

MARINA ALIFEROPOULOU

Shipping Lawyer & Mediator Legal Counsel (Greek shipping companies)

I I was born in Piraeus; I hold the LL.B. from Athens Law School, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the LL.M. in maritime law, from the University of Southampton, UK; I am currently a PhD candidate in maritime law & marine insurance; I speak fluent English & French; I am also a qualified Mediator before the Greek Ministry of Justice.

My experience includes working as a lawyer in the shipping industry for more than 25 years; at first, with major Greek shipping law firms in Piraeus, and, now as a legal counsel in Greek ship-managing companies. The above practice has a theoretical aspect: I am the author of many publications and articles, actively participating in conferences and maritime events in Greece and abroad.

Also, I am the mother of Miss Aliki Peppa, who is currently a student in the maritime business management.

The above path had been very harsh and unequally competitive; at all times, I had to create ways on my own to maintain and promote my work; however, I am grateful to a very few high esteemed professionals who supported this career.

2 The proportion of women in business leadership has increased very slowly over recent years.

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, in 2021, women accounted for an average of 30,6 % of the members of boards in the largest listed companies and for only 8,5 % of chairpersons. That indicates unfair and discriminatory under-representation of women, thereby clearly undermining the principles of equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in the fields of employment and occupation.

Furthermore, in its communication of 5 March

2020 entitled «A Union of Equality: the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025», the Commission emphasised that the European Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies should ensure the gender balance in the leadership positions. In its communication of 5 April 2022 entitled «A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission», the Commission committed to ensuring full gender equality at all levels of its management by 2024. In addition, according to the ILOSTAT: «Unfortunately, women around the world still face additional hurdles to access employment, and once in employment, to access decision-making positions and jobs in certain sectors or of certain characteristics. This horizontal and vertical gender segregation of employment, combined with the unequal distribution of unpaid work (including household and childcare activities), results in differences in working conditions such as the gender pay gap and the over-representation of women in part-time jobs».

Many women are to be found in fields such as human resources and communication, while men at a senior level are more likely to be employed in general management or line management within the same company. The current lack of transparency in the selection process and qualification criteria for director's positions in the shipping business represents a significant barrier to any gender balance

and negatively affects the women board candidates' careers.

Ensuring equality in the workplace is also a key prerequisite for reducing poverty among women.

According to my opinion, binding measures should be adopted to increase the presence of women at all levels of the shipping decision-making. As an example, there should be established a set of procedural requirements concerning the selection of candidates for appointment to shipping director's positions, based on transparency and merit. The promotion of the equal participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels will enhance and make full use of all talents. In that regard, making use of all available talent, knowledge and ideas would enrich the diversity of human resources and improve maritime business prospects. Penalties should be also introduced, which may comprise fines, or the possibility of a judicial body to annul a decision concerning the selection of directors made contrary to gender equality national provisions.

Today a large pool of highly qualified women in the shipping business remains without any appointment in the shipping managerial positions; although, the presence of women improves the governance, the team performance, the quality of decision-making, by a more diverse, collective mind-set and wider range



of perspectives. Therefore, we should aim to increase the presence of women in the high ranks of the shipping industry, in order to boost economic growth, encourage labour market mobility, and achieve an effective gender equality on the shipping market.

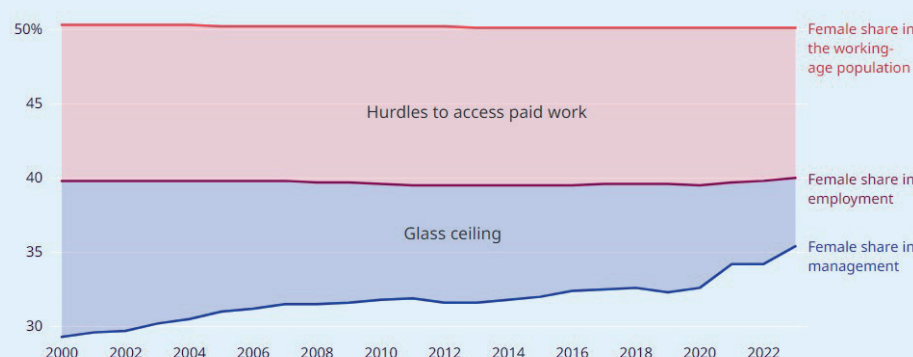
3 According to the UNCTAD Review of the Maritime Transport 2024: The 2021 blockage of the Suez Canal by the Ever Given, underscored the grave implications of disruptions for trade and the global economy; yet, just after recovering from the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic and having started to adjust to new shifts in trade patterns triggered by the war in Ukraine, global supply chains and trade are now grappling with an additional wave of disruptions; recent challenges faced since late 2023 in the Red Sea and the Suez Canal as a result of Houthi attacks on ships crossing the waterway have added more complexity to the

maritime operating landscape; the attacks have caused vessels across most fleet segments to avoid the Red Sea and the Suez Canal and to navigate around the Cape of Good Hope; this has led to extended distances and transit times and higher operational costs for shipping companies, ports and trade.

As the sector navigates these complexities and, in a world, where disruption is becoming part of the "new normal", building sustainable and resilient maritime transport is not just an option—it is a strategic necessity.

This may be achieved mainly through acceleration of decarbonization, support of vulnerable countries and economies, strengthen international cooperation to stabilize trade routes, combat fraudulent registration of ships, enhance support to safeguard food security, minimizing disputes & war, keep insurance available.

► Female share in management, employment and the working-age population compared, 2000-2023

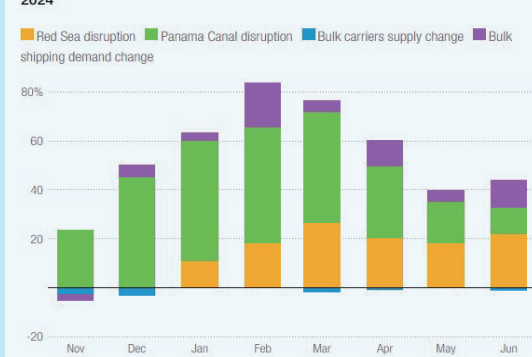


Last update: 17 January 2025

Source: ILO Modelled Estimates and Projections (ILOEST) Database, Nov. 2024 edition, ILOSTAT • [Get the data](#)

► Baltic Dry Index: Impact of Panama Canal and Red Sea disruptions

Cumulative percentage change and its breakdown, November 2023–June 2024



Source: UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) calculations, based on data provided by Clarksons Research Shipping Intelligence Network, and Martech Services Limited, Sea. [Get the data](#) [Download image](#)