



**SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCES
PORTS MANAGEMENT AND SHIPPING DPT.**

Press Release

**International Conference:
Participation of Ports Management and Shipping Dpt., NKUA in
‘Academic Excellence Meets Global Dialogue on Maritime Affairs’
SIGA2 Conference 2025 – WCTRS, University of Antwerp, Belgium**

Faculty members of the **Ports Management and Shipping (PMS) Dpt., National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)**, have actively participated in the **International SIGA2 Conference 2025**, held recently (May 7-9, 2025) at the **University of Antwerp, Belgium**, where academic excellence meets global dialogue on strategic maritime affairs.

Organized by the **Special Interest Group A2: Ports and Maritime** of the **World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS)**, this high-level academic and business event brought together leading scholars and experts across the globe to exchange insights into the future of shipping, port and maritime business with a focus on sustainability and resilience. The Ports Management and Shipping Dpt. NKUA has proudly contributed in multiple directions to this prestigious international Conference.

Professor Theodoros Syriopoulos, Chairman of Ports Management and Shipping Dpt., NKUA, was invited in the **honorary keynote speakers’ panel** to contribute his ideas to the complex issues of funding requirements for shipping, port, and supply chain companies to meet their pressing medium-term decarbonization targets. Panel members were also representatives from Global Shipping BNP Paribas, Royal Association of Dutch Shipowners, Royal Belgian Shipowner Association, OECD Policy Experts, and Arcelor Mittal steel industry managers, inter alia.

The IMO's (International Maritime Organization) 2050 target is to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from international shipping. To reach this goal, the IMO has also set interim targets of at least 20% reduction by 2030 (striving for 30%) and 70% by 2040 (striving for 80%), all compared to 2008 levels.

Two thought-provoking research papers were, furthermore, presented by PMS faculty staff to a diverse academic and market audience, addressing critical strategic financial and environmental priorities in the maritime industry:

1. Determinants of Capital Structure in Shipping Firms Under Varying Risk Conditions

Authors: **Michael Tsatsaronis, Theodoros Syriopoulos, Efthymios Roumpis**

What drives financial decisions and capital structure in global shipping?

This empirical study explores the impact of key factors, including **firm size, asset structure, profitability, and risk levels**, to shape capital structure decisions of listed shipping firms. By examining behavior across **high, medium, and low-risk market environments**, the research offers vital insights into how shipping companies strategically adapt their financing options under uncertainty - highlighting the industry's financial agility under intensified volatility conditions.

2. Coal Phase-Out and Implications on Seaborne Trade

Authors: **Efthymios Roumpis, Theodoros Syriopoulos, Michael Tsatsaronis, Christos Tsitsakis**

What does the energy transition mean for dry bulk shipping?

This empirical study investigates the global decline of **steam coal production and trade** in the context of **climate policies and carbon neutrality goals**. Using a **long-term equilibrium model**, the authors assess different **coal demand scenarios through 2050**, projecting their impact on **seaborne trade flows**. This innovative research provokes challenging findings as regards the future of dry bulk shipping and calls for adaptive strategies in fleet deployment, cargo diversification, and maritime decarbonization.

These contributions reflect the consistent commitment of **Ports Management and Shipping Dpt. faculty staff** to advance **international applied research, articulate policy recommendations, and promote academic collaboration**, reinforcing the PMS Department's position at the forefront of contemporary maritime studies worldwide.

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