

Understanding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on seafarers

Kia ora,

My name is Maria Borovnik, and I am a Senior Lecturer at the Development Studies programme at Massey University, in New Zealand. I have worked with seafarers and their families since 1999, mostly in Kiribati and Tuvalu. As part of my Te Apārangi Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden funded research on *Navigating labour mobilities: Seafarers after COVID-19*, I am distributing this questionnaire.

The aim of this survey is to **understand the experiences of seafarers during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022)**, and **any ongoing impacts or consequences** they may be experiencing three years after the pandemic-related restrictions ended. You will have received this invitation to participate in this survey as you may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. I would be grateful for your time to answer the survey questions.

There are **three parts** to this survey. The first part will ask questions about your **seafaring experiences** in general. The second part will specifically focus on your experiences during the **COVID-19 pandemic**. The third part will look at the **impacts of the pandemic**, and whether this time may still be impacting you in any way.

This survey will take **approximately 15-20 minutes** to complete.

Please be assured that **all the information you supply is strictly confidential** and no individual information will be published. **Your participation is completely voluntary. Your views are important** and will hopefully provide insight for changes in policy that will consider the special mobile and often isolated situation that seafarers are involved in, should there be another pandemic in the future.

At the end of this survey, you will have a **choice** to provide your email address to me, the researcher (Dr Maria Borovnik), **if you would like me to follow up with you for a more in-depth interview**. However, **you are under no circumstances obliged to share your details**.

You have the right to not answer any question provided, to withdraw from the survey at any time, and to contact the researcher via email M.Borovnik@massey.ac.nz or phone +64-6-9516643 and ask questions you may have about the survey.

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Massey University Human Ethics by email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Thank you very much for your participation!

Nāku noa nā,

Maria Borovnik

Senior Lecturer in Development Studies
School of People, Environment and Planning
Massey University, New Zealand
Phone: +64-6-9516643
Email: M.Borovnik@massey.ac.nz

Please upload your completed survey here: https://massey.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dal9lcFobf4KnyK

Part 1: Understanding seafarers' lives, backgrounds, and practices

The questions in this section are designed to understand a little bit more about your background and general experiences as a seafarer.

Background information and eligibility	
1. Did you work as a seafarer immediately prior to or during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please note that as this project focuses on the experiences of seafarers during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, this survey is not for you. Thank you for your interest.</i>
2a. What <u>country</u> are you <u>from</u> ?	
2b. Do you normally live in that country?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2c. In which <u>country</u> do you <u>normally live</u> when not working on ships?	
3. What is your <u>age</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 or older
4. What is your <u>gender</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> I'd prefer to self-describe: <input type="checkbox"/> I'd prefer not to say
COVID-19	
5. For approximately <u>how many years</u> have you worked in the marine industry in total?	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> Between 6 and 10 years <input type="checkbox"/> Between 11 and 15 years <input type="checkbox"/> Between 16 and 20 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 years

COVID-19

6. What type of vessel were you working on immediately prior to or during COVID-19 (2020-2022)?

(Tick as many as apply)

- ☐ General Cargo
- ☐ Containerships
- ☐ Tankers
- ☐ Bulk Carriers
- ☐ Roll-on-Roll-off
- ☐ Cruise Liners
- ☐ Fishing vessels
- ☐ Yachts (including superyachts)
- ☐ Floating Oil Rigs
- ☐ Offshore Oil and Gas vessels
- ☐ Other (please describe):

7. What was/were your role(s)/title(s) on board immediately prior to or during COVID-19 (2020-2022)?

8. Which geographical area(s) of the world were you working in immediately prior to or during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022)?

(Tick as many as apply)

- ☐ Australia / New Zealand
- ☐ Oceania / Pacific Islands (e.g., Kiribati, Fiji, Samoa)
- ☐ Europe (e.g., U.K., Spain, Russian Federation)
- ☐ Mediterranean Sea
- ☐ Southern Ocean
- ☐ North Sea
- ☐ Central and Southern Asia (e.g., India, Pakistan)
- ☐ Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (e.g., China, Singapore, Japan)
- ☐ Latin America and the Caribbean (e.g., Jamaica, Mexico, Brazil)
- ☐ North America (e.g., U.S.A., Canada)
- ☐ Northern Africa / Middle East (e.g., Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia)
- ☐ Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana)
- ☐ Other (please describe):

Current work

9. Do you currently work as a seafarer?

- ☐ Yes, full time.
- ☐ Yes, part time.
- ☐ No, not at the moment.
Please skip to Question 14.
- ☐ No, I have retired from seafaring.
Please skip to Question 14.

10. Are you still working with the same employer as you were at the start of COVID-19 in 2020?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. What type of vessel are you working on currently (or most recently)?

