

**Work package n°2 - Gap analysis of competencies and teaching materials*****Focus Group 1 - Analysis of approach to teaching and teaching materials***

*Report on the results of analysis of approach to teaching and teaching materials.*

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## I Introduction

This report contains results of the analysis of approach to teaching and availability of teaching materials for Maritime law according to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978 (STCW Convention) which is performed in according to the WP2 “Gap analysis of competencies and teaching materials” of the MareLaw project.

The targets of the analysis can be listed as follows:

- 1) to identify the current state of approaches and teaching materials for Maritime law courses in the project partners’ universities;
- 2) to identify differences and similarities;
- 3) to analyse compliance with the STCW Convention;
- 4) to determine the possibilities of improving and harmonizing course outlines and teaching materials.

The analysis were performed in two stages:

- 1) Double screening of approaches and teaching materials – conducted in such a way that each of the partners reviewed the course syllabuses and teaching materials of the other partners and tried to identify common topics that are covered within the course and described the approach and teaching materials used by each of the partners.
- 2) The results of the double screening were discussed by the first focus group, held from 13.-14 June, 2023, in Riga Technical University (RTU), Latvia, in order to further crystallize the matching areas and ways and opportunities for improvement.



### 1.1. The syllabuses examined for the purposes of the analysis

The several Syllabuses from all partners were examined during this activity by each of the project partner:

#### The Syllabuses of RTU:

1. Maritime Law (mandatory subject for bachelor's degree, 80 academic hours);
2. Ship Management (mandatory subject, 80 academic hours);
3. Technology and Cargo Transportation (mandatory subject, 160 academic hours);
4. Environment Maritime Protection (mandatory subject, 80 academic hours).

#### The Syllabuses of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya BarcelonaTech (UPC):

1. Maritime Legislation (mandatory subject for bachelor's degree, 75 h);
2. Regulation, Ship Operation and Logistics (mandatory subject for bachelor's degree, 225 h).
3. Maritime Legislation, Regulations and Economy (optional subject for bachelor's degree, 150 h);
4. Management of Maritime Safety and Pollution Prevention (mandatory subject for Master's degree, 45 h).

#### The Syllabuses of the University of Split (UNIST):

1. Maritime Law I (mandatory for 1st year of study, 30 L);
2. Maritime Law II (mandatory course for 2nd year of study, 45 L);
3. Maritime Law, Average and Damage (mandatory course for 3rd year students, 30 L).

### 1.2. Participants

In the work of focus group 1, held from 13.-14. June, 2023, in Riga, Latvia, the teachers who teach Maritime law according to the STCW Convention at partner institutions and other teachers who teach related subjects, the content of which includes some elements of Maritime law with an emphasis on the protection of the marine environment, took participation. 6 representatives from RTU (Latvia), 3 from UNIST (Croatia) and 1 from UPC

(Spain), were present in the meeting in the focus group 1. Several representatives joined to the meeting in online (1 – from UNIST and 3 – from UCP).

Except the participants from the project partners, the 3 persons, lecturing on Maritime law or related subjects, from Montenegro University (Montenegro) took part in the meeting.

Additionally, the representative from the Seamen’s Register of Maritime Administration of Latvia (hereinafter – Seamen’s Register) took part in the meeting of the focus group 1. The main objective of the project is to improve and harmonize elements of the Maritime law curriculum in according to the STCW Convention in the involved partner universities in the maritime field. In Latvia the Seamen’s Register is one who is responsible for certification of compliance of the study programs of maritime students with the STCW Convention. Therefore, the Seamen’s Register as an expert in respect of STCW Convention requirements to the Maritime law curriculum for maritime students in Latvia was invited to take part in the discussion on the current state of approaches to the course content and teaching materials for the Maritime law courses taught according to the STCW Convention. Participation of the Seamen’s Register was for benefit of all parties. For Seamen’s Register it was possibility to learn more about his project, to the problems associated with the teaching of Maritime law to maritime students and the ways to improve and develop the Maritime law curriculum. As well, partners gain benefit from the learning about Seamen’s Register approach and opinion in respect of application and implementation of the STCW Convention requirements etc.

## II Analysis of approach to teaching – similarities, differences and compliance with the STCW Convention

Today STCW Convention is in force in 167 countries (the combined merchant fleets of which constitute approximately 98.91% of the gross tonnage of the world's merchant fleet).<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, can be said that the STCW Convention requirements in respect of the competence and training of seafarers are applicable worldwide. Therefore, as well, because

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<sup>1</sup> See IMO publication “Status of IMO treaties. Comprehensive information on the status of multilateral Conventions and instruments in respect of which the International Maritime Organization or its Secretary-General performs depositary or other functions.”, p. 425. Available at : <https://www.imo.org/en/About/Conventions/Pages/StatusOfConventions.aspx> Last visited on 19July 2023.

countries of all partners are parties to the STCW Convention, the Maritime law course syllabuses in all project partners' universities should comply with the STCW Convention.

Considering the requirements of the STCW Convention the IMO Model Courses (Model Course 7.01 – maritime navigation and Model Course 7.02 – marine engineering) have been adopted by IMO. Although the IMO Model Courses are recommendatory, they are very helpful for implementation of the STCW Convention requirements. Especially, IMO Model Courses can be very useful for harmonization of Maritime law syllabuses of different maritime universities from different countries for the purposes of this project. Therefore, the relevant IMO Model Courses were considered for analysis of Maritime law course content within this activity.

Based on above mentioned the common topics were identified in the partners' syllabuses. 3 reports (one from each partner) were received before the further discussion in the meeting of the focus group 1. Generally, syllabuses of all partners comply with the STCW Convention. However, there were also some differences identified. The differences can be based on specific of national maritime industry, as well, on specific approach to reflecting the information in the syllabuses (although some topics cannot be identified in the course content, they can be covered by some general topic).

It can be noted that each topic in the course contents of RTU includes detailed references to the appropriate standard of the STCW Convention. It could be recommended that inclusion of reference to the appropriate STCW Convention standard next to each subject in course syllabuses would be useful for harmonization of syllabuses in compliance with the STCW Convention.

### III Analysis of teaching materials

Lectures is the main method of teaching of courses in RTU, UCP and UNIST. Additionally, to the lectures, the practical exercises, case studies and field work also are used.

As teaching materials, the mandatory literature, additional readings and other sources are mentioned. Bibliography includes publications in English and in national languages (Croatian, Spanish or Latvian) and international and national legislative acts. The issue present in all syllabuses is that as a mandatory literature the old text books are used (1992, 1997, 2006)

which raises the question in respect of topicality of the content of these books. The creating of a new text book or updating an old one is very time-consuming process. And due to the frequent changes in the maritime sector, including the changes in maritime legislation, every text book quite soon will become outdated. The importance and role of text book in Maritime law course has decreased comparing to time 20 years ago due to increase of availability of information in different internet sources. A publicly available data base with the teaching materials would be great support to the Maritime law teachers who usually spend lot of time for preparing the teaching materials on law to present to the students who do not have a background knowledge on law. As well, it could be easier to keep updated the web-based teaching materials.

## Conclusions

The results of this analysis are very important because they will be used as a direct input for the organization of the 2<sup>nd</sup> focus group which will aim to analyse and improve the learning outcomes of the courses (WP2), as well, these results will serve as a starting point for improving the pedagogical and digital competences of teachers (key activity in WP3) and for development of teaching materials (key activity in WP4).

It could be noted that the result of this analysis has value in itself regardless of the project. The result of the analysis could be used and could be important for revising and updating the syllabuses covered by this analysis, also out of the limits of this project.