

HELIOS CASE STUDY

Best practices in tackling social exclusion in the Mediterranean region



HELIOS

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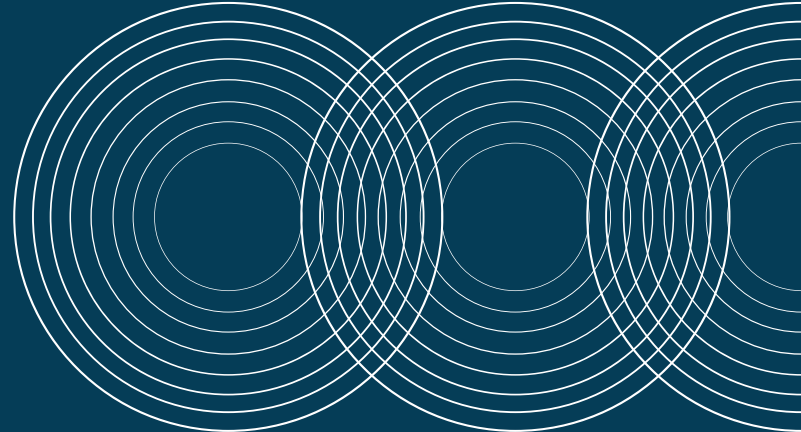
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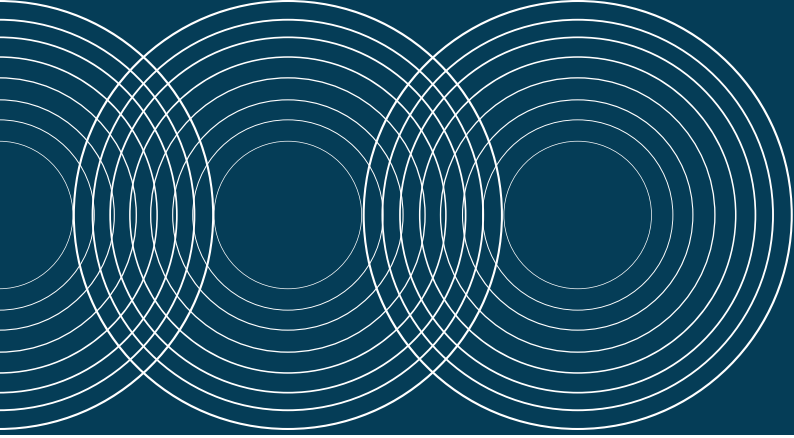
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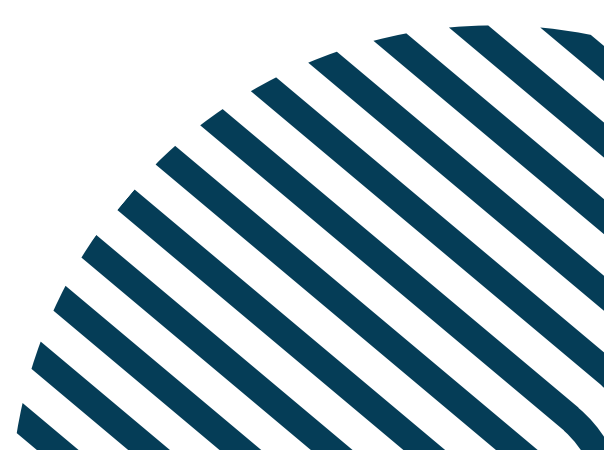
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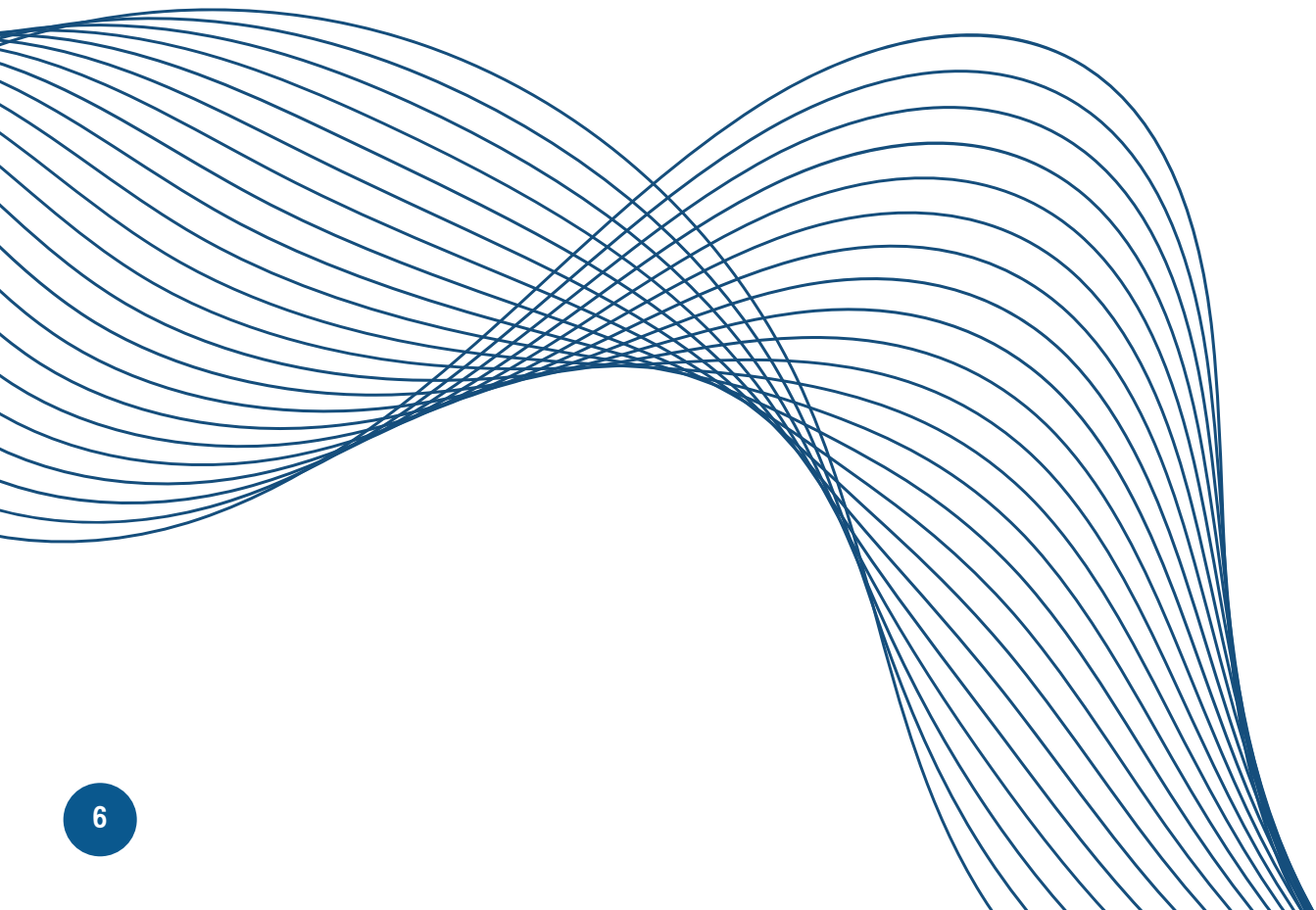
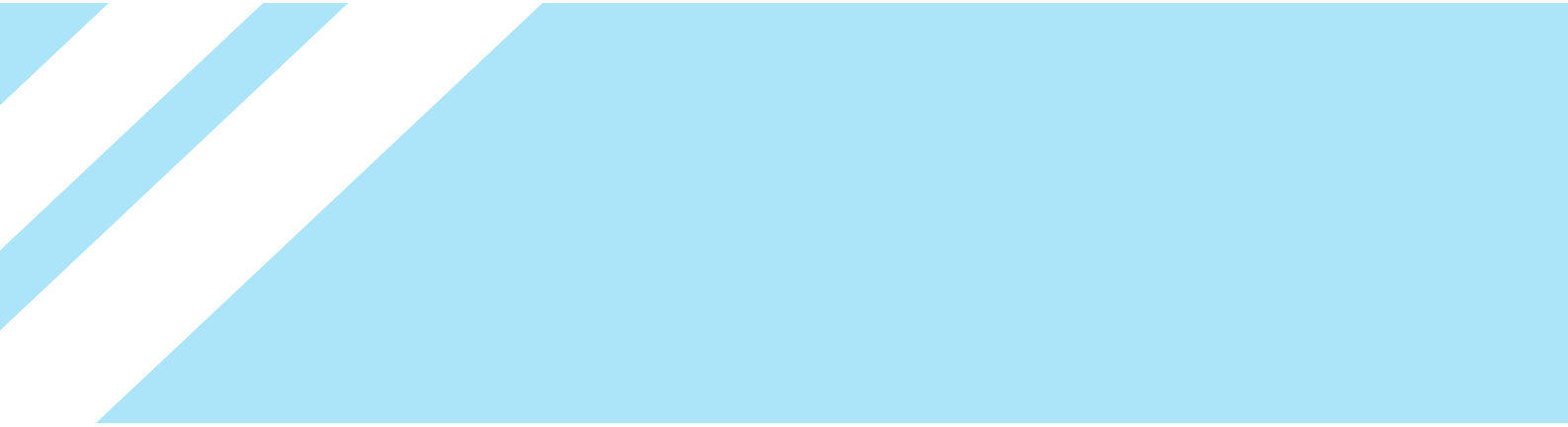
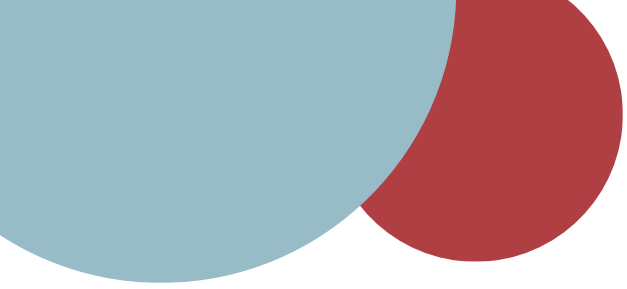
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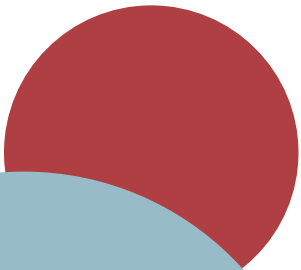


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS





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Thanks to the openness of all participants, this publication is full of vivid stories that will undoubtedly touch and inspire the readers.



ABBREVIATIONS

BaCE - Blue and Circular Economy

ENI - ENI CBC MED Programme

EUPCs - European Union partner countries

PMT- Project management team

PPs - Project Partners

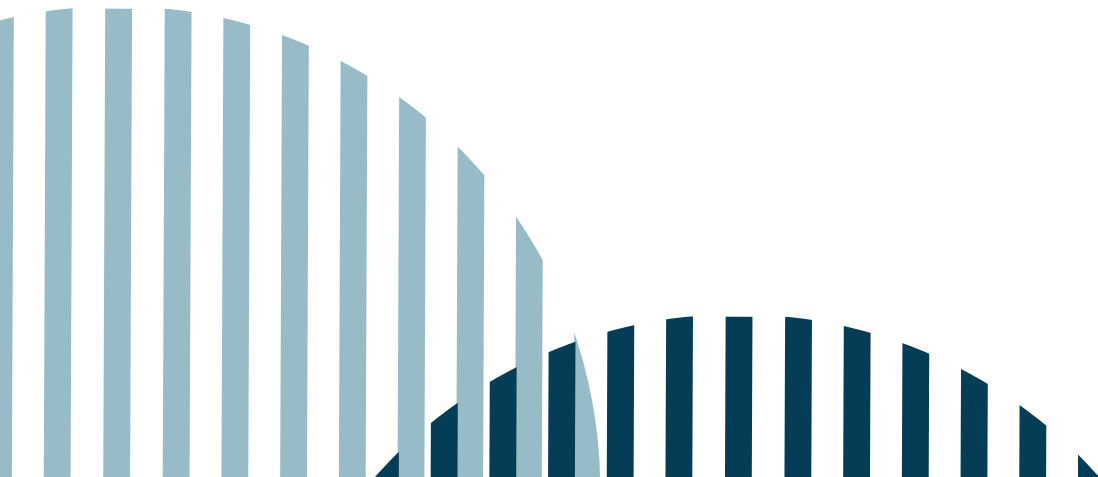
JTS- Joint Technical Secretariat

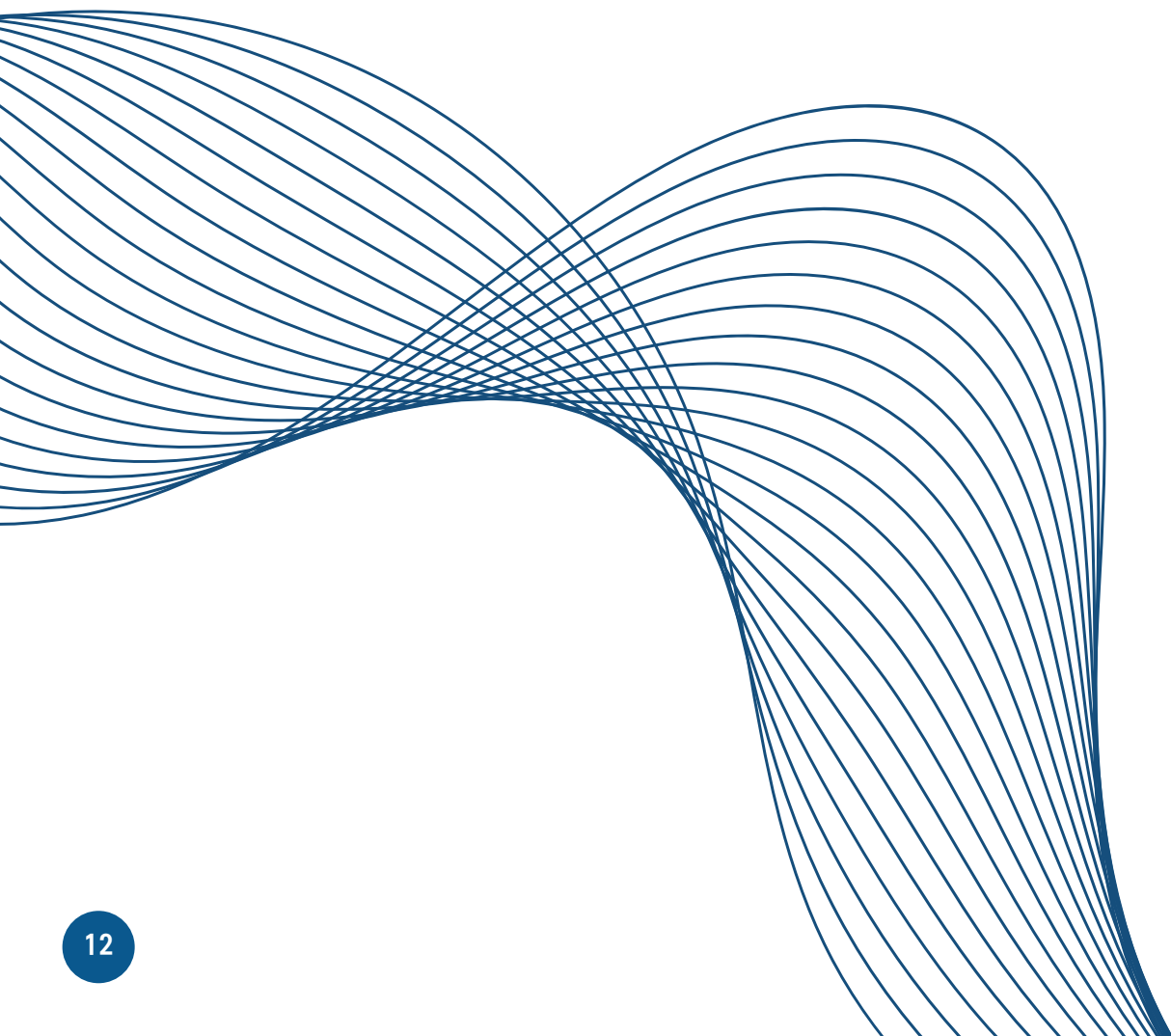
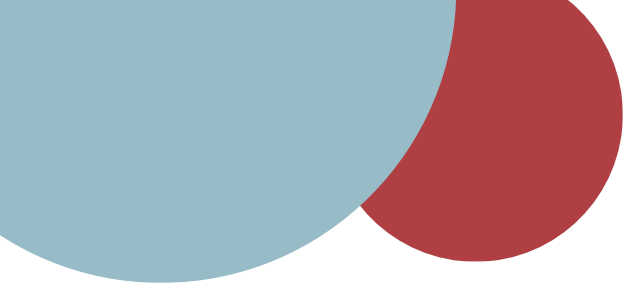
ILO – International Labour Organisation

EU - European Union

NEET - Not in education, employment or training

VET - Vocational Educational Training







HELIOS



INTRODUCTION

THE PROJECT HELIOS - ENHANCING THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF NEETS





INTRODUCTION

This publication investigates key aspects of the so called “NEET Phenomenon”, an acronym for ‘Not in Education, Employment, or Training’ [1], and presents how this problem was identified and addressed by seven high profile organisations, such as ARCES Association (Italy), COSVAP (Italy), Action against Hunger – ACH (Spain), Institute of Entrepreneurship Development IED (Greece), Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishery UTAP (Tunisia), University College of Applied Sciences UCAS (Palestine) and the National Center for Agricultural Research NARC (Jordan), which are partners of the Project “enHancing thE social Inclusion Of neetS: HELIOS”. The HELIOS project was co-funded by the European Commission within the framework of the Programme ENI CBC MED 2014-2020 and covered the period of 36 months from 2019-2023, with a budget of €2.7 million.

In 2019, the NEETs rate for young women in the European Union partner countries (EUPCs) (Italy, Spain, Greece, etc.) stood at 14.6% and remained higher than the rate of 10.8% for young men[2]. During the same year, 39% of Jordanian youth aged 15-29 were NEET[3] and one out of every two young women in rural Tunisia (50.4 percent) was NEET[4]. Last but not least, in 2019, the NEET rate in Palestine (18-29) reached 50%, and, in particular, 64% in Gaza and 41% in Westbank.

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis hit countries on both sides of the Mediterranean severely. It has exacerbated existing socio-economic challenges in the Southern Mediterranean countries (Tunisia, Jordan, Palestine, etc.), including high rates of both youth unemployment and NEETs.

The NEET rate reached 40% in some Southern Mediterranean countries in 2020, and 50% for young women. Furthermore, young people often find themselves in precarious employment situations. Women, in particular, continue to be underrepresented on the labour market due to persisting barriers in domestic economies and societies.

[1] The NEET phenomenon is a classification of people who, from the ages of 16 to 34, are not currently employed, pursuing their education, or in training. The term coined in the United Kingdom from the late 1990s, but is now used in a more global context, including non-only the Mediterranean Countries but also the United States, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, and many others.

