as significant. The only deviation is that for gas tankers, financial reward is slightly greater and professional interest and passion are marginally lower.

#### Going to sea – summary

The lesson from this information is that all potential seafarers should consider a career at sea as being one that is both financially and professionally rewarding. When designing recruiting strategies based around different nationalities, little time should be spent crafting differing strategies, but instead should focus on highlighting the financial rewards whilst making it clear that seafaring is a career to be proud of. Contrary to popular belief, the notion that individuals pursue seafaring careers due to family tradition was not supported by the data collected in this survey.

### 3. Training

With the revision of the Standards in Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Convention (STCW) underway at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), with a conclusion of the work planned for 2025, seeking the views of serving seafarers as to the quality of their training is important.

Some 90% of all seafarers agreed that their university/college provided sufficient training for their careers. Coupled with this 86% believed that their lecturers were sufficiently qualified. The results are initially encouraging, suggesting that college performance is generally not at fault. Yet, a deeper dive into the data reveals a concerning trend: when viewed through the lens of gender, satisfaction levels drop to 76%, and only 64% believe the faculty is adequately skilled. Colleges should investigate and explore why women are significantly dissatisfied with their college education.

One of the significant problems was the gaining of sea time.

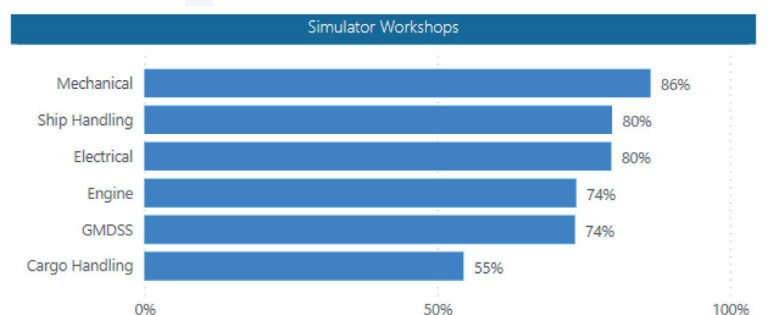
Categorisation of ease of achieving 12 months' sea time	Percentage
Very easy	11
Easy	41
Difficult	36
Very difficult	12
Unable to get the sea time	1

Whilst 51% considered finding sea time easy or very easy, 49% did not meaning that for half of all respondents, gaining sea time was a real problem. When broken down by nationality and gender, the following pattern emerges:

Nationality and gender	Percentage reporting easy or very easy
All seafarers	51
Filipino	45
Indian	50
Greek	70
Russian and Ukrainian	47
Male (all nationalities)	52
Female (all nationalities)	46

Whilst Greek officers find gaining sea time relatively easy, Filipino seafarers do not, with women officers and those from Russia and Ukraine finding it just as difficult as Filipinos. When considering ship type, it is easiest to gain sea time on gas tankers, with 58% reporting it as easy or very easy compared to 46% for product tankers and 52% for oil. This relative ease for seafarers on gas tankers is likely to be related to how gas operators plan their recruitment processes. However, the findings show that gaining sea time was difficult for many seafarers. Despite criticism for over-enrolment, it is striking that maritime colleges struggle to secure sea time for their students, especially during an industry-wide seafarer shortage. This situation highlights a disconnection between academic preparation and practical deployment within the maritime field.

Seafarers report that colleges are well-equipped with simulators covering most operations. Access to cargo-handling simulators, though, was found to be limited. However, this may be because seafarers do not need to undertake training on such simulators at that stage in their career.



Greek seafarers report less favourably on their colleges. In all measures, Greek seafarers report far less satisfaction with their academies, instructors and use of simulators. Greek colleges should investigate this and reflect on the provision of simulators compared with the wider average. The significance of this will be heightened, as revisions to the STCW Convention are expected to prompt a rise in simulator utilisation for training purposes.



