

**Priority question for written answer P-005768/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Commission lifeline needed for waterlogged European shipbuilding sector!

The recent report by the European Court of Auditors on the EU response to China's investment strategy¹ concluded that Europe is in danger on a number of fronts owing to a substantial increase in Chinese investments, not least because of the resulting competitive advantages for Chinese state-owned undertakings over European companies. The shipbuilding sector is finding it particularly hard to weather the storm², especially in view of the sustainability measures it both wants and needs. The high costs of this, coupled with unfair competition could deprive the sector of any leeway on the European market, progressively forcing it out. We must do all we can to prevent this from happening. In this connection, the Horizon Europe Partnership on zero-emission waterborne transport³ has a flagship role to play, making Europe the world leader in the construction of green and autonomous vessels.

1. What action will the Commission take in the light of the conclusions of the report by the European Court of Auditors on tender evaluation, the award of transport and infrastructure contracts and enhanced coordination of European transport and infrastructure programmes with those of third countries?
2. What strategic approach will the Commission adopt with a view to developing an industrial policy focused on this vital sector?
3. What funding is the Commission prepared to earmark for the Horizon Europe Partnership on zero-emission waterborne transport? Will it be enough to achieve its goals?

¹ https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/RW20_03/RW_EU_response_to_China_EN.pdf

² DG GROW study on new trends in globalisation in shipbuilding and marine supplies, 2017
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/bc5fa041-bac0-11e7-a7f8-01aa75ed71a1>

³ <https://www.waterborne.eu/>