[2] <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>

[3] <https://www.unicef.org/mena/reports/opportunities-youth-Jordan>

[4] https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/MNA/tunisia/breaking_the_barriers_to_youth_inclusion_eng_chap3.pdf



Over the last five years (2019-2023), the partners of HELIOS have discussed where to start and have agreed on these challenges facing the Mediterranean region and the need to investigate the social issues and develop solutions to reduce NEET rates and unemployment.

This publication tries to summarise the experience gained by the partners during the project implementation, presenting the technical aspects (including outputs [5]) and infrastructure (e-learning platform, e-profiling tools, etc.) used.

We believe that this study will advance knowledge and new ways of understanding needed by staff working in the social inclusion sector, in order to deal with social exclusion issues in their everyday work.

The methodology adopted to elaborate the publication includes an analysis of project “Rationale” (including the local context), the presentation of the profiling methodology used for NEETs and Companies (SMEs, MSMEs) operating in the Blue and Circular Economy sectors (BaCE), including its main results, the presentation of the project e-learning Platform and several case studies (Italy, Spain, Greece, Jordan) which illustrate the benefits of the training courses to students enrolled in the HELIOS capacity building programme.

Finally, it presents some recommendations for the application of our approach in the design of new employment schemes and social inclusion patterns in the coming years.

To better understand the value of the HELIOS project and its results we strongly encourage the reader to visit the project website <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/HELIOS> and, in particular, to watch the video “3 years of HELIOS: a flood of opportunities in the blue and circular economy for young people and women in the Mediterranean area” available at <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/3-years-HELIOS-flood-opportunities-blue-and-circular-economy-young-people-and-women-mediterranean>.

You will discover how our approach can support the social inclusion of NEETs and unemployed women living in the Mediterranean Region, by contributing, at the same time, to a more inclusive and environmentally sustainable future.

[5] The outputs are the tangible goods and services delivered by the Project. Source: <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/Introduction+to+Results+and+Monitoring#IntroductiontoResultsandMonitoring-1.3.9Output>



THE PROJECT HELIOS - ENHANCING THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF NEETS

The HELIOS project was a project funded by the cross-border cooperation programme for the development of the Euro-Mediterranean area – ENI-CBC MED running from 2014 to 2023 [1] with partners from Six Euro-Mediterranean countries: Italy, Spain, Palestine Authority, Jordan, Greece and Tunisia.

The project aimed to provide young people, especially NEETs and Women, with marketable skills of interest to enterprises within the Blue and Circular Economies (BaCE).

One of the main challenges in the Mediterranean region is to reduce the high numbers of NEETs and the prominent skills mismatch which currently prevail.

EUROCATIV in 2019 stated that according to the Skills for Jobs database by Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), at least 80 million workers in Europe are mismatched in terms of qualifications. This means that workers do not have the proper qualifications for the job they have been hired to do, either because they are under-qualified or overqualified [2]. On the other hand, companies experience difficulties in hiring people for the openings they have. This results in long-time unfilled positions, which leads to delays in the production process.

HELIOS identified the Blue and Circular Economies (BaCE) as those economic sectors with greatest potential for regenerative economic growth and the ability to absorb appropriately trained young people and women in the partner areas targeted by the project.

The HELIOS project created curricula for innovative, tailored skills-training courses oriented towards the specific needs of the BaCE labour market and the needs of NEETs, based on direct interaction with local enterprises.

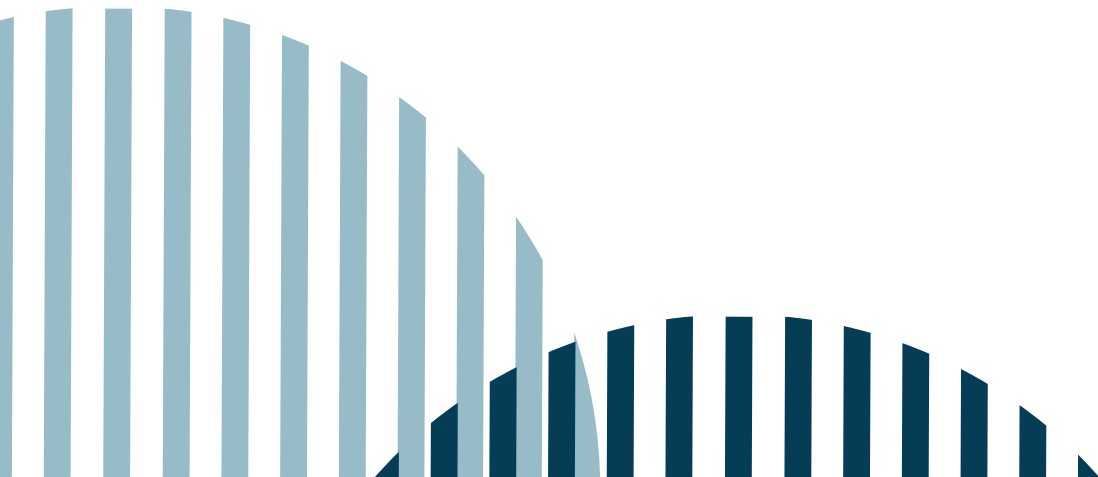
[1] <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/>

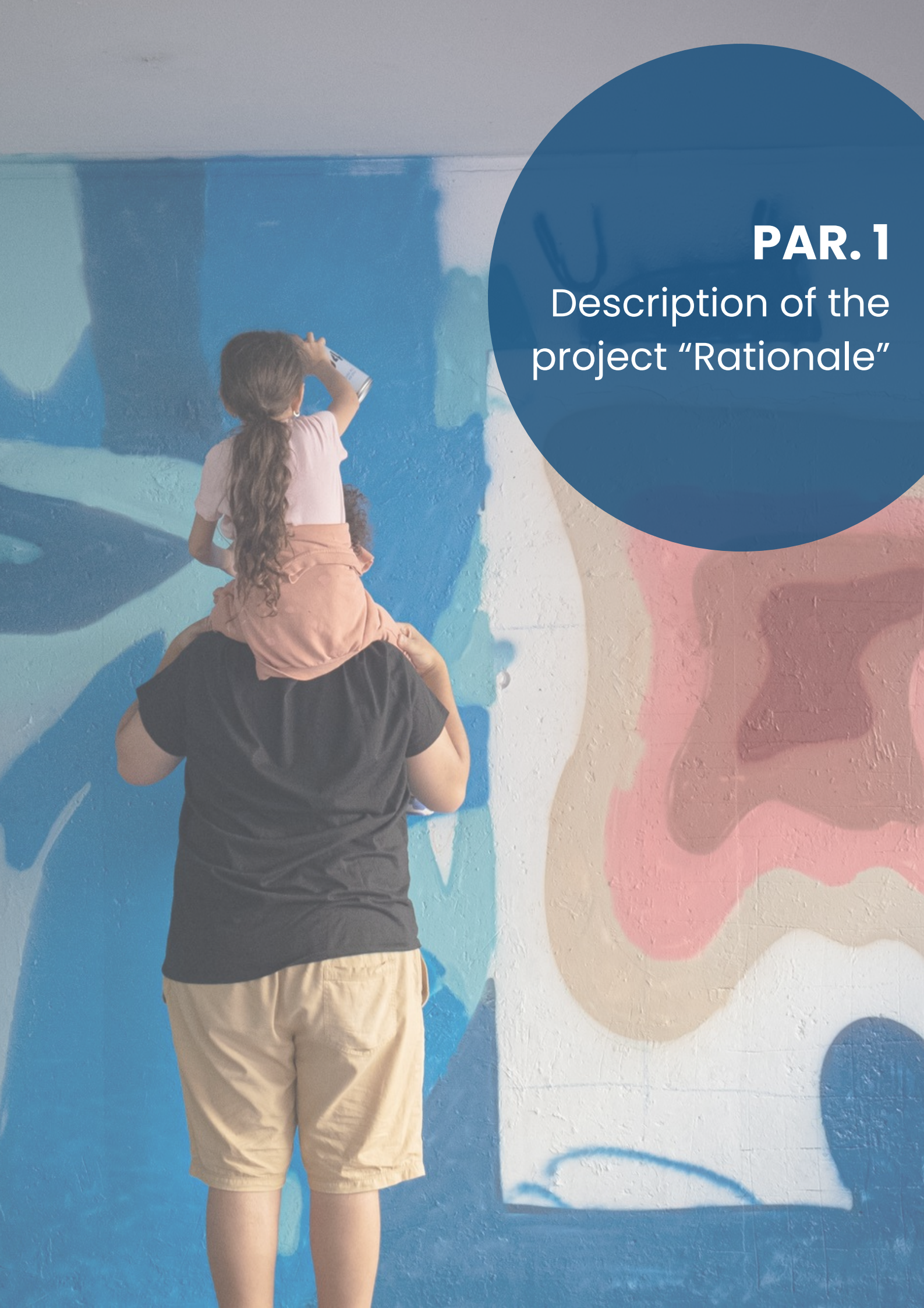
[2] Beatriz Rios. *The skills gap: an economic burden for the EU*, EURACTIV, 2019. <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/the-skills-gap-an-economic-burden-for-the-eu/>

HELIOS Project Partners:

- Lead Beneficiary ARCES Association, Sicily, Italy
- Fisheries and Blue Growth District - COSVAP (Distretto della Pesca e Crescita Blu), Sicily, Italy
- Action against Hunger - ACH (Acción contra el Hambre), Cataluña, Spain
- Institute of Entrepreneurship Development - iED (Ινστιτούτο Ανάπτυξης Επιχειρηματικότητας), Thessalia, Greece
- Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishery, UTAP (الإتحاد التونسي للفلاحة والصيد البحري), Tunis, Tunisia
- University College of Applied Sciences, Planning and External Relations Affairs – UCAS, (الكلية الجامعية للعلوم التطبيقية), Palestine,
- The National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension – NARC (المركز الوطني للبحث والإرشاد الزراعي), Jordan.

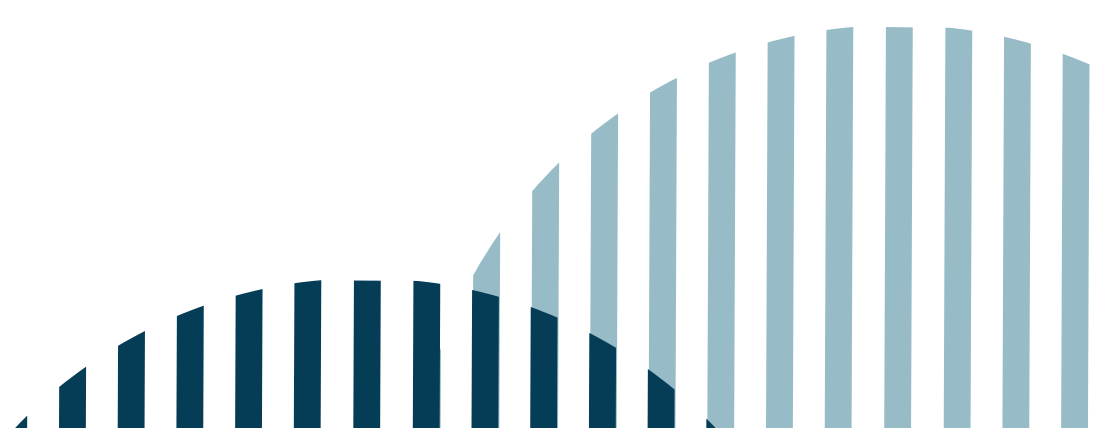






PAR. 1

Description of the project "Rationale"





DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT “RATIONALE”

This section introduces the project rationale, scope and the guiding principles that informed the research process. Understanding the local context and its possible influences on shaping, implementing and running training activities for vulnerable groups is key for any social inclusion initiative.

Adopting a common methodology for the profiling and needs assessment of NEETs (including women) and companies (including SMEs, MSMEs) is an example of important progress made in the framework of the cross-border cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the Neighbouring countries (Tunisia, Palestine and Jordan).

It serves as a guide on which to build and support this study. Designing curricula for tailored training courses and exploiting the added value of cross-border cooperation by seeking synergies in best practices (methodologies, tools, etc.) with various project partners were the guiding principles behind this initiative.

1. UNDERSTANDING THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Mediterranean faces a multitude of common challenges, including climate change, pollution, youth unemployment and social inequality [1].

Climate change interacts with employment in several ways. Climate change and environmental degradation pose significant challenges to economic growth and employment, and climate change related shocks will slow down our progress in reducing poverty.

“Fixing the economy to fix climate change” [2], the Blue and Circular Economy (BaCE) are broad concepts which seek to ensure production processes are sustainable; they call for a paradigm shift in the way businesses, services and society are conducted.

[1] <https://www.enicbcmec.eu/about-us/the-programme-at-a-glance>

[2] <https://climate.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org>



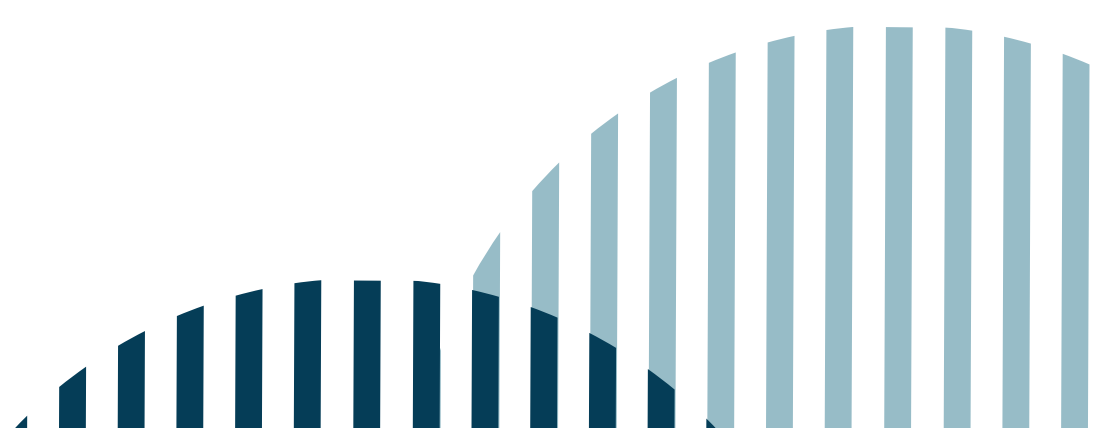
The BaCE has the potential to open new and innovative career prospects for young people, in addition to creating a cleaner, less wasteful society, and our young people and women undoubtedly have the potential to be catalysts for such a change.


The shift to a Circular economy (CE) has had an impact on labour markets around the world. While some jobs disappear, others will take their place in the future. It is undeniable that the labour market for young workers, employers, professionals, jobseekers, etc., has changed intensely in recent years due the transition from the linear concept to CE. New “circular jobs [3]” are emerging to replace those in decline. All of this is easy to explain, since new “Marketable skills” become more important than others, and workers and employers are required to develop new mindsets and skills to adapt to changing environments. In fact, in order to fight climate change, resource depletion, and achieve economic and inclusive growth, new skills and new jobs must be created. During the last 20 years, on the other hand, we have witnessed a worrying phenomenon in the Mediterranean region. The labour force participation rate of young people (aged 15–24) has continued to decline. Between 1999 and 2019, despite an increase in the global youth population from 1 billion to 1.3 billion, the total number of young people engaged in the labour force (those who are either employed or unemployed) decreased from 568 million to 497 million. While this trend reflects growing enrolment in secondary and tertiary education, resulting in a better-skilled workforce in many countries, it also highlights the substantial numbers of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), a large majority of whom are women. [4]

Let us clarify a little better the term NEET. This definition by Eurofound provides us with a clear idea of the nature of the term and how we need to be aware of the complexity of the category it seeks to protect: “NEETs is a broad category encompassing a heterogeneous population. Disentangling the subgroups within it is essential for a better understanding of their different characteristics and needs, and for tailoring effective policies to reintegrate them into the labour market or education. Identifying the subgroups also aids in identifying who is most vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion.

[3] CIRCLE ECONOMY, EHERO: *Circular jobs. Understanding Employment in the Circular Economy in the Netherlands*, June 2020.

[4] *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs* International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2020.





While individuals in the NEET category often experience multiple disadvantages, including a low level of education, poverty and difficult family backgrounds, the population of NEETs is made up of both vulnerable and non-vulnerable young people who have in common the fact that they are not accumulating human capital through formal channels” [5].

The above description allows us to better illustrate an aspect which has been one of the greatest challenges of this project; that is, to identify, within this heterogeneous group of people, the various subgroups, and to target those subgroups deemed most vulnerable in a specific partner country. Throughout this project, we have found that treating the NEET category as a homogenous group of people is of little gain when attempting to identify and engage this category in any given community. The NEET label is only useful when the indicator is disaggregated into sub-groups based on the reasons for becoming alienated from the labour market (Furlong, 2006) (highly educated with skills not required by the market, unemployed, discouraged, family caregivers, inactive etc.), some of which are extremely culture based and must be taken into consideration.

The NEET label was an indicator which became popular when trying to gauge real unemployment levels and, more importantly, it succeeded in bringing our attention to aspects of vulnerability held within unemployment categories, especially regarding young people and women. Recent attention, however, is now focusing on how to better define the various subgroups, and to encourage distinctions between the long-term and short-term unemployed, those in a vulnerable life situation or effectively inactive, and those who are in insecure or very low-paid jobs who might also benefit from attention.

This activity of profiling has spread among public employment services (PES) as a tool to support the growing need for service customization and targeted engagement of the user/NEET. HELIOS project partners worked in synergy to develop a common methodology/best practice profiling tool in order to identify and engage the most vulnerable groups in any given area (see *Chapter 2* of this publication – **Project methodology and profiling tools**).

The HELIOS project aimed to identify a minimum of two vulnerable subgroups in each partner community and employ modern technologies and new methodologies to reach and engage members of those subgroups.

[5] <https://www.enicbcm.ed.eu/about-us/the-programme-at-a-glance>



Few HELIOS partner organizations made use of NEET profiling software at the start of the project. Initial activities included:

1. profiling the NEETs in each area and training on how to identify the most vulnerable subgroups for intervention measures (such as multiple skills training);
2. identifying best methods to reach and engage target NEETs, including monitoring the success of engagement.

The methods used included e-tools (e-teaching HELIOS platform), peer-to peer methods and social media tools. The HELIOS project made careful analysis of the Swedish PES 'Unga In' Peer to Peer project, which used young NEETs themselves to conduct outreach.

2. CLOSING THE SKILLS-MISMATCH GAP

All too often, decisions surrounding the curricula content of skills courses are not based on a strategic analysis of the local economy and/or consultation with local enterprises in order to identify sectors with potential growth capable of absorbing new trainees.

The rationale behind the HELIOS project was an attempt to bridge this gap and began with a preliminary needs analysis of local economy requirements (profiling) together with identification of the main NEETs subgroups, determination of the best methods to reach and engage NEETs, and subsequent profiling. In order to pilot the HELIOS project actions and innovative approach, the Blue and Circular Economy (BaCE) was identified as the sector with most potential.