### Training – summary

From this survey, it appears that seafarers are mainly happy with the training received at nautical colleges, the outlier in this issue is Greece, where the provision of simulators is far less than for other countries. However, women seafarers report facing some difficulties and colleges should look at how they provide training to all genders. A key issue for all seafarers is finding berths to gain the necessary sea time. The industry is facing a shortage of properly trained seafarers and the industry should therefore look closely at closing any deficit through the increased provision of sea time.

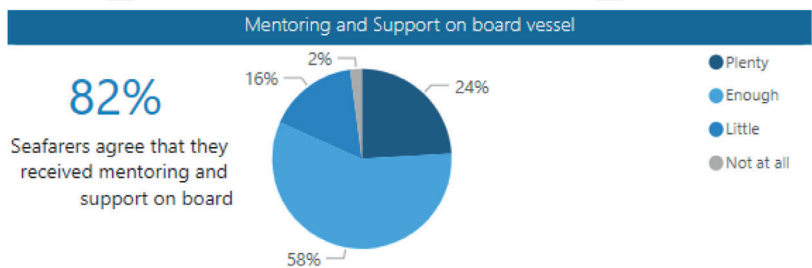
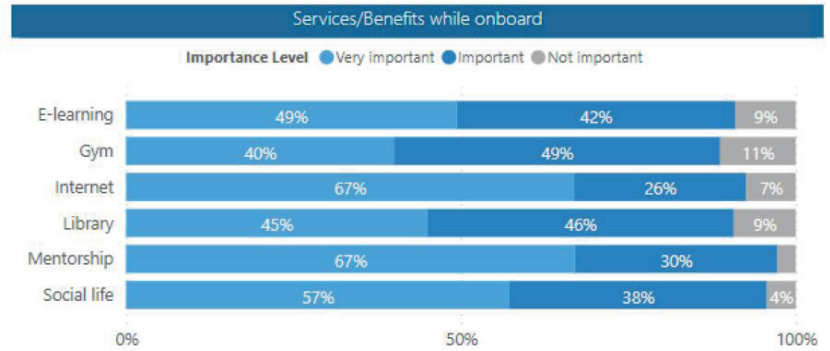
### 4. Living conditions on board

Good living conditions and the provision of welfare support on board are key to attracting and retaining a contented workforce. Among the services grouped under 'welfare' such as the provision of e-learning, a gym, internet access, a library, mentorship and a social life, the highest rating is for mentorship, with few of the others seen as important. Among those aged 18-30, only 2% said that mentoring is not important, indicating the seriousness by which junior officers take their training. Access to the internet was seen in similar importance. For those 18-30, only 3% stated that it is not important, rising to 20% for those aged 50-60. Mentorship remains very important for the 50-60 age group, with only 7% stating that it was not important.

Providing a gym is seen as the least important for all age groups. Similarly, the library is seen as less important, too, with 9% seeing it as not important.

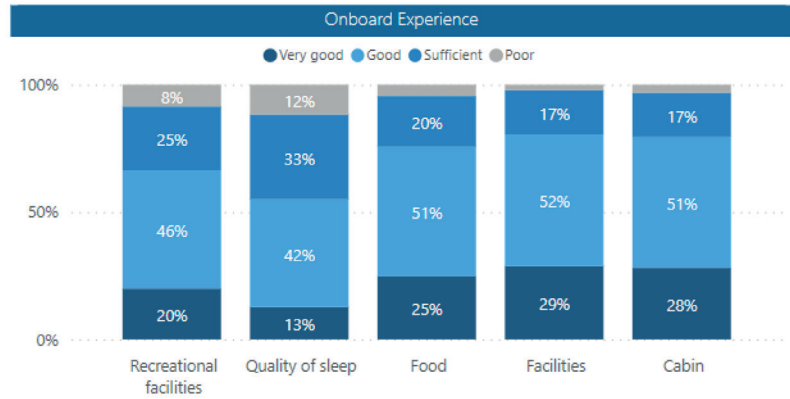
Whilst mentorship was seen as the most important issue, the provision of mentorship would be important. Some 97% of all seafarers stated that mentoring was important, with 82% having been mentored, rising to 83% among those aged 18-30. No differences were found between genders and for nationality, with 88% of Filipino seafarers receiving support, falling to 77% for Indian seafarers. From this, it is clear that seafarers take mentoring seriously at sea; this is a welcome approach when much training is undertaken through onboard instruction. Companies should then prioritise the provision of policies to support mentoring.

