

Seminar at Posidonia | Thursday, June 6, 2024 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

4th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS

“Future Trends and Innovations in the Maritime Sector”

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After graduating from the School of Mathematics of the University of Athens, Elias Spirtounias completed his graduate studies at the School of Electrical Engineering (M.Sc. degree and pre-Ph.D. studies) at Boston University. During his residence in the United States, he participated as a Research Engineer in several research programs in co-operation with other organizations and companies such as NASA, MIT, UNH in the fields of analog and digital electronics, circuits design and applications.

He returned to Greece in 1992 and after completing his military service in 1994, he held the position of Technical Director for the subsidiary of the Italian company Citec SpA., a company specialized in the design, production and application of voice and image processing systems. From 1997 until February 2009, he worked for the Foundation of the Hellenic World, a major Greek private non-profit cultural organization, starting as a Construction Supervisor and continuing as a Managing Director of the brand new then Cultural Center, Hellenic Cosmos an innovative, based on new technologies, theme park. During his tenure, he contributed significantly to the expansion, development and operation of the Center and its establishment as one of the most known technology-driven cultural theme parks in Greece and abroad.

From March 2009, he holds the position of Executive Director of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. Along with his colleagues and in cooperation with the Board have managed, in the midst of the economic crisis, to increase significantly the number of activities, undertake important initiatives, retain in high level the memberships, foster the advocacy level, expand further the presence of the Chamber in US and contribute to the evolution of the Chamber into one of the leading dynamic and reliable business organization in Greece. Since January 2022 he served as Treasurer and since January 2024 as Vice Chair of the American Chambers in Europe (ACE) Executive Committee.

Elias Spirtounias

Executive Director
American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce

Nikolaos Bakatselos

President
American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce



Nikolaos Bakatselos is the President & CEO of “Pyramis Metallourgia A.E.” and “Pyramis Deutschland GmbH”.

Nikolaos Bakatselos was Member of the Board of Directors, and Deputy Managing Director, of “Northern Greece Publishing S.A.”. He has held the position of Managing Director of “Imperium AEEX”, and Member of the Board of Directors of “Egnatia Bank Securities S.A.”. He was a Member of the Board of Directors of Attica Bank from February 2014 until June 2016.

Nikolaos Bakatselos was a Member of the Steering Committee of the “International Hellenic University” from 2006 until January 2014 and Member of the Board and President of the Northern Greece Committee of EEDE. He is Member of the Committee Support CERTH, Trustee of Anatolia College, Member of the Board of Directors of SVE, Member of the Board of Directors of IOBE and Honorary Consul of Belgium for Northern Greece.

After being a Member of the Board of Directors of the American – Hellenic Chamber of Commerce for several years, in June 2010 he was elected Vice President of AmChamGR and President of the Northern Greece Committee and since June 2019 he is the President of AmChamGR.

Nikolaos Bakatselos is Founding Member and Member of the Board of Council of Competitiveness of Greece.

From October 2019 until February 2022, he was elected as President of HEDNO by the General Assembly of HEDNO.

He holds a B.A. in Sociology from University of Reading and a MSc in Shipping, Trade and Finance from City University Business School.

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Yuri Arthur

Acting Regional Senior Commercial Officer for
Southeast Europe
U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Embassy Athens – Greece

Yuri Arthur is currently serving as the Acting Regional Senior Commercial Officer for Southeast Europe. The region includes five Commercial Service offices in Croatia, Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Romania as well as five Department of State partner offices in Cypress, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Yuri is based in Athens, Greece where she started her tour as Senior Commercial Officer for Greece in 2021. She took on the regional position in August 2023.

In Greece, Yuri has overseen the expansion of a previously small office with a renewed mandate on commercial engagement through extensive collaboration with interagency colleagues. Her tour has witnessed successful deals as the result of years of Embassy effort, including the privatization of Elefsina Shipyards in the first project financed by the U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC).

Prior to her tour in Greece, Yuri served at the U.S. Embassy in Manila (2017-2020) and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo (2014-2020). In Manila, she focused on leveraging USG resources and likeminded partners for opportunities in the infrastructure sector and worked with multilateral partners to address pharmaceutical issues. In Tokyo, she served as control officer for the first visit of former Secretary Wilbur Ross to Japan and for former President Obama’s trip to the G7 Summit leveraging her Japanese skills. Prior to starting her tour at the Embassy in Tokyo, Yuri served as a Mansfield Fellow doing a series of details in both the public and private sector in Japan.

Yuri joined the Foreign Commercial Service in 2011 but worked as a Desk Officer for the Office of East Asia in Commerce Headquarters. She represented the United States in official trade policy dialogues with Japan and was part of the Remediation Mission bringing U.S. firms to Fukushima following the nuclear disaster. Her domestic tour was at the West Los Angeles U.S. Export Assistance Center.

Prior to government service, Yuri worked as an Information Officer for the Japanese Embassy in the United States and as an Account Manager for All Nippon Airways. She is married and has one daughter and one Japanese shiba dog.

Joe Hughes

Chairman
The American Club
NAMEPA



Joe Hughes has served as chairman of the managers of The American Club, an International Group mutual, for nearly twenty-nine years.

Joe also oversees the activities of Eagle Ocean Agencies, Inc., an affiliate of SCB, which operates the Eagle Ocean Marine and Eagle Ocean America insurance facilities.

