



The Neptune Declaration

Crew Change Indicator

SEPTEMBER 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 September Indicator shows that the number of seafarers onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract has slightly decreased from 9.0% to 8.9% in the last month. The number of seafarers onboard for over 11 months has similarly slightly decreased from 1.3% to 1.2%. After a significant deterioration of the situation since May, the August and September Indicators point to a stabilization of the situation.

As vaccinations are critical in solving the crew change crisis, the September Indicator shows that the aggregate percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated has risen from 15.3% in August to 21.9% in September. 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 over 50%² (noting that this includes children who have not yet been offered vaccines so the percentage of vaccinated adults is likely higher). Thus, despite the progress in seafarer vaccinations, their rates remain 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 |
| 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.

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.

- Travel restrictions, flight cancellations and domestic lockdowns continue to prevent seafarers from going back home.
- Ship managers are facing a shortage of seafarers, and cited travel restrictions for Indian seafarers and the European summer holiday period as causes.
- Governments and ports are placing stricter crew change requirements which have resulted in the cancellation of crew changes.

Section 2: Seafarer Vaccinations

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

The September Indicator shows that **21.9%** of seafarers from the sample have been vaccinated.³ This corresponds to an increase of 6.6 percentage points since August.

| | Percentage of seafarers from the sample who have been vaccinated | |
|----------------|--|---|
| | Monthly percentage | Percentage point change from previous month |
| 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. 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 21.9%, in comparison the share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in the European Union is 56.6%, in Hong Kong it is 42.5%, in Japan it is 42.8%, in Singapore it is 74.3%, in the United Kingdom this is 62% and in the United States this is 51.2%.

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

- There continues to be limited access to COVID-19 vaccines for seafarers, due to supply issues.
- Ensuring access to the second dose of the vaccine remains a challenge, and in many cases there is a significant gap between the two doses for seafarers.
- There have been reports of reluctance by some seafarers to get vaccinated.

Endnotes

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 \(ourworldindata.org\)](#)

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.