The provision of services goes hand in hand to the real-life experience on board. Seafarers were asked to rate the recreational facilities, quality of sleep, food, facilities and the cabin. Quality of sleep scores the lowest rating. Poor quality sleep can be caused by irregular work patterns, stress and quality of the accommodation, including unsatisfactory bedding. It is clear that companies should assess and address the factors affecting sleep as well-rested seafarers have fewer accidents. Similarly, the lived experience of the recreational facilities could be improved. So, whilst the provision of a gym was not rated as the most important issue, the provision of those facilities did appear to be below expectations.



Food on board is often a source of criticism, with only 25% reporting it as very good, and 4% reporting it as poor. Another area often criticised is the cabin, but only 3% reported cabin quality as poor and 79% stated that cabin accommodation was good or very good.

When comparing genders, no significant differences were found.

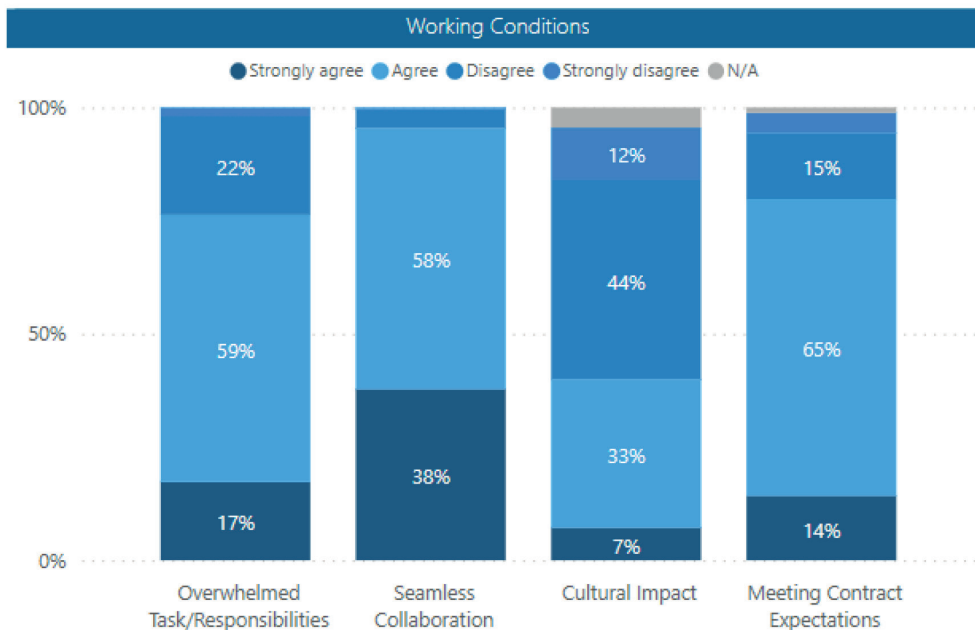


### Living conditions – summary

From the findings, we can ascertain that both recreational facilities and the reasons behind poor sleep quality warrant further investigation. Cabins, while often thought of as a negative, were viewed positively by respondents. Given the significance of mentoring for seafarers, companies must prioritise establishing policies that actively promote and facilitate mentoring programmes and offer greater support mechanisms. Access to the internet was of great importance across every age and nationality group and its provision should no longer be considered a luxury that any shipping company can avoid.

## 5. Working conditions

Moving away from the social and recreational issues, the survey delved into the operational and working environment for seafarers. It explored various facets such as workload, teamwork among seafarers, the impact of cultural diversity in their work interactions, and the alignment of contracts with their expectations.



