



The Neptune Declaration

Crew Change Indicator

MARCH 2022

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 ship managers, who are collectively responsible for more than 90,000 seafarers across all the major segments.

The March Indicator shows that the number of seafarers onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract has increased from 4.2% to 5.0% in the last month. The number of seafarers onboard for over 11 months has remained stable at 0.4%. This increase in numbers reflects the challenges brought on by the omicron and confirms the increasing trend observed in February.

The March Indicator shows that the aggregate percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated has risen from 66.8% in February to 72.8% in March. The share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in several large shipping nations in Europe, North America, and Asia is close to or above 70%¹ so seafarer rates are catching up with these numbers and the seafarer vaccination rate has surpassed the rate in the United States, at 64.6%. It must be noted however, that national percentages are based on the full population and include children, who in most countries are not offered vaccines so the numbers are not fully comparable.

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
March 2022	5.0%	+0.8	0.4%	0
February 2022	4.2%	+0.5	0.4%	0
January 2022	3.7%	-1	0.4%	-0.3
December 2021	4.7%	-2.4	0.7%	-0.3
November 2021	7.1%	-0.8	1.0%	0
October 2021	7.9%	-1.0	1.0%	-0.2
September 2021	8.9%	-0.1	1.2%	-0.1
August 2021	9.0%	+0.2	1.3%	+0.3
July 2021	8.8%	+1.6	1.0%	+0.6
June 2021	7.2%	+1.4	0.4%	0
May 2021	5.8%	-	0.4%	-

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

1 Source: Our World in Data, [Share of the population fully vaccinated against COVID-19 \(ourworldindata.org\)](https://ourworldindata.org/share-of-the-population-fully-vaccinated-against-covid-19)

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

- Crew changes in China are a large challenge due to tight national restrictions, which also make it harder to repatriate crew. This often leads owners to shoulder costs and operational inconvenience to make sure crew changes take place.
- The effects of omicron are being strongly felt. Large numbers of current crew and joining crew are testing positive, which leads to the postponement of crew changes. Additionally, restrictions remain in place in several crew change countries.
- The Philippines have lifted the quarantine for inbound travelers and Australia are opening borders, which is expected to relieve some crew changes in the area.

Section 2: Seafarer Vaccinations

The Indicator provides the aggregated percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated and provides an overview of seafarer vaccination trends, as well as the pace at which these increase month by month.

The March Indicator shows that **72.8%** of seafarers from the sample have been vaccinated.² This corresponds to an increase of 6 percentage points since February.

	Percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated	
	Monthly percentage	Percentage point change from previous month
March 2022	72.8%	+6
February 2022	66.8%	+7
January 2022	59.8%	+10.3
December 2021	49.5%	+8.5
November 2021	41%	+9.9
October 2021	31.1%	+9.2
September 2021	21.9%	+6.6
August 2021	15.3%	-

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

The data shows that seafarer vaccinations are progressing well with vaccine programs being established in numerous countries to offer vaccines to international seafarers. Seafarer vaccination rates are at 72.8%, while in comparison the share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in the European Union is 72%,³ in Hong Kong 68%, in Japan 80%, in Singapore 90%, in the United Kingdom 72% and in the United States 65%.^{4 5}

² 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.

³ <https://vaccinetracker.ecdc.europa.eu/public/extensions/COVID-19/vaccine-tracker.html#uptake-tab>

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-vaccinations-tracker.html>

⁵ The numbers are not fully comparable as seafarers are adults whereas the full population also includes children, who in most countries are not being offered vaccinations.

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

- There remain some geographical difficulties in vaccinating seafarers, due to restrictions by certain authorities and short port stays make it hard to vaccinate seafarers.
- Vaccine hesitancy remains an issue in some specific geographies. Additionally, the increase in breakthrough infections, though less severe, has caused some seafarers to raise questions on the effectiveness of vaccines.
- There are demands for increased booster shots for seafarers. However, vaccination rates have improved overall.

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](#).⁶

⁶ The March Indicator is based on data from 9 ship managers, as Wilhelmsen did not provide data for this month.