

MARINE TRANSPORT WORKERS' TRADE UNION OF UKRAINE E-BULLETIN

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2026

DEAR FRIENDS!

The Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine is constantly moving forward. It strives for new achievements, consistent steps toward change, and readiness to respond to the challenges that time brings us. We are starting this year with renewed energy, but with an unchanged mission — to support and protect Union members wherever they are.

Even thousands of kilometers away from home, amid war, instability, and global transformations, the MTWTU stands by its members: staying in touch, providing necessary support, and taking decisive action. Every day, we are reminded that true international solidarity knows no borders, and we continue to strengthen our cooperation with partners and organizations around the world. We work to ensure that Ukrainian seafarers have decent working conditions, social guarantees, and reliable protection, and most importantly, can look to the future with confidence.

The Union continues to provide legal and social support. We have continuously accompanied and will continue to maintain our course alongside the freedom-loving younger generation, whose knowledge, ideas, and dreams will become new lines in Ukraine's maritime future, which we are writing together.

The MTWTU remains a dedicated, reliable and unbreakable support for the Ukrainian maritime community. Only through joint actions can we confidently move forward towards a sustainable future. Together we are stronger!

Your sincerely,
Oleg Grygoriuk
Chairman MTWTU
IMO Goodwill Ambassador in Ukraine
Vice President of IFSMA



STRENGTHENING YOUTH MOVEMENT

CADETS ON BOARD A SHIP IN KLAIPĖDA



As part of the joint MTWTU project with Norwegian shipowner Wilson, company representatives traditionally maintain close ties with cadets who, with the MTWTU support, are studying under the double degree programme of the Kherson State Maritime Academy and the Lithuanian Maritime Academy. This time, Wilson representatives personally visited the LMA to talk to future maritime industry specialists.

Second-year cadets, who are preparing for their first voyage, had the opportunity to visit the WILSON GDANSK company's ship in the port of Klaipėda. During the visit, the cadets had a unique chance to see how the ship works from the inside: they learned about how the bridge works, the features of the engine room, and took part in real crew training exercises.

The MTWTU continues to follow youth from their first professional steps, supporting their educational process and providing new opportunities for reaching career success.



PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY ON BOARD: MTWTU SEMINAR FOR FUTURE SEAFARERS



As part of a joint project with the Danish trade union 3F, the MTWTU held a thematic seminar for cadets of maritime educational institutions on combating bullying and harassment on ships.

“Unfortunately, issues of violence and harassment remain relevant for many seafarers. For MTWTU, it’s important that cadets are informed about their rights at the earliest stages of their professional career and have a clear understanding of how to act when faced with such situations and where to turn for help,” emphasised Oleg Grygoriuk, MTWTU Chairman.



The first speaker at the seminar was Sergiy Dudchenko, Master Mariner, PhD, Associate Professor, Instructor, Researcher, Advanced Open Water Diver, Managing director of Kherson Maritime Specialised Training Centre (KMSTC). He provided detailed information about the latest amendments to the STCW-78/95 Convention. The Assistant to the ITF Inspector in Ukraine provided more detailed information on how to recognise bullying and harassment, respond appropriately and report violations.



USQE 2026 ABROAD: MTWTU RECEIVES THE “GREEN LIGHT”

The MTWTU held a Roundtable on the holding of the 2026 Unified State Qualification Exam (USQE) for students majoring in ‘Maritime and Inland Water Transport’. Representatives of all maritime higher and pre-higher education institutions of Ukraine, the Shipping Administration, and the State Institution “Scientific and Methodological Centre for Higher and Professional Pre-Higher Education” participated in the event in person and online.

The meeting's main goal was to agree on next steps and gather information on the need to hold the USQE abroad this year. MTWTU Chairman Oleg Grygoriuk also reported that Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine Mykola Trofymenko fully supported the MTWTU's initiative to hold the USQE for maritime specialties abroad.

“This isn't the Union's main job, but we consciously took on this responsibility for the profession, for the industry, and for the future of Ukrainian seafarers. Now that we have received the go-ahead for further action, we are collecting data from maritime educational institutions on the number of cadets outside Ukraine. This is necessary for the next step — an order from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine confirming the possibility for maritime specialties to take the USQE abroad,” said Oleg Grygoriuk.



FUTURE SEAFARERS VISIT MTWTU



Investing in the future of the industry means working with those who are just taking their first steps in the profession right now.

Today, cadets from the Odesa Maritime College of Fishing Industry named after Oleksii Solyanyk visited the MTWTU. Discussions focused on the union movement, practical tools available during training, including free English lessons, VR training, educational initiatives and other projects aimed at developing professional skills, international support and ITF activities.



STANDING WITH SEAFARERS BEYOND BORDERS

UNION ON CALL: SUPPORT FOR SEAFARERS IN CHISINAU



We continue to work with Ukrainian seafarers in Chisinau in the form of a temporary field office, which has already proven its effectiveness.

Today, seafarers received advice on current professional issues, submitted applications for assistance if needed, obtained union membership cards, and had the opportunity to communicate with each other. The Union stands by its members wherever they live. The demand for such meetings is growing, and with it the opportunity to provide real help to everyone who needs support.



LEGAL SUPPORT FOR UNION MEMBERS

MTWTU LAW HUB – EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS IN LEGAL SUPPORT



International Labour Organization



Belgium
partner in development

The MTWTU has been cooperating with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for many years to support maritime professionals. In 2025, a new path of cooperation began — the ILO project “ILO Support to Ukraine: Prevention of Labour Exploitation and Human Trafficking, Support to Entrepreneurship Development and Social Partners”, funded by the Government of Belgium.

Within the framework of the project, MTWTU LAW HUB was created — a consulting centre that provides free-of charge legal support to Union members.

In 2025, the Hub's specialists continued to provide support at all stages of submitting and receiving documents, helping to understand the procedural nuances and other issues that seafarers faced when obtaining the necessary documents in Ukraine.

IN 2025 346 CONSULTATIONS were provided:



- requests from seafarers
- requests from employees of maritime transport enterprises, organisations and institutions
- requests were processed during a meeting with seafarers in Varna (Bulgaria)
- requests were processed in person at the MTWTU office in Odesa
- requests were processed abroad



SEAFARERS' WELFARE

FAIRY-TALE ADVENTURES FOR CHILDREN FROM THE MTWTU

We continue to live in the reality of war with the hope of saving our relatives and our future — children who are still waiting for a holiday tree, gifts, and a Christmas atmosphere that brings back a sense of carefreeness, at least for a moment.

Despite all the challenges, MTWTU traditionally celebrated the winter holidays together with its members and their families. The children's smiles, laughter and happy eyes were the best proof that even in difficult times, when every day is a new challenge, the holiday spirit must live on.

The Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine continues to protect and support its members and give them faith in miracles — even when winter is far from festive.



Santa Claus' New Year's Residence with the support of Norwegian shipowner Wilson and sweet gifts from MTWTU



Theatre performance for children of seafarers who are MTWTU members at the at the Odesa Academic Ukrainian Music and Drama Theatre named after Vasyl Vasytko



A festive atmosphere in Izmail, where an event with entertainers, games and gifts was also organised for children.



Festive theatrical performance 'Winter Snowstorm' at the Beit Grand Cultural Centre for children of Union members registered with local trade union organisations in Odesa and Chornomorsk



FOR MORE DETAILS

+380482 42 99 01

mtwtu.org.ua

office@mtwtu.org.ua

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facebook.com/MTWTU
[mtwtu_itf_ukraine](https://t.me/MTWTU)
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