Some 76% of all seafarers reported feeling overwhelmed by their tasks and responsibilities. It is a concern that three-quarters of seafarers feel they are working beyond their capacity at certain times.

Whilst an increased workload may be expected on chemical and product tankers, there are no significant differences between ship types for any of the issues. However, there are substantial differences reported, depending on nationality.

Nationality	Overwhelmed by tasks and responsibilities
All nationalities	76
Filipino	84
Indian	81
Greek	75
Russian and Ukrainian	59

The differences between nationalities are interesting in that this issue relates to resilience, as all the seafarers will be undertaking comparable roles. Given that all respondents are undertaking comparable tasks, the question of resilience among Filipino seafarers may require investigation at a company level.

Good collaboration and teamwork are highlights of the survey with 96% of all seafarers reporting they experienced high levels of cooperation. Looking at nationalities, 92% of Greek seafarers and 99% of Filipinos reported working well together with colleagues. Given the results, it can be argued that time and resources spent creating a collaborative working environment with bridge team management and officer seminars are being well spent.

Some 40% of seafarers reported that they are affected at work by cultural differences with colleagues. This is particularly important for Filipinos, Russians and Ukrainians, with 47% and 46% respectively. However, only 26% of Indian seafarers reported that cultural differences affected them.

For contracts, 79% of all seafarers agreed that the contracts met expectations. Satisfaction levels rose to 92% for Filipinos and 80% for Indians and fell to 67% for Greeks and 77% for Russians and Ukrainians.

### Working conditions – summary

Close collaboration among seafarers and satisfaction with contract length are positive outcomes. An overwhelming majority of officers are content with contracts and collaborative working arrangements are very much the norm. The very worrying finding is that officers are sometimes overwhelmed by the workload. This applied to all ship types, but with variations between nationalities, which plays into the issue of resilience and should be addressed by companies. Given that over 40% of officers cited cultural challenges impacting their professional interactions, addressing these concerns alongside previously identified discrimination is crucial.

## 6. Safety at work

Safe working environments and the ability to raise issues without fear of consequences are key indicators of a quality operating company. The situation for all seafarers is shown below.



It was welcome to see that 98% of respondents believed that the ship was a safe working environment. The number remains at 98% for oil tankers and rises to 99% for both product and gas tankers.

Some 85% of respondents reported being able to raise complaints without fear of negative consequences. While this figure is very positive, it also means that 15% fear negative consequences, which is too high and bears further scrutiny. When broken down by nationality and ship type, there were no significant differences between nationalities, just one percentage above or below. For ship types, the following differences can be seen:

Ship type	% Fear of raising negative outcome
Oil	15
Gas	16
Product	12

Those serving on oil and gas tankers show no significant deviation. Product and chemical tankers officers have the least concerns over reporting issues.

The key issue for rest hours is whether they are always respected.

Nationality/ship type	% Resting hours are always respected
All	34
Filipino	36
Indian	39
Greek	24
Russian and Ukrainian	37

Operational factors can impact rest hours, meaning the survey results may not indicate widespread breaches, however, the differences between groups do suggest some issues. For example, the Greek officers reported that rest hours are always respected 24% of the time, compared with Indian officers at 39%. On gas tankers, the number is lower at 31%, compared with 35% for the other tanker types, however, more data would be needed to infer that there was a significant difference between ship types.

