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PRESS RELEASE

From Strategy to Implementation: European Maritime Manufacturing Industry Mobilises on Skills and Quality Jobs

On 5th May, industry leaders, trade unions, EU institutions, and education providers gathered at the European Economic and Social Committee for the Shipbuilding Pact for Skills event, focused on delivering concrete actions for skills and quality jobs in the maritime manufacturing industry.

Organised by SEA Europe and industriAll Europe, the event marked a key milestone in aligning the Shipbuilding Pact for Skills with the recently published European Industrial Maritime Strategy (EIMS), particularly its “Skills and Quality Jobs” pillar.

Opening the event, Isabelle Barthès, Deputy Secretary General of industriAll Europe, and Christophe Tytgat, Secretary General of SEA Europe, stressed that skills are not only a social priority but a strategic condition for Europe’s industrial competitiveness and sovereignty.

High-level speakers from the European Economic and Social Committee, the OECD, and the European Commission highlighted the urgent need to invest in workers to support the green and digital transition, while addressing structural labour shortages across Europe’s industrial ecosystems.

During the session on the Shipbuilding Pact for Skills, SEA Europe and industriAll Europe presented the state of play of the partnership, including its ambitious targets to upskill and reskill 200,000 workers, attract 230,000 new talents, and mobilise €1 billion in investments. The discussion also showcased progress under the LeaderSHIP project, including the development of a European Sectoral Skills Strategy and concrete training programmes tailored to industry needs.

A high-level panel discussion brought together representatives from the European Commission, social partners, regional authorities and education providers to explore how to effectively deliver the EMIS social pillar. Participants emphasised the importance of:

- strengthening cooperation between industry and education systems,
- ensuring better alignment between training and labour market needs,
- improving the attractiveness of the sector, and
- scaling up EU-level coordination and funding for skills initiatives.

The discussion confirmed broad consensus that social dialogue and sectoral partnerships and initiatives are essential to translate policy ambitions into tangible results on the ground.

Isabelle Barthès “Skills policy must deliver for workers first. Investing in training, reskilling and quality jobs is not optional, it is how we secure a just transition, protect industrial workers, and ensure Europe’s maritime sector remains strong, competitive and socially fair. Public support for Europe’s maritime industry must come with clear social conditionalities. Every euro of public investment should strengthen skills, secure quality jobs, and guarantee respect for workers’ rights. Competitiveness and social policy must go hand in hand.”



“Europe’s maritime manufacturing industry is at a turning point. Delivering the green and digital transition, strengthening Europe’s industrial resilience, and preserving our global leadership will require continued investment in skills, workforce attractiveness, and quality jobs. The Shipbuilding Pact for Skills and the European Maritime Industrial Strategy provide a strong framework — now we must turn ambition into concrete action together with social partners, EU institutions, and Member States.” — Christophe Tytgat, Secretary General of SEA Europe.

Closing the event, SEA Europe and industriAll Europe called for the swift implementation of the EMIS, with a strong focus on skills, and for continued support to the Pact for Skills as a key delivery mechanism.

*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**. At the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), SEA Europe is represented through CESA.*

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