He is a director both the American Club itself and its European subsidiary based in Cyprus.

In addition to his chairmanship of NAMEPA, Joe is President of the Maritime Association of the Port of New York and New Jersey, a director of NYMAR also, sits on committees of the American Bureau of Shipping and Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

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Carleen Lyden Walker is a marketing and communications professional in the commercial maritime industry with over 40 years of experience. She is founder and CEO of Morgan Marketing & Communications, the Co-Founder and CEO of NAMEPA (North American Marine Environment Protection Association), Chief Evolution Officer of ShippingInsight, the fleet optimization and innovation platform for shipping and the Founder of the Consortium for International Maritime Heritage, She is also the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of MAR (Maritime Accelerator for Resilience) and Co-Author of “Zero Point Four-How U.S. Leadership in Maritime will secure America’s Future”.

In 2015, Carleen Lyden Walker was appointed a Goodwill Maritime Ambassador by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). She is a member of the Connecticut Maritime Association, The Marine Society of the City of New York, WISTA (Women’s International Shipping and Trading Association, WIMAC (Women in Maritime Association, Caribbean), and is a past President of the Propeller Club Chapter of the Port of NY/NJ. She is also a member of the Pathways Advisory of the US Friends of the World Maritime University and is consistently listed among the top100 women in maritime globally.

In 2010, she was awarded the Certificate of Merit by the United States Coast Guard and in 2014 a Public Service Commendation for her work on world maritime day and AMVER, respectively.

In March 2023 she received the Distinguished Service Award for the Coast Guard for her work with both NAMEPA and SHIPPINGINSIGHT.

Carleen Lyden Walker graduated from Wellesley College with a BA in Political Science and History (Minor in Economics) and studied accounting at Cornell School of Business Administration. She is a trained facilitator and media trainer and holds a USCG Captain’s License.

Carleen Lyden Walker

Co- Founder, CEO, North American Marine Environment Protection Association (NAMEPA)
IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassador

Rear Admiral Wayne R. Arguin Jr.

Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy
U.S. Coast Guard



Rear Admiral Arguin serves as the Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy, and he is responsible for the development of national policy, standards, and programs promoting Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Stewardship. In this role, he leads several directorates including the Inspections and Compliance, Marine Transportation Systems and Commercial Regulations and Standards. Rear Admiral Arguin also leads the waterways management, navigation and boating safety, ports and facilities, merchant mariner credentialing, vessel documentation, marine casualty investigation, commercial vessel inspections, and port state control programs for the Coast Guard.

Rear Admiral Arguin is a 1992 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering. In 2001, he earned a Master of Science degree in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering from the University of Michigan.

Prior to his current assignment, Rear Admiral Arguin served as the Director of Inspection and Compliance at Coast Guard Headquarters. His previous operational assignments include Sector Commander, Sector New Orleans. He also served as Executive Officer of Marine Safety Office Memphis, TN, and Prevention Department Head at Sector Lower Mississippi River where he coordinated waterways management, vessel inspections, mariner licensing and marine casualty investigations on the Lower Mississippi River and its tributaries.

In 1994, Rear Admiral Arguin earned his Marine Inspection qualifications at Marine Safety Office Hampton Roads and served as senior marine inspector performing commercial vessel and cruise ship inspections at Marine Safety Office located in Tampa, Florida. He was also assigned to USCGC HARRIET LANE (WMEC-903) as a student engineer and Damage Control Assistant from 1992-1994.

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Erik Holmgren is the Economic Counselor at U.S. Embassy Athens. Erik serves as the Ambassador’s principal advisor on economic issues and manages a team of seven U.S. staff and two locally employed staff.

Prior to arriving in Greece in July 2021, Erik served as the Energy, Environment, Science, and Technology Counselor in Mexico City. Erik has served as Deputy Political Counselor Moscow, Political and Economic Chief Podgorica, as NATO Desk officer in the State Department as well as tours in Kyiv and Lima.

Erik has a J.D. from George Washington University and a B.S./B.A. from University of Wisconsin-Platteville in civil engineering and Spanish. Erik is originally from Madison Wisconsin. He is married with three children.

Erik Holmgren
Acting Deputy Chief of Mission
U.S. Embassy, Athens

Koichi Ito

Ambassador of Japan to Greece



Ambassador Ito Koichi has graduated from the Law School of the University of Tokyo and received MA, Harvard University.

After joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan he served as the Deputy Director in China and Mongolia Division of the Ministry. Then serving three years in the Permanent Mission of Japan in Genève, he moved to the Embassy of Japan in China, where he was Counsellor (Politics). In early 2000s he was Director of the Global Environment Division, and of Asian Regional Policy Division back in Tokyo. He served as Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of Japan in Malaysia and then as a Consul-General in Guangzhou. He returned to the Embassy of Japan in China as a Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission from 2015 to 2019. After he left China, he was appointed as Consul General in Honolulu, where he worked for U.S.-Japan security arrangement. His most recent posting was Ambassador in New Zealand.

In 2020 Ambassador ITO received the Outstanding Public Service Award, awarded by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S.A.