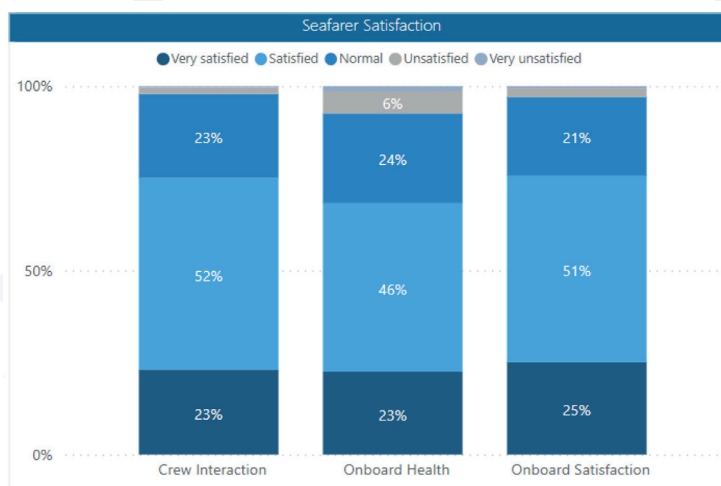
### Safe working conditions – summary

Overall, the picture is very good with the vast majority of seafarers believing they are on safe ships and a large majority comfortable raising complaints and questions over safety. Respect for rest hours shows a difference between Indian and Greek seafarers, however, overall the picture looks good and this is reflected in wider accident, SIRE and Port State Control statistics.

## 7. Seafarer wellness and satisfaction

The connection between safety and wellness is widely recognised. The survey assessed seafarers' career satisfaction in three areas: crew collaboration, onboard health, and overall onboard contentment. Results showed that team collaboration was viewed positively, with only 2% expressing dissatisfaction. However, dissatisfaction rates rise to 7% concerning onboard health and 3% for general onboard satisfaction.

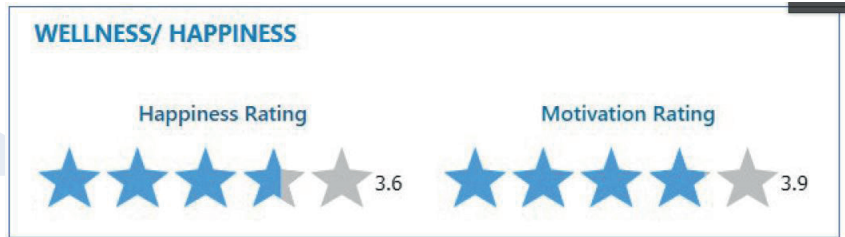
When nationality and gender are brought in, very little changes in crew interaction except for women officers who report higher levels of dissatisfaction – 8% with crew interaction and 12% for onboard health.



Nationality & gender	Percentage of dissatisfaction		
	% Crew interaction	% Onboard health	% Onboard satisfaction
All	2	7	3
Filipino	1	2	2
Indian	1	6	2
Greek	4	14	5
Russian and Ukrainian	4	9	1
Male	2	7	2
Female	8	12	2

Filipino seafarers exhibited the highest level of satisfaction across all measures and while Greek officers reported the lowest level of satisfaction, with onboard health it is evident that the majority of seafarers showed high levels of satisfaction with the overall onboard satisfaction.

Respondents were asked to rate their happiness and motivation. Overall, the happiness rating was moderate at 3.6 out of 5 and slightly higher for motivation at 3.9. Very little changes when taking nationality into account, with Filipinos and Indians slightly higher at 3.8 and 3.9 respectively. Greeks and Russians and Ukrainians are all at 3.4. Women came across as happier than men at 3.8 versus 3.6. For motivation, Filipinos and Indians were the most motivated at 4.1 and 3.9 respectively, Greeks at 3.6 and Russian and Ukrainians at 3.8. Therefore, we can state that motivation levels are almost the same regardless of nationality. With regards to gender, both report their motivation as 3.9.



**Seafarer wellness and satisfaction – summary**

Levels of happiness, satisfaction and motivation were high across the board particularly when taken together with the many other measures in this survey; seafarers seem to be a content group of workers.

**8. Prestige of the maritime profession**

How you perceive others valuing your contribution can significantly impact your life. During the pandemic, most countries designated seafarers as key workers and many rightly lauded seafarers' contribution to maintaining the world's health during this global emergency. The survey then asked what the seafarers thought others thought of themselves. The responses were split into two questions: whether they thought that they were seen as providing an essential role and whether that role was recognised by society. The questions were also split into three parts, focusing on their local community, country and globally.



