



EP(17)51

Brussels, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017

**EU Fishing sector presents a training tool for risk prevention and safety at sea  
in the European Parliament**

***-For immediate release-***

The European fishing sector, represented by a consortium of fisheries organisations, together with the Member of the European Parliament (MEP), Mr Millán Mon, co-hosted a successful reception yesterday evening in the European Parliament. The event brought together a wide range of fisheries stakeholders, including representatives of EU Institutions, industry and civil society with the aim to present and disseminate the results of the EU project called 'SAFEFISHING', aimed at promoting best safety practices at work and reducing the accident rate in the fishing sector.

Safety at sea and training have always been a top priority for both Europêche and the partner organisations. Building on almost three years of close collaboration and cooperation, the six organisations have pooled their expertise to pioneer a new approach towards harmonised preventive measures in the fishing sector. In order to better instruct fishers, in a simpler manner, on the hazards involved in fishing operations, the consortium produced an audiovisual training tool on occupational risk prevention. The implementation of these measures would certainly help minimising any potential risk and guaranteeing the best conditions of safety and health on board.

MEP Millán Mon praised the positive results yielded by this project and outlined the value of this event for the European fishing sector, stating: *'Sustainable fisheries require good working conditions, high levels of safety, environmental protection and operational efficiency. Safety at sea is therefore paramount and everyone's responsibility. As legislators, we should spare no effort to prevent any accident from happening and ensure that our fishers operate under the best possible safety and working conditions. For this reason, I am honoured to host the presentation of this project which focuses on the protection and safety of the fishermen.'*

Mr Blonk, Chairman of the EU Social Dialogue Committee for Sea Fisheries<sup>1</sup>, congratulated the partners of this project for their contribution to prevent labour risks in fishing. He also appreciated the efforts made by the European Parliament to place 'safety at sea' at the core of the future Common Fisheries Policy. Mr Blonk declared: *'The safety of human life must be at the forefront of EU legislation to ensure its protection as part of sustainable fishing. For this purpose, EU policies must be aligned with international standards on training and certification. It would be a huge step forward transposing into European legislation the IMO International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F). This Convention would bridge the legal gaps at EU level on harmonised vocational training, recognition of certificates, free movement of workers and marine pollution.'*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=480&langId=en&intPageId=1851>

Mr Touza, President of the Ship-owners Cooperative of Vigo (ARVI) and leading partner, outlined the overall objectives and results of the project. Mr Touza declared: *'SAFEFISHING offers an added value to the EU fishing sector by providing a model for best practices in the field of training and risk prevention which may be used by any country in Europe. For us, these measures are fundamental to ensure that our crews return safe and sound to their families after fishing.'*

### **About the project**

*Europêche has participated in a project of cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices in the field of training and prevention at European level. The partners of this project have produced a 'Training tool based on the use of ICT for risk prevention and safety in the trawling fishing' called 'SAFEFISHING'.*

*The project consortium is made of six partners from five European countries with experience both in vocational training in this sector and in prevention of occupational hazards in trawling: ARVI (Shipowners Cooperative of Vigo, Spain), SGS TECNOS (World's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification multinational company), MARE (Fisheries Cooperative, Italy), IMP (Maritime institute for prevention, France), RTEU (Faculty of Fisheries, Turkey) and EUROPECHE (European Fisheries Association, Europe).*

*SAFEFISHING developed, as a final product, a 'European standardised training programme for the control of occupational risks in the trawling sector' in both digital and audiovisual format ('DVD: SAFEFISHING') in order to train and inform fishers about the occupational hazards they are exposed to in the course of their daily activities, as well as the appropriate measures to prevent them. This DVD aims at improving and harmonising the prevention of trawling occupational risks in Europe.*

*SAFEFISHING is a project funded by the 'Strategic Partnerships Action' in the field of vocational training of the European Commission's Erasmus+ Programme, in particular KA2: 'Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices'.*

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**Europêche** represents the fisheries sector in Europe. Currently, the Association comprises 15 national organisations of fishing enterprises from the following 10 EU Member States: DE, DK, ES, FR, IT, MT, NL, LV, PL, UK.

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**This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication is responsibility of the project consortium. The Commission and National Agency are not responsible for the use made of the information contained therein.**

