

PRESS RELEASE

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Summer vacation at sea: 35 “Summer Seafarers” aboard Hapag-Lloyd ships

- 35 pupils are getting a taste of seafaring aboard Hapag-Lloyd ships
- Several summer seafarers are setting sail from Hamburg to South America or Asia
- For decades, the VDR program has been offering young people hands-on insights into maritime careers

Cast off for the next generation of seafarers: Hapag-Lloyd is participating again this year in the Association of German Shipowners' (VDR) **summer seafaring program** and has once again filled all 35 available spots. This gives students from all over Germany the opportunity to spend several weeks aboard a Hapag-Lloyd container ship during their summer vacation, experiencing daily life at sea.

Several participants will set sail from Hamburg this summer. On the “Santos Express” three summer seafarers are boarding the ship together. Their 333-meter-long container ship, with capacity for 11,519 TEU, operates on a Northern Europe–South America route, taking them from Hamburg across the Atlantic to Callao, Peru. A highlight of the voyage will certainly be the passage through the Panama Canal.

The 16-year-old **Lias Denecke** from Sylt, Schleswig-Holstein, knows exactly why he's signing on as a summer seafarer with Hapag-Lloyd, the world's fifth-largest container shipping line: “I want to experience something you can't see in an explanatory video. I'm interested in navigation and technology, and I want to understand what everyday life is really like on board. It's not about taking a vacation; it's about helping out and learning as much as possible”.

“For many young people, the summer seafaring program is their first real exposure to maritime shipping. It's precisely this direct insight that's crucial for sparking interest in maritime careers and

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nurturing talent early on,” says Erik Hirsch, Head of Maritime Training at Hapag-Lloyd. “The fact that we were able to fill 35 spots this year shows just how great the interest is in living and working on board.”

On board, the young people experience ship operations under realistic conditions. They accompany the crew in their daily routines, learn about procedures on the bridge, on deck, and in the engine room, and get a feel for what teamwork at sea means. The program is aimed at young people aged 16 and older who are still in school and want to explore whether a nautical apprenticeship, a technical career on board, or a maritime degree is right for them. In fact, 50% of all summer seafarers later decide to pursue a seafarer apprenticeship at Hapag-Lloyd.

“The summer seafaring program was my first real step into the world of maritime shipping. On board the ‘Cordillera Express,’ under the command of Capt. Schmidt-Grunert, I experienced during a summer 1979 voyage around the U.S. Gulf Coast just how demanding, international, and responsible this profession is – and that’s exactly what convinced me to continue my career at Hapag-Lloyd. A single summer on board can turn into a maritime career,” says Wolfram Guntermann, now Director of Regulatory Affairs at Hapag-Lloyd and a former captain with the company.

The VDR’s summer seafaring program has been introducing young people to maritime shipping since the 1960s. Hapag-Lloyd has been a partner of the program for many years and supports it as an important contribution to recruiting the next generation of talent for Germany’s maritime sector. For more information, visit [Longing for the sea – our summer seafaring programme - VDR](#)

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About Hapag-Lloyd

With a fleet of 302 modern container ships and a total transport capacity of 2.5 million TEU, Hapag-Lloyd is one of the world's leading liner shipping companies. In the **Liner Shipping segment**, the Company has 15,200 employees and 400 offices in 140 countries. Hapag-Lloyd has a container capacity of 3.7 million TEU – including one of the largest and most modern fleets of reefer containers. A total of 133 liner services worldwide ensure fast and reliable connections between 600 ports on all the continents. In the **Terminal & Infrastructure segment**, Hapag-Lloyd has equity stakes in 24 marine terminals in Europe, Latin America, the United States, India and North Africa. 4,400 employees are assigned to the Terminal & Infrastructure segment and provide complementary logistics services at selected locations in addition to the terminal activities.

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