

EBI urges stronger support for boating sector amid challenging tariffs

Brussels, 29 July 2025 - European Boating Industry (EBI) takes note of the announcement on trade by EU Commission President von der Leyen and US President Trump on Sunday. It provides predictability and stability ahead of the important boat show season in Europe.

Although it averts the worst of a detrimental trade war, the increase of tariffs to 15% will be very challenging for many businesses and SMEs in Europe. Until the US announcement in April, US tariffs were largely around 1-2% allowing a trade relationship on an equal footing. Exports of recreational boats to the US in 2023 were around \$1.8 bn and the additional costs from these new tariffs will be in the tens of millions. It also creates the risk of an unbalanced trade relationship between the EU and US, and negatively affect EU competitiveness.

Philip Easthill, EBI Secretary General commented *“The US is the most important export market for the recreational boating industry in Europe. Stability and predictability is vital, but equally important is a trading environment that businesses can sustain. This deal is not sufficient. The 15% tariff rate presents serious challenges for businesses in Europe. We call on the EU Commission to take the announcement as the basis for more sectoral negotiations and consider the needs of export-reliant industries such as ours.*

We are committed to working with our members to navigate these challenges and continue advocating for the best interests of the boating sector in Europe. The EU and the US should focus on reducing obstacles to transatlantic trade, which will lead to significant benefits for businesses and jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

In addition, a better regulatory environment needs to be created to grow the European market, reduce red tape and support our sector across all areas from trade to investment, environmental and industry policy.”

The text of the agreement has not yet been published and EBI will provide further assessment at a later stage. EBI will continue to be in constant dialogue with the EU institutions.

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About European Boating Industry (EBI)

EBI represents the recreational boating industry in Europe. It encompasses all related sectors, such as boatbuilding, equipment manufacturing, marinas and service providers. The industry is a significant contributor to the European economy, representing 32,000 companies, predominantly SMEs that employ over 280,000 people directly. The mission of EBI is to advance and represent a sustainable boating and nautical tourism industry #MadeInEurope.

European Boating Industry