



Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile - FAIMM
(Italian Shipping Academy Foundation)
Genoa – Italy



Istituto Tecnico Trasporti e Logistica "Nautico San Giorgio" – ITTL
(Technical School for Transports and Logistics "Nautico San Giorgio")
Genoa – Italy



Chalmers University of Technology – CUT
Gothenburg – Sweden



Turun yliopiston merenkulkualan koulutus - ja tutkimuskeskus – CMS
(Centre for Maritime Studies – University of Turku)
Turku – Finland



Piri Reis Üniversitesi – PRU
(Piri Reis University)
Istanbul – Turkey



Akademia Morska w Szczecinie - MUS
(Maritime University of Szczecin)
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www.sosproject.net



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Grand Hotel Savoia - Genoa (Italy)

S.O.S. Stress on Ships

Kick Off Meeting



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union
Con il supporto dell'Unione Europea nell'ambito del programma Lifelong Learning

Infinity of nothing

Imagine you're doing your usual job. And suddenly everything radically changes. Your colleagues start speaking strange foreign languages you can't understand, and the communication becomes lame, inaccurate, complicated.

Then imagine that at the end of your work shift you can't go home. You're only allowed to change room, to reach a spot where spending some free time or having rest, but *always* remaining at your work place. You take a look around you and find no friends, no family, no dear ones. You look out of the windows to see some familiar landscapes, but all you see is always the same infinity of nothing.

Thus, you realize that home, loving ones and friends are far away. The reality where you used to live has completely transformed in something so uncomfortable to be perceived as an anomaly.

Imagine you're forced in this kind of situation for a long time. Weeks. Months. Would you be able to concentrate on your tasks and duties, when called to do your job? Would you be able to go on bearing responsibilities with steadfast professionalism and competence? *Or would you rather be easily and gradually stress-stricken?*



Stress: enemy number one

Actually, what has been described above, is the normal situation a sea worker is used to live in. No real shift between workplace and home. There's one name for both: *ship*.

A small place floating, most of the time, *in the middle of an infinity of nothing*. There the maritime worker is. There he has to stay. And in the ship he is plunged in a *babel* of people, with different habits and languages. Put in these uncomfortable and psychologically pressing condition, the sea worker, especially when high-ranked as the officers, bears on his shoulders the responsibilities for high-value goods, people's lives, and for the ship itself.

In this context, *stress is his enemy* number one: when it raises, if not kept under control, it lowers and deteriorates attention, concentration, awareness, management skills, care for safety. Not by case, statistics and studies by major maritime international institutions recognize in this kind of "human element" the cause of most of the accidents at sea, and one of the main reasons for sea professionals to early quit their career, depleting the entire sector of valiant human resources, and preventing the maritime entrepreneurs to make *long-term investments* on reliable professionals.

The answer: S.O.S. project

Everywhere, the whole education and training system for students and for seafarers of all ranks supplies a huge range of chance to learn how to have technical and professional performances of high level while working on board. But no training programme anywhere is structurally dedicated to teach how *to check the arising of stress* and face it.

Many studies have been developed on the subject all over the world, but they haven't been ever converted in a specific training programme.

The idea is to gather the best experts in Europe, to build a new training programme for maritime students and workers, that will provide tools to recognize the arising of stress and to manage it, avoiding bad effects on the ordinary working activity. The training programme will be tested on a small pilot group of maritime students and sea workers, who will be then monitored during their work on board. At the end, the European maritime education and training system will have available a tested and assessed *new training programme* to meet the leading demand of having on board crews not only skilled in their specific technical tasks, but also reliable, as able to manage, tame and rule their own "human element", when it comes to threaten safety, efficiency and their career.



Background and foundations of S.O.S. project

Huge background and solid foundations, that's what a good project needs to be effective. "S.O.S. – Stress On Ships" project has them. It will take advantage of some of the most authoritative research centres, universities, academies and schools from Northern Europe, where the subject of *stress management* during the work on board has been analyzed and studied with depth and care. And they will share their know-how on the subject with other Mediterranean and Southern approaches and experiences. This fully European scientific consortium won't be alone in its job.

They will be supported, as associated partners, by several different European stakeholders, interested either in directly participating to the project's works, or to monitor the sustainability of results. Among them, S.O.S. project counts big private enterprises, public bodies, schools and sectorial associations.

Looking at the wide composition of its consortium, S.O.S. project is well weighted. It has background huge and foundations deep and solid enough to ensure its success, in favour of the future generation of sea workers.