(Tick as many as apply)

- ☐ Same as before / during the COVID-19 pandemic
- ☐ General Cargo
- ☐ Containerships
- ☐ Tankers
- ☐ Bulk Carriers
- ☐ Roll-on-Roll-off
- ☐ Cruise Liners
- ☐ Fishing vessels
- ☐ Yachts (including superyachts)
- ☐ Floating Oil Rigs
- ☐ Offshore Oil and Gas vessels
- ☐ Other (please describe):

12. What is/are your current role(s)/title(s) on board?

- ☐ Same as before / during the COVID-19 pandemic
- ☐ Other role(s) (please describe):

13. Which geographical area(s) of the world are you currently working in?

(Tick as many as apply)

- ☐ Same as before / during the COVID-19 pandemic
- ☐ Australia / New Zealand
- ☐ Oceania / Pacific Islands (e.g., Kiribati, Fiji, Samoa)
- ☐ Europe (e.g., U.K., Spain, Russian Federation)
- ☐ Mediterranean Sea
- ☐ Southern Ocean
- ☐ North Sea
- ☐ Central and Southern Asia (e.g., India, Pakistan)
- ☐ Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (e.g., China, Singapore, Japan)
- ☐ Latin America and the Caribbean (e.g., Jamaica, Chile, Brazil)

	<input type="checkbox"/> North America (e.g., U.S.A., Canada) <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Africa / Middle East (e.g., Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia) <input type="checkbox"/> Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):
General Experiences <i>Note: Even if you have since left your role as a seafarer, please choose the answers that most apply (or applied) to your situation when you are (or were) working at sea.</i>	
14. Why did you choose to work as a seafarer? (Tick as many as apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> I get to see the world. <input type="checkbox"/> I make a lot of money. <input type="checkbox"/> I must support my family financially – and this is my best choice. <input type="checkbox"/> This job was my only choice. <input type="checkbox"/> I love the adventure. <input type="checkbox"/> It makes me feel good being out on the sea. <input type="checkbox"/> I love the mobility aspect (being on the move) of this job. <input type="checkbox"/> This job has given me opportunities to build skills. <input type="checkbox"/> I love working in a very close-knit team. <input type="checkbox"/> I like that teams change over, and I get to work with different personnel. <input type="checkbox"/> It is fun working on a floating device (ship or rig). <input type="checkbox"/> The ocean atmosphere is attractive to me. <input type="checkbox"/> Other reason(s) (please describe):
15. What is the maximum time you usually spend aboard your vessels?	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 2 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 4 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 3 months <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 4 months <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 5 months <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 6 months <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 7 months <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 8 months <input type="checkbox"/> More than 8 months

16. Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding your background or general experiences as a seafarer?

Part 2: Understanding seafarers' situations during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries implemented strict lockdown policies and restrictions on travel. This section asks you to reflect on your experiences as a seafarer during these phases of COVID-19.

Experiences during COVID-19

17a. Were you ever stranded overseas due to COVID-19 restrictions?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
Please skip to Question 18a.

17b. Where were you stranded?

17c. For how long were you stranded?

18a. Were you ever stranded in your home country and unable to return to work due to COVID-19 restrictions?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
Please skip to Question 19.

18b. For how long were you stranded?

19. The next part of the questionnaire will ask you to consider several statements relating to your experiences as a seafarer during COVID-19 (2020-2022). To what extent would you agree with the following statements?

If the question is not applicable to your work as a seafarer, please tick 'Not applicable'.

Logistics	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
It was <u>easy</u> for me to return to my home in between deployments during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I was <u>not</u> required to spend any additional time aboard my vessel due to COVID-19 restrictions.								

Logistics	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
It was easy for me to enter <u>other countries</u> when taking shore leave during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
It was easy for me to <u>leave my home for new deployments</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
Communications	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
I received regular communications from my <u>employer</u> regarding my situation during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I received regular communications from <u>my home government</u> officials and departments regarding my situation during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I received regular communications from <u>foreign government</u> officials and departments regarding my situation during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I received regular communications from <u>non-governmental organisations (NGOs)</u> , such as Human Rights at Sea, Seafarer Missions, or Stella Maris, regarding my situation during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I received regular communications from <u>Seafarer Unions</u> , such as the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) or other local unions, regarding my situation during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
Support and Protection	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
I felt supported by my <u>coworkers</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
My <u>personal relationships</u> remained satisfying and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic.								

Support and Protection	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
I felt supported by my <u>family and friends</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I felt <u>able to support my family and friends</u> back home during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I am satisfied with the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on my <u>connections with family</u> .								
My <u>employer</u> made every effort to protect my rights to the best of their ability during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
My <u>home government</u> took a proactive stance in protecting the rights of seafarers during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I am satisfied with the level of support I <u>received</u> from my <u>home government</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I am satisfied with the level of <u>support my family received</u> from my <u>home government</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
Organisational Support	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
I felt supported by the <u>International Maritime Organization (IMO)</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I felt supported by <u>Human Rights at Sea International</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I felt supported by <u>international Seafarer Welfare Centres</u> , such as Seafarer Missions or Stella Maris, during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
I felt supported by <u>Seafarer Unions</u> , such as the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) or other local unions, during the COVID-19 pandemic.								

Organisational Support	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
As a seafarer, I felt supported by <u>foreign government</u> officials and departments during the COVID-19 pandemic.								
20. Is there <u>anything else</u> you'd like to share regarding your experiences as a seafarer during the COVID-19 pandemic and the supports you did (or did not) receive?								

