



BlueDivet

Blue economy digitalization skills for VET students

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Newsletter #2

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BlueDivet Partnership Meeting in Bulgaria



Varna Economic Development Agency has the pleasure to host the partnership meeting on the “Blue Economy Digitalization Skills for Vet Students” (BlueDivet) project, held on 14 and 15 of March 2023 in the city of Varna, Bulgaria.

Representatives from eight partners’ organizations from Spain, Greece, Cyprus, and Bulgaria took part in the meeting.

During the two days of the meeting the partners reviewed in a collaborative and friendly environment the advancement under the BlueDivet project, including the project results (PRs) and the next steps in its implementation.

PR1

Analysis on the state-of-the-art: Blue market needs & academic offer.

The first findings and results from the in-depth research and analysis at a European level of the demands and needs of the labor market were presented to the meeting attendees by the representative of the lead partner, the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (Spain). The research was aimed to detect what the difficulties and the requirements of the blue economy companies related with the digitalization of their companies are.

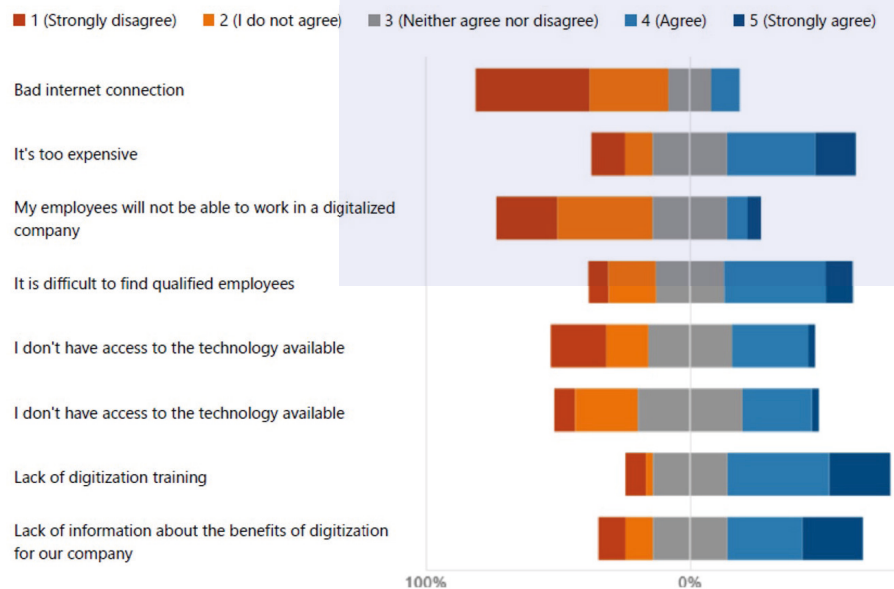
The research has approached both SMEs in different blue economy sectors and VET providers. The SMEs and VET managers reported several difficulties in digitalizing their companies.

The main difficulties for digitalization in front of the SMEs:

- o Too expensive.
- o Difficulties to find qualified employees.
- o Lack of digitalization training.
- o Lack of information on benefits.

The graph below shows also some other difficulties met by SMEs managers for digitalisation of their companies:

The difficulties in digitalizing our company are related to:



The main difficulties for digitalization in front of the VET centres:

- o Low number of VET employers in digitalization.
- o Highly unknown what are offered in the VET related to digitalization.
- o High number of employers need digitalization training.

Part of the findings from the first data analysis for both categories of respondents (SMES and VET centres) shows that:

- o SMEs are using and planning to expand on IoT, big data, digital security as the most important for their companies.
- o Although they are not very popular or used, companies are planning to expand on IA, digital twins, and virtual reality too.
- o Sensoring is not in the most used or pretending to expand but is one of the five more important digital technologies.

PR2

Curriculum for Vocational Training in the field of blue digitalization profile.

