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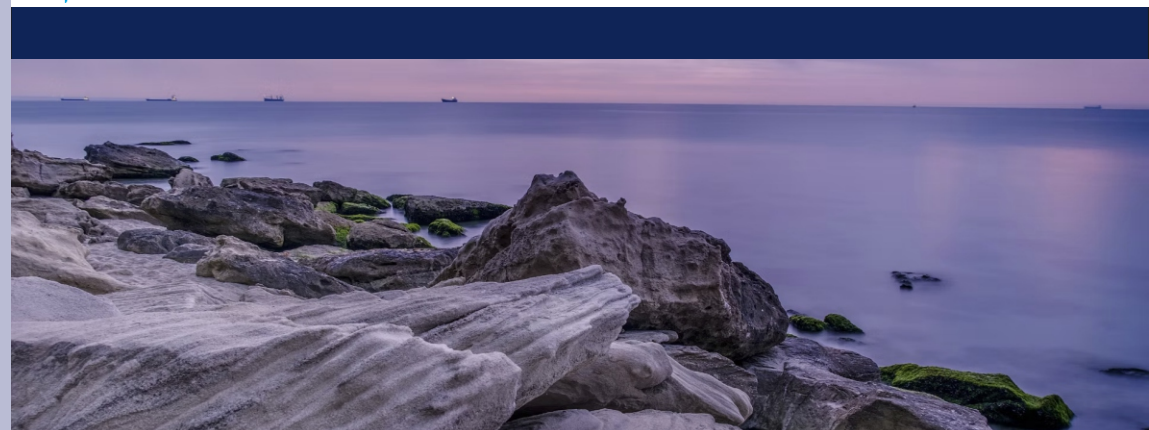
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INTERNATIONAL MARITIME FORUM GLOBAL COMPASS 2026 Varna | September 8–9, 2026

“Visionary and Actionable Horizons:
Turning Maritime Policy into Safe, Efficient
and Sustainable Practice”



Under the honorary patronage of the
President of the Republic of Bulgaria
and with the support of Varna Municipality

08:30 - 09:00 | Registration | Cherno More Hotel | Cherno More Hall

09:00 - 09:30 | Opening Remarks & Welcome Addresses

- Opening ceremony - Capt. Stanislav Stoyanov, Bulgarian Shipmasters Association (BSMA), Chairman
- Welcome address - Vice Admiral Mitko Petev, Official Representative of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria
- Welcome address - Admiral Emil Eftimov, Chief of Defence of the Republic of Bulgaria
- Welcome address - Blagomir Kotsev, Mayor of Varna
- Welcome address - Capt. Alexander Kalchev, Chairman of the Bulgarian Chamber of Shipping (BCS); Chairman of the Board, Bulgarian Shipowners' Association (BSA).
- Welcome address - Todor Angelov, Club of Marine Engineers, Chairman

09:30 - 12:30 | Panel 1: GEO-POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN SHIPPING; Moderator: Yavor Velchev - SHIPPOSSIBLE INSURANCE

Founder Speakers:

- Jake Bond - Preston Turnbull LLP, Solicitor and Master Mariner; Topic: "When Geopolitics Reaches the Bridge"
- Melis Otmar ACIL - Head of Marine Claims, London Howden Insurance Brokers; Topic: "From Red Sea to Autonomous Shipping: How AI and Geopolitical Risk Are Reshaping Marine Insurance Claims"
- Theodosios Stamatellos - Lloyd's Register, Fleet Operations Center, Director; Topic: "How geopolitical developments translate into operational realities from the perspective of a classification society."
- Cyril Widdershoven - Senior Advisor, Blue Water Strategy; Topic: "Maritime Chokepoints, Energy Security and the New Geopolitics of Global Trade: Strategic Risks and Opportunities for Governments and Industry."