He is married and has two children

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Dr. Clark Banach is an interdisciplinary public policy researcher with private sector experience in finance and consulting. He earned his PhD in Economics from Freie Universität Berlin and his MBA in International Business from Canisius University. Prior to completing his doctoral research at the Institute for East European Studies, he was a Graduate Research Fellow at the JFK Institute for North American Studies, funded by the German Research Foundation's Excellence Initiative. In addition to his academic career, he has 15 years of strategic management experience, including 10 years in consulting, during which he provided oversight to over 150 projects. His areas of analysis include economic development, international trade, public choice, public health, and surveillance.

Clark is now Program Director at Aletheia Research Institution and recently completed a joint project with MERICS (Mercator Institute for China Studies) as a Futures Fellow. This project identifies the extent of Chinese influence at port terminals and the effects of these activities on world trade flows. In this project, he developed a comprehensive database of spheres of influence at container terminals and joined these observations to annual data on global trade and investment. These findings are outlined in a report titled *How the BRI is Shaping Global Trade and What to Expect from the Initiative in its Second Decade*. His prior databases, *Building BLOCS* and *Stepping Stones: Combined Data for International Economic and Policy Analysis* and *A Database for Investigating Foreign Direct Investment and Regional Trade*, have been employed by DG Trade and APEC for research and reports on trade and investment facilitation. He is currently working on a project to identify trade dependencies and assess the economic risk profiles of Chinese trade partners based on the probability and impact of volatility in supply chains.

Clark Banach
Program Director
Aletheia Research Institution

Sofia Galani

Assistant Professor
Panteion University



Dr Sofia Galani (LLB, LLM, PhD, FHEA) is an Assistant Professor at the Panteio University of Athens. Previously, she held a Senior Lectureship (2021), a Lectureship (2015-2020) and a Teaching Assistant position (2013-2015) at the University of Bristol.

She holds an LLB from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (2010), an LLM in Public Law (2011) and a PhD in International Law (2016) from the University of Bristol. She has taught at the undergraduate and postgraduate level at Waseda University, the University of Freiburg and the University of Leipzig. Her research interests lie on maritime security, the law of the sea, human rights and terrorism and she has published in these areas.

She is the author of *Hostages and Human Rights: Towards a Victim-Centred Approach?* (CUP, 2021) and a co-editor (with Professor Sir Malcolm Evans) of *Maritime Security and the Law of the Sea: Help or Hindrance?* (EE, 2020). Sofia was one of the principal contributors to the UNODC *Maritime Crime: A Manual for Criminal Justice Practitioners* (2nd ed, 2019) and has led sessions at the UNODC Maritime Law Expert Conferences.

She sits at the Non-Executive Board of Advisors of Human Rights at Sea and is one of the authors of the Geneva Declaration of Human Rights at Sea. Since 2015 she has been the Editor of the Case and Commentary section of the *European Human Rights Law Review*.

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Plamen Tonchev is Head of Asia Unit at the Athens- based Institute of International Economic Relations (IIER). He is founding member of the European Think-tank Network on China (ETNC) and a member of the EU Chapter of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific committee (EU CSCAP).

Plamen has specialized in Chinese studies since the late 1990s and has published extensively in the field. His research interests cover both China’s politics and economy and its standing on the international scene, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and EU-China relations.

Palmen Tonchev
Head of Asia Unit
International Economic Relations (IIER)

Costis Frangoulis

President, International Propeller Club, Port of Piraeus
President & CEO, Franman



Costis J. Frangoulis is a Greek entrepreneur born in Athens and a father of two daughters, Elli and Athena.

He holds a B.A from the University of Richmond, U.K in Economics and Business Administration.

He is the Founder, President and CEO of Franman Group which he formed in May 1991. For over 30 years, Franman has been providing a wide range of equipment, products and services to the international shipping industry.

In year 1996, he founded Imperium Shipmanagement SA which managed and owned 5 handysize bulk carriers until 2006, when he decided to sell the fleet and exit the market.

He is the President of the International Propeller Club, Port of Piraeus, 1st Vice President of the International Propeller Club of the United States, an Ambassador of the Sailors' Society in Greece, a non-executive member of the board of Sfakianakis Group and a member of the Advisory Board of the Council for International Relations – Greece (CfIR-GR).

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U.S. EMBASSY
ATHENS

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The International
Propeller CLUB
of the United States



MARITIME
HELLAS



SHIPPINGinsight

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George Sp. Alexandratos was born in Athens in 1973. He holds a BSc in shipping business from Plymouth University and an MSc in Maritime Policy from Cardiff University. He is the director of Apollonia Lines S.A

George Alexandratos currently holds the position of Vice President at the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping since 2017, as well as the General Secretary of the Hellenic Short Sea Shipowners Association.

In the past (he also served as the President of the Hellenic Hull Mutual).

Lastly as he is totally in favour of business and human networking, since the end of June 2022 he was elected as the President of the Piraeus Marine Club.

He believes very much in synergies, and he is a strong supporter of the Maritime Hellas, the official Hellenic Maritime Cluster and for the promotion of the 100 job categories directly or indirectly involved with shipping.

George Alexandratos

Vice President
Hellenic Chamber of Shipping

Panos Xenokostas

President & CEO ONEX Shipyards & Technologies Group
President of the Hellenic Shipyards Association



Panos Xenokostas, President and CEO of ONEX Shipyards & Technologies Group, is a visionary entrepreneur and investor in the industries of Shipbuilding, Maritime, ICT, Aviation, Defense / Security and Energy.

