

Interview with Sergii Kazantsev

1. Tell us about where you grew up and about your family

My name is Sergii Kazantsev. I was born in 1985 in Mariupol, a large Ukrainian industrial center and the largest port on the Azov coast. I started my working career in 2006, working at the Azov ship repair plant. Afterward, I worked for a freight forwarding company in the port of Mariupol until I moved to Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, in 2011.

In 2012, I began my work at the State Inspectorate of Ukraine for maritime and inland water transport safety, as the chief specialist of the accident and incident investigation department. I worked in various positions until in 2016 I joined the Trade Union of Maritime Transport Workers of Ukraine, where I currently work.

In addition, from 2016 to 2022, I also worked on various technical support projects as:

- Project Manager for Maritime and Inland Waterway Transport of the Reform Support Team in the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine,
- strategic planning and risk assessment expert of the support team for the preparation of Ukraine for the IMO audit, and also as a
- legal consultant and STCW expert for the team of reengineering services for certification of seafarers in Ukraine.

in 2016 I was nominated as an IMO auditor.

2. Why did you choose the education you did?

As I noted earlier, I grew up in a large industrial and logistics center on the shores of the Azov Sea. Therefore, in 2002, I entered the Preazovsky State Technical University at the Faculty of Transport Technologies, from which I graduated in 2007 and received a master's degree in transport technologies.

Since 2006, my professional life has been connected with maritime transport. The Azov ship repair plant was a diversified enterprise that, in addition to ship repairs, also provided stevedoring services and also operated 5 sea vessels on international voyages. Therefore, in 2012, for my professional development, I received a master's degree in maritime law at the Odessa National Maritime University.

While working in the civil service in Ukraine, I successfully graduated from the National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine, receiving a master's degree in public administration.

3. Tell us about your current work and position

Currently, I am working as an adviser to the Chairman of the Marine Transport Workers Trade Union of Ukraine (mtwtu.org.ua). The MTWTU is the largest Ukrainian maritime trade union and is the only trade union affiliated with the ITF and ETF. Members of the

trade union are more than 80 thousand maritime transport workers in Ukraine, of which more than 50 thousand are Ukrainian seafarers working on ships around the world.

My professional responsibilities include interaction with government agencies in Ukraine, analysis of national and international legislation, and preparation of proposals for introducing the necessary changes to legislation to ensure the protection of labour and social rights of seafarers and port workers.

At the international level, I interact with UN agencies (IMO, ILO) and non-governmental organizations in the field of maritime transport.

I am also involved in strategic planning and policy development.

4. What made you decide to study at WMU?

The World Maritime University is a unique educational institution founded by the International Maritime Organization.

Only this university has a specialization in Maritime Law and Policy, which is part of my professional responsibilities and is important both for the development of MTWTU and for ensuring the sustainable development of my beautiful country of Ukraine.

I also want to mention the role of Dr. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry. Meeting her in 2014 influenced my professional life. Her career path and passion for providing fair protection to all seafarers will always be an example of professionalism around the world.

5. How did you react to receiving the Richard Charvet Scholarship?

First of all, it is a great honor for me to be a Richard Charvet Scholarship recipient.

Of course, receiving this honorary prize was a big surprise for me. In my major, I have had the honor of studying with excellent professionals from all over the world. This award is due to each of my colleagues from whom I have constantly learned throughout my wonderful journey at WMU.

And of course, I am grateful to all the professors and staff of the university, especially my supervisor, Dr. Khansa Lagdami, ITF Seafarers Trust Assistant Professor of Maritime Labour Law & Policy.

6. How should you use the prize sum?

The best investment you can make is in developing your professional skills. I will also send part of the amount to the MTWTU charity fund, which assists Ukrainian seafarers in crises and extreme situations.

7. What future ambitions and goals do you have?

My beautiful country, unfortunately, is going through difficult times. Post-war reconstruction will require clear and precise policies and strategies based on new, modern solutions.

I am confident that the knowledge and skills acquired at WMU will help in developing the best solutions for the sustainable development of maritime transport in Ukraine, as well as in ensuring the protection of the rights of Ukrainian seafarers around the world.