Following careful profiling of the local context through direct methods, such as questionnaires and interviews, the project developed tailored skills training courses oriented towards specific needs of the BaCE labour market and the needs of NEETs. Course curricula included BaCE basic notions, soft skills coaching and mentoring actions, and entrepreneurship skills, supported by new e-learning technologies to facilitate skills training for NEETs and unemployed women with no limit to age.



3. CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

Cross-border cooperation (CBC) provided the opportunity to analyse and compare present-day issues of extreme concern regarding NEETs by allowing each region to exchange information on current practices and to look for a common way forward together.

We are especially enthusiastic about bringing together the skills provided by such a diverse set of partners in creating new curricula based on market needs, in implementing new, media-based training tools, and in the sharing of cultures, especially through young people, facilitated by the e-platform, forums, social networks etc.

In many of the partner areas, the Blue Economy continues to play a considerable role in society, in other places this cultural connection has been lost and the fisheries sector, for instance, no longer enjoys the esteem it once had, especially in the eyes of the younger generation. The fishing industry, in particular, suffers from an ageing-workforce in need of new recruits and professional training, and a lack of implementation of innovations in environmental issues and technical areas. The HELIOS project sought to generate new interest in the Blue Economy and 'introduce' the Circular Economy and its huge potential as the basis for sustainable, regenerative growth in all the regions. This aspect undoubtedly benefitted from cross-border cooperation. A number of experts see the Blue Economy as a new growth frontier, a kind of Eldorado with an expected tripling of its value added between 2010 and 2030 [6].

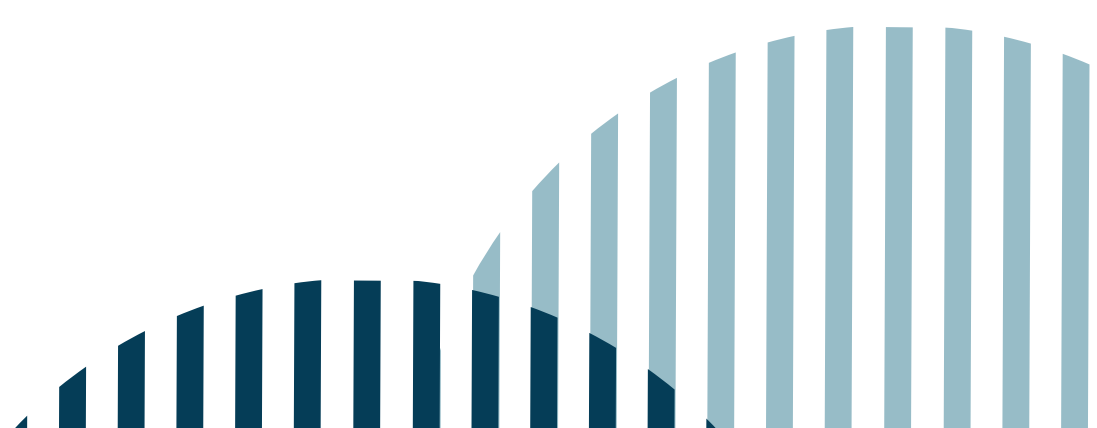
There are a number of sectors in which a particular partner country has specialized knowledge as a result of generations of 'skills accumulation' which were of interest not only in curricula development but also in stimulating the cross-border job market. An immediate benefit of the collaboration for the course participants was the creation of networks for traineeship exchanges. During the project, Palestinian students were able to take advantage of the network and travel to Jordan to carry out a traineeship at the partner organization NARC. The project HELIOS helped job seekers find information about cross-border jobs and receive guidance on working across the border. This is one of the most salient aspects of this constructive experience and it reveals how "CBC" can lead to a significant exchange of knowledge and collective action to tackle common problems, such as improving social inclusion.

[6] *Blue economy: A new frontier for growth and a healthy Mediterranean (Flyer, January 2020). More at: <https://www.enicbcmmed.eu/about-us/the-programme-at-a-glance>*



PAR. 2

Project Methodology



PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND PROFILING TOOLS

In this section we describe the methodology adopted by the consortium to properly achieve the targeted results. This methodology used to carry out the profiling of NEETs and women as well as the needs assessment of the companies operating in the BaCE sectors was established during several joint technical meetings by all project partners. Meaningful discussions and exchanges of ideas, guidelines, etc. occurred as partners moved from one profiling tool to another to reach one common goal: the elaboration of one joint survey questionnaire. Here below, we mention some of the most relevant tools identified in our project.

1. NEETS PROFILING METHODOLOGY


The methodology used for reaching and engaging young people and women in the NEETs category made use of multiple channels, with both indirect and direct outreach.

Indirect outreach:

Social media publicity using both flyers on the partner organizations pages or specific pages were created for the HELIOS project. Social media sites included Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and local news sites; Facebook groups targeting young unemployed graduates or young unemployed people in general.



Kick off meeting of HELIOS project held in Amman (Jordan)



Links were created on the social media pages to the Project website or directly to the questionnaire to facilitate the profiling and engagement process.

Flyers advertising the courses displayed in key places around the town (schools, universities, unemployment offices, youth clubs, town halls and community centres etc).

Contacting schools to pass the word using 'peer-to-peer' methods, through school Facebook pages etc.

Visits to employment agencies (including ANPAL [1]) to present the project, inviting the agencies to post information about the project also on their agency websites; Visits to trade unions for lists of women and young people.

Direct outreach:

- E-mail or telephone calls using lists from the Youth Employment scheme databases, alumni lists, in the case of Higher Education partner TVETs, societies of women graduates;
- Women's associations and charities, youth associations;
- Local and religious community associations working directly with disadvantaged members of the community (immigrants);
- Events and open meetings where women and young people were invited and project staff helped less digital savvy NEETs to complete the questionnaires.

It must be noted here that access to databases containing personal information (emails, telephone numbers etc.) is severely restricted in many of the partner countries due to privacy and data protection laws. A more detailed analysis of the specific outreach methods used in each country can be found in the HELIOS NEET profiling analysis (3.1) [2].


Following outreach, the next step was to carry out profiling to ensure better understanding of the young people and women who responded. To ensure that a shared sense of ownership and responsibility was adopted by each partner institute, a questionnaire was jointly developed and a draft version was disseminated to partners to gather feedback. Cultural differences to approaching and engaging people were taken into consideration and the questions were adjusted accordingly. The questionnaire was then translated into the partner languages and uploaded onto the survey software tool used, Google form, in our case.

The various subgroups and age groups, levels of digital competency and access to digital technologies were taken into consideration and different communication channels were adopted by the partners based on the specific situation.

[1] ANPAL Servizi S.p.A., is the in-house National Agency for the Active Labour Policies, settled on January 1, 2017 according to legislative decree No. 150/2015. The Agency was duly informed about the project activities through several face to face meetings and awareness raising events, including the last final Project conference held on January 26th 2023 at Giardini del Massimo, Teatro Politeama, Palermo.

[2] Source: WP3 NEET and BaCE Profiling, O.3.1 NEET profiling Report, edited by ARCES Association, 16th of September 2021, available at:

<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/2022-10/O.3.1%20NEET%20profiling%20-%20existing%20situation%20analysis%20and%20methodology.pdf>



Finally, all partners were asked to provide detailed notes on questions relating to the methods of implementation of the NEET profiling. Questions included how many NEETs were contacted and exactly how (telephone, email, was a cover letter used), how many responses were received, and which subcategory was the specific target. The answers to the questions were then used as the basis for assessing country methodology and best practices.

Just a small aside as a reminder of the context in which the HELIOS project was operating. The NEET profiling was due to begin in the Spring of 2020 and undoubtedly a wider range of methodologies for reaching and engaging the NEETs was initially envisaged. An abrupt switch to exclusively digital communications was enforced following the COVID-19 Pandemic.

2. BaCE PROFILING METHODOLOGY


Similar methodologies were used for the profiling of the local economy and enterprises operating within the Blue and Circular Economies.

Two main categories of enterprise were targeted – those working in the blue economy, taken as the fisheries sector or those working in close contact with the waters or coastal areas targeted by the project; and those enterprises which have already transitioned either partially or wholly towards a more circular and sustainable approach to production (therefore already part of the Blue and Circular Economy). It was important to target both these categories as the fisheries sector enterprises (non BaCE) have great potential for future growth and are in need of people with new skills to ensure transition towards greater sustainability. FAO has highlighted the importance of fishery in the Mediterranean region, through a series of publications and events. As stated by FAO in its 2022 report, “Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea generate an annual revenue of \$2.9 billion and generates an estimated half a million jobs throughout the value chain.

An average 1 in every 1 000 coastal residents in the region is a fisher, and in some coastal areas that number can be up to 10 times higher” [3]. At the same time coastal livelihoods is at risk from an ageing workforce and job losses [4].

[3] FAO. 2022. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2022*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc3370en>

[4] Source: <https://www.medecc.org/the-state-of-mediterranean-and-black-sea-fisheries-2022/#:~:text=Fisheries%20in%20the%20Mediterranean%20and,up%20to%2010%20times%20higher.>



In contrast, those enterprises which have already embraced CE elements and sustainability in their production process are an inspiration and driving force for the local economy and were fundamental to our courses in providing mentors, in guiding curricula development and hosting site visits. To aid successful profiling, a set of guidelines was produced to ensure a certain level of homogeneity in the implementation of the questionnaires. Each partner produced a list of companies which operate in the blue economy and circular economy locally. For some partners with a limited coastline, this also included the agricultural sector.

For the BaCE mapping, a number of sources were suggested for gathering data (chamber of commerce for a list of companies operating in these sectors; internet search of local companies; business development agencies, incubators etc, for new start-ups which might have a more circular/inclusive approach; TVETs which might have lists of companies interested in training course in the past in these sectors; Ministry of Fisheries and agriculture or other relevant public offices. Recommendations were also provided on best methods to approach companies for the profiling process (for example via email, telephone call, video conferencing or direct visit). The best approach may differ from country to country and were undoubtedly severely affected by the Pandemic.

A set of risk factors and indicators to ensure data quality and how to adjust for poor data collection (minimum numbers, alternative sources etc) were also provided. This included an evaluation of how many companies needed to complete the questionnaire per partner area. For the HELIOS project, we established that a comfortable range was of 100 local enterprises for mapping and 25 enterprises (from a varied pool of key economic areas) to implement the questionnaire through direct interview (via telephone or video conference) in order to obtain a complete and useful dataset for the project needs.

Engagement moments (email exchanges, virtual meetings or visits) were also deemed as extremely useful for identifying mentors for the courses and curricula development. In a similar way, following the profiling, partners were asked to gather details on the methods used to conduct the profiling (how many enterprises were approached, decision-making criteria used when identifying the enterprises to complete the questionnaires, size of enterprises, number of responses etc).

A copy of the methodology questionnaires, the profiling questionnaires and the whole assessment reports are available in the project website, section “Documents” at <https://www.enicbcm.edu/projects/helios>.



3. RESULTS OF THE PROFILING PROCESS: NEETS AND LABOUR MARKET ANALYSIS

In this section we describe the most salient results of the profiling activities in summary form. For an in-depth description of the results both aggregated and for each partner country, please see the separate reports [5].

The NEET profiling

The HELIOS project aimed to identify a minimum of two of the most vulnerable subgroups in each partner community and employ modern technologies and new methodologies to identify and engage members of those subgroups with the ultimate aim of providing skills training courses to facilitate entry into the labour market.

Through the profiling process, we needed to get a better idea of who exactly the NEETs in the target areas were; how old were they, had they left school before school leaving age, what kind of skills did they already possess and what were their perceptions of the labour market around them.

The profiling process included personal data combined with salient information about the level of education, propensity to update skills (internships/training) and familiarity with soft skills (CV writing etc.). Specific questions were also included regarding knowledge on the Blue and Circular Economy to get a better idea of awareness of these sectors amongst potential course participants, also in view of curricula development.

The data on gender show marked variation between countries regarding participation in the profiling. We found countries in which male participants were most represented, and countries in which the majority of the responses came from women. In Jordan, Spain and Greece, for example, 60-70% of survey participants were female and 30-40% male, an approximate ratio of 2:1. Italy and Palestine, where a substantially balanced percentage was found, proved to be exceptions. However, it is important to add here that these answers were also affected by initial targeting: in Tunisia and Jordan, for example, women's groups were the initial primary target.

[5] Reports are available at <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/helios>, in particular see section "Library" and "Documents".



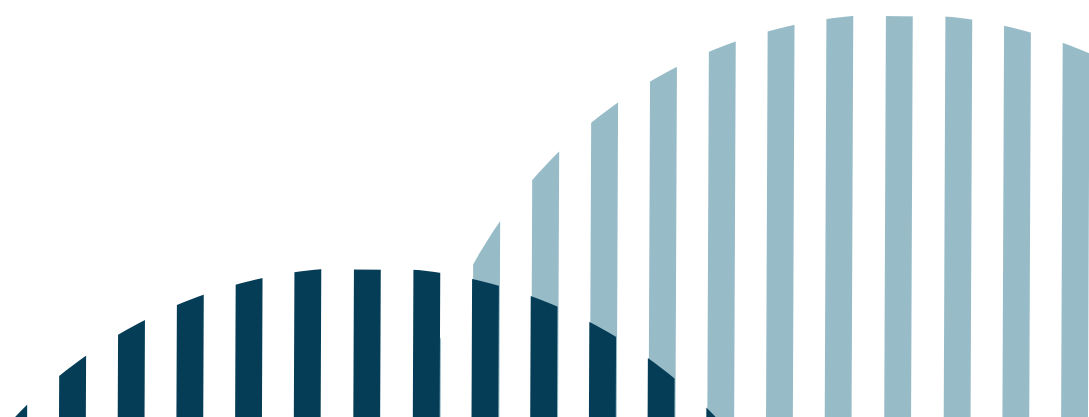
Regarding age, the results were relatively homogenous across the partner countries; most of the NEETs who participated in the profiling were in the 20-29 (20-24 and 25-29) category but with a strong presence also of the over 30s. The lowest frequency was found in the 15-19 category. The next category of extreme interest was the level of education and training held by the NEETs. Two large subgroups were formed according to whether participants held a degree or school-leaving qualification. Overall consortium results showed that the majority of NEETs participating in the survey had a high level of education (over 70% university degree). The methodology used to reach those participants needs to be taken into consideration, however, results from our profiling confirmed a marked mismatch of skills in the partner target areas as an overriding issue. An extremely important but not always easily obtainable data concerned the period of time for which a person remains unemployed. Candidates often chose not to provide this information. Although the more fragile subgroups of NEETs include those people who are no longer actively engaged in job seeking, HELIOS included a question about updating their curriculum vitae in the survey. This was a means not only of gauging vulnerability but also provided an aid in the development of the soft skills curricula. In Jordan, for example, approx. 60% of participants declared that they update their CV regularly, in Palestine around 56%, in Greece around 77%, and in Tunisia 40%.

This image differs from the traditional depiction of the more fragile subgroups of NEETs who are not interested in the mechanisms of the world of work, and are disinterested in/disenchanted with the labour market.

The data on unemployment and training was then supplemented by data needed to illustrate the difficulties young people experience in finding work and to identify the gaps between the world of work and training.

Results for this aspect differed considerably across the partner countries. In Jordan, regarding the difficulties a person encounters in finding a job, most people (over 70%) cited too few companies or 'other' as the primary reason for not finding a job.

Interestingly, they did not perceive age, gender or a lack of skills as the main obstruction to employment. In Palestine, Greece, Italy and Spain, however, a lack of opportunity (presumably linked to too few companies and job openings) was not reported as the main stumbling block but rather a lack of experience (up to 75%) and skills (such as training, specific qualifications, gender). Thus, coupled with the fact that over 70% of the participants in the survey held a higher education qualification, once again, this confirms at least a perception of skills mismatching. It is important to remember here that the reasons given for a participant's difficulty in finding a job were those 'perceived' by the participant and not as a necessarily validated response.





Local Economy profiling

The aim of the local market profiling was to obtain a clear idea of the kind of company working in the fisheries sector (or agriculture, as the case of Jordan) and, more specifically, the Blue and Circular Economy. We made a distinction here as many companies within the fishing industry have not introduced sustainability practices, signalling a clear opportunity for the project as a skills gap. However, we also focused on those companies with a sustainability component which could perhaps provide mentors for the courses, input for the curricula preparation, and job shadowing opportunities.

The aim was to maximize the effectiveness of the skills-matching process through three different steps: identify labour needs in the BaCE sectors; develop training courses tailored to fit those needs; maximize employability through specific methodologies integrated into the course curricula.

Data collection activities for the report included surveys, direct interviews with local enterprise, workshops, meetings, questionnaires, and statistics from relevant local authorities in order to collect data on subsectors of local BaCE with greatest potential for growth/job opportunities (COVID-19 measures permitting).

178 companies were reached who responded to the questionnaire providing us with a key database for understanding the socio-economic fabric of the regions involved in the study.

Since our interest was mainly to collect data to be used to develop the training curricula and transfer the skills necessary for these particular economic sectors, the questionnaire was divided into three different sections: data on the company and the identification of the sectors in which it operates; data on employees, level of training of current employees and the presence of young people and women within the labour force (the target NEETs of the project); and strategic and operational plans for the future expansion of activities and their level of interest and participation in the HELIOS project.

Results showed that production, services and transport are among the most common sectors in the target areas in the Blue Economy.

One of the fundamental questions included in the survey was to gauge if the company used any of the principles of the Blue or Circular economy (sustainability practices). 30-50% of companies declared they did not know enough about the subject or that they did not use any of the principles in their production process.

This demonstrates the huge potential and gap in the labour market for people with skills in this area as it is an area that will enjoy considerable expansion in the coming years; our labour markets must be prepared with a skilled labour force to fill the gap.



In summary, 80% of the companies have been active for 10-20 years. This is encouraging as long-established companies demonstrate a good degree of stability in the economy. They potentially have the resources to invest in sustainable practices, including new HR to face these needs. However, younger companies tend to have a greater rate of growth, also in terms of HR, and may also be more open to adopt innovative, more sustainable methods of production, which older companies tend to resist.

Of extreme interest is the data on the age range of the staff. Nearly 40% of companies declare that most of the staff is young, in the 18-35 age group, and a good number of companies have both under 35 and over 35 staff. On average, we can say that of the 178 companies which provided data on the age composition of the workforce, over 60% have a strong component of young staff. This is good news in terms of adaptability, agility and technical advancement.

Most companies claim they do not feel skills gaps for activities currently underway, and, should the need arise, they consider practical or on-the-job training of current employees to be the best solution. However, a substantial number of participant companies (nearly 25%) report that the most effective course of action would be to hire new employees.