He graduated the Hellenic Air Force Academy-Engineers Department as Aeronautical Engineer in 1996 and holds a master's degree in business administration from the University Institute Kurt Bösch in Switzerland. He has an expertise in high-risk investments in new technologies, early stages companies and restructuring in complex environments.

As the Founder and Head of ONEX Technology Group based in New York, since 2004, his vision for ONEX is to create a global brand recognized as one of the best in ship repair, shipbuilding and integrated energy transition solutions, by developing the leading shipyard-port technology and logistics hub based in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, Asia and North America.

To this moment, ONEX Group numbers over 3000 employees. The value of its assets under management amounting to approximately EUR 300 million and the total value of projects implemented by ONEX exceeds EUR 2 billion, while in the last 5 years it has successfully delivered more than 200 projects. The Group is already investing more than €650 million in Greece, with a plan to exceed €1 billion in value of its owned and managed assets by 2030. Since 2019, when the shipyards of Syros & Elefsina were reactivated under the ownership of the ONEX Group, more than 560 Greek and international ships have been serviced, changing the international footprint of the country in the shipping sector.

In 2023, the Hellenic Shipyards Association (HSAS) was also established and Panos Xenokostas was elected as the President of the BoD of the Union.

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Marinos Giannopoulos

CEO
Enterprise Greece

Marinos Giannopoulos is an experienced finance and academic professional with a Doctorate in Strategic Management. For several years he lived and was active in the UK where he worked in the City of London as a banking executive and business consultant. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the Management School, University of Liverpool, a master's degree in international business economics from City University London, and a PhD from Brunel University London, with the thesis title: "Divesting assets and redeploying resources as predictors of the performance of acquisitions: The case of Greece."

Prior to assuming his current duties as CEO of Enterprise Greece, he worked for more than a decade in the banking industry, both in Greece and abroad. He has extensive experience in managing credit risk in investment banking portfolios and participated in the management and consolidation of credit risk portfolios at financial institutions and companies in emerging Europe.

Upon returning to Greece, he led the team at one of Greece's leading banks responsible for facilitating in the implementation of Greece's National Recovery and Resilience Fund – Greece 2.0 – while also liaising with European development bodies and Greek government agencies.

He served as advisor to New Democracy's Secretariat for International Relations & European Union from 2013 to 2019. He has been a member of various academic and professional committees and has been actively engaged in research and writing with numerous articles published in leading international journals, such as the Journal for Global Business Advancement and the International Journal of Business and Economic Sciences. At the same time, he also taught at Brunel University and the Hellenic Open University in the fields of Strategic Management and Business Economics.

Semiramis Paliou

CEO, Diana Shipping Inc.
Chairperson HELMEPA & INTERMEPA



Semiramis Paliou is the Chief Executive Officer of Diana Shipping Inc., a leading global shipping company that specializes in the transportation of dry cargo goods. She has been with the company since 2015, serving in various positions including Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and member of the Executive Committee. In addition to her role at Diana Shipping, Semiramis Paliou also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Diana Shipping Services S.A. the wholly owned ship management company.

Semiramis is also actively involved in various industry organizations and committees. She currently serves as the Chairperson of HELMEPA and Chairperson of INTERMEPA, organizations dedicated for the last 40 years to promoting the protection of our seas through education, activities, and projects for our seafarers and the broader society. Under her leadership HELMEPA now focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals as defined by the United Nations, to promote social, economic and environmental sustainability. She is also the Vice president of the Greek committee of Det Norske Veritas, a member of the Greek committee of Nippon Kaiji Kyokai, the Greek committee of Bureau Veritas and the American Bureau of Shipping. Moreover, Semiramis is a member of the board of directors of the UK P&I Club, the Union of Greek Shipowners and the Global Maritime Forum.

Semiramis Paliou's passion for the shipping industry was instilled in her from a young age, having been born into a family with a long-standing tradition in the sector. She holds a BSc in Mechanical Engineering from Imperial College, London, and an MSc in Naval Architecture from University College, London. She has also completed several executive education programs at Harvard Business School, including "Finance for Senior Executives," "Authentic Leader Development," and a certificate program on "Sustainable Business Strategy." Semiramis began her career as a trainee ship surveyor at Lloyd's Register of Shipping where she was assigned field postings in Spain and Finland. Her experience at Diana Shipping Agencies S.A. further solidified her passion for the field, and Semiramis has since held numerous leadership positions throughout her career.

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Stephen Schueler has been recognized with the “2023 Global Sustainability Award” for his efforts supporting the energy, aviation and shipping industries transition to improved sustainability and cleaner fuel.

The shipping industry transitioned from heavy 3.5% sulphur fuel to the new more sustainable .5% fuel, reducing emissions by 85%. The fuel transition is having a significant positive impact on the environment with 3m barrels of fuel per day converting to the cleaner fuel. Stephen has helped lead the transition through his role as CEO of Enerjen Capital, his additional roles and project leadership. These positions include Chairman of InerFuel, leveraging their partnership with Purify Fuel improving fuel consumption by 7% and decreasing NOx and carbon by 25%. The team captured the Monaco Silver Medal at this years Sustainability Summit. Stephen’s role as Chairman of European Maritime Finance, constructing the most fuel efficient super Eco class new vessels. Schueler’s passionate leadership in promoting green fuel and sustainable trade development is leading the energy, aviation and shipping industries with a positive transition to cleaner fuel. The 2023 Global Sustainability Award serves to recognize the actions of those in the corporate world taking steps to significantly advance the development of sustainable environmental practices in business.

