



ICS ANNUAL FORUM

November 27, 2024

PRESS RELEASE

19TH ANNUAL FORUM

INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED SHIPBROKERS GREEK BRANCH

27/11/2024

TITLE: "SHIPPING BEYOND BORDERS"

The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers Greek Branch held its 19th Annual Forum, on Wednesday, 27th of November 2024, with the theme "**SHIPPING BEYOND BORDERS**".

This year's event took place with physical attendance at the Eugenides Foundation, while it was broadcast live around the world and attended online by hundreds of friends and Members of the Institute. Among the distinguished guests was **H.E. Mr. Matthew Lodge, His Majesty's Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic**, who later addressed the audience during the Awards Giving Ceremony.

A welcome address was made by **Ms Natalia Margioli - Komninou FICS**, Managing Director of the ICS Greek Branch and Hellenic Management Centre. Ms Margioli-Komninou emphasized the international presence of ICS and highlighted Greek Branch's dedication to excellence in maritime education and professional development. She mentioned that the Branch has educated 4,000 students to achieve ICS Membership, a prestigious mark of competence in the shipping industry. This success is attributed to the commitment of expert tutors who inspire and shape the next generation of professionals. She concluded that with over 10,000 professionals benefitting from corporate training programs, ICS continues to support both individuals and organizations in adapting to the evolving industry while the Company Membership scheme is now open to companies that wish to benefit from the ICS's international recognition and expanded business networks.

Mr Nicolas A. Tsavlis, FICS, Chairman of the ICS Greek Branch and Tsavlis Salvage Group addressed a very warm welcome to the attendees of the Forum. Mr Tsavlis highlighted the profound challenges and opportunities facing the shipping industry in an era of rapid change. Geopolitical instability, including conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, cyber threats, and the potential impacts of shifting global trade policies, underline the fragility of international stability. Reflecting on the theme *Shipping Beyond Borders*, he emphasized the need to transcend modern boundaries - geopolitical, digital, environmental, and regulatory - while embracing innovation and resilience. Drawing

inspiration from maritime history and the teachings of Heraclitus, he urged industry to adapt to evolving currents such as decarbonization, digitalization, and autonomous vessels.

During the 19th ICS Annual Forum, the **Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, Mr Christos Stylianides**, delivered a video message emphasizing the vital role of the Greek maritime sector in driving the nation's economy. Highlighting Greece's position as a global leader in shipping, he underscored the sector's contribution to employment, innovation, and international trade. Mr Stylianides commended the ICS Greek Branch for its pivotal role in educating the next generation of maritime professionals, reinforcing Greece's legacy in shaping the future of the shipping industry.

The panel included the following distinguished speakers:

- Harris Antoniou · Founder & CEO, Neptune Maritime Leasing Ltd.
- Helena Athoussaki · Chief Sustainability Officer, Motor Oil Group
- Dimitris Patrikios, FICS · Managing Director, V. Ships Greece Ltd.
- Mark Pearson, Managing Director, Maran Tankers Management Inc.
- Eva Tzima · Head of Research & Valuations, Seaborne Shipbrokers
- Dimitri Vassos · Managing Partner, HFW Greece
- John A. Xylas · President & CEO, Ariston Navigation Corp.

The panel was moderated by **Mr Simon Ward, FICS**, Director, Ursa Shipbrokers. His expert facilitation of discussions, posing critical questions, and encouraging diverse viewpoints, played a crucial role in the success of the event.

The forum itself was very informative and comprehensive, covering a spectrum of issues facing the shipping industry at a global level.

