

Burgas:
Fostering the Blue Economy through
developing Digital Blue Innovation Acceleration
Network
(DBAN)

Burgas Key Facts

- On the coast of Burgas Bay in the Black Sea;
- Surrounded by lakes and wetlands;
- Amazing biodiversity;
- The city itself is relatively young, but the region is steeped in history, stretching from the times of the mystical Thracians and ancient Greeks to the present;
- Population of 200, 000, growing at 1% annually;
- Well-developed transport and logistics infrastructure;

- An international airport, serving more than 3 million passengers, 125 destinations in 58 countries;

Blue Economy/Blue Growth

- **Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea – a voluntary regional cooperation network with the following goals:**
 - ❑ **healthy marine and coastal ecosystems;**
 - ❑ **a competitive, innovative and sustainable blue economy;**
 - ❑ **fostering investment in the blue economy;**
- **Reflected in the city's Plan for Integrated Municipal Development, under Priority 1, Measure 1.4;**
- **Blue Growth is key**
 - ❑ **Stimulating the local fishing and aquaculture communities;**
 - ❑ **Fostering entrepreneurship in the blue economy sector;**
 - ❑ **Developing maritime tourism;**
- **Innovation and new technologies will play a leading role in the efforts;**
- **Developing and harnessing the local academic and research potential**

“BLUACT – Cities in Action for Blue Growth”, funded by the URBACT III programme.

The project involves a total of 7 European port cities, which aim to share best practices in entrepreneurship of the Blue Economy.

Bourgas, Piraeus (Greece), Mataro (Spain), Matosinhos (Portugal), Salerno (Italy), Ostend (Belgium) and Galati (Romania).

Starting up the Blue Economy

- The project follows the success of Piraeus’ Blue Growth Initiative, an entrepreneurship competition that offers incubation services to local businesses boosting innovation and job creation.

BurgasBlueS Entrepreneurial Ideas Competition

First place - Lessplastic Bulgaria with project Plastic free Black Sea, aimed at cleaning the Black Sea and utilization of the collected plastic waste;

Second place - MS Comp Ltd. with the Burgas Clear Water Survey project for the creation of a combined measuring station for collecting the necessary data for a cleaner Burgas Bay and the system of Burgas lakes;

Third place - KodRum – BlueViewRoom / Blue VR for creating a virtual “blue” reality, representing the remarkable water spaces around Burgas

Project Key Facts

- **Topic:EMFAF-2021-PIA-FLAGSHIP-BLACK - Black Sea blue economy investment and innovation capacity building pilot**
- **Digital Blue economy and innovation Acceleration Network;**
- **4 Partners;**
 - ✓ **Burgas Municipality, Bulgaria;**
 - ✓ **Southeast digital innovation hub Burgas, Bulgaria;**
 - ✓ **International economic and business development center IBEDC, Georgia**
 - ✓ **Odessa State Agrarian University, Ukraine;**
- **Timeframe: 24 months expected to start July 2022 – July 2024**

Project objectives

- **Create Digital Blue Innovation Acceleration network to support and bring to life blue growth initiatives in the three partnering regions of Bulgaria, Georgia and Ukraine;**
- **Mobilize resources (knowledge, methodology support, partnership, funding,) to support SMEs in the field of blue economy traditional and emerging sectors;**
- **Facilitate and foster regional investment in Black Sea Economy;**
- **Create supportive and entrepreneurial environment and provide facilities, mentorship and training;**
- **nurture existing and inspire potential entrepreneurship in the region;**
- **Boost the development of blue economy growth, provide a structured capacity building and co-creation support for SMEs in the region;**
- **Create opportunities for commercialization and internationalization of sustainable green and blue solutions and innovations at Black Sea Basin region**

Project activities

REGIONAL BLUE GROWTH STRATEGY WITH LOCAL SMART SPECIALIZATION ACTION PLANS

- identify and tackle local capacity building needs and potential for smart blue innovation and smart specialization

BLUE INNOVATIONS HACKATHONS IN BURGAS, BATUMI, ODESSA

- boost innovation and digitalization in blue economy sectors;
- build and explore the potential for SMEs/start-ups in developing sustainable blue economy;
- contribute to the objectives of the CMA;
- winning pilot projects will contribute to the just and green transition by providing sustainable solutions that green, decarbonize and digitalize the Blue economy sectors;
- winning finalists will go through a mentorship and incubation program developing, modeling and testing their pilots and developing business plan