Stephen Schueler is the CEO of Enerjen Capital. Serves as Chairman of InerFuel, European Maritime Finance and Carbon Advisors. Board Advisor to warehowz.com (US largest on demand warehouse marketplace, Joblio (global HR staffing), Vikand (the largest Marine health care provider) and LumeNXT. Schueler has always focused on the sustainability of the environment and is currently making a significant impact. Stephen’s personal and company efforts are making significant contribution to improve our environment.

Stephen Schueler was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. He began working at Procter & Gamble (P&G) after graduating from Miami University where he earned his Bachelor’s degree. He subsequently graduated with his M.B.A in Finance from San Francisco University.

Ioannis Theotokas

Professor of Shipping Management
Chair, Department of Maritime Studies
University of Piraeus



Ioannis Theotokas is Professor of Shipping Management, Chair of the Department of Maritime Studies of the University of Piraeus and director of the MSc in Marine Science and Technology Management Program.

He has a background in economics having received his PhD from the University of Piraeus. His research interests lie in the areas of Shipping Management, Human Resource Management, and Strategic Management.

He is the author and co-author of more than 100 research works and seven books among them being the Management of Shipping Companies (Routledge) and the Leadership in World Shipping (Palgrave, co-authored with Gelina Harlaftis).

He has acted as coordinator or principal investigator in many research projects and consultancy studies related to employment, entrepreneurship, strategy, training, and competitiveness issues in shipping. Between 2015 and 2017 he served as the Secretary General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy.

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Yianna Hormova is an administrative scientist and public policy expert. She is a graduate of the National School of Public Administration and of the School of Philosophy of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Degree in Archeology and Art History).

She holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and a Master's Degree in Museum Organization and Management from the University of Leicester.

Yianna Hormova is a civil servant since 2010 and before her appointment as Deputy Governor of Public Employment Service (DYPA), she was Head of Office of the Deputy Minister of Digital Governance (2019-2021) and Secretary General for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality (2021-2022).

From 2014 to 2019 Yianna Hormova was Secretary General at the Municipality of Karpenisi. She was a Parliamentary Associate to a member of the Greek Parliament for five years (2002-2007) and an associate to the Secretary General for Gender Equality during 2009.

She speaks English and Italian, and she has published studies and articles in scientific journals. She is also a PhD candidate at Panteion University.

Yianna Hormova

Deputy Governor
Public Employment Service (DYPA)

Maria Progoulaki

Teaching Fellow, ALBA Graduate Business School
The American College of Greece



Dr. Maria Progoulaki is originally a maritime economist, with special interest on the human side of shipping management. She brings over 15 years of combined experience in consultancy, teaching and research in maritime business strategy, maritime human resources, and cultural management in shipping. Maria is passionate about applying the scientific and theoretical knowledge in the global maritime business where she works as consultant for Green-Jakobsen A/S. In parallel, she is eager to transfer the up-to-date knowhow and real case studies of people management in shipping to first-hand expertise and best practice in class. Throughout the years, she also participates in research and authoring that complement theory and practice.

Since 2014 Dr. Progoulaki serves as a Teaching Fellow at ALBA where she delivers the course on Human Resources in Shipping for MBA and MSc programmes, as well as for ALBA Executive Development- Thenamaris Shipping Management programmes (2017, 2020). She actively supports ACG and ALBA by having participated in and supervised Field Consulting Projects (2018-2022) that foster strong connections between academia and the industry. Since 2017 she is also a leading member of ALBA Academic Supporting Committee of the Maritime Trends Conference. Maria also organises on an annual basis guest lectures and panel discussions of maritime professionals for ALBA MBA and MSc programmes.

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Elias Kariambas is Vice President, Regional Business Development in ABS, based in Piraeus. He joined ABS in 2012, as Technology and Business Development Manager for the Eastern Region in Europe, and then held the position of Director of Global Ship Systems Centre.

Prior joining ABS, Dr. Kariambas worked for 17 years as an Engineer and Manager at the plan approval office of Bureau Veritas in Piraeus.

He graduated from National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) as a Naval Architect - Marine Engineer, holding also a Phd in Ship Design from NTUA, as well as an MBA in Business Administration from the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB).

Elias Kariambas

Vice President, Regional Business Development
ABS – American Bureau of Shipping

Irene Notias

Founder & Director, Project Connect
Country Manager, Sing Fuels Hellas



Irene Notias is a highly reputable businessperson from NYC. In 2015 she established the NPO, PROJECT CONNECT which has since then earned the trust and support of a prestigious group of shipping and maritime service companies who enjoy the services and benefits it offers, as members. During Greece's highest ever youth unemployment 2009-2016, Irene took initiative and launched the first Human resources facility for the Greek shipping community that enhanced chances for youth employability by cultivating the next generation workforce with excellence and standards. Together with HR executives, Irene created an easy to run, Work-Study program and the first Online CV Platform that directly "connects" shipping students & graduates to shipping companies for work experience where they obtain the necessary soft & hard skill sets. Her NPO embeds maritime education, officially, in the Hellenic School system via the project based, Adopt a Ship educational program, run by same.

