

# A MANIFESTO FOR THE FUTURE OF LEN FROM THE PRESIDENT PAOLO BARELLI

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*The Ligue Européenne de Natation (LEN) is the lifeblood of aquatic sports in Europe. My pledge is to dedicate the resources, work, and energy essential to engendering its success. This manifesto outlines seven drivers that will secure this objective.*

## 1. CAPITALISING ON EXPERIENCE

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**I was elected as LEN President in September 2012. Over the following four years I worked to save the institution from financial crisis, restoring its limited resources to a fully-functioning office. My dedicated colleagues in the Bureau re-established a struggling organisation. Any success that LEN is enjoying today is owed entirely to them.**

How did we turn things around? Intensive evaluation and decisive action. Our comprehensive understanding of the organisation's problems meant we were in a position, when called for, to make difficult, cost-cutting decisions with confidence. We focused on one ambition: creating a new lease of life for LEN, and re-establishing Europe as the leading continent in aquatic sports.

**The work carried out during the last four years has helped LEN achieve a solid financial position. In 2015-16, this enabled us to contribute a total value of approximately €2,000,000 towards the member federations' participation costs at the European Championships, as well as prize money for athletes. Any such support was not possible in the past!**

The next four years are crucial – LEN must continue to strive towards dominance in its sport sector as a financially viable organisation. I have the strategic know-how to position LEN as a leader in its arena, and have a proven track record in delivering results.

## 2. STRATEGIC FINANCIAL FORECASTING

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**In 2012, the first year of my Presidential term, LEN had €200,000 in its bank account. Today we have close to €5,000,000 in reserves.**

Our strategy was to strengthen existing contracts with LEN's commercial partners. We renegotiated the terms of future Championship events, thereby securing an improved level of income.

**We had a strategic plan of action, and it worked. We will exceed these successes in our next term. Our system is fool proof: strategic financial forecasting and implementation.**

## 3. MAXIMISING EXPOSURE

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Exposure is key. During my term, publicity for our calendar of events was maximised by securing interest from TV broadcasters in our various disciplines. Through a fair and transparent process, we have now allocated TV slots for all of our major championships up to 2022!

**LEN has entered in to a long term TV rights contract. This will further promote aquatics and provide the deserved exposure to the wonderful host cities and organising committees which will collaborate tirelessly to offer spectacular championships to our spectators. We will create a stronger fan base across Europe which, in turn, will help our federations to build our sports in their countries.**

Generating a stronger online presence will be our next publicity target. This will enable us to enhance LEN's existing profile and attract more partners and sponsors. In order to ensure our objectives are achieved, we will improve publicity areas such as: data handling, TV graphics, live streaming and social media.

## 4. COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

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Over the last term, we have worked hard to ensure that governance within LEN was improved. The Bureau meeting minutes were circulated rigorously to ensure absolute transparency of the decision-making processes. This has resulted in regular, accurate and more detailed reporting to Congress – our highest authority.

**Apart from the professional manner in which the LEN Office operates, we also have a world renowned auditing firm – Deloitte – as our External Auditors. Our team includes the competent LEN Audit Committee and legal advisors offering support services in relation to the implementation of all Swiss policies, procedures and legal norms.**

## 5. ENHANCED NETWORKING

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**Strengthening ties between the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) and LEN will be a top priority in the organisation’s immediate future. We will work to increase the support we offer to national federations for the development more specifically in the areas of teaching and coaching courses, aquatic sport centres, modernization of equipment and European legislation.**

**Our excellent relationship with the European Union (EU) and other relevant organisations will be reinforced to develop the ‘Learn to Swim’ and ‘Prevention from Drowning’ projects across our continent. This effort contributes to our ongoing objective to reduce cases of drowning across Europe.**

**Finally, with our newfound financial standing, LEN must provide operational assistance to members who desire to develop aquatic disciplines more rapidly in their home countries. We will offer particular support to nations that are less resourced and require more technical and organizational backing, thereby building a stronger Aquatic Europe.**

## 6. DELIVERING WORLD-CLASS EVENTS

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LEN has been privileged to co-operate with excellent organizing committees in some of the most vibrant, culturally rich cities in Europe: Barcelona, Herning, Berlin, Rostock, Budapest, Baku, Belgrade, Netanya and London. We will continue to attract more major cities to host our outstanding championships.

These prestigious venues are key to promoting our disciplines as widely as possible. Moreover, we will devise well-thought out championship schedules with the collaboration of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), aiming to avoid clashes between LEN competitions and other large events.

**We will continue to provide economic support for participating teams at the European Championships through increased team contributions and prize money for athletes. LEN will work towards assuring free travel and accommodation to all athletes participating in future Championships.**

## 7. BUILDING A LEGACY

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My programme is ambitious, yet completely achievable. Under my stewardship, LEN will continue to be the leading continental body within FINA. With your support, as I have done over the past four years, I will continue to have your interests and needs as my priority.

**I would like to thank all those who have helped LEN achieve such remarkable results during my term as President. Our most heartfelt thanks go to our athletes who we are proud to support by means of our continued, passionate, hard work.**

**The future of LEN is beyond bright. I look forward to shaping it with you.**

**Paolo Barelli  
President  
Ligue Européenne de Nataion**

**April 2016**