



European Parliament backs key boating priorities in tourism report

Brussels, 28 April 2026 – European Boating Industry (EBI) welcomes the European Parliament’s adoption of the resolution on the future of the EU Tourism Strategy. The adopted text includes a series of priorities relevant for nautical tourism and marks an important step forward for recreational boating.

The report adopted by the European Parliament plenary by 439 to 42 with 129 abstentions sends a clear political signal: nautical tourism is not a niche offer on the margins of European tourism. It is a high value part of Europe’s tourism economy, part of its maritime identity, and part of the solution for more balanced, sustainable and regionally inclusive tourism growth. Parliament recognises that the rise of specialised tourism, including “nautical” tourism, creates new opportunities for peripheral, rural and outermost regions, and that “the growth of specialised tourism requires support through investment in the necessary infrastructure”.

Report: [“enhancing connectivity, preserving cultural heritage, and driving local excellence in European tourism: destination management and regional tourism growth.”](#)

A major result for EBI is Parliament’s support for action on boating licence recognition. The adopted report “calls on the Commission to follow up on the study assessing the advantages and drawbacks of a possible mutual recognition of boating licences for recreational boat operators by proposing a regulatory measure” that facilitates the mobility of “approximately 48 million European boaters” and supports nautical tourism and the blue economy. This is a direct response to one of the most persistent barriers boaters and boating businesses face in Europe.

The report also strengthens recognition of the boating sector in the clean transition. Parliament welcomes the Sustainable Transport Investment Plan and explicitly states that support for sustainable fuels in waterborne transport should include the existing fleet of leisure boats.

Another important breakthrough is cultural recognition. In the final text, Parliament stresses that future EU funding for intangible heritage should support cultural traditions “from maritime and nautical practices such as sailing” and craftsmanship. This is an important acknowledgement that boating and sailing are not only economic activities, but also part of Europe’s living heritage and identity.

Philip Easthill, Secretary-General of European Boating Industry, said: *“This is a strong result for the boating and nautical tourism sector. The European Parliament has recognised that nautical tourism belongs at the centre of European tourism, connectivity and sustainability agenda. The report reflects key EBI priorities: better cross-border mobility for boaters, support for the energy transition and recognition of boating as part of Europe’s cultural heritage. These are big wins for our industry and for the many coastal, island, inland waterway and outermost communities that depend on it.*

We very much thank the Rapporteurs in Parliament for leading the way on this critical resolution, in particular MEP Daniel Attard and MEP Nikolina Brnjac for their commitment in driving excellence in European tourism and regional tourism growth.

European Boating Industry

Square de Meeûs 35 | B-1000 Brussels

www.europeanboatingindustry.eu | office@europeanboatingindustry.eu



We very much look forward to the follow-up from the EU Commission through the EU Tourism Strategy expected in June.”

The report comes on the heels of the breakfast debate on “EU Water-Based Tourism on the Rise: Developing the EU Policy Framework” hosted by MEP Nikolina Brnjac in the European Parliament and co-organised by EBI and ADAC e.V. in November 2025. It brought together policymakers across political groups and countries, industry representatives, and consumer organisations to discuss how the EU can strengthen sustainable water-based tourism and the recreational boating industry. It was the first event of its kind placing the sector and consumers at the heart of the EU’s debates surrounding the future Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Industrial Maritime Strategy.

Note to editors: European Parliament rapporteur Daniel Attard MEP will hold a press conference on Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 17:30 CET on Parliament’s proposals for European tourism, ahead of the forthcoming EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy. More information on how to join [here](#).

European Boating Industry (EBI) represents the recreational boating industry in Europe. It encompasses all related sectors, such as boatbuilding, equipment manufacturing, marinas, tourism 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 Made in Europe.

Press contact: office@europeanboatingindustry.eu

European Boating Industry

Square de Meeûs 35 | B-1000 Brussels

www.europeanboatingindustry.eu | office@europeanboatingindustry.eu