Professionally, Irene founded & managed Prime's Bunkersplus Services, a 24/7 fuel buying service, for 20 years serving the top Greek & American Shipping companies with their Bunker Marine Fuel Purchases as their Bunker Broker, and Exclusive Fuel Purchasing Agent. She has also worked for reputable world fuel companies as Fuels Trader, and Sales & Marketing Manager. Most recently she sold her business to Sing Fuels Singapore, where she is the country manager of their new Greek division. Irene has much experience in Administration and start-ups.

She has authored about twenty articles about the Marine Petroleum and Shipping Industry for Trade Magazines.

She holds a bachelor's in business administration, from Pace University, NYC, Majoring in International Management. Minor in Marketing and Political Science.

She enjoys organizing & speaking at fund raisers, charity events as much as presenting at trade seminars, webinars, and teaching the skill of buying and selling marine fuels.

Irene serves as active member of the International Bunker Industry Association, IBIA, Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA), American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. She is on the Board of Directors of the Plato Education Foundation, USA. She has also served two terms as Governor, US Propeller Club Port of Piraeus, Vice – President, WISTA, Secretary, Athens Alzheimer's & Related Disorders Association, BoD, Kardamylian Foundation. Parish Council member, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, NYC, and enjoys membership in the Chios Marine Club and supports other smaller associations that serve a purpose.

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Dr. Nikolaos Liapis is a Mechanical Engineer NTUA and holds a PhD from the School of Chemical Engineering NTUA in fuel quality. His main areas of expertise are fuels, biofuels and lubricants, tanker management and logistics. He is an Energy and Business consultant in the oil, shipping and industry sectors, specializing in the Green Transition. He has worked for more than 29 years in managerial positions in the Petroleum Sector. For the last 15 years he has worked as COO at ELINOIL, an oil distribution company, and as General Manager at ELIN SHIPPING COMPANY, a subsidiary shipping company that manages small tankers. He has extensive experience in project management, overseeing projects such as the design and construction of biodiesel plant, the construction of fuel depots and the management of tankers.

Dr. Liapis is President of the Hellenic Institute of Marine Technology (HIMT), member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Short Sea Shipowners (HSSA), member of the Downstream Committee of the Institute of Energy for Southeast Europe (IENE) and member of the Hellenic Technical Committee of RINA and Lloyd's Register. He has served as Coordinator of the Energy Products Committee of the Hellenic Association of Petroleum Marketing Companies (SEEPE), while today he is a Consultant to SEEPE. He is a founding member of the Hellenic Association of Biofuel Producers (now SVIVE) and has served as President of the Marine LNG Network, President of the Biofuel Technology Platform and representative of the European Biodiesel Council (EBB) in Greece.

He teaches postgraduate courses at the University of Piraeus, the University of Limassol and the Athens College of Economics and Business and has been a lecturer at Metropolitan College. He is teaching, among others, Energy Policies, Decarbonization of Shipping, Maritime Logistics, Port Operations, Maritime Technology and Strategic Management. He has been a speaker at a significant number of conferences on energy, fuels, biofuels and shipping.

Nikolaos Liapis
President
Hellenic Institute of Marine Technology

Theodore Lilas

Associate Professor
University of the Aegean



Dr. Theodore Lilas is Associate Professor at the University of the Aegean. He is an Electrical and Computer Engineer from National Technical University of Athens. He holds MSc in Computer Science from Columbia University, where he received graduate research assistantship from Center for Telecommunications Research for Student Electronic Notebook, a predecessor of tablets from IBM.

His PhD thesis was supported with research assistantship from General Secretary for Research and Technology in the field of artificial intelligence enhancing robotics with computer vision for the shipbuilding industry. Has participated in several National and European research projects and has been the R&D Manager in NAFSI shipyard. Has also worked as consultant in industry and participated in intelligent automation projects.

Since 2005 is teaching at Aegean University and in 2012 has been elected Assistant Professor in the same University.

Research focuses on intelligent autonomous systems and blue growth.

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Dr. Alexandros Glykas is an exceptionally motivated Naval Architect and Marine Engineer, driven by the dynamic nature of the Maritime Industry and the vast opportunities it presents for enhancing international standards.

His passion lies in educating and inspiring young professionals, which he accomplishes through his role at ALBA Graduate Business School.

From 1996 to 2000, Alexandros actively participated in maritime casualty investigations, where he played a pivotal role in the ratification of new requirements for Bulk Carriers at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Notably, he made significant contributions to the second phase of the M/V DERBYSHIRE Investigation (1997-2000), organized by the UK Department of Transport, marking the beginning of his career.

Since 2001, Alexandros has assumed key responsibilities in ship management and embarked on a career as a lecturer, initially as a lecturer and later as an adjunct Professor in Maritime Technology. His expertise expanded in 2007 to encompass policies and procedures pertaining to Ship-to-Ship transfer operations. Having delivered lectures internationally, including at ALBA Graduate Business School, Alexandros continues to educate students on various subjects, including Maritime Technology, Ship Repair Management, Ship Valuation, and Marine Policy aspects.