On average, seafarers considered their role to be important on a local, national and global basis, with similar scores for recognition of their work by society. Filipino seafarers gave the highest rating of 3.1 and 3.2, whereas, Greek seafarers gave a lower level of 2.3 or 2.4. No differences were seen between men and women who rated it at 2.6 or 2.7.

For their recognition, all seafarers gave ratings of between 3.1 and 3.2. Again, Filipino seafarers gave a higher rating at 3.3 to 3.5 and Greek seafarers the lower rating of 2.9 to 3.1. However, all are fairly consistent and again were are no differences between men and women.

**Prestige of the maritime profession – summary**

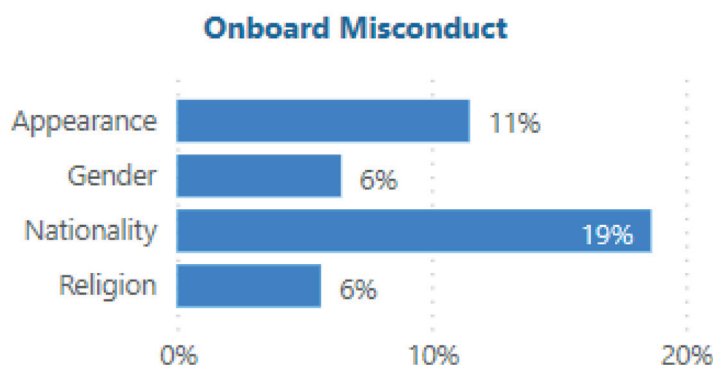
From the findings, seafarers do not see overwhelming recognition for their efforts and so the lesson to be learnt here is that the role of the seafarer should receive greater promotion by all stakeholders within the industry.

## 9. Misconduct and discrimination

Seafarers were asked to report whether they had seen or experienced any discrimination, harassment or bullying and comment on how safe it is for women at sea.

Unfortunately, many seafarers had seen or experienced such misconduct, with nationality being the main cause. For the main nationalities, Indians, Filipinos and Russian and Ukrainians all reported nationality as being the main issue, whereas Greeks reported it as being down to appearance.

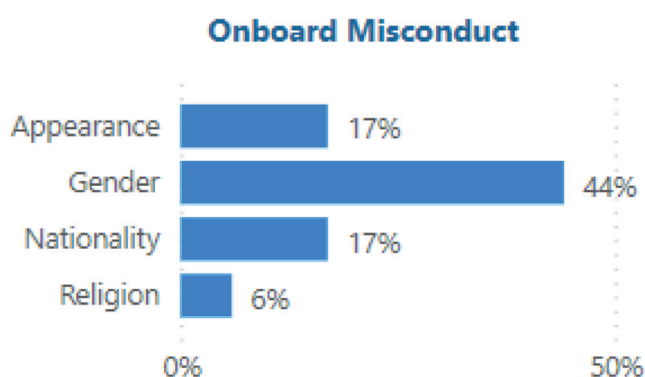
The IMO, in 2023, agreed a series of amendments to the STCW Convention to address bullying and harassment, though the effects of those changes have yet to be seen.



Nationality	Highest reported misconduct	Percentage
Filipino	Nationality	21
Indian	Nationality	12
Greek	Appearance	19
Russian and Ukrainian	Nationality	12

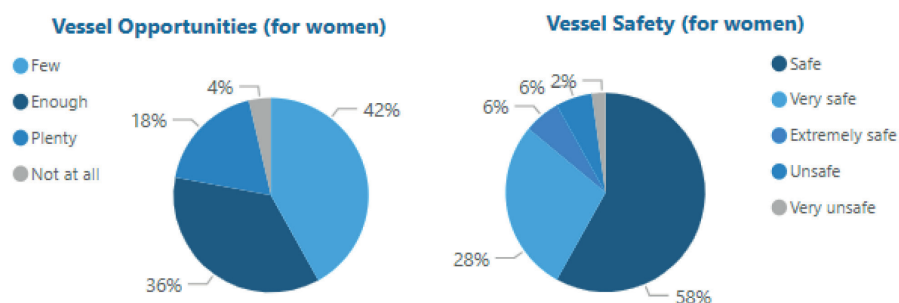
An alarming 44% of women in the survey report harassment on the basis of their gender.