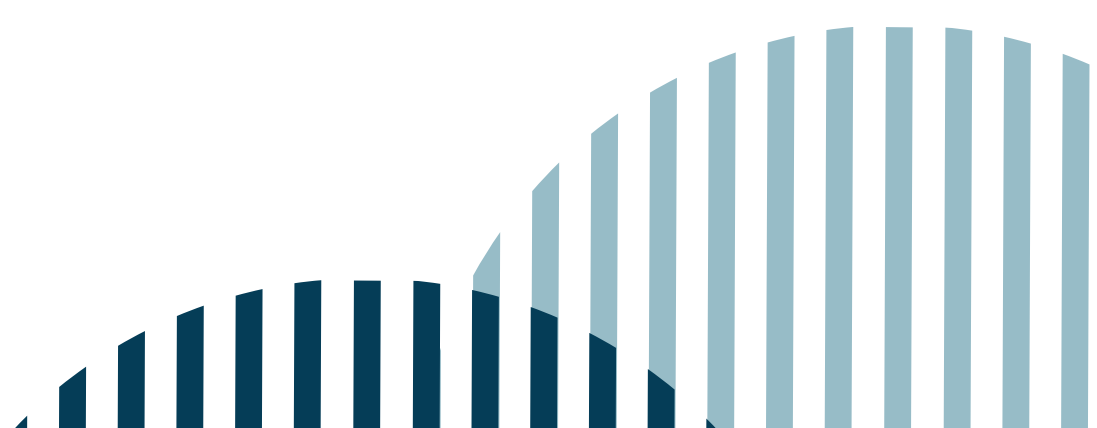
Companies consider professional knowledge of work and previous experience gained, followed by communication skills and knowledge of new technologies, to be the most important factors when hiring. The level of formal education was not reported as a fundamental requirement.


Our profiling results showed that companies are highly motivated in hiring young people or women, considering the main gains to regard improvements in the working environment, commitment, creativity, autonomy and innovation, followed by flexibility and productivity.

Most companies plan to expand their business over the next five years; however, they also underline a series of critical issues such as difficulties in accessing financing, difficulties in accessing markets and a lack of specialized figures, and issues related to bureaucracy and logistics.

Most companies demonstrated willingness to collaborate to share information on job offers, to host trainees, and to assist the experts on the implementation of training and mentoring.

In conclusion, companies declared an interest in skills regarding process innovation, soft skills and specific technical skills. They consider hands-on practical training or training on the job to be most effective. However, a lack of HR departments may impede correct management of the workforce and skills recruitment. There is a good component of young people in the companies, which will aid future growth and, therefore, expansion of the workforce.





Although companies claim they do not perceive a gap in skills regarding current production activities and consider training of current employees to be the best solution to improve company functioning), they do recognize a lack of specialized figures as an obstacle to future expansion, in addition to difficulty in accessing financing. Other aspects hindering future growth concern product improvement, training for employees and the sustainability of production processes.

The results show a need to raise awareness of social inclusion issues and the importance of providing opportunities for vulnerable categories of our society.

The Project methodology was also based on the creation of one project e-learning platform as new method of teaching distant audiences [6]. The HELIOS e-learning platform is also part of the Profiling tools interfaces for this project, found at <https://heliosportal.eu/en>.

4. THE E-LEARNING PLATFORM AND THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

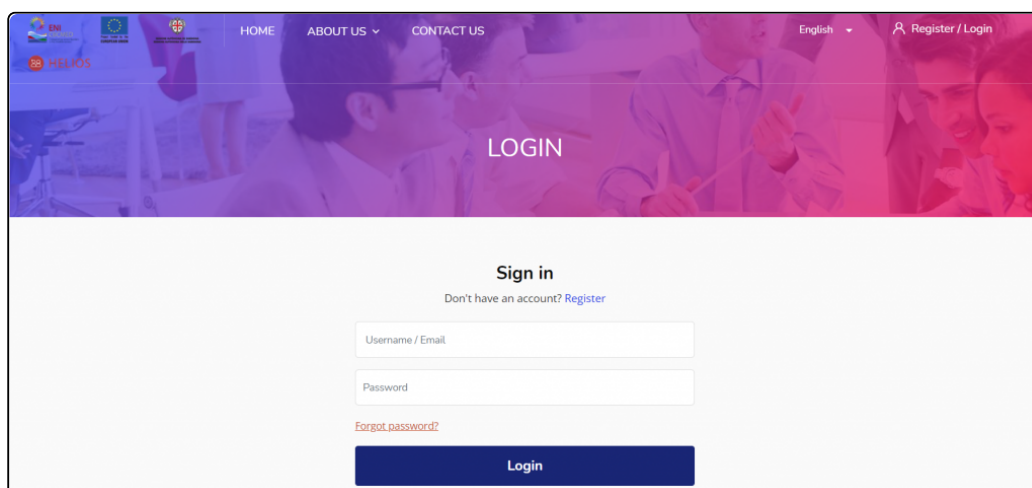
This section presents the e-learning platform as part of the overall project communication strategy. HELIOS Learning Platform is an e-learning portal developed to provide instructors, administrators, and learners with a robust, secure, and integrated system to create a customized learning environment.

This platform has a well-developed infrastructure that can provide training, knowledge exchange, and communication services between users, entrepreneurs, mentors, and other platforms.

[6] <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/HELIOS-launches-e-learning-platform-developed-gaza-support-training-actions-mediterranean>

HELIOS Platform Advantages:

1. **E-learning functionalities:** with more than 20 different types of activities available such as assignments, quizzes, SCORM, databases, certification etc, each can be customized considerably.
2. **Collaborative learning:** synchronous and asynchronous online discussions are designed to facilitate communication and knowledge-sharing among learners. Learners can comment and exchange ideas about course activities or contribute to group learning by sharing their knowledge.
3. **Communication:** Infrastructure for internal communication and messaging functionality are secured through the platform between users, admins, mentors, and instructors, as well as for content sharing. Live events (ZOOM, Wiziq, BBB, Teams etc.) could be established by developing external plugins.
4. **Authentication:** the platform supports multiple types of authentication tools, as well as authentication integration and compatibility with various other systems.
5. **Multi-language content customization:** Instructors can upload learning content and assign them to specific language users.
6. **Country-based user management:** Each country's local admin can manage country accounts, follow up on their progress and extract reports.
7. **Friendly access:** Using a smartphone application, the HELIOS platform can be accessed by downloading the application on Google play store and Apple Store.
8. **Interoperable platform:** Open-source software packages were used to develop the platform. It would be beneficial to connect with other platforms to provide services to other communities and enrich the content, mentorship, and entrepreneurship services provided to users.

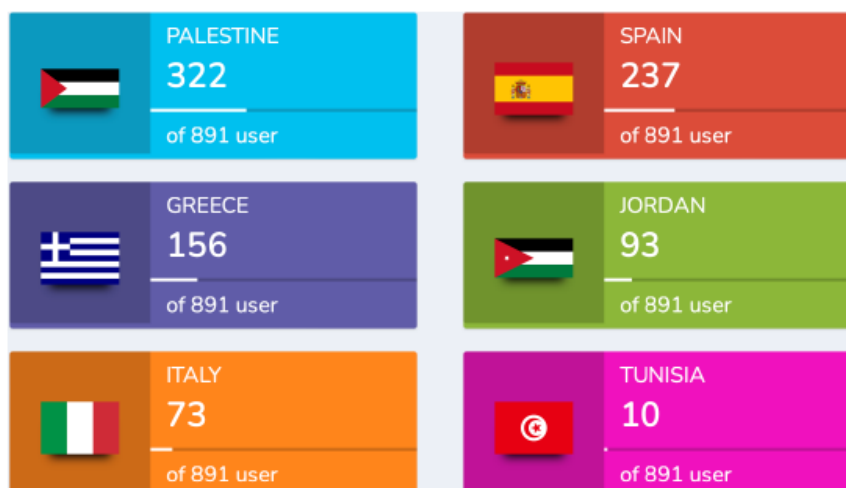


The Login screen of the HELIOS e-learning platform

Engagement method

HELIOS E-learning platform offers several strengths that make it effective for learning purposes. Some of the key strengths are:

- 1. Accessibility:** HELIOS platform provides flexibility and accessibility to learners, allowing them to access the Blue and Circular economy materials and any other tailored courses from anywhere at any time. At the same time, they can use their smartphones to access the material. This eliminates the barriers of physical location and language constraints, making learning more convenient and accommodating to NEETS schedules. The HELIOS learning platform was developed and made available to all users around the world.
- 2. Self-learning:** HELIOS E-learning platform enables self-paced learning, allowing learners to progress through courses at their speed according to their available time slots. This is extremely beneficial for NEETs who may have commitments that limit their study time. Moreover, the General English training materials also made free access to all users. Otherwise, users from project partner countries can freely access tailored content in their language.



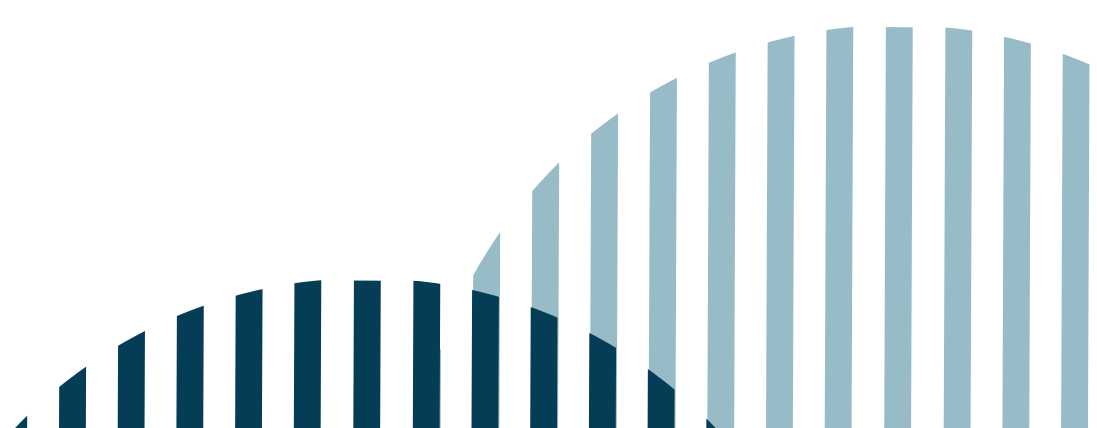
Number of registered users on HELIOS Platform



3. **Updated Content:** HELIOS e-learning platform provides instructors, mentors, and entrepreneurs with the ability to upload their own tailored enrichment materials, either for face-to-face or online learners. This will secure the enhancement of the learning experience. Instructors from all partner countries tend to upload their updated materials at the end of face-to-face training sessions.
4. **Collaborative Learning:** The platform facilitates collaborative learning through discussion forums, chats, and task feedback. This allows learners to connect with peers, engage in discussions, share ideas, and collaborate on assignments, fostering a sense of community and enhancing the learning experience through social interaction. All partners of HELIOS project encouraged local instructors, mentors, and entrepreneurs to take part to enrich the contents and discussions of the E-learning platform.
5. **Interoperable Platform:** Open software used for platform development provide the capability to extend the platform services, audience, and integration with other learning platforms.

While HELIOS e-learning platform offers numerous benefits, there are also some improvements that could be achieved to avoid weaknesses such as:

- **Limited Social Interaction:** The HELIOS e-learning platform does not offer social functionalities and all real-time collaboration with instructors and peers.
- **Self-Motivation:** The e-learning process requires self-motivation from NEETs as they must manage their own time, stay tuned, and complete tasks without direct supervision. This can be challenging for learners who struggle with self-discipline or need external accountability to stay on track with their studies.
- **Lack of Immediate Feedback:** In face-to-face training, learners can seek immediate clarification from instructors when they encounter difficulties or have questions. With the e-learning platform, learners may have to wait for responses to their queries, which can slow down the learning process and create frustration if timely support is not available.
- **Credibility Concerns:** Learners, usually look forward to the reputation and accreditation of their certificates to ensure they receive high-quality education





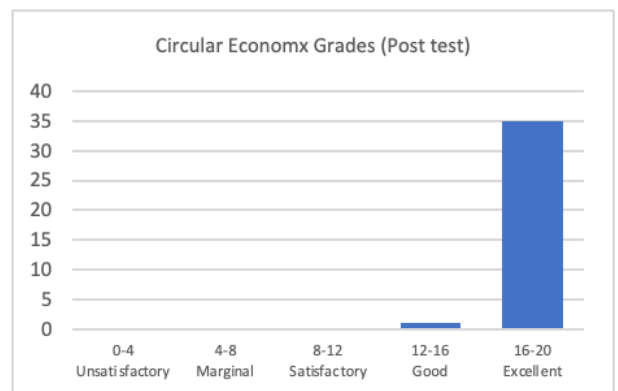
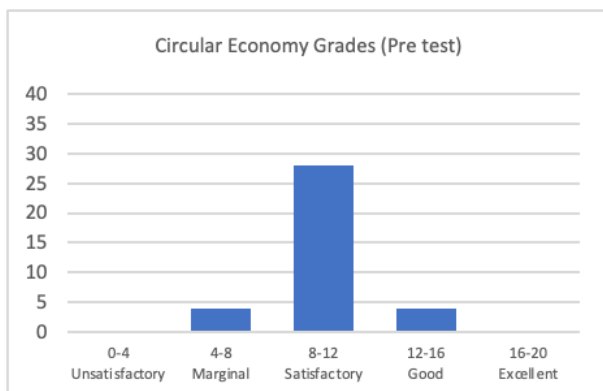
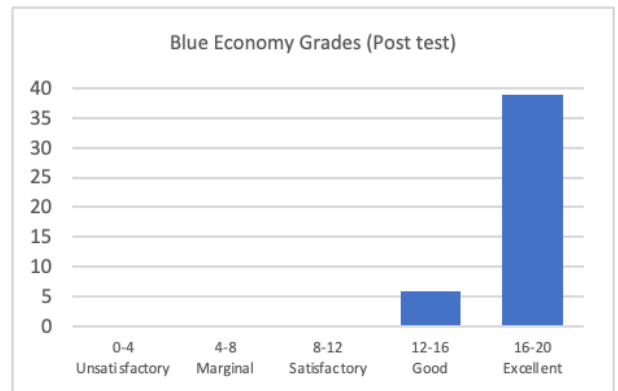
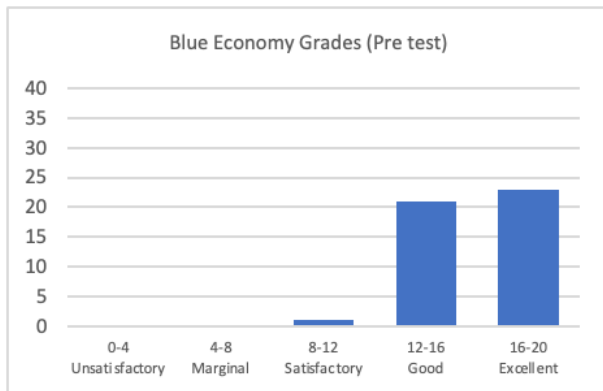
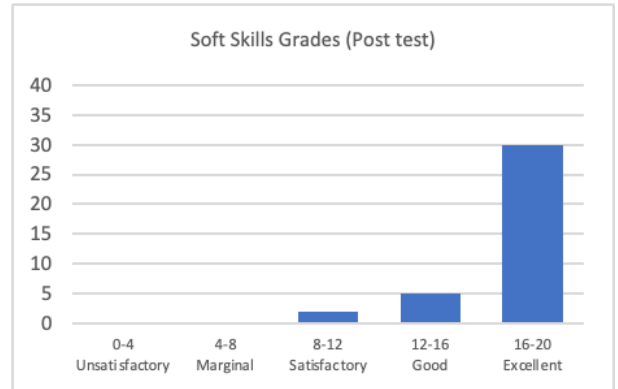
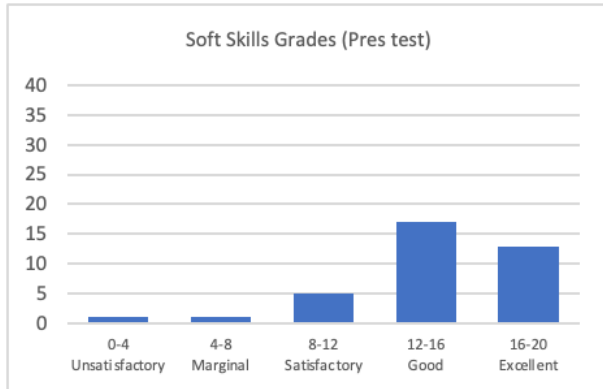
Tools created to monitor progress and skills gained by the trainees

As indicated in the report on the findings of this initiative [7], the platform is currently offering, as proposed, four learning modules: Soft skills, Blue Economics, Circular Economics, and Entrepreneurship. Project teams developed these modules under the supervision of experts appointed by all project partners. Many hours were spent as project partners in group and bilateral meetings to structure the content, develop the material, tailor and translate the learning modules.

Pre and post-tests are assessment tools designed to examine the change in a particular topic's overall knowledge and awareness. Pre-tests are usually implemented before the training starts to inform trainers of the background of NEETs and if there is any prior experience. It also provides an initial idea of how to adapt the content and material for the training group, which type of supporting material could be used (videos, presentations, field visits, etc.), and the best training methodology for such a group (case studies, interactive training, coaching, etc.). On the other side, pre-tests provoke group minds toward new concepts and terms.

Unlike pre-tests, post-tests are given to NEETs after the completion of the instructional training program to measure their achievement and the effectiveness of training. It shows whether a NEET gained the knowledge required to successfully complete the module. It reveals how much each NEET knowledge grew and how. Gathering pre-test grades from entering NEETs enables match pair analyses of pre-test and post-test grades (Figure 2). Local trainers can use these results as a benchmark in future training to adapt and tailor the content based on the level of experience that the NEETs have.

[7] WP6. 6.3. *Impact Assessment Methodology Report*, edited by Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (iED, Greece), September 2023.



Pre and post test results of three modules



The above charts represent the grades of NEETs in pre and post-tests of Soft Skills, Blue Economy, and Circular Economy. The grading scale was divided into five categories: (0-4) Unsatisfactory, (4-8) Marginal, (8-12) Satisfactory, (12-16) Good, and (16-20) Excellent. The columns represent the number of NEETs achieved the corresponding grade category.

After analysing these data in pairs, a significant impact was found in all modules at the end of training. For example, in the pre-test of the Soft Skills module, 13 NEETs achieved an Excellent grade (16-20). After finishing this training module, the number of NEETs increased to 30. In the Blue Economy module, 23 NEETs reached Excellent grades in the pre-test. In the post-test, the number of NEETs increased to 39 for the same grade category.

The same thing was applied to the Circular Economy module. The number of NEETs who got Excellent grades in the pre-test was 0. In the end, the number increased to 35 NEETs.

In terms of the platform's sustainability and to boost the self-learning concept as one of the trending skills, the platform user has to study the online content and explore all the supporting materials provided.