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

Coffee Break 20 minutes (depending on session timing)

- Stavros Karamperidis - Associate Professor in Maritime Economics, Head of the Maritime Transport Research Group, University of Plymouth
- Richard M. Gunn - Reed Smith LLP, Partner, Maritime Lawyer; Topic: "30 years of the Salvage Convention – hull, clubs, war, and sanctions."
- Neil Roberts - Lloyd's Market Association Head of Marine; Secretary of Joint War Committee; Chair of IUMI Policy Forum; Topic: "The London war insurance market"
- Anna Carnielli - Studio Legale B&C Barcati-Carnielli & Partners, Maritime Lawyer; Topic: "Sanctions, Tariffs and Regulatory Compliance - Company compliance in shipping industry as a strategic tool"
- Yavor Velchev - SHIPPOSSIBLE INSURANCE, Founder; Topic: "Blacklists & Battlefields - War Insurance in Sanctioned Seas"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

12:30 - 13:15 | Networking Break: Light Catering & Beverages

13:15 - 15:30 | Panel 2: PORTS & TERMINALS: OPERATIONS AND ADVANCEMENT; Moderator: Ralitsa Zlateva - Marine Operations Analyst, Koch Shipping

Speakers:

- Thomas J. Wiker - Gallagher Marine Systems (GMS), President; Topic: "Strengthening Global Maritime Safety: Insights from U.S. Incident Response Practices"
- Pavel Sheytanov - Corporate Sales Trader & F-Gas Lead, Vertis

Environmental Finance; Topic: "EU ETS and Maritime Shipping: From Regulation to Commercial Reality"

- Walter Vervloesem FNI - Nautical Institute London, President; Topic: "Supporting Net-Zero Through Cargo Knowledge and Cargo Care"/"Cargo Care – The Missing Step in Reaching Net-Zero"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

Coffee Break 20 minutes (depending on session timing)

- Manolis Nikolaïdis - Nautical Institute Greece, Secretary General; Topic: "Black Sea Blue Future: Decarbonisation and Port Cities in Transition"
- Marcello Pica - Monaco Chamber of Shipping, VP; Marine Partners Monaco, President & CEO; Grimaldi Group, HR Director
- Dimitris Monioudis - Managing Director, Rethymnis & Kulukundis Ltd; Chairman, INTERCARGO Technical Committee; Topic: "Dry Bulk at a Crossroads: Operational Reality and the Case for True Collaboration"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

Coffee Break 20 minutes (depending on session timing)

15:45 - 17:00 | Special Panel: From Sea to Space - Bulgarian Innovation in Action Industry, Defence, Education and Emerging Technologies; Moderator: Svetoslav Stamenov - Founder and Manager, ITR Management Consult OOD, PMP

Panel Convenor and Curator: Nikolay Bedzhev — PhD, Marine Pilot, University Lecturer and Owner of NauticBlue

Speakers:

- Plamen Manushev - Vice Admiral (Ret.), Former Commander of the Bulgarian Navy, Consultant at MTG-Dolphin plc; Topic: "Proteus 36 MLC: The Future of Autonomous Naval Warfare and Distributed Maritime Operations"
- Radoslav Kalchev - Master Mariner, Founder, Windy BG Ltd., GWO Training & Safety Innovation; Topic: "Integrated Safety Technologies for Maritime, Offshore and Renewable Energy Operations"
- Borislav Teberov - Founder, Pontic Dynamic; Topic: "Autonomous maritime systems build for real-world missions"
- Nikolay Bedzhev - PhD, Marine Pilot, University Lecturer; NauticBlue, Owner; Topic: "Next-Generation Ship Theory: An Integrated Platform for Engineering Education and Simulation"
- Zdravko Atanasov - Master Mariner, Simulation Engineering, Member of BSMA; Topic: "IntelliCelestial – Innovative Simulation Platform for Modern Astronavigation and AI-Augmented Star Tracking"
- AstroCadets - Naval Academy Cadets; Topic: "An Intelligent VR System for Space Mission Simulation, Underwater Training and Psychophysiological Crew Assessment"
- Dinko Manolov - Founder and CEO, Kodin Space; Topic: "Space Situational Awareness and Orbital Intelligence"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

DAY 1



Have a question?
Scan the QR Code
and ask the moderator.