He has also authored papers in scientific journals, co-authored two books for Marine Academies, and published several works, publications and a book, focusing on the Management and International Policy of Ship-to-Ship transfer Operations. Currently, Dr. Glykas serves as a Teaching Fellow at ALBA, where he delivers engaging lectures on Ship Technology for MSc and MBA classes, as well as Shipping Management for MSc students. Furthermore, he actively supports the school by participating in and supervising Field Consulting Projects that foster strong connections between academia and the industry.

Alexandros Glykas

Teaching Fellow
ALBA Graduate Business School
The American College of Greece

Matthew Thomas

Partner, International TradeMaritime
Blank Rome



Matthew J. Thomas has more than 25 years of experience in international trade, transport and maritime regulation, and government affairs, representing leading energy and commodities companies, shipowners, governments, insurers, investors, ports, shipyards, and marine terminal operators. Matt works extensively in the areas of international trade sanctions, export controls, and related anti-money laundering measures. He has represented several global companies targeted for U.S. sanctions, reaching successful resolutions with the Departments of State and Treasury ("OFAC"). He has aided numerous clients around the world on sanctions and export control compliance planning, investigations, and transactional due diligence, with particular focus on the energy, commodities, maritime, transport, and services sectors. In addition, Matt has extensive experience in the maritime, logistics, and container shipping sector. He has represented leading carriers, terminals, and logistics providers in regulatory proceedings before the Federal Maritime Commission ("FMC"), where he formerly served as the Assistant General Counsel for International Affairs. He represents marine terminal operators in complex joint venture arrangements and is experienced in global container operators' merger and integration projects. He also counsels private companies and foreign governments on matters of international law and diplomatic strategy, particularly in defending national sovereignty or combating international trade barriers. During his government tenure, he was responsible for the FMC's relations with foreign governments and multilateral bodies, such as the European Union, World Trade Organization, and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Matt works with leading maritime and offshore energy clients on a broad range of compliance issues, including environmental, safety, citizenship, and "Jones Act" coastwise compliance. He has represented leading energy companies in key Jones Act rulings and investigations that have shaped domestic petroleum trade, and structured complex Jones Act compliance ownership structures. Throughout his career, Matt has built strong relationships with U.S. government officials, trade associations, and the local legal and lobbying community.

He guides international businesses in their dealings with the Departments of State, Treasury, Commerce, Justice, and Transportation, as well as independent regulatory agencies and Congress.

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Ezekiel Davis serves as the Regional Vice President of Business Development for Europe at the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS).

With over two decades of experience in the maritime and offshore industries, Ezekiel brings a wealth of expertise in strategic growth and client relationship management. His career at ABS has been marked by successful roles in various regions, including North America, Asia and currently Europe where he has driven significant business expansion and innovation initiatives.

Ezekiel holds a degree in Marine Engineering and is currently completing an MBA at London Business School. Ezekiel is known for his commitment to the ABS mission and advancing safety and performance standards within the industry.

Ezekiel Davis

Regional Vice President of Business Development, Europe
ABS – American Bureau of Shipping

Christos Stylianides

Minister
Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy



Christos Stylianides has been Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy of the Hellenic Republic since September 13, 2023. On June 25, 2023, he was elected Member of the Greek Parliament with the New Democracy Party.

From September 2021 to May 2023, he served as the first Minister of Climate Crisis and Civil Protection of Greece. Between 2014 and 2019 he served as European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management. During the same period, he was EU Ebola Coordinator after his appointment by the European Council. He is considered the "architect" of rescEU, the bold initiative that upgraded significantly the European civil protection system. In 2014 Christos Stylianides was also elected Member of the European Parliament (Democratic Rally Party of Cyprus/European People's Party). In two different periods he served as Government Spokesperson of the Republic of Cyprus (2013-2014 and 1998-1999). During the period 2006-2013 he was a Member of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus (elected in 2006 and 2011 with DISY) with a strong parliamentary record. From 2006 to 2011 he was also a member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and was elected a Member of its Bureau in 2012.

He has been Visiting Professor at the Department of Health Policy at the London School of Economics (LSE) in Great Britain, Visiting Professor in Practice at the Medical School of the University of Nicosia-Cyprus and at the Ruhr Universität Research School of Germany.

In May 2021, he was appointed EU Special Envoy for Freedom or Religion or Belief (FoRB).

In recognition of his work, Christos Stylianides received important honorary awards from governments and international organizations and institutions. Among other, he received the Golden Decoration of Honour by the Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Honorary Award of Civil Protection of the Land of Baden-Wurtemberg (Germany) for his contribution to the upgrading of the European civil protection system. He was also named "Global Champion for Education in Emergencies" by the international organization Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and "Political Champion for Education in Emergencies" by the Malala Foundation. For his humanitarian action and contribution to coexistence and reconciliation he was awarded the "Peace and Reconciliation Prize" of the historic city of Guernica, Spain.

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Christopher J. Wiernicki is Chairman and CEO of the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) and Chairman of ABS' Affiliated Companies.

