

# Green Party calls for votes at 16 in June election



# Green Party

19 April 2017

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, is calling for the Government to bring in legislation to allow 16 and 17-year-olds vote in the snap General Election.

Lucas, whose party will begin their campaign tomorrow in Bristol, used an intervention in the House of Commons today to urge the Prime Minister to give young people a greater say in the future of the country. There are 1.5m young people who would be eligible to vote if 16 and 17-year-olds were given a vote on June 8.

Evidence from the Scottish independence referendum, substantiated by research from Austria and Norway, shows – aided by the encouragement of families and schools – 16 and 17-year-olds have higher rates of turnout than 18 to 24-year-olds [1].

Caroline Lucas said:

“Everything is at stake right now. Our relationship with Europe, our border policies, our position on the world stage – voters will be given the chance to decide what kind of nation we want to be. The election is especially important for young people as they will live with the decisions made on June 8th for their entire lives.

“Theresa May should give Britain’s 1.5 million 16 and 17-year-olds – the first generation to have received citizenship education – a say in what will very much be their future. The Government should urgently change the law to expand the electorate – using the remaining parliamentary time to truly hand people control. After trebling tuition fees, cutting housing benefit for young people and slashing the educational maintenance allowance – surely the Government should give young people a chance to have a say on the policies that are affecting them.

“This should be a moment when we hand control to people and widen the scope of our democracy. Let’s trust young people with a vote in June – and let them have a real say about the future direction of their country.”

## Notes:

1. <http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/votes-at-16>

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## [If Theresa May is so proud of her record, why won't she debate it? – Jeremy Corbyn](#)

**Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party,**

commenting on the news ITV are to host a pre-election debate, said:

“I welcome ITV’s decision to attempt to hold a TV debate with the Prime Minister. If Theresa May is so proud of her record, why won’t she debate it?”

“She cannot be allowed to run away from her duty to democracy and refuse to let the British people hear the arguments directly.”

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## [News story: £1.4 billion deal for Royal Navy's new attack submarine](#)

The submarine, named Agamemnon, is part of the Astute Class, the largest, most advanced and most powerful attack submarines ever to enter service with the Royal Navy. The submarines are being built by BAE Systems in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, which employs around 8,000 people in its Submarines business, with thousands more working in the UK submarine supply chain.

The new contract guarantees a better deal for the UK taxpayer and for the

Armed Forces, with an incentivised contract arrangement that will help to save money and demands the best possible work from industry.

**Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:**

This latest investment means we are well on our way to completing our fleet of Astute submarines. These are the most advanced submarines ever operated by the Royal Navy and are already providing unprecedented levels of stealth and attack capability across the world.

Backed by a rising defence budget and a £178 billion equipment plan, Barrow will remain the hub of our submarine build programmes providing high skilled jobs for years to come.



Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon with BAE Systems apprentices inside Devonshire Dock Hall where HMS Agamemnon is under construction. Picture: Michael Vallance, BAE Systems.

Construction of the 7,400 tonne, 97-metre long Agamemnon began in 2012, and is well underway in the Devonshire Dock Hall at Barrow, alongside Boat 5 – Anson – and the yet-to-be-named Boat 7. Their sister submarines, HMS Astute, Ambush and Artful are already in service with the Royal Navy, contributing to operations around the globe.

**Rear Admiral Paul Methven, Director Submarines Acquisition for the Submarine Delivery Agency, said:**

The signature of this contract secures another world-class nuclear submarine for the Royal Navy. These are the most technologically advanced submarines we have ever operated, offering much greater firepower, better communications and more advanced stealth technology than their predecessors.

Today marks another significant milestone for the Astute programme, that demonstrates the UK's ability to deliver complex engineering projects, providing a fleet of submarines which will protect the UK's interests around the globe.

Featuring the latest nuclear-powered technology, the Astute Class submarines can circumnavigate the world submerged, manufacturing the crew's oxygen from seawater as they go. They also have the ability to operate covertly and remain undetected in almost all circumstances despite being 50 per cent bigger than the Royal Navy's current Trafalgar Class submarines which are being replaced by the Astute Class.