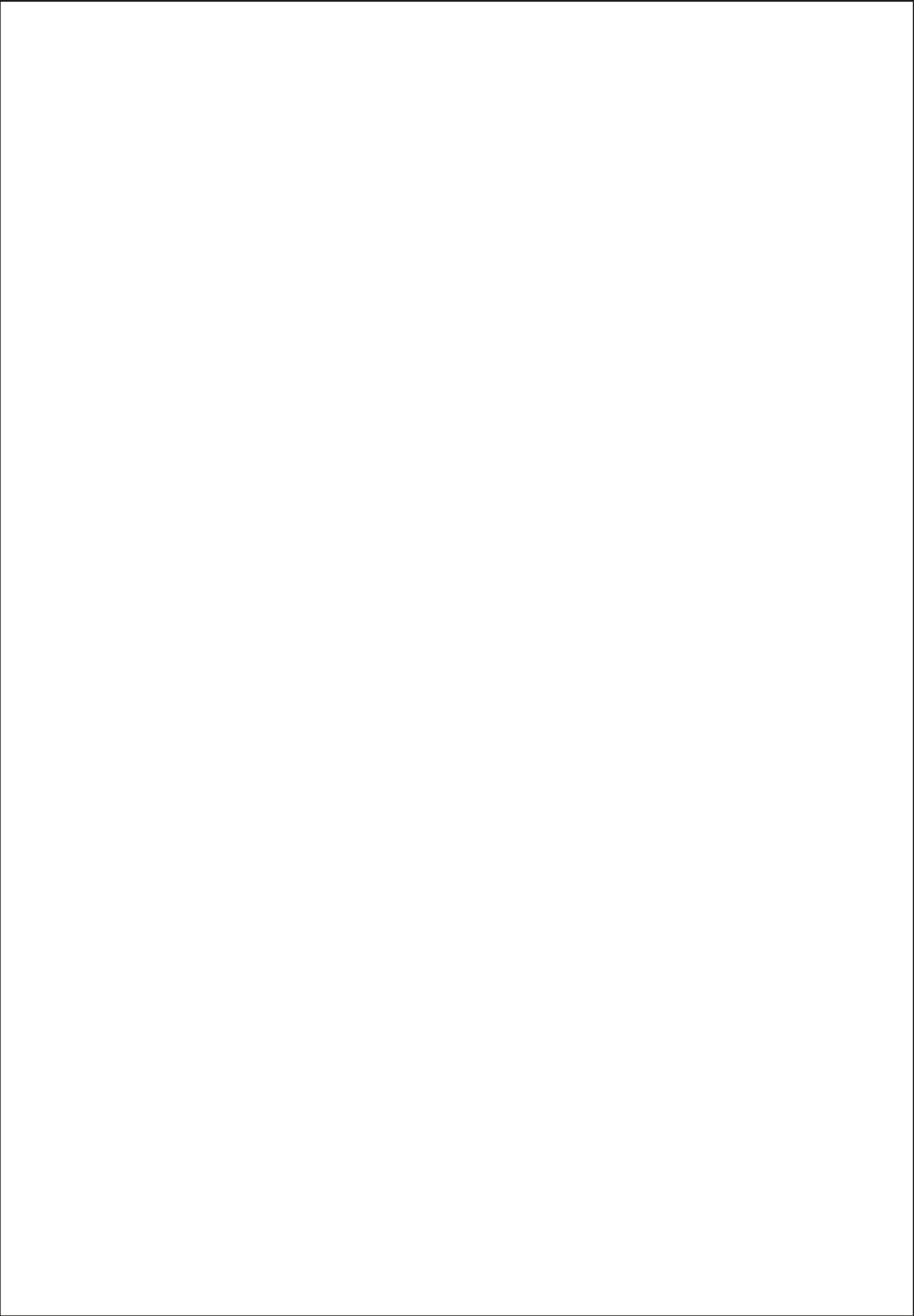
BLUE INNOVATION EXPOS AND SMART SPECIALIZATION CONFERENCES IN BURGAS, BATUMI, ODESSA

- **Promote innovative green and blue businesses and hackathon winners;**
- **Network and brokerage events to foster co-creation and cooperation;**
- **Improve the visibility of investment opportunities in the Black Sea blue economy and capacity of public/private investors to identify SMEs and start-ups;**
- **Bring together blue economy stakeholders in the Black Sea Basin to analyze and identify local potential for Blue growth cooperation and innovation;**
- **Boost capacity building and investment in the region**

BLUE INNOVATION ACCELERATOR DBAN

A decentralized repository of open data for the identification, registration and support of the search for resources (tools, services, data or documents) useful for intensifying innovations in the Black Sea regions;

- Provide digital tools for enhanced capacity of Blue Economy actors;**
- Develop stakeholder capacity to establish/enhance concrete cooperation and networking approaches;**
- Host all results generated by the DBAN project and suitable external resources to integrate, educate, support and disseminate, and promote citizen participation**



INCREASE OF CAPACITY FOR BLUE ECONOMY ACTORS

- **blended digital courses on digital skills and competences using both online and offline capacity building exercises;**
- **preparation and execution of the mentoring scheme in a real environment - the prize of the local champions- the winners of the local Hackathons;**
- **an acceleration service that aims to lead local concepts to commercialization phase;**
- **increase capacity of blue economy actors, especially SMEs to harness the potential of digital technologies to innovate and improve their interaction with their beneficiaries, partners;**
- **improve the efficiency of their work and the quality and format of services offered to clients**

SUPPORT WEB APPLICATION FOR BLUE ECONOMY SMES AND START-UPS (BLUECOTOUR.COM)

- **Web portal and Mobile app for Android and IOs systems;**
- **help SMEs and start-ups of Ukraine, Bulgaria and Georgia in developing their businesses (especially in the context of integration to touristic sector);**
- **promote services and improve capacity for blue economy market integration (incl. expanding market linkages and strengthening value chains);**
- **identify and tap into potential public/private investors**

Future plans

- **Keep the focus on Blue Growth;**
- **Use a business accelerator model to stimulate the creation of Blue economy innovation;**
- **Increase the connectivity between the local ports and other land transport stations by**
 - ✓ **Mobility islands**
 - ✓ **Sea taxi**
- **Integrated booking platform for berths and events;**
- **Digital marketplace for fishing catch;**
- **Promote citizen engagement**

Promoting smart pocket ports

Digital and better connected to logistics, industrial environments, and sustainable development resources

Using technology as leverage to

- *Sustainable environmental monitoring*
 - ✓ Creation of a Blue Growth Research Center;
 - ✓ Currents monitoring and how they affect the distribution of waste;
 - ✓ Measure, monitor and report rainfall, wind speed and detect rising sea and river levels to prevent flooding
- *Waste removal*
 - ✓ Automated containers clean-up the sea;
 - ✓ Drones and underwater ROV map the distribution of waste and identify the areas most in need of intervention;
 - ✓ local stakeholders participate in clean-up efforts

Thank you!

Website

www.burgas.bg

Mail: g.sakaliev@burgas.bg