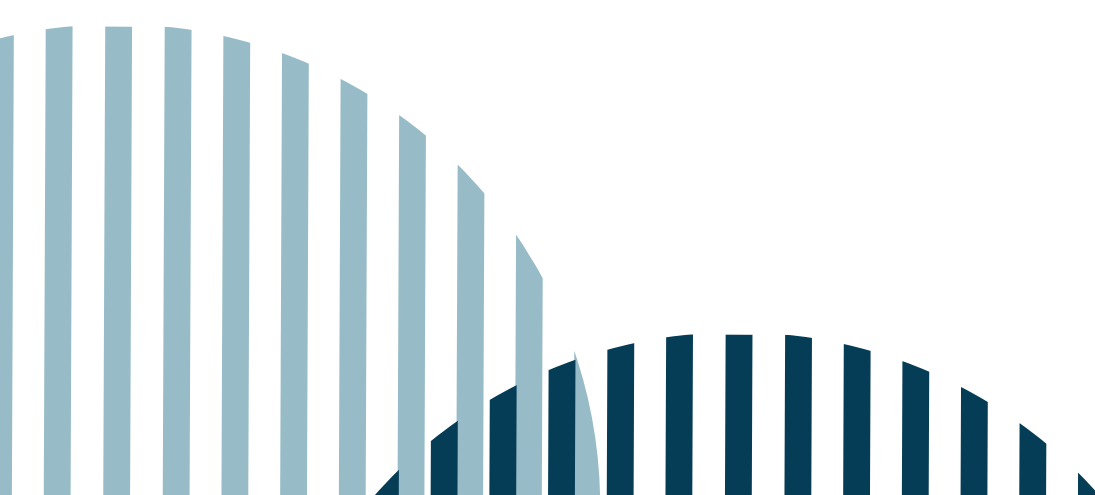
She or he can then take the online test to evaluate her/his achievement. Once she/he passes the exam, a downloadable proof of achievement will automatically be generated. Local platform admins are still reachable by their contact info published on the platform. They can help in the case of any technical problem.


The e-learning platform of HELIOS is a tool that creates interest in deeper exchange and learning activities among the registered participants and other new users of it. The learning materials are available for everyone for free and it stimulates new ideas with regard to further collaborations and job opportunities.

Use of apps and social media networks

The communication strategy of "HELIOS" project aimed to contribute to the diffusion of the project objectives, vision and outputs to the target dissemination communities. It included the development of one **Communication plan** to provide some guidelines for partners to ensure effective, targeted and coordinated communication.

The Communication plan detailed the proper channels and tools of communication and appointed who had the authority to communicate vertically and horizontally across the project's area of intervention.





In order to implement the communication strategy, online tools have proved to be fundamental: a dedicated project page on ENI CBC MED website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were used to communicate actions, events, results, training and job opportunities.

Actions taken to ensure good communication also included media campaigns: organization of launch, mid-term and closing events; development of dissemination materials for media and web communications; management of website content, posters, Flyers, rollups newsletters etc.

Also crucial was the communication carried out by each Partner at the regional level and subsequently elevated to the Euro-Mediterranean level through the project channels.

During the HELIOS experience, it was possible to observe the importance of digital tools such as social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) to connect labour market and job seekers.

Crucial, however, is that on the one hand young people possess those digital skills necessary to use the Web efficiently (e.g., knowing how to navigate the Internet, how to carry out an online search, how to use social media professionally), on the other hand crucial is the ability of companies to attract talent through effective and ad hoc communication.

In addition to the use of electronic tools, workshops, info days, company visits included in the training activities, and project events (capitalisation events and final event held in Palermo in January 2023) were also very effective. These enabled young job seekers to connect with professionals, trainers and companies.

Regarding e-tools, among the indicators achieved by the project are:

- news, calls for tenders, training opportunities, clips and events posted on the HELIOS page on the ENI CBC MES program website: <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/HELIOS>
- a HELIOS Facebook channel with 913 followers (many of them women between the ages of 25 and 34): <https://www.facebook.com/HELIOSENICBC>
- a HELIOS Twitter channel with 530 followers: https://twitter.com/HELIOS_ENI_CBC
- a HELIOS Youtube channel to facilitate the dissemination of visual material: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCphkmrE2YAeir45KOLMdmvw>
- HELIOS e-learning portal: <https://HELIOSportal.eu/en/forms/login>

In addition, a LinkedIn page (658 followers) was also created to promote some project news to a professional audience: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/HELIOS-eni-cbc-med-project>



5. THE RESULTS OF THE HELIOS TRAINING PROGRAM

This section describes the results of the training program. The outcome is measured on the following levels:


- Number of Job contracts created
- Number of Cross-border activities implemented

As for Palestine, 40 students, who enrolled in HELIOS training courses by UCAS, were assigned internship opportunities in blue and circular-based organisations for two months. They are very satisfied with the hosting organisations as they apply and deploy what they have learnt in HELIOS training courses either face-to-face or online in their daily tasks and activities.

Furthermore, 5 students (3M, 2F) participated in advanced cross border training courses in NARC (Jordan) in circular economy and post-harvesting. This border training gave the students opportunities to benefit from exposure to diverse expertise and knowledge in post-harvesting methodologies, cutting-edge practices, and new approaches to a circular economy. This can lead to the acquisition of new skills, knowledge and competencies that can be applied in their respective field and help them to get a job.

As for Italy, two students (unemployed women), enrolled in HELIOS training courses by ARCEN (BEN), were hired with a permanent contract in a company operating in the Blue economy sector in Sicily. They are very satisfied with the hosting organizations as they apply the theoretical and methodological knowledge of HELIOS training courses to the management of their daily activities. Other students have started collaborations with organisations and projects, as well as participated as speakers at national and regional workshops.

One unemployed male attendee of HELIOS Training Course from Greece was hired in a company located in Larissa, Greece, which applies many circular and green practices within their procedures. The contact was made after the attendee completed a training session and when a position in the company opened for an employee with the qualifications of the attendee. As for Spain, the HELIOS training programme involved 103 participants across the country; the results reveal a significant success in the job placement of previously unemployed individuals.



Out of these 103 participants, 17 people, 15 women and 2 young men, have found employment, marking a noteworthy achievement in the program's goal of generating employment opportunities for all. The jobs obtained are distributed across several sectors, highlighting the diversity of skills and talents among the participants:

- Social Activities and Education: 2 job placements
- Administration and Management: 2 job placements
- Sales and Commerce: 3 job placements
- Engineering and Industry: 4 job placements
- Logistics: 1 job placement
- Hospitality: 1 job placement
- Circular Economy: 1 job placement
- Blue Economy: 2 job placements
- Not Specified: 2 job placements

It is important to highlight that all the contracts achieved in BaCE sectors are permanent, which shows the stability of these emergent sectors.

6. IMPORTANCE OF THE MURALS

In this paragraph we describe some peculiarities of the proposed project methodology to engage young people in the design and construction of youth spaces, by involving them in challenging activities that stretch their abilities, imagination and view of the world.

Muralism is dedicated to showing how NEETs can do productive, valued and beautiful work in their local communities. By creating art for the community by the community, these murals not only beautify our surroundings, but each mural expresses the culture and uniqueness of the community itself.

In the case of HELIOS project, the foundation of creating a community mural has been community engagement and raising awareness for the topic of the project through Art. Such initiatives and their deliverables foster the idea that people and teams may collaborate to improve the lives of people. On a regional level, people believe they are a member of a community that can create something of high quality in partnership with various organizations, including local businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, and governmental bodies, when they see an amazing art project in their area.

Moreover, the identity of the place is depicted when elements of its habitats and activities, or even the heritage and history of their area, are illustrated in the mural. Youth gain fresh perspectives on how to use their creativity, which helps them choose better career routes and get to know one another better through the meetings that are scheduled for the interaction with the street artist and their support to his/her work for the completion of the mural.

All these factors enhance residents' feeling of pride for their place and the mural attraction they are able to demonstrate, and they might coordinate more efforts to maintain this exhibit and take care of the whole environment in their area in order to attract visitors, to have a better image and become more extrovert in their relationships with stakeholders.

Murals could also attract new local companies, bring people to already established venues, and enhance an area's economy, by beautifying and advancing a sometimes-neglected neighbourhood. It is widely suggested that areas with a vibrant and busy cultural scene are more appealing to visitors and businesses. Establishing a distinctive and culturally vibrant community can be largely facilitated by public art since public murals nowadays can be an extremely noticeable, substantial, enduring, and obvious form of art.

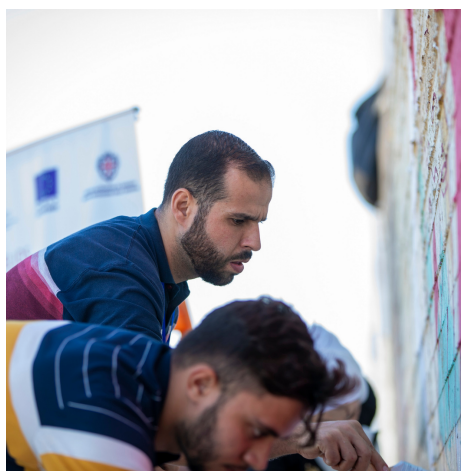
We encourage the reader to watch the supplementary videos realised by the PPs of HELIOS where the participants of the project activities create the murals. These videos are available at:

- <https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/3-years-HELIOS-flood-opportunities-blue-and-circular-economy-young-people-and-women-mediterranean;>
- <https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/HELIOS-greece-interviews-representant-agia-municipality-about-circular-economy;>
- [https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/HELIOS-gaza-brings-opportunities-unemployed-youth-and-colors-coasts.](https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/HELIOS-gaza-brings-opportunities-unemployed-youth-and-colors-coasts)

Moreover, here below are some pictures of the painters, hard at work.



One unemployed woman is painting on the wall of a school building

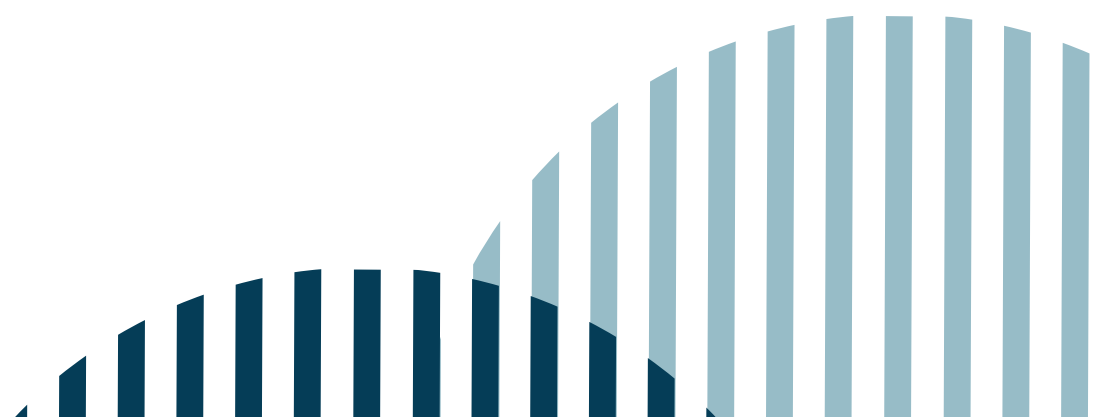


HELIOS in Gaza brings opportunities for unemployed youth and colours the coastline

A close-up photograph of a fishing net. The net is made of blue plastic mesh and is tangled with several ropes. One rope is green and another is white. A large, rusty metal weight is attached to the net. The background is a blurred blue and white.

PAR. 3

Case study:
introduction





CASE STUDY: INTRODUCTION

In this section we present some case studies of the Partner's work across different sectors (Organic farming, Hydroponics, Aquaponics, Circular food processing, Waste management, Recycling and Reusing, etc.) to provide further insight into what the Project Consortium has done.

The partners illustrate some experience of their participants who attended the training courses and traineeships in companies operating in the BaCE sectors.

CASE STUDY: PALESTINE

The HELIOS project is promoting the social inclusion of uneducated and unemployed youth and women. Some of the main challenges in the Mediterranean region are high rates of unemployment among young people and the mismatch of skills possessed by these young people with the requirements of the labour market. The University College of Applied Sciences (UCAS) is a partner of this project representing the State of Palestine, aiming according to its strategic vision to reduce these rates and to bridge the gap of mismatched skills. The needs of the local economic sector and the capacities of NEETs were assessed at the early stage of project implementation. To pave the road towards achieving project goals, several courses were developed and tailored to the Palestinian NEETs. UCAS, took the lead and offered this training to Palestinian NEETs.

UCAS conducted this training in the field of Blue and Circular economy (BaCE), soft skills, and entrepreneurship. One crucial step is to be introduced to make the Palestinian NEETs, who finished their training courses, aware, ready, and armed with the needed skills for the real challenges.

The hackathon was an innovative and powerful way to generate value-driving ideas by bringing out the internal or external competitive spirit of the NEETs.

The hackathon aimed at elevating and enhancing the skills of 123 NEETs, allowing them to compete and exchange knowledge when applying the ideas obtained after receiving their training in the field of Blue and Circular Economy and soft skills.

The Hackathon contest was organized within clearly established parameters and a set time, giving the participants the incentives to solve problems and co-create submissions for new products, services, and process improvements. The NEETS projects were judged and developed by a panel of experts, who ultimately selected innovative ideas that were well-developed.



HELIOS Hackathon in Palestine



The audience assisting the Hackathon event

The group taking the most action to assist the students registered in the HELIOS hackathon were those entrepreneurs who have had entrepreneurship experience in the field of the BaCE and who have participated in similar Hackathons. They came from technical, business, product, marketing roles and more. Trained NEETS including women were invited to register for the hackathon as long as they had clear project ideas with a participating team of at least five participants.



Meetings with company owners



The students share their own stories/experiences

The Hackathon started with a recreational activity for the participants to break the ice and make them familiar with the reality and challenges facing the blue and circular economy sector in Palestine.

After that, the participants were trained on entrepreneurship skills and how to create ideas for entrepreneurial projects. Successful stories of entrepreneurs and start-ups were presented to motivate them and to engage them with the economic sector's main challenges. More intensive training sessions were conducted for topics such as business model development, teamworking, leadership, and presentation skills. The HELIOS learning platform tool was used to receive, select, evaluate, and rank participants' ideas. These projects were mainly concerned with the following topics:

- Marine tourism in Gaza
- Production and manufacture of fishing equipment
- Fishermen port area pollution treatment
- Fish farming
- Early detection of fish whereabouts for fishermen
- Seawater desalination
- Exhaust treatment of seawater desalination plants
- Seawater or sewage as a source of renewable energy
- Metal, Glass, Plastic, and medical mask recycling
- Battery recycling
- Food and Paper recycling
- Reusing remnants of garments from sewing factories
- Agricultural waste and the production of biogas



The jury at work

Finally, 27 project presentations had to be accessed and guided by the jury. The competition time began on the third day of the hackathon, with each group ranging from 5-6 participants. Each group had distinctive pioneering ideas.

The competition was intense between the groups for the first three places. It is worth mentioning here that there was a remarkable participation of women in this hackathon with more than 60%, remarkable considering that these fields of work are generally dominated by men.




Presentations of pioneering ideas

Here below are also some **testimonials** from the Palestinian trainees who attended the HELIOS training sessions

IBRAHIM ALMASHHARAWI

Helios Trainee

Helios training was special for me, as it added a lot to my personality, and contributed to expanding my perceptions and ideas in the field of the blue and circular economy, and I hope soon to open my own project and apply what I have learned in this great training.




HUSSEIN HAMMAD

Helios Trainee

Helios training constitutes a changing point in my academic level as it added new scientific concepts that were not widely common in the sector. The training was comprehensive in a way that made it very useful. So that there were field visits and practical applications that make these concepts as real capabilities that help to form pioneering projects in areas that have not been explored in the sector. The training further highlighted ways to adapt with the work environment and asserted the professional mechanisms of inclusion in the labor market.




BASMA SHBAT

Helios Trainee

Helios' training was one of the best courses I've ever had. It was a different experience that added a lot to me in the fields of environment, Blue and circular economy and life skills. I am very thankful to the coordinators and the trainers.




SABER ELKASS

Soft Skills Trainer

It was a pleasure to participate as a trainer in such a qualified training. This training covered many personal skills that each person needs in order to interact with the surroundings and engage in the work environment. In my training, I have relied on enhancing knowledge, skills, and experience, and employing various games and activities to assert both the practical and the applied knowledge.



University College
of Applied Sciences
TOWARD APPLIED SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

REEM MORTAJA

Helios Trainee

An interesting training that included a lot of information in various fields (entrepreneurship, circular economy, blue economy, life skills) and how to exploit resources in a sustainable way that serves nature, the environment and future generations, in addition to acquiring new and diverse experiences that help to generate pioneering ideas and projects.



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MAHMOUD AL-HINDI

Blue Economy Trainer

"HELIOS provided curricula for innovative targeted and tailored skills training courses oriented towards the specific needs of the BaCE labor market in the Mediterranean Sea, based on direct interaction with local enterprises. I believe that this project is an important tool for the development of the Blue Economy in Gaza Strip, especially for youth and women empowerment"



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of Applied Sciences
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2. CASE STUDY: JORDAN

The challenges faced by Jordanian NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) are further compounded by the impacts of climate change. This issue adds a new dimension to the existing challenges faced by NEETs in the Mediterranean region as a whole, and specifically in Jordan.

Climate change magnifies the obstacles of food security, social exclusion, and economic constraints, which in turn contribute to lower quality of education and high rates of unemployment among NEETs. To address these multifaceted challenges, initiatives like HELIOS have been implemented to assist NEETs in consortium countries, including Jordan. HELIOS adopts various means and approaches to empower NEETs. In Jordan, a combination of virtual and face-to-face training courses were provided to equip NEETs with high-quality capacity-building training. The virtual training reached 91 NEETs, while face-to-face training was provided to 120 NEETs.

The aim of the training programs is to offer NEETs opportunities for a stable income in fields that enhance their resilience to climate change, specifically focusing on the blue and circular economy. Four technical training courses were established: Organic farming, Hydroponics, Aquaponics, and circular food processing. These courses provide NEETs with essential technical knowledge necessary to thrive in sustainable agricultural practices.

Moreover, the training programs incorporate the development of soft skills, entrepreneurship skills, and employment skills. Each trainee undergoes three weeks of intensive training, focusing on both technical and soft skills, while ensuring that climate knowledge and sustainable economic practices are never overlooked.


By combining technical expertise, soft skills, and climate knowledge, HELIOS aims to enhance the employability and resilience of NEETs in Jordan. This holistic approach equips them with the necessary tools to pursue stable and sustainable livelihoods, fostering their adaptation to the challenges posed by climate change.

The HELIOS project in Jordan has made significant strides in empowering vulnerable groups across different areas.

Its primary objective has been to equip these individuals with essential skills, technical knowledge, and guidance necessary for social inclusion and climate change adaptation.

The project has yielded remarkable results, with many of the HELIOS trainees successfully creating their own jobs and initiating their work, particularly in the field of circular food processing.