**Will Blamey, Managing Director of BAE Systems Submarines, said:**

Securing the contract for the sixth Astute class submarine is a significant milestone for BAE Systems and the result of many years of hard work by our highly skilled workforce. The Astute class submarines are amongst the most highly capable and technologically advanced in the world and we're immensely proud to build them for the Royal Navy.

Alongside work on the Astute Class, BAE Systems is also the industrial lead for the Dreadnought programme, the Royal Navy's next generation of nuclear deterrent submarines.

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## **Western Mediterranean: Actions for the sustainable development of the blue economy**

The region covers economic hubs like Barcelona, Marseille, Naples and Tunis. It also includes tourist destinations like the Balearic Islands, Sicily and Corsica.

The sea's biodiversity is under severe pressure with a recent [report](#) by scientists from the Joint Research Centre indicating that 50% has been lost in the last 50 years. In addition to this are recent security and safety concerns from the increase in migration from the South to the North.

This initiative will allow EU and neighbouring countries to work together to increase maritime safety and security, promote sustainable blue growth and jobs, and preserve ecosystems and biodiversity.

Karmenu **Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries said: *"Millions of holiday makers have a happy association with the Western Mediterranean. Like the millions more who live across the region, they understand the fragile link between conserving national habitats and traditions and ensuring economic viability. Blue economy is important for each of the countries involved and they have recognised the strength of working together."*

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, said: *"This new regional initiative recognises and taps into the economic potential of the Mediterranean Sea and its coast lines to further enhance economic growth, contribute to job creation and eventually the stabilisation of the region. It is an important step towards closer coordination and cooperation among participating countries."*

The initiative is the fruit of years' of dialogue between ten countries of the Western Mediterranean region who are ready and willing to work together on these shared interests for the region: five EU Member States (France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Malta), and five Southern partner countries (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia). It follows up on the Ministerial Declaration on Blue Economy endorsed by the Union for Mediterranean (UfM) on 17 November 2015.

### **The goals of the initiative**

By fostering cooperation between the ten countries concerned, this initiative has three main goals:

1. A safer and more secure maritime space
2. A smart and resilient blue economy
3. Better governance of the sea.

Gaps and challenges have been identified and a number of priorities and targeted actions have been set for each goal.

For **Goal 1** priorities include cooperation between national coast guards and the response to accidents and oil spills. Specific actions will focus on the upgrade of traffic monitoring infrastructure, data sharing and capacity building. For **Goal 2** priorities include new data sourcing, biotechnology and coastal tourism. For **Goal 3**, priority is given to spatial planning, marine knowledge, habitat conservation and sustainable fisheries.

The initiative will be funded by existing international, EU, national and regional funds and financial instruments, which will be coordinated and

complementary. This should create leverage and attract funding from other public and private investors

This “Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy of the Western Mediterranean” is another example of the EU’s successful neighbourhood policy. Barely three weeks ago, the EU secured a 10-year pledge to save Mediterranean fish stocks. The MedFish4Ever Declaration, signed by Mediterranean ministerial representatives from both Northern and Southern coastlines on 30 March, involves 8 Member States (Spain, France, Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, and Cyprus) and 7 third countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey, Albania, Montenegro). The two projects will enhance each other in protecting the region’s ecological and economic wealth.

## **Background**

The initiative is based on the Commission’s long-standing experience with sea basin and macro-regional strategies (such as the Atlantic Strategy, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region). It is also based on over two decades of work within the 5+5 Dialogue, which has created strong ties between the participating countries. Furthermore, the initiative builds on other EU policies linked to the region, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy Review priorities and the recent Communication on International Ocean Governance.

The initiative is presented in two documents. A Communication outlines the main challenges, shortcomings and the possible solutions. A Framework for Action presents the identified priorities, actions and projects in detail, with quantitative targets and deadlines to monitor progress over time. Some of the actions could extend well beyond the countries in question and even beyond the sub-basin.

