

80 years of the National University "Odessa Maritime Academy": Achievements and Prospects

The National University "Odessa Maritime Academy" (NUOMA) began its history on June 7, 1944, when by the order of the People's Commissar of the Maritime Fleet of the USSR, the Odessa Higher Marine School (OHMS) was founded. It was decided that higher marine schools would train deep sea navigation officers, ship's mechanical engineers, ship's electrical engineers, and radio engineers. OHMS launched study programmes for four specialties: Navigation, Ship Power Plants and Mechanisms, Ship Electrical Equipment and Mechanisms, Ship Radio Equipment.

Over the years, the Odessa Maritime Academy has had various names: Odessa Higher Marine School (since 1944), Odessa Higher Engineering Marine School (since 1958), Odessa State Maritime Academy (since 1991), Odessa National Maritime Academy (since 2002), National University "Odessa Maritime Academy" (since 2015). Currently, the academy's name relates to the highest level of educational institution in Ukraine (National University) and includes our brand "Odessa Maritime Academy," which is well-known worldwide.

The university is a leading educational, scientific, and methodological centre that defines the strategy and pathways for the development of maritime education in Ukraine and actively cooperates with leading maritime higher education institutions worldwide. The high professionalism and qualification of academic staff, compliance with international and national education and training standards have always been indispensable conditions for the high-quality training of top specialists for the maritime industry.

strategic goal of NUOMA's activities is to meet the growing educational and cultural needs of citizens of Ukraine and foreigners in obtaining higher maritime education, which guarantees employment, ensures high wages, career promotion prospects throughout life, and competitiveness in the global labour market. The prerequisites for achieving this goal are the growth in volumes of maritime shipments in global shipping and the increased demand for highly qualified specialists of the sea vessels' crews and onshore services of the maritime industry. Maritime transport accounts for more than 90 % of global trade. Thanks to the university graduates, Ukraine is among the leaders in the number of officers on ships flying the flags of European Union countries and on ships of the global merchant fleet in general.

Since Ukraine's independence, NUOMA has launched new study programmes, created a network of subdivisions as follows: the Naval Institute, Azov Maritime Institute (the city of Mariupol), Danube Institute (the city of Izmail), Danube

Professional College (the city of Izmail), Professional College of Maritime Transport, the Military Training Department of the Professional College of Maritime Transport, and Maritime College named after O.I. Marinesco. Due to the occupation of the city of Mariupol, the Azov Maritime Institute has been temporarily relocated to Odessa, the base institution. In addition, the university operates: the Institute of post-diploma education "Training and Certifying Centre of Seafarers", the Centre of post-diploma education of Transport Infrastructure Specialists, the Training Centre "Survival under Extreme Conditions at Sea", the Training and Simulator Centre for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), Medical Centre "Academmarine", a publishing centre, sports complex, and more.

The number of cadets and students of the university, with its subdivisions, is more than 7,000 people. Additionally, thousands of seafarers annually undergo refresher and updating courses at the university. The system of training and certification of seafarers in Ukraine is recognised by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). It allows graduates of the university to work in various foreign companies, as well as on ships flying the flags of European Union countries. International experts state the high-quality of education and training programmes and training courses at the university, a high-quality certification system, a high level of training facilities and simulators, and the high qualification of NUOMA teaching staff.

Educational programmes of NUOMA for first (Bachelor's), second (Master's), and third (educational-scientific, PhD) levels of higher education meet the standards of higher education and are accredited by the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance. The quality management system of the university is certified in compliance with ISO 9001:2015 and DSTU ISO 9001:2015 by the certification body "Bureau Veritas Certification Ukraine". The certification scope includes educational activities at different levels of higher education; methodological, scientific and innovative activities; practical training of seafarers and employment promotion.

The university cooperates fruitfully with world leading maritime professional associations: the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) and the Nautical Institute of Great Britain (NI) (London, UK). The university is represented in the governing bodies of both institutes. Four bachelor and four master programmes related to different fields of engineering are accredited by IMarEST to meet the requirements of the highest level of "Chartered Engineer" in the UK, and the programmes in the field of navigation are recognized by the Nautical Institute of Great Britain.

NUOMA is an active member of the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU), established under the auspices of the Nippon Foundation

(Japan) in 2000. The university's representatives, including students, regularly participate in the annual general assemblies and conferences of the association held at various maritime universities (academies, institutes) around the world - members of the association. NUOMA takes part in the work of committees, working groups, and conducts research projects with partners within the association. Over several years, one or two students from the university receive scholarships from the association. The association conducts student forums at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization in London, in which university students participate. The IAMU student forum provides an opportunity for the next generation of maritime industry leaders to communicate and collaborate with leading global researchers, educators, and experts in the maritime field, as well as students from around the world.

The university's academic staff regularly work as members of the Ukrainian delegations as well as the ones of the International Association of Maritime Universities at the assemblies, and sessions of committees and subcommittees of the International Maritime Organization, primarily the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and the Subcommittee on Human Element, Training, and Watchkeeping (HTW). The International Maritime Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships.

For many years, NUOMA has actively participated in various international educational and research projects: NELI, NEWADA, MOWE-IT, HINT, MARINE, IAMU, TEMPUS, DEEP, ERASMUS+, Horizon Europe, and more. The university's lecturers participate in conferences of the International Association of Maritime Lecturers (IMLA): International Conference of Navigation Simulator Lecturers, International Conference on Engine Room Simulators, and International Maritime English Conference.

