

Are you ready for the Twenty twenties?



After another record breaking year, Laurence Lewis looks at the main facts and figures from 2019 in the superyacht recruiting industry

Who hasn't attended a Great Gatsby themed party over the holiday period? They were all the rage as we were celebrating the dawn of a new decade; the Twenty Twenties! A hundred years ago, the roaring twenties was a period of renaissance in art, culture and music, of economic prosperity and freedom. It was also a time when great yachts were being built. There was a flurry of activity in European shipyards when iconic sailing yachts such as MOONBEAM IV was finished by Fife & Co in the UK whilst Abeking and Rasmussen in Germany was launching the 23 metre classic gentleman's sailing yacht TALISMAN. A hundred years later, construction is underway at the German shipyard of their flagship project 6507 at 118 metres. Almost 100 metres gained in 100 years!

Today, clearly, the yachting industry is prospering; in 2019, there were 449 yachts under construction, 369 yachts were delivered compared to 313 deliveries in 2018 and 248 in 2017 (Boat International). The yacht crew market is buoyant too, as illustrated by the data below we have been collecting in our 17th year of trading. We believe that this data is fairly representative of the crew market in general.

In the last two years, we have seen the number of job requests on yachts increase by an impressive 17%. For the fifth consecutive year, our yacht crew agency data shows that the majority of positions were on yachts of 71 metres plus in length. These represented 42% of total yacht jobs and an increase of 21% compared to two years ago. Positions on yachts of between 51 and 70 metres was the second busiest segment, with a 28 % share.

Interestingly, the demand for crew on yachts between 31 and 50 metres increased by 10% between 2018 and 2019 which, we believe,

is a reflection on the difficulties Captains and hiring managers are experiencing in this segment of the market in attracting good crew. Recruiters have to work much harder for these clients who are searching for new crewmembers. The reason being, many crew, whether deckhands, stewardesses,

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chefs or Engineers, are being lured towards the larger vessels in the 70-80 metres range which are perceived as being more appealing work places, given the larger crew numbers who are able thus, to provide more support. Captains clearly rely on crew agencies for support to educate and source these hard to find candidates. More or less as previously, motor yachts represent 92% of the crew recruitment market which again is coherent with the global yacht market.

For those jobseekers weighing up the benefits of working on a private versus a charter yacht, you'll be interested to learn that 65% of jobs in 2019 (66 % in 2018) were on private vessels. This clearly indicates that it's well worth interviewing for private yacht jobs rather than waiting around for that elusive charter position. Another consistent figure we have found is the percentage of Captains' jobs which remains unchanged at 4% of job requests at YPI Crew whilst the remaining 96% were crew jobs. Officers registration, which hit a record high in 2018, plateaued in 2019 with still the overhanging question of whether there will be enough captain positions to accommodate all the upcoming Officers in the future.

The year 2019 was the busiest ever in terms of steward/ess and deckhand registrations and the second busiest for Chefs. 2020 will undoubtedly bring another busy season, are you ready?