



European Tugowners Association

Strategic ports, sustainable industry: Charting Europe's maritime course **11th November 2025, BIP Center, Brussels**

The conference will explore the future role of Europe's ports and port services in the context of the upcoming European Maritime Industrial Strategy and European Port Strategy, which will set the course for the EU's maritime policy in the years ahead. The event will provide a space to discuss how ports can become essential hubs for clean energy, innovation, resilience and trade while remaining competitive and how the port services industry can remain a strategic asset within the port ecosystem. Furthermore, these strategies could be the cornerstone of a EU industrial policy that may help the shipbuilding and equipment industries recover their competitiveness in a period of geopolitical tension and rising global competition.

Programme:

10.00 – 10.30 Registration

10.30 – 10.40 Conference opening by the ETA Deputy Chairman Holger Schwesig

10.40 – 10.50 Introduction by the moderator Anna Maria Darmanin (ETA Secretary General)

10.50 – 11.20 The upcoming EU Port Strategy (EPS) - Torsten Klimke (Head of the Innovation and Research Unit, DG MOVE)

11.20 – 11.50 The upcoming EU Industrial Maritime Strategy (MIS) - Dario Bazargan (Policy Officer, DG GROW)

11.50 – 12.20 The shipbuilding and equipment manufacturers' perspective on the MIS - Christophe Tytgat (Secretary General, SeaEurope)

12.20 – 12.50 The Ports' perspective on the EPS - Lamia Kerdjoudj (Secretary General, FEPORT)

12.50 – 13.00 Wrap up and closing by the moderator.

Speakers' profile

Holger Schwesig is the Managing Director of Fairplay Towage Group, and serves as Deputy Chairman of the European Tugowners Association. With a career spanning several decades in the shipping and towage industry, Holger has held senior leadership roles across multiple regions, including Switzerland, Africa, and Italy, notably as Country Managing Director for Hapag-Lloyd AG before joining Fairplay in 2018. Renowned for his strategic vision and operational expertise, Holger has overseen complex market expansions, developed innovative sales strategies, and fostered strong client relationships throughout his career. Holger has been elected ETA Deputy Chairman in June of 2025.

Torsten Klimke is Head of the Innovation and Research Unit at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport where he is responsible for the EU's transport research and innovation strategy, Urban Mobility and support programmes. Previously he managed a team on sustainable shipping and international maritime transport in the same DG. Torsten has also worked on a competitive shipbuilding industry strategy in the Commission's Enterprise and Industry DG. He started his career in the air traffic management sector in Germany and later worked on the Single European Sky package in the European Commission. Torsten studied electrical engineering at the RWTH Aachen in Germany.

Dario Bazargan is a Policy Officer at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), where he plays a pivotal role in shaping Europe's maritime industrial strategy. With a background in European Union law and extensive experience in maritime policy, Dario is known for his expertise in fostering collaboration between EU institutions and industry stakeholders. He has previously held advisory roles with leading maritime organisations, and is deeply involved in advancing the competitiveness and resilience of Europe's shipbuilding and shipping sectors.

Lamia Kerdjoudj is the Secretary General of FEPORT, the Federation of European Private Port Companies and Terminals since March 2014. She has a professional experience of more than 27 years during which she held different positions within the maritime and logistics sector. Among others, she has been for more than seven years the Public Affairs manager of the French Shipowners' Organization. She has also worked for private companies and corporations and has been in charge of consulting and business development assignments for large multinational companies.

Christophe Tytgat is Secretary General of SEA Europe – the Shipyards' and Maritime Equipment Association of Europe – and CESA. Since 2021, he has been a member of the "Consultative Commission on Industrial Change" of the European Economic and Social Committee. Prior to that, Christophe was a board member of the research association "VESSELS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION" and the "WaterborneTP Technology Platform". Before joining SEA Europe/CESA, Christophe held various positions at the European Community Shipowners' Association (ECSA) and worked for the Belgian federal administration (Foreign Affairs Office and Maritime Transport Administration).