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## Press Release · Pressemitteilung

### Talent in Focus:

### SMM 2026 showcases the attractiveness of maritime careers

**Competition for talent is intensifying – Maritime Career Market and industry initiatives provide new momentum**

**Hamburg, 14 July 2026** – The maritime industry is facing one of its greatest challenges for the future: not only must it transform ships, ports and supply chains, it must also attract the people who will drive this transformation. While the industry is investing billions in decarbonisation, digitalisation and maritime security, demand for qualified professionals continues to grow. According to the latest **Seafarer Workforce Report** by BIMCO and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the global shipping industry alone will require more than 113,000 additional ships' officers by 2030. At the same time, competition for skilled professionals is intensifying across virtually every segment of the maritime industry. Companies are looking for engineers, IT and software specialists, automation experts, as well as professionals in offshore energy and port logistics.

This is precisely where SMM 2026 comes in. Taking place on **3 and 4 September**, the **Maritime Career Market** will provide an international platform for recruitment, career orientation and knowledge exchange across the maritime industry.

"The success of the maritime transition depends not only on new technologies, but above all on the people who develop them. With the Maritime Career Market, we are creating opportunities for companies, universities and everyone who wants to shape the future of the industry to connect directly," says **Claus Ulrich Selbach**, Vice President Exhibitions Maritime & Energy at Hamburg Messe und Congress.

The importance of this approach is also emphasised by **Dr Reinhard Lüken**, Chief Executive Officer of the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (VSM): "Germany's maritime industry enjoys full order books and outstanding technological prospects. However, our future competitiveness will depend on our ability to attract enough qualified professionals and young talent. To achieve this, we need to demonstrate just how modern, international and future-oriented maritime careers have become. The Maritime Career Market at SMM brings companies and prospective professionals together face to face – exactly the kind of format we need to inspire people to pursue careers in the maritime industry."

The Maritime Career Market offers space for around 30 exhibitors from industry, academia and education to present themselves as attractive employers. Companies already registered include

**Anschütz, Boluda, DNV, Heinrich Rönner Group, KBN, PROSTEP, SKF and Vulkan.** Participating academic institutions include **Emden/Leer University of Applied Sciences, Flensburg School of Nautical Studies and the University of Rostock.** The format goes far beyond traditional recruitment, showcasing the full spectrum of maritime career opportunities – from vocational training and dual-study programmes to direct entry into shipbuilding, digitalisation, offshore industries, port operations and maritime services.

The Maritime Career Market is complemented by a comprehensive supporting programme. Highlights include the **Career Forum**, featuring presentations and panel discussions on future trends, skills requirements and career opportunities in the maritime world of work, as well as networking formats such as the **Career Happy Hour**, the **Job Route**, **guided tours** and a **school rally** organised in cooperation with the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (VSM). School pupils, university students and accompanying teachers will receive **free admission** to SMM on both event days.

The growing recognition that attracting young talent has become a shared responsibility across the maritime industry is also reflected in the new image and recruitment campaign launched by the **German Maritime Centre (DMZ)**. The campaign will officially launch at SMM during the panel session "Ship your Talent" on 3 September.

"The maritime industry has a great deal to offer young people. Together, we want to inspire the next generation by highlighting the wide range of career opportunities our industry provides. The Maritime Career Market at SMM is the ideal setting for launching this campaign," says **Hanna Maurer**, Project Manager at the German Maritime Centre (DMZ).

With its commitment to talent development, SMM is sending a clear signal: the maritime transition requires not only new technologies, but also fresh perspectives and the skilled professionals who will shape the industry's future. At the same time, the world's leading maritime industry event reinforces its commitment to actively shaping the future of maritime employment.

Companies and universities are still welcome to join the Maritime Career Market as exhibitors and present their employer brand to an international audience.

Further information for [exhibitors](#) and [visitors](#).

### **Maritime Career Market at a glance**

- 3–4 September 2026
- Hall B2, Upper Level
- Career Forum
- Job Route

- Career Happy Hour (3 September)
- Guided tours for apprentices and students
- School Rally
- Free admission for school pupils, university students and accompanying teachers

### About SMM

**SMM – the world’s leading maritime industry event** – will take place from 1 to 4 September 2026 in Hamburg. Under the guiding theme “Driving the Maritime Transition”, it brings together international stakeholders from across the maritime industry to discuss key future topics and actively shape the development of the sector. More than 2,200 exhibiting companies from around 60 countries and approximately 50,000 participants from up to 120 nations are expected. Spanning around 90,000 m<sup>2</sup> across twelve exhibition halls, SMM showcases the entire value chain of the industry. The focus is on energy efficiency as a key lever of the maritime transition, complemented by maritime security and defence, artificial intelligence, decarbonisation, and digital technologies. SMM serves as a central platform for innovation, international exchange and business development. A comprehensive conference programme accompanies the exhibition, including TradeWinds Shipowners Forum, Maritime Future Summit, gmec – Global Maritime Environmental Congress, MS&D – International Conference & Expo for Maritime Security & Defence and Offshore Dialogue. Running alongside SMM, ALL ABOUT PORTS will launch as a new platform for integrated port solutions. The international conference and accompanying exhibition focus on port infrastructure, terminal technology and port logistics, bringing together port operators, technology providers and investors.

**Further information:** [SMM – Driving the Maritime Transition | 1–4 September 2026](#)

### Supporters of SMM 2026

Main sponsor: DNV

Supporters: VDR, VSM, VDMA, GMT, VDS, CLIA

Conference partners: gmec: Seatrade Maritime News; MS&D: German Maritime Institute (DMI);

Offshore Dialogue: Society for Maritime Technology (GMT); Maritime Future Summit: HANSA – International Maritime Journal; TradeWinds Shipowners Forum: TradeWinds

### About ALL ABOUT PORTS

ALL ABOUT PORTS is an international conference with an accompanying exhibition dedicated to the future of the port industry. The inaugural event will take place on 2–3 September 2026 at the CCH – Congress Center Hamburg and will be held in parallel with SMM – the world’s leading maritime industry event. It positions itself as a new platform for integrated port solutions. The focus is on port infrastructure, terminal technology and port logistics, as well as key topics such as digitalisation, automation, sustainability and security. ALL ABOUT PORTS brings together

international stakeholders from the port and logistics industry and fosters exchange on innovation and future-ready port locations.

**Further information:** [www.allaboutports.de](http://www.allaboutports.de)

### **Digital Press Kit**

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For SMM 2026: [Press Shop](#)

For ALL ABOUT PORTS: [Press Shop](#)

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