

## **Political Guidelines for the next European Commission reconfirm the importance of technology leadership and the blue economy**

Waterborne Technology Platform welcomes the Political Guidelines for the next European Commission, emphasising the essential role of research, development and innovation as well as the blue economy

Brussels, 24 July 2024

On 18 July, Ursula von der Leyen presented the [Political Guidelines for the next European Commission](#) to the members of the European Parliament. These Political Guidelines set the starting point of defining the policy priorities of the European Commission for the period 2024 – 2029, followed by the guidelines on the budget post 2027 for the EU.

The political guidelines highlight that cooperation between all actors with a clear goal and a collective mission – EU institutions, national and regional governments, private sector, social partners, citizens and civil society is one of the key priorities in the coming years. Thereby, the focus will be on implementing what has been agreed, working closely with all stakeholders and focusing on big challenges.

Part of the political guidelines is the development of a new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness, the so-called prosperity plan, which will put research and innovation at the heart of the economy. According to the document, technology leadership will be key, since the world is in a race that will dictate who will be the first to climate neutrality and first to develop the technologies that will shape the global economy for decades to come. Furthermore, the inclusion of the 24 million small and medium sized enterprises in Europe is at the heart of the document.

Another element of the prosperity plan is to build a clean industrial deal to decarbonise and bring energy prices down. The clean industrial deal is supposed to prepare the way towards the 90% emission-reduction target for 2040. At every step, cooperation with industry, social partners and all stakeholders is envisaged. Finally, as part of the prosperity plan, a European Competitiveness Fund will support Important Projects of Common Interest (IPCEIs) so that Europe can use its collective strength to invest together in ambitious common projects.

Finally, a European Oceans Pact will focus on boosting the blue economy and ensuring the good governance and sustainability of our oceans in all their dimensions.

The report is specifically relevant for the implementation of the [Long-term strategy](#) of the Waterborne Technology Platform, which is centred around technology leadership in waterborne. In this definition, all segments of the European waterborne transport sector (ranging from shipyards, maritime equipment manufacturers, shipowners, research institutes and academia to public stakeholders) play a key role, and the functioning of the entire sector will be key to ensure that the EU’s waterborne transport sector remains a global leader and delivers quality jobs.



Eero Lehtovaara, Chair of the Board of Directors, Waterborne TP, said: *“We warmly welcome the Political Guidelines for the next European Commission, which clearly indicates the strategic importance of research, development and innovation co-financed by the European Union. However, to ensure we reach the ambitious targets set for 2040 and to enhance or increase the competitiveness of the European waterborne sector, the importance of current models, like the co-programmed partnerships should not be underestimated. As indicated in the political guidelines, we need to cooperate with all actors, both when it concerns research, development and innovation, but equally important, also in case of deployment of innovations. Only in this spirit of cooperation, sustainable competitiveness will be achieved during the mandate of the new European Commission.”*

**WATERBORNE TP** has been set up as an industry-oriented Technology Platform to establish a continuous dialogue between all waterborne stakeholders, such as classification societies, shipbuilders, shipowners, maritime equipment manufacturers, infrastructure and service providers, universities or research institutes, and with the EU Institutions, including Member States ([www.waterborne.eu](http://www.waterborne.eu)). The members of Waterborne TP comprise members as well as associated members from both maritime and inland navigation countries, representing about 19 Member States. In addition, the Associations member of the Waterborne Technology Platform represent the broader waterborne sector throughout the entire EU.

Enquiries concerning how to join and become more closely involved in the “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” partnership or other activities of the Waterborne TP can be sent to: Jaap Gebraad, Secretary General Waterborne TP, [jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu](mailto:jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu), tel: +32 493 835 626