Part of the partners' attention was centered on the preparation of an online training course with a focus on digitalization in the blue economy. The course is aimed at teachers from the VET Centers and students. The development of the topics takes into account the results from the survey, conducted by the partners among companies and VET centers at European level. The final Course Syllabus includes four modules: Blue Economy Sectors, Technologies for blue economy digitalization, Entrepreneurship in the blue economy sector, and Business Management. Creation of the training materials is planned to be finalized by the end of June, 2023 followed by internal peer review in July

- o SMEs have difficult to find qualified employers and digitalization training.
- o Companies didn't know what is offered by the VET. There is no VET employers on digitalization.
- o Mostly VET don't offer digitalization training.
- o VET training focussed on IoT, Virtual Digitalization, IA, Robots. Not the most demanding: big data and digital security.
- o Need time, equipment, and training on digitalization for VET teachers.
- o VET and companies strongly agree the need of specific formation for maritime sector.
- o More than 50% of VET centres are in contact with blue economy companies but less than 30% search for a work on them.



and creation of a training platform until September, 2023. All the materials will be translated in Bulgarian, Greek, English, and Spanish and available for interested students and VET centers.

A learning, teaching, and training (LTT) activity will be organized under the BlueDivet project in October 2023 in Greece, and a pilot testing of the materials between November 2023 and February, 2024. The training package (PR2) will be supported by a mentoring programme for students interested in entrepreneurship and for VET centers.

PR3

Launching a Handbook for Blue Divet Mentoring Program

The activities for the preparation of a Handbook for Mentoring Program (BlueDivet project result 3) were also discussed at partners' meeting in Varna. The Handbook will be developed to launch a mentoring programme. It will be aimed at VETs teachers responsible for the training package and administration of VETs. It will include Guidance to the partners for the selection of mentors, explaining how to identify possible mentors and to convince them. Later, it will assist students interested in entrepreneurship in finding mentors

The partners proposed and agreed on Handbook's time planning including its drafting until October, 2023, follow-up review and partners' discussing to improve

Handbook's content until January 2024, and a month for testing. After the evaluation of the mentorship programme, it will be updated, finalized, and launched in March 2024. The handbook will be fully finalized by June 2024.

The Handbook for mentoring programme will be developed in English by Andalucía Emprende and translated by the partners into the languages of their countries. The methodology will be tested, evaluated, updated, and launched at each partner country. It will be internationally usable but specific national circumstances will be taken into account. It will support the creation of a network of mentors, which should involve at least 12 mentors (3-4) per partner's country.

European Maritime Day 2023

Call for applications: stand at EMD 2023, Brest, France

The European Commission has launched a call for application for stakeholders to have a stand at the European Maritime Day 2023, in Brest, France. Every year DG MARE organizes this flagship event during which Europe's maritime community meets to network, discuss, and outline joint action on maritime affairs and sustainable blue economy.

The call for application is open to stakeholders based in the EU/EEA area or in accession countries. The deadline to express interest in purchasing a stand is Wednesday, 5 April at midnight. DG MARE will review applications on an ad hoc basis. All info and request form to fill in can be found following the link <https://www.emd2023-exhibition.com/request-a-stand/2>



The EU Blue Economy Report 2023



In a new format, the sixth edition of the EU Blue Economy Report continues to analyze the scope and size of the Blue Economy in the European Union. Its main objective remains to provide support to policymakers and stakeholders in the quest for a sustainable development of oceans, coastal resources and, most notably, to the development and implementation of policies and initiatives under the European Green Deal in line with the new approach for a sustainable Blue Economy. Through its economic evidence, the Report also seeks to serve as a source of inspiration to investors.

The sixth edition of the Report¹ focuses on a summarized data analysis, trends and drivers of the Blue Economy established sectors (i.e., those that traditionally contribute to the Blue Economy), as well as of the emerging sectors such as the Blue Biotechnology and Ocean Energy.

The report is available for downloading at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9a345396-f9e9-11ed-a05c-01aa75ed71a1>

Good practices for sustainable cruise tourism



Final report

This study gathered and analysed available evidence on cruise tourism to support cruise stakeholders in moving forward on sustainability. It took place against a policy background of the European Green Deal, the European Commission new approach to sustainable blue economy and the development of a Transition Pathway for tourism. It looked at the economic, social and environmental 'as-is', examined the most promising responses to the challenges, measured economic impact, and documented regulatory and non-regulatory environmental and social frameworks. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions. There is uncertainty about cost and regulation. Local specificities are important as 13 destination case studies illustrated.

The report is available for downloading at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/664f158c-909c-11ed-b508-01aa75ed71a1>