



## MET in Ukraine in time and after of Russian invasion

Prof. Dr. Mykhaylo Miyusov, Rector,  
Capt. Dmytro Zhukov, Senior Lecturer  
National University "Odessa Maritime Academy"  
Odessa, 65029, Ukraine  
[rector@onma.edu.ua](mailto:rector@onma.edu.ua), [dsz@onma.edu.ua](mailto:dsz@onma.edu.ua)

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### Abstract

Ukraine is one of the leading crew supply countries. Most world-famous shipping companies and recruiting companies have representatives in Ukraine and work with Ukrainian seafarers. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022, with the Russian invasion, the world was changed. The ongoing armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine presents a severe and immediate threat to the safety and security of crews and vessels operating in the region. Ukrainian ports are closed, and some Ukrainian cities are under temporary occupation by Russia. There are four IAMU member institutions in Ukraine: Kherson State Maritime Academy, Kherson; National University "Odessa Maritime Academy," Odessa; Odessa National Maritime University, Odessa and The State University of Infrastructure and Technologies, Kyiv.

The war in our country is the main obstacle for providing students and cadets qualitative MET. Educational institutions can provide online education only and no practical training. More than one-third part of lecturers is out of Ukraine. The Government's financial support to the educational institutions is reduced to a critical minimum. The onboard training is a massive problem for our cadets due to the Government's ban on leaving Ukraine for men aged 18-60. Due to logistical challenges, many cadets onboard the vessels cannot return home. Many students and cadets try to continue their education onboard in Ukraine. Unfortunately, maritime education is not a priority for the Ukrainian Government during the war and post-war devastation. International efforts of the marine industry are needed to support maritime educational institutions in Ukraine.

*Keywords:* MET, War in Ukraine

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### Introduction

International shipping is a truly global industry, transporting over 11 billion tons of cargo to various parts of the world each year. It is not unusual for sea voyages involving a series of international port calls to be serviced by a ship owned, managed, and crewed by companies located in different jurisdictions and registered in another flag State. The ship is also likely to be crewed by seafarers of several different nationalities, certified by labor supply countries that are different from the ship's flag State [1].

The global demand for STCW-certified seafarers in 2021 is estimated at 1,881,320. There is a demand for approximately 883,780 officers and 997,540 ratings [1]. Since the 2015 BIMCO Seafarer Workforce report, the supply of STCW-certified seafarers available to the international trading world merchant fleet has increased, with both numbers of qualified officers and ratings continuing to grow. The number of STCW-certified officers has now estimated at 857,540 - a percentage increase of 10.8% since 2015 [1]. According to data from shipping companies, the five main nationalities of STCW seafarers working within the world merchant fleet are shown below.

	All seafarers	Officers	Ratings
1	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino
2	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese
3	Ukrainian	Ukrainian	Indian
4	Russian	Indian	Ukrainian
5	Indonesian	Russian	Indonesian

Tab. 1 Five main nationalities of STCW seafarers as indicated by shipping companies 2021 (BIMCO Seafarer Workforce Report 2021 Source) [1]

Following the BIMCO Seafarer Workforce Report 2021, Ukraine is one of the five main nationalities of STCW seafarers.

### 1. MET in Ukraine

Main advantages of Ukrainian seafarers and cadet's programs:

- High motivation of Ukrainian citizens to work in officer positions in international shipping;
- High potential to increase the number of ship officers due to the ability of educational institutions to increase the number of cadets and students;
- Relatively low tuition and an opportunity for the best students to study at the expense of the state;
- Favorable conditions for education and training of the foreign citizens;
- A flexible system of training and certification of seafarers to get an opportunity to become junior officers in 4 years;
- Use of active marine officers as lecturers and instructors;
- Support of maritime universities and academies of Ukraine by the shipping industry, cadet programs;
- English language learning and training.

There are four IAMU member institutions in Ukraine: Kherson State Maritime Academy (KSMA), Kherson; National University "Odessa Maritime Academy" (NU "OMA"), Odessa; Odessa National Maritime University (ONMU), Odessa; and State University of Infrastructure and Technologies (SUIT), Kyiv..

The total number of MET students and cadets in these Institutions is about 20 000 (Fig.1).

