

MARITIME STRATEGY MID-TERM REVIEW

JOINT ECSA/ETF POSITION

BACKGROUND

In the context of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Maritime Transport, the Social Partners ECSA and ETF have agreed to express a joint position with regard to the Commission's Mid-Term Maritime Strategy Review. This joint position should be read in conjunction with the individual position expressed by each of the two associations with regard to the Commission's questionnaire in the framework of the related public consultation.

POINTS OF COMMON INTEREST

1. Stimulate seafarer recruitment and employment

The EU shipping industry is an important source of jobs, both onboard ships – for ratings and officers – and onshore (directly and indirectly). Moreover, shipping-related jobs are often knowledge-intensive and of high-quality. Hence, there is a genuine EU interest not only in increasing the attractiveness of a seafaring career, including for youngsters and women, but also in securing a critical mass of experienced personnel¹ whilst sustaining the competitive position of the European maritime industries.

To that end, the following actions should be adopted:

- Provide for lifelong career prospects in the maritime industry and maritime clusters and facilitate career progression from rating to officer jobs as well as labour mobility in the maritime industries throughout Europe. In this respect, consideration should be given to the findings and recommendations on career paths and obstacles to career progression laid down in the ECSA/ETF Maritime Career Path Mapping 2013 Update.
- Enhance the image of shipping and careers at sea by improving awareness of job opportunities – both onboard and onshore –, by organizing promotion and recruitment campaigns at national level and by encouraging best practices in such campaigns and by highlighting the opportunities that exist to access EU funds for training and education and by making use of the permissible State Aids.

¹ Please find more information on the respective ETF and ECSA positions on employment on their individual contribution, which were submitted online in the framework of the public consultation

2. Stimulate seafarer training

The maintenance of high training standards and the professional competence of crews are essential to ensure safe, secure and environmentally sound shipping operation. Hence there is a need to provide an appropriate framework for the provision/improvement and adaptation of education and training for crews, for example by means of more state support for training and education, as reflected in the Social Partners' Work Programmes, and through continued support for projects put forward by the Social Partners for Maritime Transport in their Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee.

The following measures are suggested:

- Ensuring thorough enforcement of international and European requirements under the international Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) by all nations granting seafarers' certificates of competence.
- Proposing minor amendments to the STCW Convention and Code to solve the inconsistencies that are a consequence of amendments that were adopted in different period in time or from different interpretations of the provisions of this Convention and Code.
- Promoting cooperation between European maritime training institutions for upgrading seafarers' competences and adapting requirements to the pre-requisites of today's shipping industry and maritime clusters.
- Establishing maritime certificates of excellence (European maritime postgraduate courses), inter alia, to prepare seafarers for a career onshore after a career at sea.
- Stimulating the establishment of maritime centers of excellence and develop a voluntary standard of excellent maritime training and education, including leadership, innovation, safety, culture and green shipping.
- Facilitating the establishment of a network of maritime training institutions and academies.
- Stimulating an Erasmus' type model for exchanges of students between the maritime training institutions of the Member States.
- Assisting Member States and the maritime industries in identifying the relevant EU funding programmes for education, apprenticeship and training.

- Promoting in partnership with the industry the provision of places, where necessary backed by financial incentives, for cadets to be taken onboard during their studies in EU training institutes.
- Fostering and supporting research addressing the human element factor.
- Promoting the development of a goal-based framework (including financial support for research) for the safe manning of ships, addressing the issue of fatigue and adequate watch conditions at international and EU level.

3. Improve living and working conditions of seafarers onboard ships

- Stimulating the ratification of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention and its related amendments, by EU Member States, and ensure a proper implementation and enforcement of this convention.
- Supporting the work of the social partners in negotiating a social partners' agreement on the ILO MLC amendments, adopted in 2014.
- Reducing administrative burdens for master and senior officers onboard ships and organize a dedicate forum to identify and solve the relevant burdens.
- Facilitating the use of visa for seafarers for entering, transiting or leaving the Schengen area.
- Promoting the better use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for improving quality of life at sea and foster the availability of broadband communications, including internet.
- Disseminating the relevant documentation for a bullying and harassment-free workplace in shipping and encourage best practices for national campaigns.
- Ensuring the prolongation of the EU NAFVOR/ATALANTA mission in the fight against piracy attacks in the Gulf of Aden to protect the life of seafarers transiting through this region.
- Taking the necessary steps to help shipowners in protecting their crews working onboard ships that operate off the coast of West-Africa.
- Encouraging the European Commission and Member States to take all relevant measures with regard to the issue of migration in the Mediterranean Sea, including in terms of financial resources and deployment of operational means, to fully ensure the immediate prevention of further loss of life.

- Promoting and monitoring the observance of the IMO/ILO Guidelines on Fair Treatment of Seafarers by States, including Member States, so as to avoid criminalization of seafarers.
- Identifying the need for measures to improve onboard health care in cooperation with the industry.
- Identifying possible solutions to address the role of the human factor in maritime casualties.

4. Promote and monitor the ratification, implementation and/or enforcement of relevant international and European legislation

- Monitoring the ratification of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention and its related amendments as well as the implementation of EU legislation related to this convention.
- Promote decent work for seafarers through support for the continuous improvement of the minimum seafarers' rights set out in the MLC, 2006.
- Monitoring the ratification, implementation and enforcement of the STCW Convention.
- Promoting the IMO/ILO Guidelines on Fair Treatment of Seafarers.
- Monitoring the implementation and correct application of the Directive on seafarers amending Directives 2008/94/EC, 2009/38/EC, 2002/14/EC, 98/59/EC and 2001/23/EC.
- Monitoring and promoting the ratification of ILO Convention 185 by States, including Member States.