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Italy – Croatia

 **MareSkill**

Conference: Marine technologies and implementation for sustainable blue economy

Mareskill project presentation

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About presenter - Frane Urem



Project Manager of MareSkill, part of the Interreg Italy-Croatia 2021-2027 Programme

Current Position: Vice Dean of the Polytechnic of Šibenik, Professor

Additional Roles:

- Visiting Professor at the University of Zadar
- Oracle Academy Trainer (Central Eastern Europe and Finland)



Introduction

- **Project Title:** MareSkill – *“Smart and Innovative Blue Skills for a Competitive Blue Economy”*
- **Duration:** 30 months (from April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2026.)
- **Objective:** Address the skills gap in the blue economy by enhancing education and developing targeted upskilling and reskilling programs





Project Partners

- **Partners:**

- **Croatia:** Polytechnic of Šibenik, University of Zadar, University of Rijeka, Croatian Chamber of Economy
- **Italy:** Fenice Foundation NGO (Italy), Regional Agency for Technology and Innovation – ARTI (Italy), National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics – OGS (Italy), University of Trieste (Italy)

- **Associated Partners:**

- Malignani Technical Institute (Italy)
- AluTech Development and Innovation Center (Croatia)





The Common Challenge

- The blue economy is a critical growth area for the Italy-Croatia region but faces a significant skills shortage
- **Key Challenge: Aligning workforce skills with the needs of industries like marine tourism, aquaculture, and offshore energy**
- The current education systems need to meet the evolving demands of the sector, creating a gap between labor market needs and available skills





Project Objectives and Innovation

- **Main Objectives:**
 - Develop tailored upskilling and reskilling programs to bridge the skills gap
 - Create a cross-border knowledge hub to enhance collaboration between academia and industry.
 - Implement pilot courses focused on key sectors of the blue economy
- **Innovation:** The project uses the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) methodology to identify specific skill gaps and develop educational content based on direct input from industry stakeholders





Key Activities

WP1 – Identifying Blue Skill Gaps

- Create a methodology for conducting an entrepreneurial discovery process (EDP) for blue skills in focused sectors and innovation /entrepreneurial areas
- Conduct surveys and interviews with industry stakeholders and students
- Facilitate open dialogue between policymakers, academia, and industry



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Key Activities



WP2 – Developing and Implementing Pilot Courses

- Design educational programs and materials for upskilling and reskilling
- Implement pilot courses in key blue economy sectors (e.g., aquaculture, marine tourism)
- Collect feedback to optimize and finalize the pilot courses



Key Activities



WP3 – Establishing a Cross-Border Knowledge Hub

- Organize study visits for students and young researchers to industry partners
- Create a sustainable model for knowledge exchange and collaboration
- Formalize cooperation through agreements between academic and industry partners





Key Outputs and Expected Results

- **10 organizations collaborating across borders**
- **60 participations in joint activities across the Italy-Croatia region**
- Development of innovative training programs that increase employability in blue economy sectors
- Enhanced capacity for education providers to deliver industry-relevant skills training





Achievements So Far

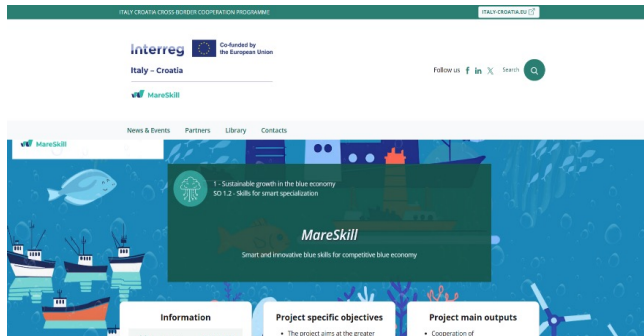
- **Kick-off Meeting** (April 2024): Set objectives, signed Partnership Agreement, and created Quality Manual.
- **EDP Methodology** (July 2024): Identified skill gaps in aquaculture and marine tourism with input from key stakeholders.
- **Questionnaire Development** (November 2024): Comprehensive tool designed to identify blue skill gaps, focusing on aquaculture, marine tourism, and environmental protection.



Achievements So Far

- **Communication Boost:**
 - Launched [project website](#)
 - Social media: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#)

- Collaboration with other projects: Joint activities with DIH InnovaMare (Interreg) and Eco Minds (Erasmus+ KA2) for enhanced skills development and sustainable practices



Conclusion and Call to Action

- MareSkill is a transformative project that aims to close the skills gap in the blue economy through innovative education and strategic partnerships
- **Join us in shaping the future of the blue economy** by leveraging MareSkill's opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and sustainable growth



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 **MareSkill**

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