

## *Raising necessity of scientific divers for sea and ocean research*

ScienceDIVER project aims to support the development of blue and smart cross-sectoral skills to meet the evolving needs in the labor market of the Blue Economy. It will build strong long lasting collaborations and structures between academia and industry in order to offer standardized training and clear career pathways to the diving scientists.

The project meets the increasing need of skilled and qualified scientists to perform dive-based research - a valuable highly productive, cost-effective research tool that supports underwater marine science and archaeology related disciplines. It refers to the requirements of the EU Communication COM/2014/02543, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC (Good Environmental Status (GES) of marine waters by 2020, the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage and will contribute to the achievement of the goals in the period 2021-2030, declared by the United Nations as the "Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, a "once in a lifetime" opportunity exists for Nations to work together to generate the global ocean science needed to support the sustainable development of our shared ocean".

The partners will join forces to create a permanent cooperation framework between marine industry and education, aiming at providing benefits to young people and all relevant stakeholders in order to:

- raise awareness on scientific diving among educational institutions/ academia at national and EU level and attract young people to scientific diving careers through targeted innovative educational/training initiatives;

- provide tangible solutions through a pilot vocational training scheme for scientific divers;

- mobilize stakeholders, create partnerships and joint actions between

- higher education, diving and maritime industries facilitate the professional acknowledgement of scientific divers in the Blue Economy market.

During the project life, the partners will act towards developing and establishment of unified, internationally recognized standards and training courses for Scientific Diving in all European countries.

The successful implementation of the ScienceDIVER project will be at the core of the initiative for development of a European Directive (common framework, status, educational standards, recognition and rights of Scientific Divers in all European countries). The common efforts of the engaged large group of stakeholders will close the skill gaps and will make the "scientific diving" career more attractive and valuable to young people in Europe in order to be able to meet the forthcoming innovative challenges in Blue Science for sustainable Blue Growth.

ScienceDIVER brings the expertise of seven partners from five EU countries: Greece (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki-coordinator, Atlantis Consulting SA), Italy (University of Calabria), Germany (University of Stuttgart, envirocom), Bulgaria (Marine Cluster Bulgaria) and Malta (Divers Alert Network Europe Foundation). Interested stakeholders are invited to learn more about the project and to participate in workshops, career days, B2B meetings and networking events during the project life till October 2022.