



DanishShipping

# Charting the Course

Strategy of Danish Shipping  
2026–2030



It is no coincidence that Denmark ranks among the world's top 10 shipping nations. We have achieved this because for generations, we have had a global outlook bolstered by strong maritime and trading traditions. They have grown into a significant maritime industry and laid the foundation for an innovative and competitive maritime cluster. That foundation remains as strong as ever.

Shipping is agile and Danish shipping companies excel in the way they adapt to shifting patterns of trade in global markets and a volatile geopolitical reality. The Danish shipping industry represents a strategic asset and a strength in a turbulent world, where supply security and resilience have risen to the top of the agenda.



## This is where we belong

Although shipping is global and Danish operated vessels sail around the world under various flags, the focal point of our strength remains Denmark and the Danish flag. This is where we belong. This is also where, in the next few years, we need to secure a predictable, competitive and ongoing favourable framework for Danish shipping companies.

International shipping accounts for up to 3% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions. That entails a special responsibility for the climate and for driving shipping's emissions towards net zero. This ambition remains firm, despite the wider geopolitical challenges on the world stage.

In recent years, Danish shipping companies have invested heavily in new sustainable vessels and energy-efficient solutions that reduce fuel consumption and emissions. At the same time, we are acutely aware that our industry operates within the natural habitats of countless marine species in the world's oceans. Therefore, we also have a responsibility to ensure minimum biodiversity disturbance.

Danish shipping holds a strong global presence in multiple segments. They include container, product tanker, ro-ro/pax, offshore wind, dry bulk and specialised vessels.

Danish Shipping represents the entire industry, covering Danish-flagged and Danish operated tonnage – as well as offshore installations in the North Sea.

Overall, this strategy aims to:

- **strengthen Denmark and the Danish flag as the home base for Danish shipping companies**
- **ensure that Danish seafarers' skills are world-class**
- **drive the sustainable transition of shipping with undiminished ambition**
- **ensure Danish shipping companies contribute strategically to defence and crisis preparedness.**

Danish Shipping must be the trusted partner and collaborator, ensuring that our members are equipped with the best possible conditions to operate competitively and sustainably in Denmark. They are charting the course in a changing and global trading environment.

# Purpose

## The Preferred Shipping Community

The focal point of this strategy is to strengthen Denmark as the preferred home and community for shipping companies.

Denmark is where Danish shipping companies' interests are best represented, from political support to world-class skills and strong collective bargaining agreements.

## World-class Danish shipping

Denmark ranks among the world's **top 10** maritime nations measured by operated tonnage.

–Danish Shipping based on data from S&P Maritime portal, October 2025

Danish-flagged merchant vessels account for approximately **12%** of NATO countries' merchant fleet. This makes the Danish-flagged civilian fleet the **third largest** within NATO.

–Danish Shipping based on data from S&P Maritime portal, July 2025

### • Preferred

This means that, while shipping companies naturally operate globally with multiple flags and offices abroad, they continue to invest in Denmark and maintain the Danish flag as their flag of choice. This is often alongside others. That means the overall framework conditions for shipping companies must remain competitive.

### • Shipping Community

This indicates that no single company can build a leading maritime nation alone. It requires collective investment and collaboration around shared goals for the industry. They apply to effective authorities and better regulation, improved framework conditions and the exchange of knowledge on innovative and energy-efficient solutions.

## Strategic Focus Areas

The world is changing. We adapt, seize opportunities and contribute to forward-looking solutions. We contribute to the sustainable transition of shipping, our strategic role in Danish, European and global security, and provide a vital link in the international supply chain.

To achieve the goal of making Denmark the preferred home and community for shipping companies, our strategy for the coming years focuses on three strategic areas:

**1** Competitive home for Danish shipping

**2** World-class maritime competences

**3** Safely and ambitiously towards zero

## Danish shipping's impact on society

Every **4 minutes**, a Danish operated vessel calls at a port somewhere in the world.

–Danish Shipping, 2025

Danish shipping companies operate **1,687** vessels, **640** of them under the Danish flag.

–Danish Shipping based on data from S&P Maritime portal, October 2025

**18%** of Denmark's total exports in 2024 came from shipping.

–Statistics Denmark

Danish shipping companies employ **25,500** in Denmark and on Danish vessels – including **18,500** at sea of which **7,000** are Danish.