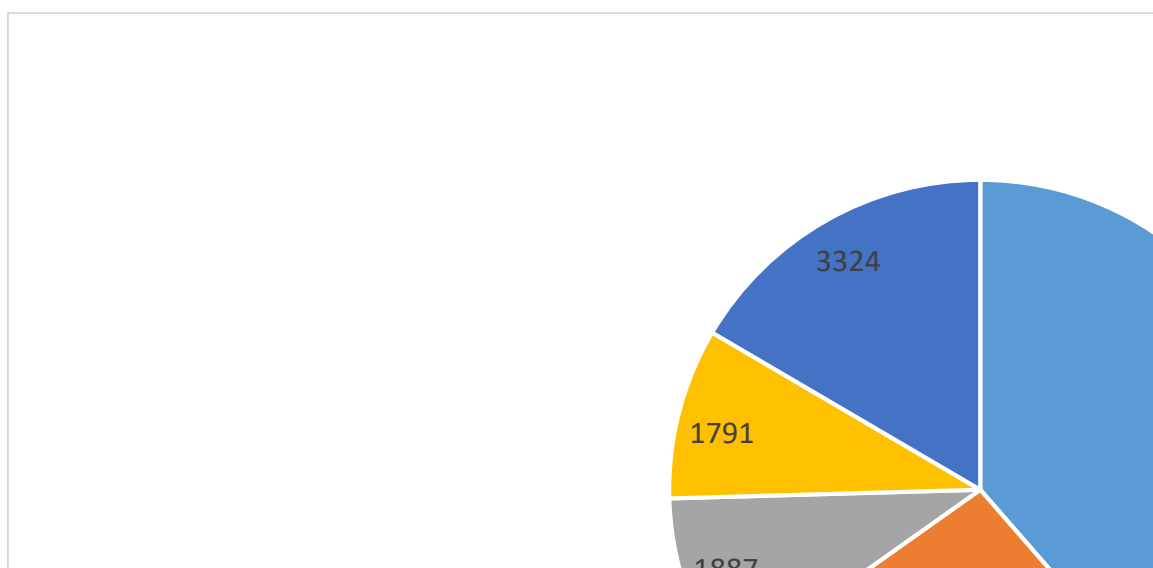


Fig.1 Number of MET students in institutions in Ukraine in 2020

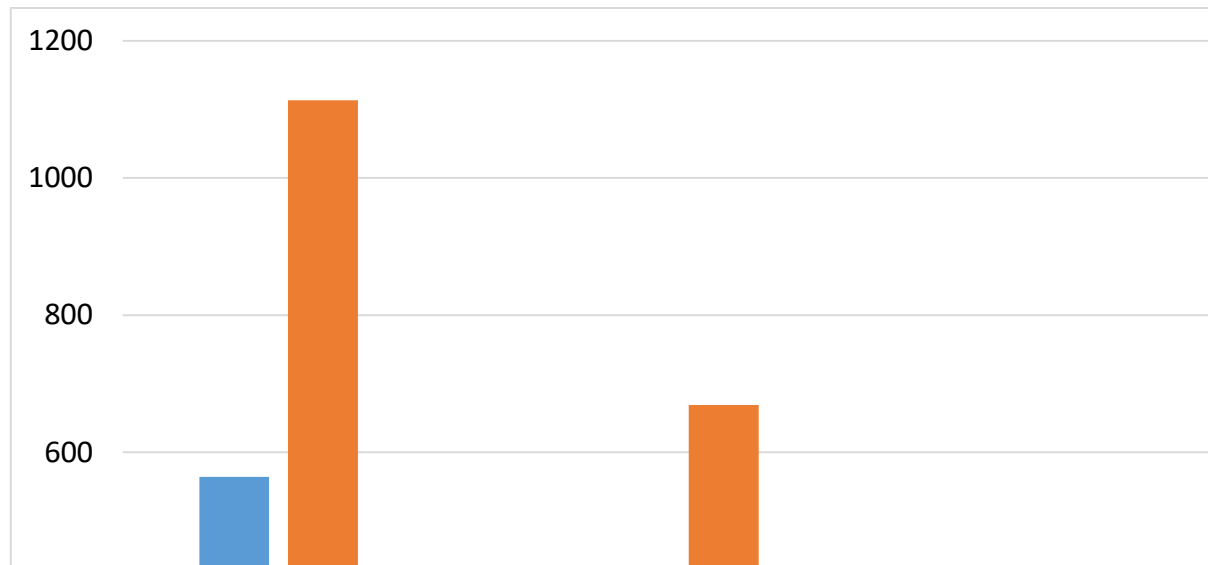


Fig.2 Number of MET students Admission to IAMU member institutions in Ukraine in 2020

