

## **PRESS RELEASE**

12 April 2023

### **SkillSea starts a European network for maritime education and training STC Group and ENSM sign Memorandum of Understanding**

To better equip maritime professionals in Europe for the challenging demands of today project SkillSea focuses on establishing a European network for maritime education and training to cooperate and collaborate better. As a first step in improving their mutual collaboration, meanwhile anticipating on the expected collaboration between all SkillSea Maritime Education and Training providers, the Scheepvaart en Transportcollege (STC) and École Nationale Supérieure Maritime (ENSM) will intensify their collaboration. Both educational institutions have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on April 12th in Amsterdam to formalize their cooperation. This collaboration is one of the outcomes of the European project SkillSea, in which both institutions are part of, along with 23 other EU partners from the sector. The main contemporary themes are energy transition, digitization of ships, and further development of skills such as collaboration and leadership. The French Minister of Higher Education and Research, Sylvie Retailleau, and the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture, and Science, Robbert Dijkgraaf, witnessed the signing. The MoU signing was part of French President Macron's state visit.

Europe, a traditional source of maritime expertise, created the SkillSea project to ensure that European maritime professionals have the necessary skills for the rapidly changing labour market. As the end of the SkillSea project approaches, all education partners are focusing on establishing a European network for maritime education and training to work better together. To promote the exchange of knowledge and expertise, ENSM and STC will prepare the exchange of students and professors between France and the Netherlands under the Erasmus+ programme.

In addition to the creation of a European network of maritime education and training institutions, SkillSea will deliver several surveys describing current and future competency needs, as well as a large number of educational packages (covering digital, 'green' and leadership skills, among others), including a toolbox (containing the curriculum; the course description; and the evaluation of the educational package) that will enable the development and exchange of new educational packages.

The project is also working on a new collaboration between shipping industry partners, government agencies and education partners in the maritime transport sector. All project outcomes will be reflected in a strategy document with a concrete action plan.

#### **Note for the editor**

For more information you can contact Esther Ouwens Nagell, dissemination manager of SkillSea, [e.g.t.ouwens.nagell@stc-r.nl](mailto:e.g.t.ouwens.nagell@stc-r.nl), 0031 622 47 48 06.

## **About SkillSea**

Social partners and educational institutions in Europe work closely together in the SkillSea project to ensure that maritime education better and permanently matches the needs of the maritime sector.

The SkillSea results help maritime educational institutions to continue to innovate their curricula and to tailor them to the needs of the sector. In addition to developing a sustainable skills strategy, SkillSea has the ambition to increase the number of these professionals and improve the safety and efficiency of this vital sector.

Technology and digitalisation are transforming the shipping industry. 'Smart' ships are coming into service, creating demand for a new generation of competent, highly-skilled maritime professionals. Europe is a traditional global source of maritime expertise and the four-year SKILLSEA project is launched with the aim of ensuring that the region's maritime professionals possess key digital, green and soft management skills for the rapidly-changing maritime labour market.

It seeks to not only produce a sustainable skills strategy for European maritime professionals, but also to increase the number of these professionals - enhancing the safety and efficiency of this vital sector. The future-proofing project is developed by the industry's social partners, the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and is comprised of a consortium from national maritime authorities, shipping companies, ship owners' associations, maritime trade unions and maritime education providers from 16 countries in Europe.

SkillSea is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

Visit [www.skillsea.eu](http://www.skillsea.eu) for more information about the project.