Regardless of STCW amendments, which may ultimately address this issue, it is crucial for companies to quickly tackle harassment, making sure every seafarer feels welcome and valued in their work environment.



### Safety and opportunities for women on board

Some 54% of women respondents believed there are opportunities for them on board, with 46% reporting 'few' or 'none'. This compares with the assessments by their male colleagues, 70% of whom believed that opportunities do exist.



Regarding safety, only 3% of women stated that a ship is 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe', a welcome self-assessment by female seafarers. In the same category, half of all men surveyed believed ships offer a safe workplace for women, with 10% disagreeing.



### Misconduct and gender issues – summary

Gender equality on board is key to making the shipping industry a safe and inclusive workplace for all seafarers and addressing the harassment based upon gender will be key in the retention of women seafarers. However, misconduct and harassment are not just confined to gender, as far too many seafarers suffer or see issues due to nationality, religion or appearance. The responses from all seafarers clearly demonstrate more should be done to improve the shipboard environment.

### 10. Future perspectives

Ascertaining future career paths is a key issue as it indicates how happy or not seafarers really are – and in particular, whether they would recommend the career path to someone else. The findings, broken down by nationality and gender, are shown below:

Nationality/ gender	To become a Master or C/E	To study for higher degree	To recommend the career	Does the career give balance work/life
All	77	71	69	68
Filipino	76	67	80	76
Indian	84	71	61	68
Greek	77	74	74	58
Russian and Ukrainian	71	74	68	71
Male	77	70	69	68
Female	76	84	80	71

The intention to stay at sea to become either C/E or Captain is very high. Overall, 77% wish to stay at sea to gain that position. When considering nationality, 84% of Indian seafarers seek the highest position, whereas the number drops to 71% for Russian and Ukrainians. For gender, there is no difference between them on their ambition to stay at sea. Even taking the lower number, over 70% of all seafarers wishing to stay at sea long enough to become C/E or Captain reflects well on the industry, showing that seafarers are both ambitious and willing to stay at sea for around a decade.

Some differences are seen when recommending the career to others. Filipino seafarers stand out, with 80% recommending the career and this is mirrored for female seafarers. This is worth noting when considering the level of reported harassment by women, yet they continue to recommend it as a career. The lowest score was for Indian seafarers at 61% and this should be seen when compared to them seeking to hold the highest position. Therefore, Indian seafarers are willing to stay at sea long enough to gain command, but only 61% would recommend following that career path. Nationality has no significant effect on the undertaking of a higher degree, however, this appears to be the intention for 80% of women seafarers. The question of work-life balance does not give huge differences except for Greek seafarers who rate it at 58% compared with the overall score of 68. Filipino seafarers rate this the highest at 76%.

The age at which officers aim to leave the sea for a shore job in a shipping company is important as this should be accounted for when estimating the current and future shortage of officers as well as plans for shoreside staff.