He has over 35 years of extensive commercial, government and international experience in marine and offshore design, operations, infrastructure and safety management, ports and bunkering, digitalization, cybersecurity, and clean energy transition. He is a serving member of the President's National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC), which advises the White House on how to reduce risks and improve the resilience of the nation's critical infrastructure sectors. Prior to his current role, Wiernicki served as Chairman of the International Association of Classification Societies and held senior roles at ABS, including President and Chief Operating Officer (COO), Chief Technology Officer and President and COO of ABS Europe Ltd. Prior to joining ABS, Wiernicki was the CEO of Designers & Planners, Inc., a naval architecture firm. Wiernicki is a recognized industry thought leader in the areas of decarbonization and sustainability, digitalization and advanced technology, marine safety management and human factors, naval architecture, marine engineering, alternative fuels, carbon economics, and environmental, social and governance (ESG). In March 2023, he accepted a position on Singapore's Maritime International Advisory Panel (IAP). The IAP was established by the Singapore Ministry of Transport (MOT) and Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) to seek global perspectives on key trends that will shape the maritime industry.

Christopher Wiernicki holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Vanderbilt University and was inducted to Vanderbilt University School of Engineering Academy of Distinguished Alumni and was named to the Vanderbilt University School of Engineering's Board of Visitors. He holds a master's degree in structural engineering from George Washington University where he was inducted into the George Washington University Engineering and Applied Science Hall of Fame. Wiernicki also holds a master's degree in ocean engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and completed Harvard University's Advanced Management Program. Wiernicki also received honorary Doctor of Science degrees from Maine Maritime Academy, Webb Institute and SUNY Maritime College, and an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree from Stevens Institute of Technology.

Christopher J. Wiernicki

Chairman and CEO
American Bureau of Shipping and ABS' Affiliated Companies

Vasileios Tsiamis

Partner – Head of EU Policies and Access to EU Funding & other Incentives in Greece, Strategy and Transactions
EY Greece



Vassilis is a Partner at EY Greece, specialising in Strategy and Transactions with a focus on Access to EU funding and Incentives. With over 30 years of experience in EU affairs, his expertise spans industrial policy, research and development, innovation, funding access, security, and defence.

Vassilis holds a military engineering degree from the Hellenic Army Academy, as well as Master's degrees in Management and Planning from the Hellenic Defence College, International Politics from Université Paris-Sud, and Electrical and Computer Engineering from Greece.

He has vast experience on managing large-scale procurement, research, development, and technology programs, both nationally and internationally. Vassilis has a proven track record of securing public funding for projects at both national and European levels, including programmes, such as ESIF, Innovation Fund, Connecting Europe Facility, H2020, Horizon Europe, LIFE, EDIDP/EDF, and EIB.

With senior positions in a European Council Agency from 2009 to 2019, he possesses a deep understanding of EU policies and associated funding instruments, particularly in areas, like green and digital transition, security and defence, cyber, shipping and maritime, energy, circular economy, transportation, health, space, advanced manufacturing, and radio spectrum.

Furthermore, his expertise extends to providing advisory services for the continuous assessment of various companies' project pipeline, adaptation to the most appropriate funding scheme and preparation and submission of the Grant Application folders, along with project management and financial implementation of large-scale EU awarded projects.

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Christian Berg
Managing Director, Amogy

Christian Berg is a distinguished professional with over 25 years of leadership experience in the oil and gas and offshore wind industries. His expertise encompasses hands-on experience from vessels, marine consultancy, offshore chartering, and top management roles. In 2022, he assumed the position of Managing Director at Amogy Norway, having previously held the role of Commercial Director at Yara Clean Ammonia.

Educated at Copenhagen Business School, Mr. Berg holds an Executive Master's degree in Shipping and Logistics. His academic background has underpinned a career marked by strategic leadership and innovative project management.

During his tenure as Commercial Director of Bunkering at Yara Clean Ammonia from 2021 to 2022, Christian Berg spearheaded several pilot projects aimed at utilizing clean ammonia as a fuel. He played a crucial role in developing a bunkering network to support ammonia as a viable alternative fuel. His efforts included collaborating with branch organizations, shipowners, and other industry parties, leveraging his extensive network within the shipping industry. Mr. Berg also represented Yara Clean Ammonia at numerous international events as a speaker, promoting the use of ammonia and the company's initiatives. From 2017 to 2021, Christian Berg was the CEO and owner of Bech Offshore AS, where he managed commercial operations and consultancy services. Under his leadership, the company initiated and structured investment opportunities within the Offshore Support Segment. Notably, he led the successful turnaround of Wilson Offshore during his dual role as Chairman and CEO in 2019 and 2020. Prior to that, he served as the CEO of GC Rieber Shipping from 2017 to 2018, where he successfully reorganized the onshore organization and assembled a new management team, significantly increasing the company's contract backlog. His role included substantial involvement in the acquisition of Schlumberger's Seismic Division—a transaction worth 650 million USD. From 2011 to 2017, Mr. Berg was the CEO of Viking Supply Ships, where he restructured the company, focusing on the Arctic niche market, and saw the company through periods of substantial contract gains and significant financial challenges due to geopolitical and economic shifts. In earlier roles, Mr. Berg was the Chief Commercial Officer at Siem Offshore from 2008 to 2011, where he was responsible for securing contracts for an expanding fleet, making the company a global supplier to major oil companies. He was also the General Manager of Promarine Ltd. and Promarine AS from 2006 to 2008, where he established strong relationships with decision-makers in major oil companies. Between 1999 and 2005, Mr. Berg directed NavTech AS in Egersund, focusing on new business development and the advancement of Marine Electronic Charting solutions. He also served as a consultant in Asia, promoting and developing business for Marine Electronic Charting solutions in key markets such as Singapore, Hong Kong, and Bangkok.