

## PRESS RELEASE

# New study finds 15 key pain points for women at sea

*Interviews with 115 anonymous women seafarers from all ranks form the basis of a multi-year effort by the All Aboard Alliance to improve living- and working conditions for women at sea.*

**Copenhagen, 27 April 2023**— The new qualitative study from the Global Maritime Forum and the All Aboard Alliance contains a wide spectrum of perspectives from women seafarers who address the challenges they experience at sea, from ill-fitting safety gear to slower career progression, and harassment.

From the anonymous interviews, the All Aboard Alliance has identified 15 key pain points which fall into four broad categories:

- Difficult for women to succeed professionally at sea
- Challenging social relations onboard
- Employment challenges at sea
- Physical conditions onboard

Some of the pain points are already known, but the detailed accounts are very valuable. The study itself contains a selection of the quotes recorded to illustrate the pain points.

*“We need to make life at sea more inclusive to women seafarers. But now that we have a better understanding of what the pain points are, we can work together to address them. We do not want them to leave their careers at sea because we need them – and we need many more,”* says **Su Yin Anand, Head of Shipping at South32 and Co-Chair of the All Aboard Alliance.**

The qualitative study covers such a wide spectrum of the industry and looks broadly at the problems that face women working at sea. On average, women at sea amount to less than 2% of the total seafarer population.

*“These issues must be addressed. First of all, because it is the right thing to do. Secondly, because the maritime industry is changing rapidly, and more advanced skills are needed – ones which require us to holistically look at the full talent pipeline to identify the best candidates – for the maritime sector to thrive and grow,”* says **Mikael Skov, Co-Chair of the All Aboard Alliance, and CEO of Tanker operator Hafnia**, which in 2022 launched its Maritime Cultural Lab aboard four of its vessels, with crew matrixes consisting of at least 50% women – to learn more about the cultural nuances and impact of a more diverse crew.

It is important to note that many of the key pain points identified in this study – such as bullying and harassment, feelings of isolation, and long contracts keeping seafarers from their families for many months are also considered as pain points for many male colleagues.

### Input for trial vessels

The interviews were conducted as the first part of a pilot project conducted by the All Aboard Alliance. The study covers women of all ranks, from captains to deck hands, and in many types of ships, with most of the women interviewed being from Asia (63%) and Europe (25%).

*“The study provides us with the direction we need to develop adequate measures to find solutions to each of these challenges, and none the least, to decide which of the measures to test in the pilot project later this year. The maritime industry needs female seafarers, and it is important that we work collectively to develop and test ways to make work life onboard more inclusive for everyone,”* says **Susanne Justesen (PhD), Project Director, Human Sustainability at Global Maritime Forum** and author of the report.

In the next phase of the project, to be launched in Q4 of 2023, selected vessels from within the All Aboard Alliance with higher-than-average numbers of women officers and crew members onboard, will test the co-designed measures and solutions in an action-research approach. The goal is to identify which of the proposed solutions are most impactful in addressing the 15 key pain points for female seafarers, and thus best will help the All Aboard Alliance in making a career at sea not just inclusive, but also attractive to more women seafarers going forward.

Read the **Diversity@Sea report no. 1, 15 key pain points for women at sea** [here](#).

### **About the All Aboard Alliance**

The All Aboard Alliance brings together senior leaders from across the maritime industry, united by a collaborative drive towards increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all organisations, at sea and onshore. The All Aboard Alliance is supported by Founding Knowledge Partners: Global Maritime Forum, Diversity Study Group, and Swiss Re. The Alliance was established in 2021 and currently has 36 member companies.

### **About the Global Maritime Forum**

The Global Maritime Forum is an international not-for-profit organisation, headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, committed to shaping the future of global seaborne trade to increase sustainable long-term economic development and human wellbeing.

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