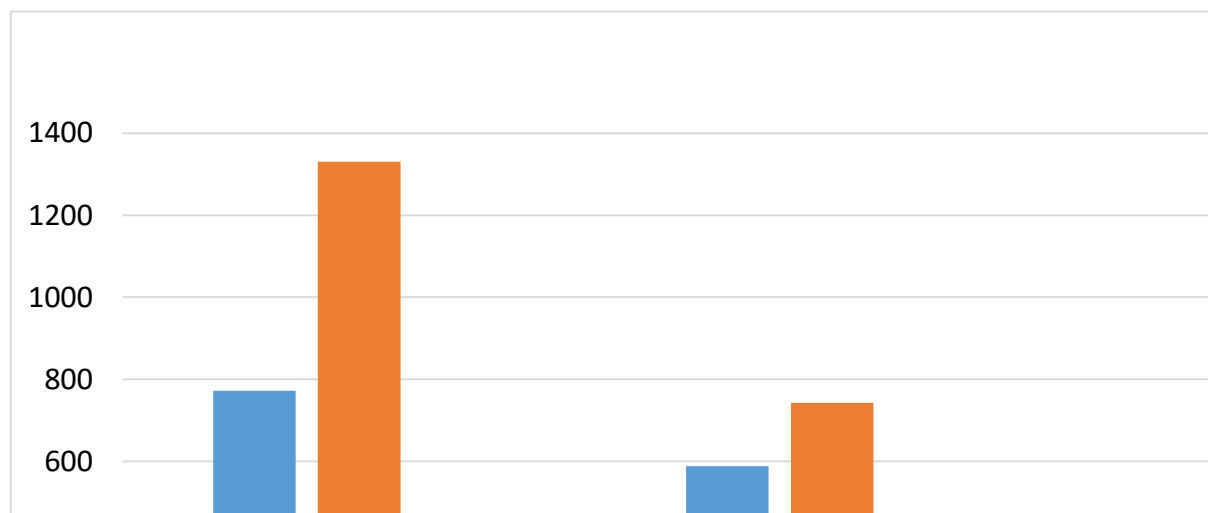


Fig. 3 Number of MET graduates in IAMU member institutions in Ukraine in 2020

## 2. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and MET

The world changed on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 due to the Russian invasion. The ongoing armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine presents a severe and immediate threat to the safety and security of crews and vessels operating in the region. Ukrainian ports are closed, and some of the Ukrainian cities are under temporary occupation by Russia [2].

Russia invaded Ukraine in February, but Ukrainian forces retook large areas around the capital, Kyiv, in early April after Russia abandoned its push towards Kyiv. Following the withdrawal from the north of Ukraine, Russia has refocused its efforts on taking control of the east and south of the country.

Russian forces initially made rapid gains in the south, with their main objective being the creation of a land corridor between Crimea, which has been annexed in 2014, and areas held by Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk. However, strong resistance from Ukrainian forces near Mykolaiv in the west and Mariupol in the east significantly slowed down Russian advances.

The port of the city of Mariupol, which has been encircled since the start of March, is now under the control of Russian forces. Civilian people are under continuous pressure from the Russian forces.

# Areas of Russian military control in Ukraine



Source: Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 12 May)

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Fig. 4 Map the Russian invasion of Ukraine (BBC Source)[4].

To the west, Russia aimed to take control of Odesa and cut off Ukraine's access to the Black Sea. However, its forces were blocked by a staunch defense in Mykolaiv and forced back towards Kherson by Ukrainian counteroffensive in March.

Russian forces regroup in the area to resume attacks on Mykolaiv, and significant efforts are being made to reach the administrative border of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Thanks to the heroism of the Ukrainian military and international support, the offensive of the Russian troops was stopped, and fierce battles continued. Financial problem is the main problem for maritime educational institutions in Ukraine during wartime. Martial law reduced the financial support for maritime institutions from the Government, and the universities' incomes have considerably decreased.

The Azov Maritime Institute of the National University "Odessa Maritime Academy" is in the city of Mariupol, it is destroyed and temporarily occupied by Russia.