–Danish Shipping, data as of September 2024

About **50%** of Danish ships on order can run on alternative fuels.

–Danish Shipping based on data from S&P Maritime portal, October 2025

Approximately **100,000** jobs in the wider Danish maritime cluster.

–Danish Maritime Authority, 2024

## 1 Competitive home for Danish shipping

**The world is rapidly changing - and Danish shipping companies must be supported in seizing the opportunities these changes create.**

Denmark stands strong as a maritime nation: Shipping companies provide thousands of jobs across the country, vital transport capacity, and the ability to deploy offshore wind. On many levels, the framework conditions for shipping companies are among the best in Europe, and the Danish-flagged merchant fleet is recognised as a high-quality flag of choice.

Yet despite this strong position, it remains essential to ensure that regulation and government support keep pace with developments in Danish companies' international operating environment. Many other maritime nations are working actively to attract shipping activity through new frameworks, while rapid geopolitical and trade policy shifts bring new threats as well as opportunities. Danish shipping must be able to navigate these successfully, while contributing to society's broader resilience at sea.

### We work towards

1

**Competitive national and international framework conditions**, that strengthen the competitiveness of Danish shipping companies. The Danish flag should remain the flag of choice.

2

**Active support from the authorities in central markets** - including geopolitical advice and assistance with offshore wind activities etc.

3

**An active role in security, defence and resilience** as part of society's maritime robustness at sea and in ports.

#### Target

- The Danish-flagged merchant fleet to grow as much as, or more than, the world fleet.

### Key Initiatives

- Prevent distortionary taxation from the EU, UN or individual countries (e.g. double taxation).
- Ensure the Danish Maritime Authority actively supports the industry in areas such as flagging, sanctions guidance and international negotiations.
- Launch a broad benchmarking analysis of key competitiveness factors compared with other quality maritime nations.
- Conclude Danish and international collective bargaining agreements that balance competitiveness with attractive working conditions.
- Support Danish offshore shipping companies face increasing local barriers, particularly in the offshore wind sector.
- Strengthen dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission on geopolitics, trade policy and sanctions; to provide Danish shipping companies with up-to-date analyses and knowledge to identify opportunities and avoid obstacles.
- Develop partnerships and frameworks that enable the merchant fleet to contribute to national preparedness, defence and resilience when required.



## 2 World-class maritime competences

**Danish seafarers must be second to none and the obvious choice for Danish shipping companies.**

Denmark is home to a strong maritime cluster with world-class shipping companies, leading educational institutions and close collaboration between public and private bodies. This provides a unique foundation for attracting, developing and retaining the best skills – at sea and on land. That will ensure Denmark remains a leading shipping nation.

Experience has shown that it has proved particularly difficult to attract and retain seafarers. Without world-class Danish seafarers, a strong maritime cluster cannot be sustained. Seafarers not only bring invaluable expertise to sea operations, they also carry this experience ashore. That strengthens shipping companies, educational institutions, authorities and the entire maritime value chain.

It is therefore crucial to ensure we have seafarers of top international standard while simultaneously developing world-class skills on land. Only through the interplay between sea and shore can Denmark maintain its position as a leading maritime nation.

### We work towards

1

**Shipping being known as an attractive and accessible choice for young people:** Ensure a broad, attractive, and forward-looking approach to attracting young people and new talent.

2

**Future-proofing education and skills:** Integrate the green transition, digitalisation, AI and global developments into the entire education and training system.

3

**Attractive jobs at sea through personal development:** Create frameworks for career progression, flexibility and well-being so that more people choose to stay longer in the industry.

#### Targets

- The number of students enrolled in maritime education to increase each year up to 2030.
- Deliver at least 400 internships annually.
- More Danish seafarers in 2030 compared to 2025.

### Key Initiatives

- Increasing visibility and awareness through initiatives such as *The Universe of Shipping*, *All Hands on Deck*, *Maritime Student Days*, and digital solutions.
- Targeted *World Careers* campaign to raise awareness among students facing education choices.
- Practical introduction programmes in upper secondary education and easy access to internships in secondary school.
- Exploring ways to make life at sea more attractive, encouraging longer careers at sea.
- Broadening the talent base by supporting shipping companies' work with equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Continue developing shipping education to meet the evolving needs of shipping companies, e.g. on energy transition.
- Establish a unified framework for maritime continuing education and training – both at sea and on shore – offering short and flexible programmes.