08:30 - 09:00 | Registration

Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy Planetarium

09:00 - 09:30 | Opening Remarks & Welcome Addresses

- Welcome address – Rear Admiral Prof. Dr. Kalin Kalinov, Rector of Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy
- Welcome address - Svetoslav Todorov, Head of Handy Operations, Cobelfret NV Global Shipping Delegate, Whale Guardians™ Programme
- Welcome address - Alessandro Geretto, President of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Bulgaria
- Welcome address - ICT Cluster (TBC)
- Welcome address - Deyan Dimitrov, PhD, Attorney at Law | Chief Assistant Professor, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences | Legal Advisor to the Bulgarian Shipmasters Association (BSMA)

09:30 - 12:15 | Panel 3: MARITIME INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Moderator: Milena Stoycheva - Chief Executive Officer, The Edge

Speakers:

- Simon Bennett - International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), Deputy Secretary General; Topic: "The IMO Net-Zero Framework for GHG reduction: latest developments and will it be adopted this year?"
- Thomas Klenum - Executive Vice President, Innovation & Regulatory Affairs, The Liberian Registry (LISCR); Chair, IQARB; Topic: "Navigating IMO Decarbonization: Collaborative Pathways for Shipyards and Shipowners"
- Milena Stoycheva - Chief Executive Officer, The Edge; Topic: "How to build a Maritime Tech Ecosystem - The Roadmap"
- Jordan Taylor - Director, Project Harrison, Fulbright Specialist; Topic: "How Project Harrison is building Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence for the Commercial Maritime Industry"
- Mikael Khelia - Port State Control & Flag State Implementation Expert, EMSA

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

Coffee Break 20 minutes (depending on session timing)

- Madlen Jekova - CEO Stellium Group; Topic: "The Wellbeing Paradox of Maritime AI: Why More Data Hasn't Moved the Numbers"
- Viktor Dukov - Founder and CEO of SeAI; Topic: "Where the Sea meets the AI"
- Nicolas Ponet - Head of Sales at Vanguard Tech; Topic: "From geopolitical intelligence to operational response – managing maritime risk when conditions change faster than the policy environment."
- Rüçhan Derici - Founder & CEO, 3e Group | Logistics & Industrial Transformation Expert; Topic: "Beyond Digitalisation: Turning Maritime Rules into Defensible Decisions"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

12:15 - 13:00 | Networking Break: Light Catering & Beverages

13:00 - 15:30 | Panel 4: SEAFARERS' HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SKILLS; Moderator: Andreana Ivanova MICS - Cargill, Laytime and Invoice Operator

Speakers:

- Andrew Cook FNI - Secretary General, International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA); Topic: "The Human at the Sharp End"
- Hubert Ardillon - Secretary General, Confederation of European Shipmasters' Associations (CESMA); Topic: "Seafarers Health, Safety, and Skills"
- Zalao Sanchez Varela, AFNI - University of Split, Professor Assistant, Faculty of Maritime Studies; Topic: "Safety at sea is not gender-neutral: from evidence to engineering change for women seafarers"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

Coffee Break 20 minutes (depending on session timing)

- Stella Kiss - Clinical Psychologist and Head of Operations at Mental Health Support Solutions (MHSS); Topic: "When AI Becomes a Confidant"
- Mihaela Ivanova - Deputy Crewing Manager, Unity Ship Management Ltd; Dimitar Yordanov - Administrative Manager, Unity Ship Management Ltd; Topic: "Crew Welfare Is Not a Benefit"
- Douwe van der Meulen - Policy Advisor – Social Affairs & Maritime Security, European Shipowners | ECSA
- Hristo Papukchiev - Master Mariner; Maritime Safety & Risk Management Expert; Topic: "Decision Space: From Choice to Constraint – Understanding the Progressive Degradation of Decision-Making in Maritime Navigation: An analytical framework for recognising the transition from available options to inevitable outcomes"

Q&A (Questions & Answers) session – participants can submit questions via Slido on the topics discussed (time permitting).

15:30 | Official Closing Act and Resolution

- Capt. Dimitar Dimitrov, PHD, FNI; President of CESMA and IMO GMA for Bulgaria
- Capt. Ivaylo Paskov, AFNI; Deputy Chairman, Bulgarian Shipmasters' Association (BSMA); Senior Marine Superintendent, Navibulgar

Time: 15:30 | Varna Landmarks Sightseeing

Discover the cultural and historical highlights of Varna on a guided tour.

DAY 2



Have a question?
Scan the QR Code
and ask the moderator.