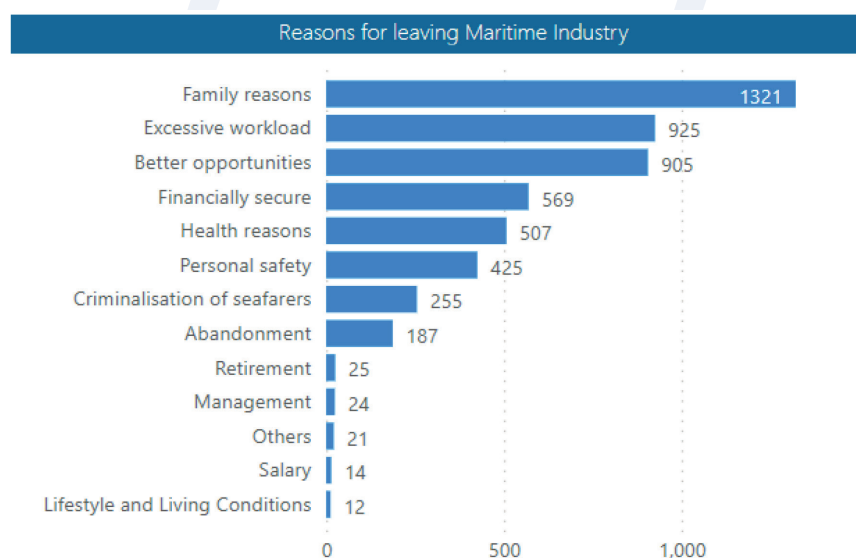
Nationality/ gender	% Intention work ashore	% in 1-2 years	% in 3-4 years	% in 5-6 years	% in 7-8 years
All	60	11	13	15	21
Filipino	57	10	11	16	20
Indian	65	10	12	17	26
Greek	61	15	17	9	20
Russian and Ukrainian	45	8	8	12	17

Nationality/ gender	% Intention work ashore	% in 1-2 years	% in 3-4 years	% in 5-6 years	% in 7-8 years
Male	59	10	13	15	21
Female	72	16	19	14	23
Age					
18-30	64	7	10	16	38
31-40	62	12	16	16	19
41+	47	15	13	12	7

Across all respondents, 60% had aspirations of working ashore. When considering nationality, with Russian and Ukrainian officers this dropped to 45% compared with Indians at 65%. Considering gender, women were much more likely to want to gain a shoreside career with 72% thinking of that. When age is looked into, young officers below 31 had the greatest intent to stay at sea with 64%, but seek to move ashore later. This compared with older officers who were less likely to seek a post in the office but would seek it sooner if they did. This is consistent with a normal career path and should be noted alongside the officers' intentions to stay at sea long enough to gain their certificates.

### Reasons to leave the sea

The reasons provided for leaving the sea are mixed and it should be remembered that these responses are from those still at sea and reflect the drivers for the wish to leave the sea.



For all officers, the biggest motivator was family reasons. Next came excessive workload and better opportunities. The next grouping involved financial security, health issues and personal safety. Two legal issues are of concern, these being criminalisation and abandonment. Issues that barely registered revolve around living conditions, salary and long-term contracts. Apart from retirement, no significant differences were found across the age groups, which understandably feature much more strongly in the older age grouping.

For differing nationalities family reasons is top for all and the main issues for all officers were reflected in the results. For Russian and Ukrainian officers, family reasons were double that of any other issue and the workload for Indian officers is the closest of all to family reasons. This shows that there is a uniformity in why seafarers wish to leave the sea. The conditions on board including contracts and salary do not seem to exert a major push factor; instead, the pull of the shore and family exerts the greatest effect.

### Future perspectives – summary

Officers, in the main, expressed a wish to stay at sea to gain the highest position they can before looking to seek a position ashore. This shows a commitment to their profession and the aim of seeking a long-term career combining sea and shore. Marginal differences between nationalities can be seen, however, the standout group were the women officers who had the greatest number wishing to stay to get promotion, study for higher qualifications and then work ashore. Shipowners, when looking to recruit, should bear this in mind.

The possible push factors for leaving the sea such as salary, living conditions and management do not appear to have a great effect. Instead, the pull factors of family and better opportunities are reported as the main concerns for why the officers would leave.

## **11. Conclusions**

The lived conditions on board ships and the reasons for wishing to leave the sea, are common across the nationalities. Whilst there are some issues revolving around harassment, working hours and workload, dissatisfaction with salary, living conditions and contracts is not supported by the survey. In the main, seafarers are content with their career, wished to pursue the highest professional qualifications and continue their careers ashore.

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