

## INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH



**CLAUDE MAILLOUX**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**HUMAN RESOURCES SECTORIAL COMMITTEE OF THE MARITIME INDUSTRY (CSMOIM)**



Claude Mailloux holds a Bachelor's degree in Geography and a Master's degree in Political Geography from Université Laval.

Since April 2005, he has been Executive Director of the Human Resources Sectorial Committee of the Maritime Industry (CSMOIM), which is mandated to support Québec's maritime organizations with regard to all things related to human resources development, including training and careers/occupations promotion.

He is also the training representative on the Marine Industry Forum and sits on the Board of Directors of SODES, where he was Assistant Executive Director for 15 years.

**Question 1: This summer, you released data on human resources requirements in the Québec maritime industry. In your view, what are the highlights?**

**Answer 1:** This study is based on an online survey conducted on Québec maritime organizations in January, February and March 2020. The goal was essentially to identify the current maritime population and its main characteristics (trade, age, gender, etc.) and to arrive at a hiring outlook for the next three years.

The maritime organizations were also counted and classified by activity type. We now know

that there are 332 companies in Québec whose main activity is maritime. The maritime sector considered included goods and passenger transport, port authorities, port services and marine services. Shipbuilding was not included.

We learned that the population of maritime workers has continued to grow in recent years. Before this, the most complete data available to us dated from 2016, when we enumerated 14 300 direct jobs in the maritime industry. In 2020, this number had risen to 15 600, a 9% increase. More specifically, the survey showed 5 541 navigating employees and 9 446 non-navigating employees.



**Question 2: What are this study's findings compared to the study released in 2016?**

**Answer 2:** The main finding is that the number of direct jobs continues to increase, mirroring the maritime industry's overall growth. This growth, which has been steady for many years now, is reflected in the hiring outlook: maritime employers foresee hiring close to 4 000 individuals over the next three years (more than 3 000 of them will be navigating personnel).

This data reflects the profound concerns expressed by employers in recent years regarding the enormous difficulties they encounter in hiring specialized personnel like maritime officers, especially those with experience like masters and chief engineers. It also explains initiatives aimed at hiring maritime personnel from other countries and the pressure put on the federal government to relax conditions allowing maritime personnel to enter Canada. In 2019, bilateral agreements to this effect were reached with certain countries, including France and Norway.

The study also provides information on many other interesting aspects of the maritime population. For example, the proportion of navigating employees (35%) and non-navigating employees (65%) has remained practically unchanged since the preceding study (2016).

We also learn that the presence of women remains marginal in operations-related trades. While we find women in all jobs at sea, they are rare. In the engine room, women account for

only 4% of workers. However, they are heavily represented in administrative jobs.

The average age of navigating employees as a whole is 44 years, but the average age is much higher for certain occupations. For example, the average age of holders of higher certification, such as master with STCW certification, is over 50 years.

For more details on the study's different findings, you can consult the [complete study](#) (French only) and the [study highlights](#) on the Sectorial Committee website.

**Question 3: In your opinion, what are the challenges linked to human resources requirements that the maritime industry will have to face in the next 5 or 10 years?**

**Answer 3:** The key challenge has been the same for a long time. We need to attract new workers by promoting maritime trades and occupations, which suffer from a chronic lack of visibility. Despite all of the efforts made by many organizations such as the Sectorial Committee, the Institut maritime du Québec and numerous others, like SODES, our industry and its trades/occupations too often go unnoticed.

We don't know yet if our international hiring efforts will be rewarded. Even if they are, they will fill only a few navigating officer positions. For all of the other occupations, future workers can come from only two sources: young people making career choices (including choosing what to study)



and people who are already on the job market but who might be attracted by the advantages the maritime sector has to offer. However, they have to be aware of these advantages...and that requires promotion.

Nowadays, the demographic context is very unfavourable for careers promotion. Workers are scarce in almost all economic areas and competition to attract attention is keen. Consequently, making a mark where future workers are concerned requires significant, and especially, ongoing effort. "Try, try and try again," as the saying goes.

Fortunately our sector has excellent arguments in its favour, including very generous salaries and unparalleled challenges. This is true in management, in land operations and at sea.

It is sometimes difficult to assess the positive repercussions of careers promotion campaigns like EMBARQUE, which the Sectorial Committee has been running on social networks since 2018, despite the fact that these messages reach hundreds of thousands of people. However, one thing is certain: nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Our messages must be repeated on an ongoing basis to have a chance of reaching their goal. We will also have to pay particular attention to women since, despite our efforts, this clientele is slow to take interest in maritime operations-related trades.

**Question 4: On a more personal note, you will be retiring at the end of 2020. If you had one piece of advice to give maritime business leaders and one for industry workers, what would they be?**

**Answer 4:** Don't stop believing. Too many factors argue in favour of maritime transport growth. The pandemic has definitely slowed this growth down in 2020, but this is only temporary. Where Québec is concerned, the St. Lawrence River represents a significant tool for development and growth. But, for this to be possible, we need workers. We know they won't come on their own so we have to make sufficient promotional efforts to attract them.

One of the most effective means is to offer the public and young people hands-on experiences, especially ship tours. They're hard to organize but they're essential to bring people closer to maritime realities and to get them interested.

We also need a training system able to prepare future workers for all of the sector's jobs. This means offering maritime workers the training needed to maintain and develop their skills on land and at sea, whether or not this training is required by maritime regulations.

In this regard, there are solid bases notably with the Institut maritime du Québec (IMQ) and the IMQ's Centre de formation aux mesures d'urgence (CFMU), which is dedicated to continuing education.



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However, these institutions require considerable support from governments and the industry to be able to meet needs. This includes current needs as well as future skills, those that will be required by technological developments in port operations and by new generations of ships.

The Maritime Sectorial Committee exists to play a useful role in two key areas: training development/organization and planning related to new workers. The formula of bringing all of the players concerned by human resources together is the key to success. It may require compromise, but I think we've shown that it works. And there is potential to go even further with the support of maritime organizations. "Help us to help you", as they say. Much remains to be done but the tools exist. In my opinion, it's very promising.