One inspiring example is a woman who participated in the HELIOS training program and utilized her newfound knowledge and skills to transform leftover vegetables into cosmetic products. Her innovative approach caught the attention of the National Agricultural Research Center (NARC), which recognized the value of her products.



As a result, she was invited to be part of the prestigious annual Olives and Rural Women Festival, providing her with a platform to promote her unique creations and generate additional income. This success story exemplifies the positive impact of the HELIOS project in supporting individuals to harness their potential and generate sustainable livelihoods. By providing the necessary training, linkages, and guidance, HELIOS has enabled vulnerable groups to actively participate in the economy, while also fostering their resilience in the face of climate change challenges.

3. CASE STUDY: ITALY

In this section we present the training courses that were carried out by ARCES in cooperation with local companies. The training courses were mainly implemented through face-to-face model of blended learning. Selected teachers have elaborated didactical learning materials that have stimulated and sustained the entire group class' learning experience. The training was articulated around two phases to stimulate the student's curiosity and enthusiasm for this key subject in their education.

The first step was the face-to-face training phase, during which the training consisted of the same four modules (Soft skills, Circular Economy, Blue economy and Entrepreneurships) covered in this training (Phase 1), with reading material and videos provided to educate participants through the HELIOS e-learning platform.


Participants were informed that the training would take approximately four hours per day and no more than three weeks to complete the course, not including the study visits to companies operating in the Blue and Circular economy fields.

A total of fifty participants from different provinces of Sicily region completed the online multimedia training entitled "HELIOS BaCE training course", within the framework of several training editions.

These participants were all NEETs and unemployed women, aged between 20-50 years, very motivated to learn the material associated with these classes.

Data collection occurred through the completion of pre- and post-training tests in the online learning platform designed to measure 1) changes in participant knowledge, and 2) attitudes towards self-employment and business development.

The second training phase was designed to allow participants to practice what they have learnt during the on-line face-to face training courses through practical experience in companies across Sicily region (2 Phase).



The students were accompanied by ARCES staff and the Teachers to all companies to learn about the production processes and product range. The study visits were also considered as Job Shadowing for the teachers.

On November 16, 2021, one study visit and related Job Shadowing took place at the Junkle company located in Piazza Aragona, 13 in Palermo. The meeting was divided into moments of listening and observation of practical activities. The founder of the company, Ms. Ilaria Sposito talked about the origins of her project to recover and reuse the discarded sails of boats, waste material defined as "dangerous waste" and complex to dispose. The tailoring activity creates accessories such as backpacks, bags, clutches, and original furnishing elements such as poufs and lamps. The production process was described in the different phases of realization with the possibility to closely observe the materials, the tools used, and the final product. The values that the company carries forward and its circular approach are well represented and evident in the products. Very interesting was the in-depth examination of the meanings of the concepts of "Made in Italy" and "greenwashing", on marketing strategies, on the importance of the "Brand", through a "logo/name" that makes the product unique, recognizable and appealing. The suggestions and insights for starting a circular business in the tailoring sector were also stimulating. The following bibliographic references were also provided to support the training:

- Textilpedia fashionary
- Fashion business manual
- Love clothes last Orsola de castro
- Let my people go surfi

The experience of our participants who attended the training courses is very positive; most of them have acquired skills through on-the job training or study visits to companies operating in the BaCE sectors. Two participants out of fifty participants have found a job after completing their training courses. Here are two testimonials from the Italian trainees who attended the HELIOS training sessions.

As a result, she was invited to be part of the prestigious annual Olives and Rural Women Festival, providing her with a platform to promote her unique creations and generate additional income. This success story exemplifies the positive impact of the HELIOS project in supporting individuals to harness their potential and generate sustainable livelihoods. By providing the necessary training, linkages, and guidance, HELIOS has enabled vulnerable groups to actively participate in the economy, while also fostering their resilience in the face of climate change challenges.

Maria Grazia Anello

Helios Trainee

The Helios course was a surprise. The Blue Economy is my sector, but I was able to delve deeper into subjects I only knew superficially, with specialized and highly qualified teachers. Thanks to the Helios course, I have opened my eyes and learned that I am more potent with my education in the Blue Economy and finally I know better how to contribute to safeguarding the environment, while concurrently doing business. I acquired useful skills for my work as a sector operator, because the training courses allowed me to have a new vision and new ideas to put into practice.




Maria Teresa Cavaliere

Helios Trainee

I attended the course in the midst of the pandemic, when I had lost my job and I was faced with many doubts about my future. A new world opened up to me thanks to Helios. Everything related to sustainability and especially the world of the sea and fishing, but also the hints about entrepreneurship and business incentives, gave me new awareness and restored hope for the future. For months now, I have a job, thanks to the internships promoted by Helios, thanks to what I learned in the field of the blue economy, and thanks to my desire to challenge myself.




More video testimonials are available on our project website and related Library:

- <https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/HELIOS-trainees-learn-how-apply-blue-circular-economy-models-catering-sector>
- <https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/HELIOS-ales-trainees-learn-how-turn-their-business-ideas-reality>



The companies that were mainly involved in HELIOS project and specifically in the training courses of WP5 through various ways, came from the fields of environmental protection and construction, water management, operation and maintenance of technical and environmental projects, technologies for waste management, recycling and reusing and other related fields to BaCE sector. Collaborating with companies in these and other related fields is essential to deliver a comprehensive and relevant training course on Blue and Circular Economy since Entrepreneurship and Soft Skills were two other important pillars of the course. This collaboration can bring significant added value to the training material in several ways, as well.

One example of the added value that these businesses can bring to the training material is practical expertise. They can share real-world examples of how they have implemented these practices in their own operations, as well as case studies and best practices from other companies in the industry.

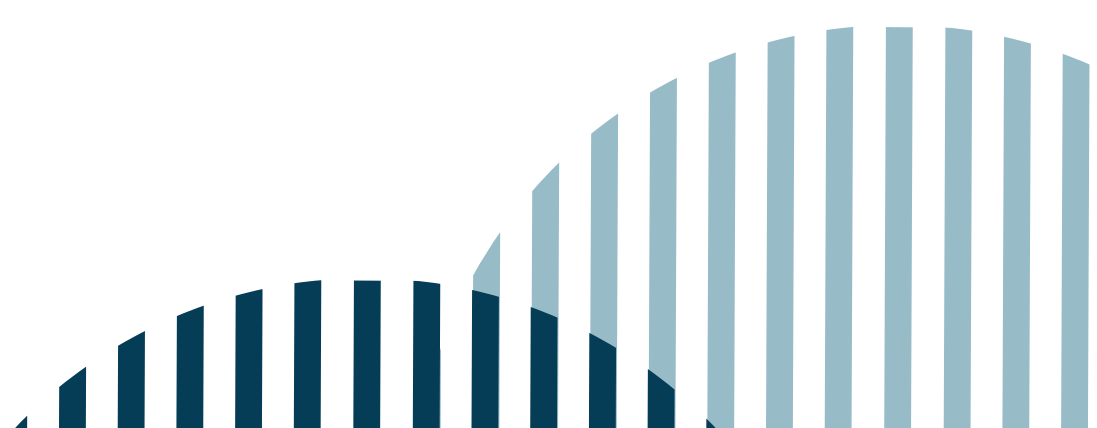
Another advantage of the involvement of these businesses in the training course is that they bring industry-specific knowledge. Each industry has unique challenges and opportunities when it comes to implementing sustainable and circular practices, and collaborating with businesses in different industries can provide insights into these specific challenges and opportunities.

For example, a company that specializes in water management provided insights into how to conserve water in agricultural settings, while a company that specializes in construction might have insights into how to repurpose construction waste.

Networking opportunities are another example of the added value that these businesses brought to the training material. The training course managed to provide participants with opportunities to connect with professionals in the field, learning from their real experiences, and potentially offer a way to search for new job opportunities or collaborations.

These connections can also help participants expand their professional network, which can be valuable for their future career development.

In addition to the above-mentioned advantages, these businesses can also provide access to cutting-edge technologies. For example, a company that specializes in waste management might be using advanced technologies such as bioreactors or anaerobic digesters to turn organic waste into energy or fertilizer.



4. CASE STUDY: GREECE

By collaborating with this company, the training course can provide insights into the latest innovations and trends in waste management, as well as share best practices for implementing these technologies in different settings. Overall, businesses specializing in Blue and Circular Economy brought significant added value to the training material, providing practical expertise, access to cutting-edge technologies, industry-specific knowledge, networking opportunities, and increased credibility. They were approached and used in several forms, thus offering a multiple way to provide hands on input to the future learners. Here is below one testimonial from one of the Greek trainees who attended the HELIOS training sessions and who wanted to share his perspective on the importance of this training experience.



Eleni Galli
Helios Trainee

After completing the online training course, I was able to find a job in a small business that specialized in recycling used materials and turning them into new products. I was thrilled to have found a job that aligned with my new values and interests. Overall, the online training course on Blue and Circular Economy and entrepreneurship played a crucial role in helping me find a job that I love. The knowledge and skills I gained from the course gave me the confidence to contribute to the success of the business, and I was grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in the world through my work.

    **institute of Entrepreneurship Development**



5. CASE STUDY: SPAIN

In this section we present the training courses that were carried out by Acción contra el Hambre (ACH) in cooperation with local companies.

In order to approach young people and women, the PMT has used different ways of broadcasting and recruiting, as described here below:

- Project presentations targeting Public and Private organizations working with young people and women with the aim of sharing information on the contents of the training
- Engagement of social services and local employment services
- Engagement of Companies operating in the BaCE sector
- Participation of University and Vocational Educational Training (VET) schools/centers operating in the BaCE sector.

With the aim of recruiting and attracting more students to attend the project training, the main channels were meetings, social networks, databases of the Spanish youth guarantee network, mailing, posters and participation in employment events, such as the Barcelona employment fair organized by the Barcelona City Council. Other channels were Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc.

The training itineraries were designed for personal development and capacity building in order to improve the employability of young people and women enrolled in the project.

The aim of the training courses was to provide the participants with the necessary tools and strategies to improve the process of job search or entrepreneurship, and to raise awareness of the local BaCE sectors from an occupational point of view, all with the objective of improving their employability.


For this purpose, the PMT prepared different exercises in the training sessions where participants learn as they go along (learn by doing), such as IKIGAI, CANVAS method, skills based on hobbies and Elevator Pitch.

The educational proposal is based on principles of participation, self-responsibility and self-reliance. The adult's willingness to learn is oriented towards tasks that favour the development of their social roles and their own learning.

In the training sessions, group work, interaction and feedback between participants were encouraged. Consequently, all these factors allowed to perceive the perspective of new knowledge and skills in the group of participants positively.

The aim of the training was to integrate and develop to the maximum level the individual potential of adults, by focusing on a constructive path and evolution.

The PMT designed distance and face-to-face sessions, in which the trainer generated co-working spaces among participants, by creating online and face-to-face group sessions.



Competence-based work combines knowledge, skills and behaviours that can be used and implemented directly in a context of improving employability. The development of competences is based on learning activities that are linked to the professional and educational reality of the participants. In each session the PMT has worked in depth on a key competence to achieve personal and occupational development goals.

Here below we mention the most relevant sessions implemented by ACH, including the main topics addressed.

Soft Skills sessions

- Session 1 - First steps towards your goal. Skill MOTIVATION
- Session 2 - Create your action plan. Skill GOAL DEFINITION AND TIME MANAGEMENT
- Session 3 - Your personal brand. Skills CREATIVITY, SELF-AWARENESS
- Session 4 - High impact CV. ADAPTATION and CRITICAL THINKING competencies
- Session 5 - Communication and speech. Elevator Pitch. Skills CONFIDENCE and NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION
- Session 6 - Networking. NETWORKING SKILLS
- Session 10 - Go towards your goal. RESULTS ORIENTATION, RESILIENCE

Specific sessions on employment


- Session 7 - Self-candidacy. Skills PROACTIVITY and PERSEVERANCE.
- Session 8 - How to succeed in the interview. Skills INITIATIVE and COMMITMENT.
- Session 9 - Recruitment 2.0. Skills COOPERATION

Specific sessions on entrepreneurship

- Session 1 - The challenge of entrepreneurship. MOTIVATION and PERSEVERANCE
- Session 2 - Your professional goal of Entrepreneurship. SELF AWARENESS and FUTURE VISION.
- Session 3 - Prototyping ideas. CREATIVITY, ANALYSIS
- Session 4 - The client. EMPATHY
- Session 5 - Competitor analysis. ORGANISATION AND PLANNING
- Session 6 - Economic and financial plan. FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

Blue and circular economy sessions

- Session 1 - The blue economy and professional profiles ANALYSIS
- Session 1 - The circular economy and professional profiles. ANALYSIS
- Session 2 - Job Placement opportunities and resources. PROACTIVITY and RESULTS ORIENTATION



In all the training sessions carried out by ACH (Spain), one of the cross-cutting approaches was gender, equality and empowerment of women, as women are historically disadvantaged in relation to men. This approach is the one that guides in a transversal way the skills training programme for young people and women, both in the contents and in the very process of interacting and interrelating among the participants.

Within the framework of the blue and circular economy, an integral approach was applied, which incorporates several needs of the territory: those of professionals, those of economic growth and those of sustainability. In order to raise awareness of the sector, trainees visited several companies operating in the BaCE sector with the participants.

Our participants were keen to access the labour market, either through employment or entrepreneurship. That is why the sessions offered by the PMT were aimed at reaching the following goals:

- Increasing the level of employability of the participants. For this reason, participants developed competences on personal development (self-knowledge and self-esteem), social skills (communication, teamwork, motivation, etc.) and employability skills (labour market insertion and entrepreneurship).
- Increasing the level of employability through vocational training to access to the blue economy sector labour market.
- Joining the STCW Maritime Safety course [1] developed by an approved external company.
- Promoting networking and synergies between participants through dynamic sessions and group work.
- Mobilising the resources and tools available in the environment regarding employability and training offers. Personalised visits to the Barcelona City Council's employment service, called Barcelona Activa [2] were organised by the PMT.
- Contributing to the knowledge of its territory, of the situation of the blue and circular sectors with reference to job placement and entrepreneurship. Visits to companies in the blue and circular sectors. For the training materials of these sectors, we subcontracted an expert consultant (a mentor) for the design of the course contents. The first part of the training course covered the blue and circular sector and the most sought-after professional profiles, and the second part covered the main ways of accessing employment in these sectors. At the same time, visits to companies in the blue sector (Costa Cruises, M92) and the circular sector (Sant Adrià waste incinerator) were prepared. The trainers have tried to adapt to the needs of each group, which is the main reason for which ACH has designed online, face-to-face or hybrid itineraries.

[1] This course is compulsory for anyone who wants to work professionally on board of any kind of vessel: (Charter, Fishing, Passenger, Yachts, Cruises, Merchant, Port Services)

[2] A benchmark organisation in Catalonia in terms of job placement and entrepreneurship.



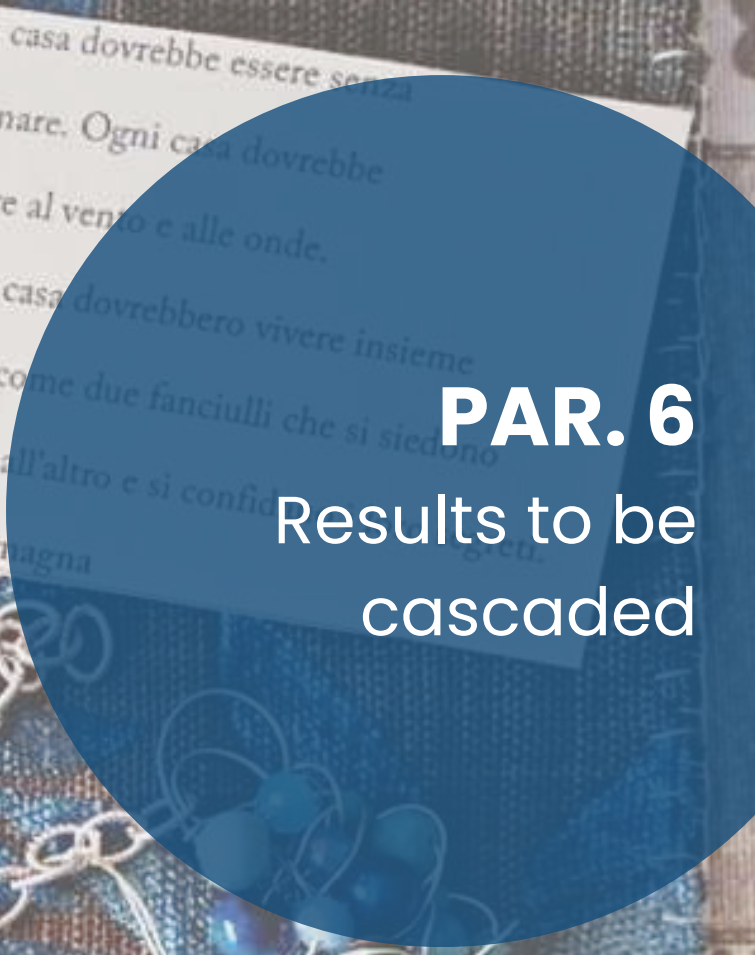
ACH Methodology

- The methodology adopted by ACH to fully achieve the results is based on the next points:
- Reaching target population:
- Outreaching in social networks
- Contact with other organisations
- Collaboration with specific training Schools in blue economy (STCW)
- Contact with potential participants to know about their situation and to detect needs and interests, with the aim of adapting the labour orientation sessions as much as possible.

Methodology implemented in skills training sessions

- 30-hour orientation cycles, adapting each one of them in time and dates according to the needs detected in the participants selected during the dissemination process.
- Content adapted to the profiles of the group, generally related to the blue and circular economy, but also adapted to other sectors, always aimed at both job search and entrepreneurship.
- Hybrid training format, offering face-to-face and virtual sessions, always adapting to the availability of the participants.
- Group and individual sessions provided.
- Adaptability and flexibility ensured to make it easier for participants to frequent courses.
- Course conclusion activities: goal achievement evaluation, satisfaction surveys sent to participants once the orientation cycles are finished, feedback request from the participants at the end of each session, signing of attendance forms by the participants, both group and individual.