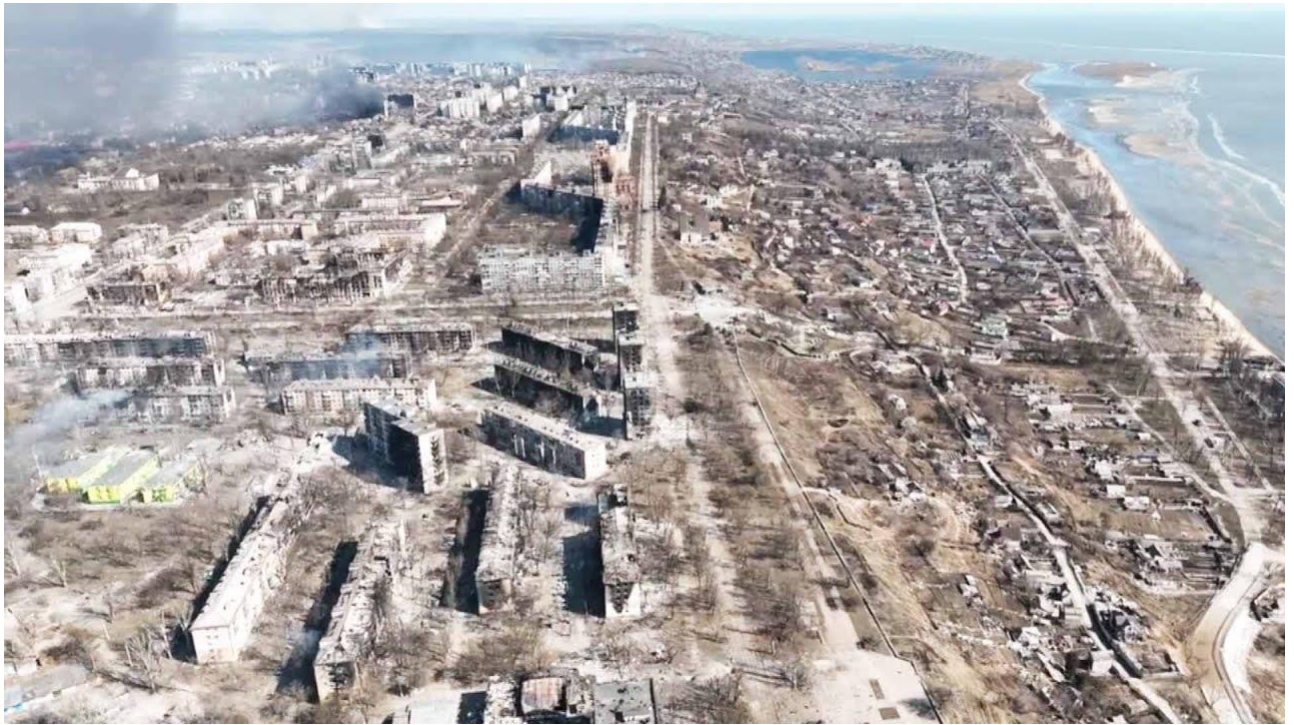


Fig.5 90 % of the City of Mariupol was destroyed by the war.

Cadets and students from Mariupol will continue education at the National University "Odessa Maritime Academy" in Odessa. For NU "OMA," this is an additional complex problem organizing accommodation, financial support, education and training, and employment for cadets, students, and the Azov Maritime Institute staff.

Kherson is under temporary occupation now. The administration of the Kherson State Maritime Academy moved to Odessa and tried to organize distance work of all staff at the Kherson State Maritime Academy and continue the educational process in such critical conditions. The war in our country is the main obstacle for providing students with qualitative MET. Unfortunately, maritime education is not a priority for the Government in the warring country and the post-war devastation. International efforts of the marine industry are needed to support maritime educational institutions in Ukraine.

Our Lecturers provide online education and no practical training now. More than one-third part of our lecturers is out of Ukraine. The onboard training is a massive problem for our cadets due to the Government's ban on leaving Ukraine for men aged 18-60. Due to logistical challenges, many cadets onboard the vessels cannot return home. Many students and cadets try to continue their education onboard in Ukraine.

The total number of NU "OMA" staff is 1025. Part of the administrative and service personnel is official in downtime due to the martial law and only receives a minimum salary. According to Article 34 of the Labor Code of Ukraine, "Downtime is the work suspension caused by lack of organizational or technical conditions necessary to perform the work due to unavoidable force or other circumstances." The total number of lecturers and instructors is 318; about 30 % of lecturers are abroad now.

The World Bank analyses the war in Ukraine to slash Ukraine's GDP output by over 45% [3]. Blockade of the Ukrainian sea ports destroyed the shipping in Ukraine and caused traders to change logistics for shore-based transport. Ukraine is one of the leading crew supply countries. Most world-famous shipping companies and recruiting companies have representatives in Ukraine and work with Ukrainian seafarers. The reorientation of these shipping companies to other crew supply countries inflicts terrible damage on Ukrainian crewing and Ukrainian MET. The war in Ukraine will be a reason for the shortage of qualified seafarers for global shipping.

## Conclusion

We believe the war will end, and we can return to normal life and work.

We might call post-war perspectives which must be a priority for us:

- Visa-free regime with the EU, permission to work in the EU countries, the status of a candidate for membership in the European Union;
- Marshall Plan for Ukraine, international support for economic development;
- Support Ukrainian MET by foreign partners;
- Favorable conditions for business development, preferential taxation;
- Odessa should become the center of international maritime business due to a visa-free regime and developed infrastructure that has not suffered because of the war.

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