### 3 Safely and ambitiously towards zero

**Danish Shipping is committed to driving a competitive and sustainable transition for international shipping.**

We have already contributed to setting ambitious goals. Our task is to push for the adoption and effective implementation of climate regulations and upholding ambitions.

We take responsibility for the industry's impact on climate and the environment, and we work to ensure that decarbonisation goes hand in hand with the long-term competitiveness of our members. This requires clear frameworks and a strong focus on the practical implementation of existing regulations, so that shipping companies can navigate change with confidence and seize opportunities.

We also recognise that climate, environment and biodiversity are closely interlinked and we will continue to strengthen our knowledge of our impact as well as the opportunities to reduce it. At the same time, safety and preparedness will become ever more important as the sector transitions to new fuels.

For us, competitiveness is not only a precondition, it is a driver for achieving our climate ambitions and ensuring that international shipping continues to thrive while leading the way towards net zero.

#### We work towards

1

**An active role in ensuring safety of alternative fuels** in connection with the gradual energy transition.

2

**The adoption of robust and competitive climate regulation** with effective implementation and practical handling of challenges.

3

**Scaling up production of alternative fuels and technological solutions**, enabling our members to meet new requirements while at the same time enhancing the efficiency and competitiveness of the merchant fleet.

#### Targets

- Global regulatory schemes are in place that drive the green transition of shipping beyond the EU's regional measures.
- The revision of the EU ETS for shipping and the EU's FuelEU Maritime initiative takes into account climate regulatory initiatives of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and paves the way for a legal framework that avoids double-counting, double-payment and double-reporting.

#### Key Initiatives

- Ongoing push for ambitious and competitive frameworks that continue to drive the energy transition of global shipping.
- Ensure a safe and sustainable fuel transition by addressing environmental risks and protecting crew safety. This is particularly through our work on the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), so that new technologies are adopted with confidence.
- Drive smooth and effective implementation of adopted regulation, such as the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), while ensuring alignment with global rules when adopted, so that progress is accelerated rather than fragmented.
- Influence regulation to increase investment in alternative fuels and the energy transition of shipping, e.g. by advocating for national and European reinvestment of ETS revenues.
- Accelerate fleet energy efficiency as a fast, cost-effective and proven pathway to emission reductions by promoting best practices, high standards and effective global regulation.



# Danish Shipping on solid foundation

Danish Shipping represents a united industry – with Danish-flagged/operated tonnage as well as offshore installations in the North Sea.

We bring the shipping industry together and speak with one voice. We represent our members on the basis that we are the ones who know them best.

We must therefore continue to be the organisation that pursues our members' agendas. It must be credible and grounded in knowledge, insight and mutual trust. We will build our impact and influence on behalf of the Danish shipping industry – globally, in the EU and in Denmark. That is the way to remain relevant, not only for our members, but for all our stakeholders within and beyond the maritime sector.

We are here to provide support in day-to-day operations, in long-term efforts and when crises arise. The association has a small and knowledge-intensive organisation with employees from differing professional backgrounds having vastly different tasks. It will be of increasing importance to ensure opportunities for everyone to gain new skills and competences, including in the use of new technologies to improve efficiency.

At Danish Shipping, we know that the most satisfied members are those who make the most use of our services. Therefore, more of our members should benefit from what we offer. As an organisation, we must also reach further into our member companies so that more of them know how we can assist them.

A key task in this strategy is to preserve and strengthen the member-focused culture, where we know each member and help them with their challenges swiftly and professionally.

For Danish Shipping, this means being the foundation for our members – so that Denmark is ***the preferred shipping community***.

## Targets

- 90% of participants in our members' satisfaction survey will indicate that they use us to a larger extent for advice, services, networking and information.
- More than 90% of participants in our members' satisfaction survey will recommend Danish Shipping's services, network, advice and information to their colleagues.



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**The world is changing.  
We adapt, seize opportunities  
and contribute to forward-  
looking solutions.**

**Danish shipping contributes  
to the sustainable transition  
of shipping, our strategic  
role in Danish, European and  
global security, and we provide  
a vital link in the international  
supply chain.**





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