



Blue Career Centre of Eastern Mediterranean & Black Sea

Mentoring for the Sea

Blue Career Centre of Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea is established

A Blue Careers project funded by the European Commission

Blue Career Centre of Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea - MENTOR is a project, implemented by a consortium of seven partners from Cyprus (University of Cyprus, coordinator; Marine Institute of the Eastern Mediterranean; Cyprus Chamber of Industry and Commerce), Greece (National Technical University of Athens; Agricultural University of Athens), Bulgaria (Marine Cluster Bulgaria) and Romania (Constanta Maritime University). The project is co-funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

The main objective of the project is to set up a Blue Career Centre – a regional platform for dialogue between business stakeholders, education & training institutions, research organizations, policy makers, civil society as well as the EU and the Union for the Mediterranean. The project aims at attracting young people and experienced workers to key Blue Sectors in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea: Maritime Transport (shipping, ports, shipbuilding and ship repair); Cruise Tourism; Marine Aquaculture and Offshore Oil and Gas. MENTOR seeks to increase employability by providing prospects for young jobseekers and support to businesses in finding eligible employees with proper qualifications. The project duration is two years (March 2017 – February 2019). A Blue Career Centre Secretariat will be established in Cyprus with representations in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania.

The EU Blue Growth Strategy identified and ranked marine and maritime activities of the highest potential for future growth and jobs perspectives in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In order to achieve sustainable growth the Blue Economy needs highly qualified and skilled professionals. Many Blue Sectors are experiencing difficulties in finding

the eligible employees and expect that these difficulties will continue throughout the foreseeable future. At this stage four Key Blue sectors have been selected, being of strategic importance in the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea regions: Maritime Transport, Cruise Tourism, Marine Aquaculture and Offshore Oil and Gas.

The project consortium along with observers from neighboring non-EU countries, such as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, will join forces in order to:

- Attract higher education graduates or persons with vocational/technical qualifications to maritime professions through targeted and innovative education and/or training initiatives (including career guidance);
- Offer mentoring and career guidance to students (age 15 - 18) for Key Blue Sectors in the region;
- Retrain and up-skill workers employed in other sectors and/or people currently unemployed for a job in the Blue Economy;
- Diversify and expand the skills of people currently employed in the Blue Economy to progress in their careers and/or to facilitate their mobility to other maritime jobs.

The successful operation of the first Blue Career Centre for the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea is expected to set an example and model for all other sub-basins. A European network of Blue Career Centres may eventually be established ringing together all the stakeholders of the various European Marine and Maritime Clusters in a common effort to close the skills gap, tackle unemployment and make “blue careers” more attractive to young people of Europe and its neighborhood.