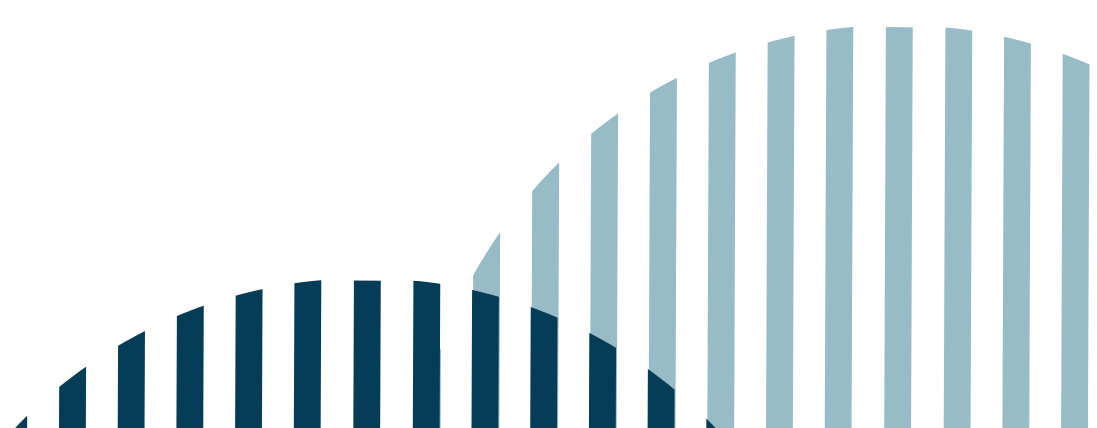
Nessuna casa dovrebbe essere senza
vista sul mare. Ogni casa dovrebbe
appartenere al vento e alle onde.
Il mare e la casa dovrebbero vivere insieme
per sempre, come due fanciulli che si siedono
uno di fronte all'altro e si confidano l'un
Fabrizio Caramagna



PAR. 6

Results to be
cascaded







RESULTS TO BE CASCADED BASED ON LESSONS LEARNT

This section describes the approach followed within the Project Consortium which seeks to standardize best practices and to allow project results to be cascaded to other Mediterranean countries (outside the project partnership) severely affected by high NEET rates.

The project approach proved to be effective, efficient and influenced VET organizations and trainers throughout the MED region with a “best” method of identifying how / which sector of the economy to focus on with new skills-based courses. To give you just an example, “ASSOFOR Associazione Organismi di Formazione [1]” which is the national network of Training Centers located in Italy, has already signed a cooperation agreement with ARCES (Coordinator of HELIOS project) at the end of last year 2022.

The idea behind this agreement is to replicate the trainings with staff and teachers of each single member of this organisation, by adopting the best practices mentioned above (tools, methodology implemented in skills training sessions, etc.).

The HELIOS project created a number of results which can be cascaded to other areas, amongst which are the following:

- *Profiling*

This activity included the profiling of the NEETs to get a better understanding of the subgroups, and profiling of the economic sector with most potential to absorb skilled workers. As part of the NEET profiling, the HELIOS project aimed to identify a minimum of two vulnerable subgroups in each partner community and employ modern technologies and new methodologies to reach and engage members of those subgroups.

- *Digital learning Platform*

This refers to the HELIOS e-platform complete with course curricula, teaching contents, student registration and self-learning. The HELIOS platform has been subsequently replicated by two other ENI-CBC projects Cluster [2] and Greenland [3]. These two project networks which used the HELIOS e-learning platform as a model widened the impact of the project to include new institutes and Mediterranean Countries not originally involved in the HELIOS project. These new networks included the Mediterranean countries of Portugal, Egypt, Lebanon and Cyprus, in addition to new organisations/partners from Spain, Greece, Palestine, Tunisia and Jordan.

[1] <https://www.assofor.com/index.php/chi-siamo/>

[2] <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/cluster>

[3] <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/greenland>



- *Structure of the skills courses*

Worthy of note here is the way in which the course contents were created. The contents included technical skills (blue and circular economies), soft skills and entrepreneurship and were based on results from the profiling and collaboration with the mentors to identify skills gaps in the market. There was a strong focus on practical skills, site visits, mentoring and coaching. Involvement of mentors (successful young people and women from local enterprises) in the planning and content of the courses. This activity ensured that the skills provided were in line with market requirements.

- *Workshops to provide capacity building to Local Authorities*

This included a knowledge transfer on private and public employment schemes which have worked successfully in some of the partner countries. The model schemes were transferred to local authorities from areas which currently do not operate employment schemes. It is worth mentioning here that, thanks to HELIOS, the project consortium was able to meet and exceed several of the important targets set in the description of Work, by implementing a smarter way to interact and connect with NEETs, and by developing course topics as a direct result of research with practitioners and potential employers.

As a group, we also learnt some lessons from this project:

1. Course topics should be highly practical and easy to put into practice;
2. Training courses need to be highly focused on what industry needs;
3. Trainers can understand how many profiles and what skills are needed only by talking to industry. To this end we strongly encourage the exchange of ideas with Companies which are locally based;
4. Profiling is very important to optimize the performance of any training course;
5. Skills needs assessment [4] is fundamental to identify the gap between “what is and what should be”.

[4] The ILO describes skills needs assessment and anticipation (ILO, 2015a) as ‘activities to assess future skills needs in the labour market in a strategic way, using consistent and systematic methods’. It aims to provide information to all labour market actors about current and potential future skills needs and imbalances so that they can make decisions, develop measures and take actions with a view to meeting the needs and avoiding the imbalances. It can be done at regional, national and/or sectoral level. Source: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/apprenticeships/publications/toolkit/system-and-policy-level/labour-market-relevance/skills-needs-assessment/lang--en/index.htm>



1. NEXT STEPS

This section focuses on the main recommendations drawn from other results of this project. It is presented the commitment of the HELIOS partnership in relation to the project's post-completion period, as well as their recommendations and proposals on how the project's outputs, not only are going to survive over time but also thrive in the long term. It provides a set of ideas on how to maintain valuable results alive, that could inspire other beneficiaries and strategic partnerships in the future. Suggestions were compiled by the whole partnership regarding the impact of the project and the sustainability of deliverables in the short- and long-term. These suggestions comprise good practices that come from partners' experience and expertise and recommendations that stem from the project objectives.

2. SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To begin with, the internal meetings organized by partner organizations with relevant staff and departments ensured the integration and continuity of online training, with the aim to present and offer the training itineraries and materials developed under the project to the strategic employability axes of organizations.

Online training has been highly valued, so some projects have already used the materials designed to complement their participants' activity. The integration of the blue and circular economy perspective into programs will be considered as an employability strategy within emerging and sustainable economies.

More specifically, ACH plans to present the HELIOS itineraries to the person in charge of implementing employment programs in other countries. A great possibility of using HELIOS materials and courses for training is foreseen in these international settings. They are considering transferring the entrepreneurship itinerary to their office in Italy for implementation.

Regarding the local blue and circular economy contacts and collaborators established in terms of HELIOS project, they will be shared with job prospectors to integrate these companies into their database and share job and internship offers in blue and circular economy companies with interested participants. In addition, ACH will try to seek funding to continue the training itineraries in collaboration with public administrations throughout Spain.



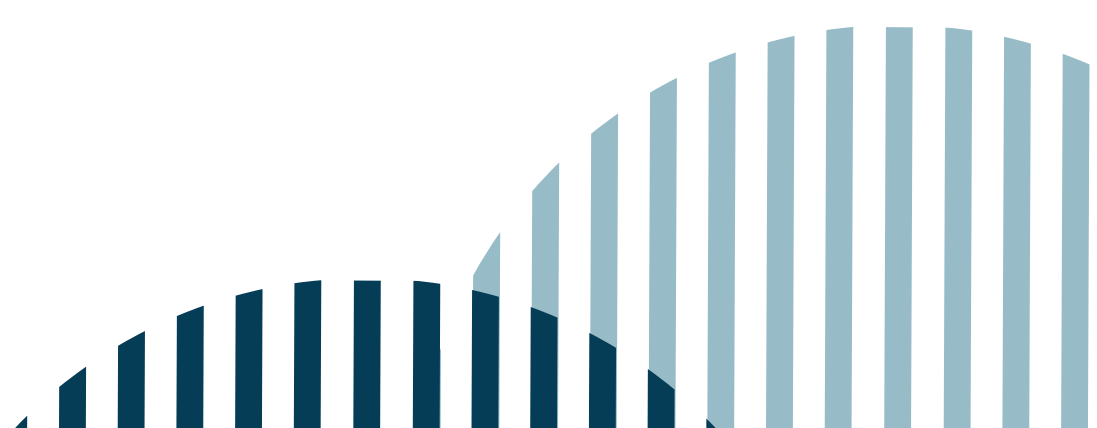
They have already presented their online soft skills training to the administration of the Extremadura region, and they will continue to search for funding in future public calls. They are also committed to continuing to seek funding to offer maritime safety training as a professional path in the blue market with the professional training organization they collaborated for the HELIOS training. With the collaborators from La Mina neighbourhood who participated in the graffiti activity of the program, the organization will continue to search for new spaces where they can develop employment programs with collaborating artists, having as a goal to use murals to improve the environment, work with young NEETs, and promote employability.


From these actions it can be inferred that strategic meetings and partnerships with crucial actors and collaborators, whose objective should be to use online itineraries for other socio-labour inclusion projects, either as a tool or as complementary to other activities, must be adopted as a good practice by the organizations that were involved in the training sessions of HELIOS and especially in connection with the external stakeholders that supported this activity. The blue and circular economies are two growing sectors with professional positions to be filled in the coming years, thus integration of clean emerging economies as engines for future employability in employability programs could be the main pillar of similar programmes that is likely to be conducted by partners in the future.

The project's impact on organizations and NEETs could be measured by the number of job or traineeship placements that might occur from participants in programs that will be developed based on the methodology of HELIOS project.

These insertions not only directly impact the lives of the participants and their families but are also a sample of the social impact that local companies have with hiring people from vulnerable groups, who will have the opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge on specific fields through non-formal education. All the involved partners and stakeholders in the project might be the ones who will initiate and implement such programs, or they could be supporters or ambassadors to other stakeholders who were inspired by HELIOS results and impacts on the defined target groups.

The murals created within Intellectual Output 6.1 – “Art through graffiti and the Blue Economy” will generate an added interest to the historical buildings and selected sites of all involved municipalities and bring more visitors and artists to the cities. These artworks will attract thousands of visitors and young people (including vulnerable groups) interested in these creations, and thus generate new ideas for other projects or businesses that can be implemented by NEET artists and unemployed women living in the selected areas or suburbs. New mindsets and business ideas will come from the interconnection between our experience and new possibilities from other funding sources at national, local and European level. This is going to be a sort of sustainable impact of our project.





Among the useful deliverables that were created during HELIOS implementation are the promotional videos by all partners, concerning specific outputs of the project or serving the project's needs of communication and dissemination with the scope to present in a compact and precise way the results and the objectives of HELIOS project. The videos are uploaded on [HELIOS Youtube channel](#), and they were shared through other social media channels and on partners' social media networks. The videos will continue to be accessible from the above channels in order to encourage more and more people to explore the benefits and the potential of HELIOS project in local communities.

Newsletters with information about the project are an effective method for sharing knowledge about all project-related subjects. This could contain information on strategies, schedules, actions scheduled for the area, chances for participation, or anything else relevant to individuals with an interest. Project newsletters can be useful for anyone interested in learning more about a planned project, not only those who will be directly impacted by it. Regular newsletters are most effective for long-term, important, or complex projects, thus HELIOS partner organizations that have their own newsletter and organize campaigns have the potential to mention HELIOS even after its completion when they include news around BaCE in their newsletter campaign. On top of that, partners could create a link for direct access to the e-learning platform of HELIOS both on the newsletters to be shared and on specific areas on their websites.

A good example that is already implemented is the upload of an article that introduces HELIOS project to website visitors that could include links leading to the website and platform of HELIOS. Another dissemination piece that could be further used for the sustainability and visibility of the project after its end is the banner created for the project. The designing process of the banner was grounded on the will of partners to deliver a dissemination material that will be friendly, attractive, reusable and memorable. The provision of the basic information of the project on the banner permits all PPs to reuse the banner on other occasions such as events, conferences, exhibitions, or other social gatherings where its display may attract the attention of local actors or other third parties.

At the same time, the use of a roll-up banner supports the process of building a good reputation for the project and the strategic partnership behind it. Based on the above, events are essential tools and opportunities for a project's sustainability. This is due to the fact that they provide a more personal and engaging interaction with the interested audience, which ultimately makes a more lasting and indelible impression than passively watching a more conventional form of dissemination. Events also aid in the project's sustainability on a more local level by enabling local actors to participate and networking with groups, organizations, and people that have similar goals.



The HELIOS partners are ready to take advantage of this chance in order to continue showcasing the project's outcomes through their participation in local, regional, and international events in the future.

Apart from events, other resources that will be exploited by partners for the sustainability of the project and for the further enhancement of HELIOS target groups are projects and programs similar to HELIOS that can also offer vital benefits to vulnerable groups. HELIOS partners are involved in several partnerships working on the same or similar topic(s) and even in the same geographical area. Two specific examples could be the CLUSTER project and the GREENLAND project. Materials and results that come from HELIOS could be used or presented to these projects, always with the goal to bring an added value to the execution of project activities or events, through which participants could gain access to one more source for learning about the field of Blue and Circular Economy.

The most important lesson learnt from the Methodology for WP6 “Project Capitalization” is the necessity for exploitation and transferability of project results, and not only for their communication and visibility. To achieve transfer of results to community, public institutions, and project participants, many ways of interaction and approach had to be deployed based on the target group that was met in every environment.


3. EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES IMPLEMENTED IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

This section presents the description of some of the existing employment instruments in Partner countries (Italy, Spain, Greece) aiming at supporting vulnerable groups (NEETs, unemployed women, etc.) enter the labour market.

The presentation of Employment schemes was part of the project activities for the year 2023. In particular one workshop was organised by ARCES on 25th of January 2023 during the final project event held in Theatre Massimo of Palermo (Sala dei Dipinti) [1].

The main findings of this workshop included the need for increased funds for services, tools, employment agencies and employment programs focused on social inclusion, capacity building, community engagement and youth participation.

[5] <https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/helios-held-its-final-event-sicily-promote-future-social-inclusion-actions>. Last January 26 2023, HELIOS held its final event in Palermo (Sicily) to raise awareness of project achievements but, more importantly, to promote the future actions to ensure continuity of the network and activities already put in place to foster the social inclusion of young people and women in the Mediterranean region.



Below there are some *employment schemes* that are being implemented on a regular basis or are organized and set in use whenever there is necessity in the field of interest. There has been the effort to compile successful employment schemes from countries that have longer “tradition” in the implementation of employment schemes both in private and in public bodies. Greece, Italy and Spain will be the countries that will find and offer ongoing, completed or designed employment schemes to be used as examples and good practices in the capacity building workshop targeted at stakeholders from local authorities or other interested parties in knowledge transfer about employment schemes.

3.1 GREECE

Public employment scheme

DYPA is the Public Employment Service in Greece and is responsible for the implementation of the government policy to strengthen employment and combat unemployment, as well as the contribution to the formulation of this policy, the care for the unemployed and especially vulnerable social groups, through policies, assistance in the search for jobs, facilitation of integration or reintegration into the labor market and their training. Usually, national funds and/or initiatives are designed and organized for beneficiaries who are registered in DYPA or are utilized through DYPA services to enhance vulnerable populations and increase the employability of citizens.

The support of DYPA towards workers or unemployed people in Greece is interpreted with programs and initiatives that are designed with the aim to employ or train target groups for specific or general positions. Here, as an example, a Pre-employment program for 300 unemployed young people aged 18-30 in private sector companies and in companies, institutions, organizations of the public sector regularly engaged in economic activity in specific municipalities in Greece will be offered [6]. It is a program designed by DYPA, it is partly funded by the government and mainly by DYPA, and it addresses youth from Greek municipalities that were affected by natural disasters.

The aim of the program is to prepare three hundred (300) unemployed people aged 18-30 years old, registered in the records of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, graduates of at least compulsory education, for a period of 7 months in a public or private sector work environment, with a view to their integration into the labor market. Strengthening young people's access to the labor market through the acquisition of professional experience and addressing the drop-out rate by the removal of labor drain are among the objectives of the program.

[6] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/proghramma-proerghasias-ghia-300-anerghoys-neoys-illias-18-30>



The program is addressed to:

- private enterprises, Social and Solidarity Economy Organisations (SSEs)
- public enterprises, bodies, and organizations, and to enterprises of local government of first and second degree, which regularly carry out economic activity, in the Municipalities of Istiia-Aidipsou and Mantoudiou-Limni-Agia Anna, of the Regional Unit of Evia.

Eligible applicants are enterprises in the private, public, and social sectors which have not reduced their staff in the 3 months preceding the application and have not received state aid funding of more than EUR 200.000 in the previous 3 months.

The beneficiaries of the program are unemployed individuals aged 18-30 years old who have completed at least compulsory education registered in the registry of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, who have obtained the qualification in the last three years from the date of their nomination by the KPA2 CHALKIDA (regional department of DYPA in the Regional Unit of Evia). The beneficiaries that will be selected for the program will be allocated in positions based on the staff members of the eligible enterprises and organizations, namely, the bigger the entity, the more beneficiaries will be occupied there.

The duration of the program is 7 months and the DYPA pays a monthly allowance equal to the statutory minimum wage (with full contributions) and a proportion of holiday bonuses and holiday allowance. It concerns placement in positions of pre-employment. The procedure for the selection of organizations and beneficiaries and their placement for the initiation of the employment program includes the following steps:


1. Businesses submit an online application/ vacancy notice/ vacancy order/ solemn declaration and specify the specialization and educational level of the position;
2. DYPA (KPA2 CHALKIDAS) confirms that the enterprise fulfills the requirements for the application;
3. The employment advisers of the DYPA (KPA2 CHALKIDAS), indicate to the enterprise the candidates in accordance with the qualifications required for the vacant position;
4. The enterprise selects the beneficiary, and they sign a cooperation agreement before starting the occupation.

The program launches with an *open public call for participation* [7], both for eligible applicants and beneficiaries. The requirements for participation and any special conditions that need attention to be paid are described in the public call. Based on this call, *apress release* [8] and an *information brochure* [9] about the program are then created to be shared with common public and raise awareness and participation in the call.

[7] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/ozrd4691o2-f6ps.pdf>

[8] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/dt-aithsis-epixirhseon-gia-programma-apokthshs-ergasiakhs-empirias-efbias.pdf>

[9] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/enhmerotiko-efbias.pdf>



All the interested parties in the program can submit their application through an Online gate of DYPA [10]. The interested stakeholders need to have already a profile as unemployed to have access to apply.

Continuing, the processes of Prerequisite check, Approval of beneficiaries, Search and Proof for correspondence, and the creation of Cooperation Agreements follow in the implementation of the program. All the details of these procedures are included in the public call and are differentiated according to every program's conditions and to the national frameworks. Also, the tasks and responsibilities of every position in the organizations are drafted provided in the open call, or at least guidelines for how to realize them, but it is up to every vacancy and the beneficiary who will be employed to set which exactly their role will be in the new position.

Private employment scheme

The Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (IED) is a Greek non-profit organization committed to the promotion of innovation and the enhancement of the entrepreneurial spirit. Apart from the basic staff that is employed in the company, iED implements a successful internship program through which students can take a six-month occupation in the organization where they can practice several tasks and responsibilities before they graduate from university and start looking for professional opportunities in the labor market and/or start a career if they are hired after the end of the internship placement.