## **For More Information**

[Communication](#)

[Framework for Action](#)

[MEMO/17/1001](#)

[MEDFISH4ever Declaration](#)

[Ocean governance](#)

[Blue Growth](#)

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# **Western Mediterranean: Actions for the**

# sustainable development of the blue economy

## **Why do we need an initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean?**

The western Mediterranean Sea has enormous wealth in terms of natural resources, cultural assets and diversity of people and places. The various sectors of the maritime economy have vast potential for development. But despite the major assets, the region faces a number of challenges which give rise to geopolitical instability: a prolonged economic and financial crisis with high youth unemployment in several countries, growing coastal urbanisation, the overexploitation of fish stocks, marine pollution and last but not least the refugee crisis. In addition climate change greatly affects the region and the rise in sea level is a major threat to coastal ecosystems and economies. Other factors such as population growth and ageing, migration and deepening globalisation are bound to magnify these pressures.

## **How has the initiative for western Mediterranean come about?**

This Initiative for the Western Mediterranean follows up on Ministerial Declaration on the Blue Economy endorsed by the Union for the Mediterranean on 17 November 2015, which invited the participating countries to explore the added value and the feasibility of appropriate maritime strategies at sub-regional level, and build on the experience of the 5+5 Dialogue. In October 2016, the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia encouraged further work on an initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy, together with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat.

The Initiative results from close cooperation between the European Commission and the national governments, the UfM Secretariat, the region's stakeholders and regional organisations such as General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, the UN Environmental Programme, the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions. The process started in February 2016 and culminated a year later with a Stakeholder Conference in Barcelona.

## **Which countries are involved?**

The geographical scope of this strategy is based on the western Mediterranean sub-basin and concerns ten countries: five EU Member States (France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Malta) and five non-EU countries (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia). As it concerns both EU and partner countries, it will have to be politically endorsed both in the EU and in the Union for the Mediterranean.

## **Will it be open to other countries?**

The scope of action and the potential benefits of this initiative could easily extend beyond the western Mediterranean sub-basin. Marine and coastal areas are interconnected systems, so depending on the needs to be addressed, actions may involve partners in the central Mediterranean and north-east Atlantic and will remain open to other partners.

### **What are the main objectives and goals of the Initiative?**

By fostering coordination and cooperation among the ten countries, the Initiative aims to increase safety and security; promote sustainable blue growth and jobs; and preserve ecosystems and biodiversity in the western Mediterranean region. It therefore focusses on three main goals (a safer and more secure maritime space, a smart and resilient blue economy and a better governance of the sea) and proposes a number of priority actions to reach those goals. A Framework for Action identifies the gaps that need to be filled and the potential added value of the actions proposed.

### **How is this initiative linked to EU policies? What areas will it cover?**

Rather than creating new legislation, this Initiative aims to achieve the Commission's priorities ('A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment', 'A Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy', 'Towards a New Policy on Migration' and 'A stronger global actor') by strengthening cross-border cooperation in the region and fostering compliance with EU law. Special emphasis is laid on better synergy between existing funds and on an integrated approach that ties together different policy strands and strongly interconnects EU policies and initiatives.

The Initiative complements the MedFish4Ever Declaration (Malta, 30 March 2017), which sets out a detailed work programme for the next 10 year to save the Mediterranean fish stocks and protect the region's ecological and economic wealth.

### **Who will benefit from the Initiative?**

All stakeholders in the region will benefit from the Initiative, including local, regional and national administrations, universities, maritime clusters, training institutions, businesses, SMEs, fishermen, civil society organisations and investors. And last but not least the people living in the region.

### **How will the Initiative be funded?**

The Initiative will be funded through the existing international, EU, national and regional funds and financial instruments. As per a conservative estimate, the funds available for implementing this Initiative amount to at least € 4 billion. In addition the EU is envisaging creating a dedicated assistance mechanism for the western Mediterranean and launching focused calls to promote maritime clusters, Maritime Spatial Planning and cooperation between maritime training institutes and between coastal communities on small scale fisheries in the region amounting to about €10 million.

### **What are the next steps?**



The Commission invites the European Parliament and the Council to endorse this Communication. The Commission also invites the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee to provide opinions on this Initiative.

The participating countries will also need to take ownership and define a governance structure to lead and implement this Initiative. Based on their reports, the Commission will in turn report on the implementation to the Council and the European Parliament by 2022.