Ms Eva Tzima highlighted the challenges in the current market, emphasizing that sentiment plays a significant role in pricing, and uncertainty is leading to cautious decision-making. She noted that the dry bulk slowdown reflects China's shift toward quality over quantity and its reduced reliance on property-driven growth. **Mr Mark Pearson** emphasized the nature of shipping as a highly regulated industry, where compliance requires significant resources and adaptability. He highlighted that, in the context of sustainability, company size plays a crucial role, with larger organizations better equipped to navigate regulatory challenges and implement sustainable practices effectively. **Mr John Xylas** highlighted the uncertainty in the market over the past six to twelve months, emphasizing that many owners remain cash-rich, reducing the urgency to sell, while operators face challenges in securing long-term charters due to a lack of available vessels. He pointed out the trend toward consolidation in the industry but noted that the foundation of shipping continues to be small to medium enterprises. This underscores the resilience required by smaller players to adapt to the evolving regulatory environment. **Mr Dimitri Vassos** reflected on the impact of sanctions and protectionist policies on sale and purchase transactions. He emphasized the need to adapt to the

geopolitical landscape and recognized the evolving role of ESG compliance in shaping the industry's future. **Mr Dimitris Patrikios** underscored the importance of agility in navigating economic and market volatility. He addressed the challenges posed by the energy transition, emphasizing that while it is a necessary societal shift, the availability of alternative fuels remains limited and not yet scalable to meet the industry's demands. **Mr Harris Antoniou** discussed the growing trend of economic fragmentation and its implications for shipping, emphasizing the industry's resilience as a connector in global trade. He also reflected on the financial sector's heightened scrutiny of emissions, acknowledging that while intervention is sometimes necessary to influence progress, the challenge lies in ensuring these measures are effective and aligned with long-term goals. **Ms Helena Athoussaki** emphasized the significance of ESG as a comprehensive framework comprising policies, procedures, metrics, and targets that evaluate a company's performance concerning financial risks and opportunities across the pillars of environment, social responsibility, and governance. She highlighted the importance of analyzing trends by assessing both their risks and opportunities, underscoring ESG's growing role in shaping strategic and operational decisions within the maritime industry.

The panelists collectively highlighted that future maritime professionals should embody integrity, humility, and a strong work ethic as the foundation for success. Agility, adaptability, and collaboration across departments are crucial for navigating a volatile market and driving strategic decisions through data insights. A passion for the industry, commitment to excellence, and a willingness to learn were deemed essential, while traits like negativity, unresponsiveness, and unethical behavior were discouraged. These qualities define the ideal profile for thriving in the dynamic shipping industry.

PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY

The emphasis on essential skills and attributes for future maritime professionals resonates with the outstanding achievements of ICS Greek Branch. The excellent performance of the Greek Branch is translated into 5 International Prize Winners and 4 distinction students, who have excelled in the ICS Professional Qualifying Examinations in 2023-2024. All of them were honored during the **Awards Giving Ceremony**, which was included in the Annual Forum's proceeding.

During the award presentation, **H.E. Mr. Matthew Lodge, His Majesty's Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic**, highlighted the significance of the ICS in advancing professional standards within the shipping industry. He praised the Institute's long-standing legacy, established under its Royal Charter in 1920, for shaping maritime education and contributing to the sector's global development. The Ambassador expressed the British Embassy's pride in collaborating with the ICS Greek Branch and commended its efforts to promote professionalism in this vital field. Concluding his remarks, he congratulated the award recipient for their exceptional achievement, embodying the excellence fostered by the ICS.

The International Prize Winners are:

- Philip Iliakis, Trafigura: Award to the candidate with the highest marks in Ship Sale & Purchase Examinations worldwide
- Liesza Bertram – Sotiriadis, Holland Hellenic Shipping Agencies: Award to the candidate with the highest marks in Shipping Finance Exams worldwide
- Panagiotis Michaleakos: Award to the candidate gaining the highest marks in Dry Cargo Chartering worldwide
- Alexandra Mangos (2 prizes): Award to the most successful candidate overall in Examinations and award for gaining the highest marks in Shipping Law worldwide

The distinction students are:

- Eleni Manioudaki, Ifchor Galbraiths: Award to the candidate gaining a distinction in Shipping Finance Examinations
- Alexios Mavropoulos, Halkidon Shipping Corporation: Award to the candidate gaining a distinction in Ship Sale and Purchase Examinations
- Emanet Meliksha: Award to the candidate gaining a distinction in Shipping Business Examinations
- Evangelos Karagoudakis, Wilhelmsen Port Services: Award to the candidate gaining a distinction in Shipping Business Examinations

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