It has become a good tradition to hold the annual International Forum on Seafarers' Education, Training and Crewing in Odessa. In April 2013, the university, together with the "Odessa House" exhibition centre, successfully held the first forum, which included a conference and exhibition at the Passenger Terminal of the Odessa Sea Port. The forum received high praise from the international maritime community and at the participants' request became an annual event for the university and our city. Usually, representatives from over 20 countries worldwide participate in the forum.

NUOMA possesses all the necessary facilities, methodological support, and personnel to train graduates in accordance with the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers

(STCW Convention). Bachelor programmes include all types of mandatory training for obtaining the first Officer's Certificate of Competence (CoC). Master's programmes and refresher and updating courses enable graduates with the appropriate practical experience to hold senior officers' positions (Master, Chief Engineer). The Institute of post-diploma education at the university has created conditions for effective upgrading of seafarers' competency.

The Institute of Maritime Law and Management, in addition to solid professional knowledge and skills, provides an in-depth knowledge of the English language, giving its graduates significant advantages when applying for employment in international and foreign companies, which highly value our graduates.

The presence of scientific schools, PhD and doctoral studies, a specialized scientific council for the thesis defence, and the publication of collections of research papers provide the opportunity for effective training of highly qualified personnel: PhDs and Doctors of Science. PhD studies are carried out in the following fields: Maritime and Inland Water Transport, Management. The university's specialized scientific council is entitled to consider and conduct the thesis defence for the scientific degree of Doctor of Sciences in specialties such as "Navigation and Seagoing Ships' Handling," "Operation and Repair of Transport Means". The university publishes the collection of scientific works: "Navigation," "Ship Power Plants," "Automation of Ship Technical Means" and proceedings of annual scientific conferences.

For students, there is a four buildings' campus, a canteen, a library, a sports complex, a modern medical centre, and a gas boiler installation. NUOMA has created all conditions for physical training and sports: an Olympic-class swimming pool, fitness halls and gyms, a mini-stadium, and a water station on the seashore.

In accordance with the STCW Convention and the National Provision on Certification of sea-going ships' officers, under the education and training programmes, all cadets undergo onboard training. Its total duration for navigators is 12 months, and for other specializations - 12 months of combined practical training, including onboard and technological training at the university's workshops and ship repair enterprises. Onboard training is undergone on ships of Ukrainian and foreign shipping companies. The cooperation of the university with many companies on the cadets' onboard training and their subsequent employment is based on the appropriate agreements.

Despite the problems caused by the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine, the onboard training is being performed. The Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has regulated the procedure for crossing the state border by students sent to foreign companies for onboard training. Annually, about

1,000 full-time cadets undergo onboard training on ships of more than 100 foreign companies. The main partners of the university are MSC Shipmanagement, V. Ships, Marlow Navigation, Alpha Navigation, Anglo-Eastern, Columbia Shipmanagement, Uniteam, Univis, Stargate, CMA Ships, OSM Crew Management, Eurocrewing, Staff Centre, Acomarine. All foreign companies cover the costs associated with providing cadets' onboard training, including air travel and other transport expenses to and from the ship, meals, insurance, wages, and others. Every year, with the support of foreign partners, the university upgrades its laboratory and simulator base.

Long-term partnership unites the university and the Trade Union of Marine Transport Workers of Ukraine (MTWTU). The trade union implements various support programmes for students and university employees. With the support of MTWTU and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), a major project worth about 660 thousand US dollars was implemented for the purchase and installation of a full-scale engine room simulator K-Sim ERS Wärtsilä RT-Flex by Kongsberg Maritime (Norway). The project's funding was provided by the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC). At the initiative of MTWTU, the ITF Seafarers' Trust supported future seafarers by paying for the education of university students who are internally displaced persons from the occupied territories of Kherson and Donetsk regions of Ukraine, children of seafarers called up for military service, and children from low-income families.

Every year, the university graduates from 2000 to 3000 specialists of different levels from Junior Specialist to Master. In wartime conditions, the university organized and provide the educational process, ensured the possibility for students to undergo simulators' training in laboratories, and onboard training, as well as graduation certification.

Graduates of the university have good employment opportunities in maritime business. A NUOMA Diploma guarantees wide career promotion, both at sea and ashore, at enterprises and companies in the maritime industry. Our doors are always open to graduates and friends. We invite everyone who wishes to continue the glorious traditions of the university and become a high-class professional in the maritime industry.

We believe the war will end soon and we can return to normal life and normal work. We can say with confidence that maritime education in Ukraine has excellent prospects.

The preconditions for this are:

the excellent traditions of education and training of ship officers in Ukraine;

the presence of several maritime educational institutions that were not damaged as a result of the war and retained a unique laboratory and training base,

and teaching staff. Educational institutions have the opportunity to significantly increase the number of students;

the seafaring profession remains very attractive for Ukrainian youth due to the high level of remuneration;

the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine is introducing a system of educational grants that expands opportunities for obtaining higher education in accordance with the wishes of applicants, fully or partially without payment;

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;

significant representation of shipping and shipmanagement companies in Ukraine and in particular in Odesa;

international support of Ukrainian MET institutions by partners.

Odesa should become the centre of international maritime business due to favourable conditions for business development, preferential taxation, a visa-free regime, developed infrastructure, and significant professional human resources.

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