

PRESS RELEASE

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SEA Europe welcomes Council Conclusions on the European Industrial Maritime Strategy

SEA Europe welcomes the adoption of the Council Conclusions on the EU Industrial Maritime Strategy, which represents a strong political signal in support of Europe's maritime manufacturing industry and a strong recognition of the strategic role that shipbuilding and maritime equipment play in Europe's industrial sovereignty, economic security, resilience and technological leadership.

The Conclusions come at a critical moment for Europe. As global competition intensifies and geopolitical tensions continue to reshape industrial value chains, the Council acknowledges the strategic importance of maintaining a strong maritime industrial base in Europe and highlights the need to preserve key shipbuilding, ship repair, retrofitting and maritime equipment manufacturing capabilities across the Union.

SEA Europe particularly welcomes the Council's recognition that Europe must strengthen its competitiveness while addressing growing market distortions and unfair subsidisation from third countries and its call to explore options to better protect European maritime industries through existing trade defence instruments. Equally significant is the Council's support for the strategic use of public procurement and tendering procedures, including the use of sustainability, circularity and European content requirements. The Conclusions reflect an increasing awareness that a level playing field is indispensable if European companies are to continue investing, innovating and creating high-quality jobs in Europe.

The Council also places industrial resilience and investment at the heart of its vision for the sector. From support for the modernisation of shipyards and the deployment of advanced technologies to the creation of an EU Industrial Maritime Value Chains Alliance and improved access to financing, the Conclusions provide important political guidance for strengthening Europe's maritime industrial ecosystem and securing its long-term competitiveness.

SEA Europe further welcomes the emphasis placed on innovation and industrial transformation. The support for initiatives such as "Shipyards of the Future", together with the focus on digitalisation, automation and clean technologies, reflects the reality that Europe's leadership in maritime manufacturing will depend on its ability to remain at the forefront of technological development.

The Conclusions also rightly underline the growing importance of maritime security and industrial resilience. SEA Europe welcomes the Council's recognition of the need to protect critical maritime infrastructure, strengthen supply chains, develop dual-use maritime capabilities and support strategic vessel segments that contribute to Europe's security and preparedness objectives.

The Conclusions also acknowledge one of the sector's most pressing challenges: access to skilled workers. SEA Europe strongly welcomes the call for a coordinated European approach to maritime skills, vocational excellence, reskilling and workforce development. Ensuring the availability of qualified talent will be essential to delivering Europe's industrial and technological ambitions.



On the adoption of the Conclusions, **Christophe Tytgat, Secretary General of SEA Europe**, stated: *"Today's Council Conclusions represent another important step forward for Europe's maritime manufacturing industry. They recognise that shipbuilding and maritime equipment are not only economic activities but strategic assets for Europe's competitiveness, resilience and sovereignty. The Council has endorsed many of the priorities long advocated by the maritime manufacturing industry, including stronger industrial cooperation, investment in innovation and skills, support for industrial resilience and a more determined response to unfair global competition. The challenge now is to translate this political ambition into concrete measures that allow European industry to compete and thrive."*

SEA Europe looks forward to working with the European Commission, the European Parliament and Member States to ensure the effective implementation of the EU Industrial Maritime Strategy and to strengthen Europe's position as a global leader in maritime manufacturing.

Background Note:

SEA Europe represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 17 nations, encompassing the production, maintenance, repair, and conversion of all types of ships and floating structures, commercial as well as naval, including the full supply chain with the various producers of maritime systems, equipment material, and services. SEA Europe's membership is situated in EU Member States, Norway, Turkey, United Kingdom and Ukraine. As an NGO observer at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), CESA represents the shipbuilding industry and its supply chain from EU Member States, Norway, and Turkey.

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