



The Neptune Declaration

Crew Change Indicator

AUGUST 2021

Overview

The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator is published monthly to provide reliable data regarding the crew change crisis and the way it evolves. It is based on data from 10 ship managers, who are collectively responsible for more than 90,000 seafarers across all the major segments.¹

The August Indicator shows that the number of seafarers onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract has slightly increased from 8.8% to 9.0% in the last month and the number of seafarers onboard for over 11 months has risen from 1% to 1.3%. This could indicate that the situation has started to stabilize since the significant deterioration we have seen in the previous months.

As vaccinations are critical in solving the crew change crisis, we have expanded the Indicator as of August 2021 to include the aggregate percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated. The Indicator shows that in August 15.3% of seafarers have been vaccinated. In comparison, the share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in several large shipping nations in Europe, North America and Asia is at around 50%² (noting that this includes children who have not yet been offered vaccines so the percentage of vaccinated adults is likely higher). This shows that despite progress in seafarer vaccinations, their rates are much behind those of large shipping nations.

Section 1: Overdue Crew Changes

	Percentage of seafarers onboard beyond the expiry of their contracts		Percentage of seafarers onboard for over 11 months	
	Monthly percentage	Percentage point change from previous month	Monthly percentage	Percentage point change from previous month
May 2021	5.8%	-	0.4%	-
June 2021	7.2%	+1.4	0.4%	0
July 2021	8.8%	+1.6	1.0%	+0.6
August 2021	9.0%	+0.2	1.3%	+0.3

The data reflects the situation on the 15th day of the preceding month.

The contributing ship managers have, as part of the reporting, also highlighted the following key developments that have impacted crew-changes in the past month.

- Continual high infection rates and subsequent domestic lockdowns are still challenging crew changes and causing disruption to crew movements and stretching resources, especially in Eastern Europe.

¹ The data is based on monthly reporting by the following ship managers: Anglo-Eastern Univan Group, Bernhardt-Schulte Ship Management, Columbia Shipmanagement, Fleet Management, OSM, Synergy Group, Thome, V. Group, Wallem and Wilhelmsen. The Global Maritime Forum is responsible for collecting and processing the data and publishing the indicator. More detail is available [here](#).

² Source: Our World in Data, [Share of the population fully vaccinated against COVID-19 \(ourworldindata.org\)](#)

- Travel restrictions persist, specifically for seafarers from the Indian subcontinent and China.
- The Philippine government has announced a travel ban for seafarers traveling from the UAE, Oman, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, further disrupting crew movements.
- Many inbound flights have been cancelled, especially to Australia and the Philippines.
- There are ongoing issues related to collaboration in facilitating crew changes between charterers and ship owners.

Section 2: Seafarer Vaccinations

The August Indicator provides a new data point, the aggregated percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated. This percentage will be published monthly going forward with the aim to provide an overview of seafarer vaccination trends and the pace at which these increase month by month.

The August Indicator shows that **15.3%** of seafarers from the sample have been vaccinated.³

	Percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated	
	Monthly percentage	Percentage point change from previous month
August 2021	15.3%	-

The data reflects the situation on the 15th day of the preceding month.

The data shows that seafarers are starting to get vaccinated, especially those from developed countries. Programs are being set up, especially in the US and some European countries, to offer vaccines to international seafarers. However, while seafarer vaccination rates are at around 15.3%, in comparison the share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in the European Union is 48.9%, in Hong Kong it is 35.8%, in Japan it is 32.9%, in Singapore it is 58%, in the United Kingdom this is 56.5% and in the United States this is 49.2%.

While the percentage of vaccinated seafarers remains much below North America, the European Union and some Asian nations, this percentage is closer to those of Africa, Asia and South America. For instance, the vaccination rate in Africa is at 1.8%, that of Asia (not including China) is at 10.9%, and that of South America is at 19.9%.⁴

This reflects the uneven global distribution of vaccines and large variation in vaccine access across nationalities.

Additionally, the contributing ship managers have highlighted the following areas where they are finding most difficulties vaccinating seafarers:

- Leading maritime crew nations continue to have low vaccination rates and seafarers continue to have limited vaccine access.
- The largest challenge is securing the supply of vaccines and severe supply challenges have been identified in the Philippines, Myanmar, Indonesia, Venezuela and Latvia.
- Recognition of vaccinations also continues to be a challenge due to the differing kinds of vaccines or due to vaccination in different locations.
- There continues to be resistance by some seafarers to be vaccinated.
- Few countries are offering vaccination for seafarers while serving on board the vessels.

³ The data has been collected from leading ship managers who have made great efforts in addressing the crisis. It is expected the percentage is likely to overestimate the actual proportion of vaccinated seafarers.

⁴ The data is sourced from Our World in Data and reflects the situation in early August 2021.