Part 3: Understanding the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on current and future situations

This section asks you to reflect on the short-term and longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on your professional and personal life.

Impacts of COVID-19								
<p>21. As above, this next section presents several statements. This time the statements ask you to think about your <u>experiences before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic</u>. In this section of the questionnaire, the phrase "during COVID-19" refers to the approximate time of the pandemic between 2020 and 2022.</p> <p>To what extent would you agree with the following statements?</p> <p>If the question is not applicable to you, please choose 'Not applicable'.</p>								
Physical Wellbeing	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
BEFORE COVID-19, I coped well with the <u>physical demands</u> of my deployment.								
DURING COVID-19, I coped well with the <u>physical demands</u> of my deployment.								
CURRENTLY, I am coping well with the <u>physical demands</u> of my deployment.								

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
BEFORE COVID-19, my <u>mental and emotional wellbeing</u> during deployment was generally positive.								
DURING COVID-19, my <u>mental and emotional wellbeing</u> during deployment was generally positive.								
CURRENTLY, my <u>mental and emotional wellbeing</u> during deployment is generally positive.								
Onboard Stress	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
BEFORE COVID-19, there was a <u>manageable level of workplace stress</u> aboard my vessel(s).								
DURING COVID-19, there was a <u>manageable level of workplace stress</u> aboard my vessel(s).								
CURRENTLY, there is a <u>manageable level of workplace stress</u> aboard my vessel(s).								
Financial Impacts	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
BEFORE COVID-19, I felt <u>financially stable</u> in my work as a seafarer.								
DURING COVID-19, I felt <u>financially stable</u> in my work as a seafarer.								
CURRENTLY, I feel <u>financially stable</u> in my work as a seafarer.								
Social Connections	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
BEFORE COVID-19, I felt <u>socially connected</u> to my family and friends back home during deployment.								
DURING COVID-19, I felt <u>socially connected</u> to my family and friends back home during deployment.								
CURRENTLY, I feel <u>socially connected</u> to my family and friends back home during deployment.								

Job Satisfaction	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
BEFORE COVID-19, I was <u>satisfied with my job</u> as a seafarer overall.								
DURING COVID-19, I was <u>satisfied with my job</u> as a seafarer overall.								
CURRENTLY, I am <u>satisfied with my job</u> as a seafarer overall.								
22. During and/or after the COVID-19 pandemic, were any of the following <u>behavioural changes</u> applicable to you? (Tick as many as apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> I noticed a tendency to withdraw socially. <input type="checkbox"/> I tended to drink more alcohol than usual. <input type="checkbox"/> I found that I was more angry than usual. <input type="checkbox"/> I found that I was more anxious than usual. <input type="checkbox"/> I felt depressed. <input type="checkbox"/> I was allocated medical prescription to deal with depression and/or anxiety. <input type="checkbox"/> I increased my medical prescription(s). <input type="checkbox"/> I took to recreational drugs. <input type="checkbox"/> I increased my use of recreational drugs. <input type="checkbox"/> I started working out/going to the gym. <input type="checkbox"/> I increased the time that I normally work out/go to the gym. <input type="checkbox"/> Other changes that I noticed were (please describe):							
23a. Were you made unemployed (or underemployed) as a result of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – underemployed <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please skip to Question 24.</i>							
23b. How long were you unemployed (or underemployed) before you could return to your seafaring role?								
24. Did you receive any COVID-19 financial assistance from your <u>home government</u>?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No							
25. Did you receive any COVID-19 financial assistance from your <u>employer(s)</u>?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No							

<p>26. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your ongoing employment <u>choices</u>?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> After COVID-19, I feel <u>more motivated</u> to work in seafaring.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My experiences during COVID-19 <u>have not impacted</u> my choice to work as a seafarer.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Because of COVID-19, I <u>no longer wish to work</u> in seafaring.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I no longer wish to work in seafaring, but this is <u>not because of COVID-19</u>.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):</p>
<p>27. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your ongoing employment <u>chances</u>?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> It has been extremely difficult finding new ship-based employment and I am still <u>unemployed (or underemployed)</u>.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It has been difficult to find new ship-based employment, but I was able to continue working as <u>seafarer</u>.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It has been difficult finding a new seafaring job and I have found a job ashore instead.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It hasn't affected my chances, but I had to find a new job after COVID-19.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I've had <u>no interruptions since 2020</u> and have continued with my usual seafaring work.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It hasn't affected my opportunities, but I chose to retire after COVID-19.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):</p>
<p>28. Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding the impacts of COVID-19 on your experiences as a seafarer?</p>	
<p>If you would like to be considered to participate in a more in-depth interview about your experiences for this research project, please enter your email address: <i>You are under no obligation to provide any personal information.</i></p>	

Thank you for your time. If you know other seafarers who may be interested in participating, we encourage you to **please share this survey**.

Please upload your completed survey here:

https://massey.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_da9lcFobf4KnyK

For more information on this research, please visit: <https://seafarermobilities.com>