For this kind of internship program, connection and contact with universities is highly recommended, especially with representatives of the schools or departments from where the interns will come. Also, the use of applications and/or other online tools for the promotion of the program and the discovery of suitable interns can be very useful. Last but not least at all, the businesses/organizations that are willing to develop such employment schemes must be fully aware of the national legislation around internships, especially when public universities and payments are involved.

[10] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/proghramma-proerghasias-ghia-300-anerghoys-neoys-ilikias-18-30>



In the case of iED, the procedures that are followed for the internship program are described below:

- *Announcement of internship position*

First of all, based on the activities of all departments in the company, the available position(s) for intern students are decided. Using the relationship between the local university of Thessaly and iED, the open internship position(s) are first communicated to the staff and office of university that are responsible for the internships. Usually, this approach is not official, it is rather an update to provide the information to the interested students fast and directly.

- *Upload of internship position*

Except for the communication of the internship position(s) directly to the university, it is very beneficial to upload it in applications and sites for internships search. For example, iED uses the ATLAS application [11], a centralized online service which interconnects companies that provide internship positions with all academic institutions in Greece by creating a unique internship positions database. First, the internship position and the schools of interest are submitted in ATLAS by the organization that runs the internship program and has positions to fill. The universities that are connected with the app promote the position to interested students and they in turn submit their application for the internship through the system.

- *Pairing of business and intern student*

After the selection of the beneficiary who will be placed in their business of preference, agreements for this purpose must be prepared and signed by all involved parties; the university, the intern, and the organization. Usually, these agreements derive from the university and its internship office where they are also submitted after they are filled in with the details of the intern and the organization. In the case of iED, the placement of the intern(s) and their tenure start 15-30 days after the selection through the ATLAS system and the preparation of all the necessary materials. Also, on behalf of iED, the signed agreement must be submitted to the national business service information system “ERGANI”, through which every employer is obliged to notify the recruitment, termination, and declaration of terms for the employment of its employees. Therefore, every interested business must be aware of the national labor law so as to know about the payroll regulations and especially in terms of internships.

[11] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/ozrd4691o2-f6ps.pdf>



- *Tasks and responsibilities of intern*

The reason why every business or organization is in contact with certain universities and specific departments is because the main goal of an internship program is for students to practice their knowledge in actual activities in real professional environments. Thus, the tasks that the intern will undertake during the program are defined by the needs of the business and agreed with the supervisor of the intern who will be responsible for the intern's training on any issues needed and for the monitoring of his/her progress and final evaluation. For example, IED usually seeks interns in university schools such as Business Administration, Marketing, IT and technological schools, Project Management, Finances, Graphics design, to practice their theoretical knowledge from university to actual job positions. Also, the work timetable is defined by the office hours of the company and if the intern has to reach a specific target of internship hours according to the university requirements, the two sides agree on a convenient schedule until the intern fulfills the required duration of internship.

- *Monitoring of intern*

When the intern is placed in the selected company for the program, a supervisor is assigned for the monitoring and guidance of the intern by the company and an internship book is provided to the intern by the university. It resembles to a diary, where the intern is required to write down which days and hours he/she worked and the specific tasks or activities that he/she has worked on. It is a piece of evidence for the complete and right implementation of the internship program by a specific student because his/her details are also included in this document. Even if it is not provided by the educational institution, it is a good tip to prepare an internship diary because it will assist the intern and the supervisor to track the knowledge gain and progress through the internship program.

- *Evaluation of intern*

After the internship program finishes on the predetermined date, an overall evaluation must take place for all the involved parties. The intern student must evaluate the business and the program that he/she participated, the supervisor must evaluate the intern, and the organization is eligible to suggest their own way of evaluation of the intern. Next, another round of evaluation is scheduled where the core of the evaluation is given by the university in order to indicate which aspects of the internship have to be assessed in relevance with the intern's academic knowledge and soft skills. At this point the evaluation of the intern is conducted mainly through open-ended questions where the supervisor is invited to reply in detail according to the tasks that the intern had undertaken. In the end, all these documents along with other evidence that the university might request are submitted to the internship office of the university.



3.2 SPAIN

Public employment scheme

The employment system of Catalonia, Spain is the set of entities, services and programs necessary to promote and develop public employment policy, which guarantees quality occupational services to people and companies in the area. The scope of the employment system in Catalonia is multi-dimensional and among its key actions are:

- Vocational guidance
- Vocational training for employment
- Promotion of employment
- Labor intermediation
- Entrepreneurship and self-employment
- Labor mobility
- Local economic development
- Attention to companies

The Youth Guarantee is a European employment initiative to reduce youth unemployment. Being enrolled allows you to participate in different programs of:

Work

- Singular Projects
- Recruitment in internships in City Councils, County Councils and ESALS
- First experience in the Generalitat
- Dual Occupational Vocational Training
- Work and Training. Youth Wards and Extutelados Line

Training to develop professional skills

- New opportunities
- Dual Occupational Vocational Training
- Singular Projects
- Work and Training. Line of young people in care and ex-wards

Insertion in the labor market: internships or employment contracts



Entrepreneurship and self-employment

- Aid for entrepreneurs and self-employed workers
- Singular Projects

Career guidance

- Youth employment benchmarks
- Singular Projects

Mobility international

- TLN Mobilicat
- Eurodyssey
- Singular Projects

One of the main requirements for anyone who wants to be enrolled in the Youth Guarantee program is to have Spanish nationality or be a citizen of the Union or of the States that are part of the Agreement on the European Economic Area or Switzerland that are in Spain in the exercise of free movement and residence. Foreigners holding an authorization to reside in Spanish territory that qualifies them to work may also register, as well as unaccompanied minors who provide an Accreditation of the Child Protection Services of the Autonomous Community that individually justifies access through registration, activities or education or training programs that have an impact on their benefit. Other requirements for enrolment in the employment program are to be registered in any municipality of Catalonia and be over 16 years old and under 30 years old when requesting registration in the National Youth Guarantee System File. The interested parts are required to not have worked on the calendar day before the application submission date, not have participated in educational actions on the calendar day before the application submission date, and not have received training actions on the calendar day before the application submission date. They must submit an express declaration of interest in participating in the National Youth Guarantee System, acquiring a commitment to active participation in the actions that are developed within the framework of the Youth Guarantee.

Private employment scheme

As case studies of employment schemes in Spain, employment projects that are developed in the partner organization ACH are presented in this section.

The *EMPLOYMENT SHUTTLE* is a project with teams of 25 participants, including a 4month training, targeting at the development of employability competencies and abilities, by brokering with companies and corporate volunteering.

The tasks of a *COACH* in the *EMPLOYMENT SHUTTLE* are *COORDINATION*, *FACILITATION*, and *TRUST*. They are expected to keep fluent communication with all staff involved and make sure that agreements and information are provided in written form. Also, they are a support/guide for the participants in their search for employment, they are not responsible for finding them a job. They should trust their participants and their possibilities because anyone who is selected for the program can find a profession.



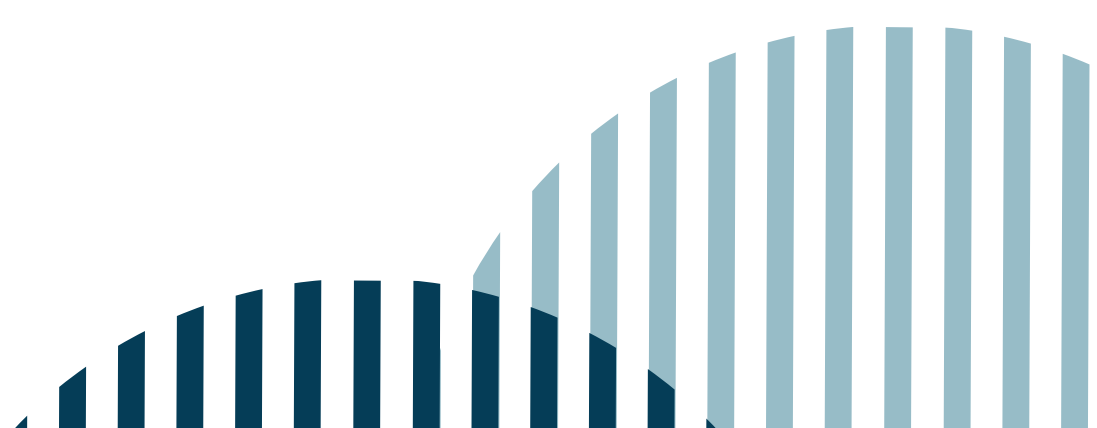
The *EMPLOYMENT SHUTTLE* begins with the phase of *Dissemination* and *Selection*, which includes communication with employment offices and social services, mailing to database, meetings with social entities, public presentations, use of flyers and posters, cases of previous participants, and promotion on social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).


The part of *Selection* is accomplished through a personal interview, where the main activities that take place and the main elements that are investigated are the following: Review of CV, personal and social context, adjustment of expectations and motivation, teamwork, autonomy, flexibility and adaptation, self-concept, critical incident, motivation to work, cooperation, commitment to assistance, responsibility, emotional balance, personal autonomy, social desirability.

The first session of the employment shuttle aims to motivate and engage participants with the employment program. participants' expectations from the project are compiled and it is explained how it will really be, teamwork starts being encouraged, knowledge and trust among participants are kicked off, the phases and development of the project are clarified, and the hours of the group sessions are determined. In the team building session it is important to go from group to team, establish a participative approach, establish responsibilities, and foster commitment among participants. confidence, synergies and collaboration are generated both among participants and between participants and the coach, common objectives are established for the project, and responsibility as well as individual and team commitment are improved in this session. To get the participants to define their professional and personal objectives and to draw up an action plan, there is a session for tools for employment, specifically for the CV (Curriculum Vitae), the *PERSONAL BRAND*, the *COVER LETTER*, and the *SOCIAL NETWORKS*.

The knowledge, use and management of the different search tools for employment, both individually and as a group, are promoted and the autonomy of the participants is favored since they are given the opportunity to put into practice the acquired competences concerning employment tools.

Usually, the closing session of the *EMPLOYMENT SHUTTLE* is a closing event open to the public, which allows the organizer(s) of the program to increase their visibility. It is organized jointly with all the shuttles and often under the request of entities that were engaged as donors or employers in the program, with the objective of empowering the participants and beneficiaries of the shuttles. The risk of a closing event is that those who have not yet found employment might feel that the project ends without having achieved their objectives. in this case, the closing event should also target at the empowerment and motivation of these participants, at the consolidation and follow-up of the program, and last but not least, at the reinforcement of both the team and individuals.





The essential criteria for participation in this project are availability, basic literacy, and basic computer literacy. The labor situation of the potential participants should be long-term unemployment (12 of the previous 16 months or 6 months of the previous 8), or unemployment with no work experience or less than 1 year of work experience, or underemployment, without a contract and wage lower than the minimum wage. There are also vulnerability criteria that future participants should abide by: recognized degree of disability (from 33%), responsibility for dependent person, responsibility for dependent disabled person (from 33%), responsibility for dependent student, being victim(s) of violence (domestic, gender, sexual, mobbing, bullying, etc.), belonging to a household without employment, or having no formal education or professional qualification.

The competencies to be cultivated and enhanced in the project are *Motivation, Commitment, Teamwork, and Generation of Business Ideas.*

In the first phase of *BUSINESS SHUTTLE*, which is Selection, the main *OBJECTIVE* is the selection of 20 people with the required profile. The participation of at least 40 people in the selection process is required and participants should not be the most vulnerable people. It lasts approximately 1 month and the activities mainly concern informative sessions and individual interviews, the topics of which can be *Motivation, Groupwork, Business ideas Availability, Commitment.*

In Phase 2, *Training*, which lasts 2-3 months with around 23 sessions, the main objectives are the improvement of skills aimed at the creation of viable businesses and the generation of synergies among participants. The activities can be carried out in group and individual sessions, and their contents vary from technical skills, such as *Problem solving, Canvas Model, Prototyping, and Economic financial plan*, up to soft skills and team building, such as *Team Cohesion, Leadership Customer care, and Presentations of Validations.*

The last phase of *BUSINESS SHUTTLE*, *Mentoring*, might last more than 5 months but intensiveness is decreased. The main objective here is the monitoring of the startup and equipping participants with technical and emotional support during the phase of growth of their business(es), the activities address individual and group sessions along with networking, and the contents concern the topics of *Management, Numbers and Logistics, Customers and Communication, Emotional Management, and Strategic Planning.*

Generally, group sessions have plenty of options for activities: presentation of technical topics, group tasks, games and videos, presentations or workshops led by participants, computer work, individual work, corporate volunteering and many more.



The methodology of the employment projects is based on the:

- Competency-based approach,
- Coaching approach,
- Peer to peer approach,
- Team-building approach.

The *GROUP SESSIONS* are the core component of the methodology for the development of skills for employment. The frequency ought to be 2 sessions per week and the duration approximately 4 hours per session. The schedule is decided in a participatory way with the team and is one of the first decisions they make as a team. Group sessions are organized based on *PHASE, STATE OF GROUP, and ABILITIES*.

INDIVIDUAL COACHING is considered as complementary because it aims to complement group sessions in empowering participants and reaching the expected results. The frequency should be 2 and more sessions per person throughout the project provided that there will be diversity according to the needs of the participants' schedule, and the session's maximum duration should be 1 hour. Individual coaching sessions are mainly personalized, but there are also other options, such as small groups with 2/3/4 participants that need to reinforce some specific content, phone follow-up, WhatsApp or skype sessions. their main objectives are focus on specific goals, offer a comprehensive approach, offer emotional support, and address specific topics.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING entails direct contact between participants and professionals from other entities, administrations, companies. it allows the participants to expand their look and their strategies, etc., and the topics depend on the teams and the environment (e.g., employment services, selection processes and profiles, professional networks, personal branding, intelligence and emotional management, gender equality, etc.).

PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS allows participants to grow and strengthen networks for their professional life. Before the process of the event starts, the team has to know where it is going, what and who they are going to meet and what it is for. It is also expected by them to prepare the Elevator Pitch. After the event, participants are capable of sharing what has happened in the event, reflecting on the positive aspects and giving tasks. Some examples of such events are job fairs or talks and workshops.

The objective of *JOB INTERMEDIATION* process is to increase the number of job placements. Regarding coordination, the intermediary forms a team with the coaches, with whom they work in a coordinated manner.



3.3 ITALY

Public employment scheme

The public authority responsible for Public employment schemes is the Italian National Agency for Active Labor Policies ANPAL [11]

The Agency is established by the “Jobs Act” reform (Leg. Decree no. 150 of Sept. 14, 2015). It implements active labour policies for job seekers and for the unemployed who are entitled to allowances (Naspi, Dis-Coll, Asdi).

ANPAL also coordinates the National Network of labour policies. This network includes all regional and national structures dealing with active employment policies.

The Agency is responsible for the information system managing the labour market, which includes the monitoring of services offered, the Register of accredited entities involved in active policies, and the national database of employment incentives.

The Agency is a public institution and operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour.

In particular the Agency promotes the right to work, training and professional growth of people and is responsible for putting in place the right tools and methodologies to support public and private operations in the labour market.

The Italian National Europass Centre is managed by ANPAL to support the implementation process of the new Europass [12] (in compliance with Decision (EU) 2018/646), that is a portfolio of documents created to record knowledge and skills acquired in European countries by students, VET learners, etc [13].

ANPAL plays a role of coordinator of the Programme “Guarantee of workers' employability” G.O.L. (Garanzia di occupabilità dei lavoratori) [14] where the Ministry of Labour is the owner.


It monitors the Programme and supervises the implementation of all interventions by the Regions. It chairs the Steering Committee of G.O.L which brings together the central and regional levels.

[11] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/ozrd4691o2-f6ps.pdf>

[12] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/ozrd4691o2-f6ps.pdf>

[13] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/ozrd4691o2-f6ps.pdf>

[14] Source: <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/apaskholisi/proergasia-efbia/ozrd4691o2-f6ps.pdf>




The Programme G.O.L. is implemented by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces on the basis of the Regional Plans approved by ANPAL. G.O.L. serves an ambitious purpose: striking a more satisfactory balance between labour supply and demand, encouraging the placement and re-placement of workers, and providing training tailored to market demands. G.O.L. is available to workers on redundancy funds who are beneficiaries of some financial contribution to support their unemployment periods, such as NASpl and DIS-COLL benefit, but it is also available to fragile or vulnerable workers, NEET categories, unemployed without income support, etc.

Beneficiaries of income support benefits are expected to access the services of employment centres (provided by G.O.L.) within four months of starting the benefit. The paths are designed to be as “personalised” as possible.

In order to implement the G.O.L. Programme, the Sicilian region has activated five paths targeting several users, depending on the user's distance from the labor market.

- **Path 1 - Reintegration into work:** for beneficiaries closest to the labor market, to whom guidance and intermediation services are provided with the aim of accompanying them as fully as possible in their transition to work;
- **Path 2 - Upskilling:** for beneficiaries less close to the labor market, but still with marketable skills. It involves short-term training interventions with a professionalising content for the necessary adaptation of skills;
- **Path 3 - Reskilling:** It involves beneficiaries who are more distant from the labour market and with skills not adequate to the required needs, and who will most likely enter a ‘reskilling’ pathway where a more robust vocational training activity is needed to bring the jobseeker closer to the profiles required by the market. This path is generally characterized by an increase in the level of qualification/EQF compared to the level of education of the beneficiaries;
- **Path 4 - Work and inclusion:** For complex needs, i.e. in the presence of obstacles and barriers that go beyond the working dimension, in addition to the previous services, the activation of the network of territorial/local services is envisaged (depending on the case, educational, social, social-health, conciliation), as is already the case for the basic income.
- **Path 5 - Collective relocation/outplacement:** It foresees an assessment of employment opportunities for workers on the basis of the specific company crisis situation. This pathway will cover situations where it seems appropriate to assess employability profiles not individually, but by groups of workers. This is the case of company crises involving workers still formally employed, but potentially in transition.



Each Path includes specific active employment policy measures and services. To access the Programme G.O.L., the beneficiaries must contact the Regional Employment Center, in order to carry out an assessment process aimed at assigning the reference cluster, i.e. one of the four paths envisaged by G.O.L. The following tasks, such as reception, profiling, assessment and stipulation phases of the Personalized Service Agreement / Employment Agreement are carried out exclusively by the Employment Center of territorial jurisdiction. Once joining the programme G.O.L., the user chooses the public or private operator (including ARCES Association) [15] through which to implement the Programme measures, such as training interventions, skills need assessment, etc.

The services offered by the Regional Employment center of Palermo are the followings: reception, orientation and consultancy, business services, matching supply and demand, placement, inclusion of disabled workers and protected categories, promotion of internships, EURES services, youth help desk, women's help desk, services for non-EU citizens, study orientation, start-up to the Public administration [16].

ANPAL is the national managing authority of the Programme PON IOG-GARANZIA GIOVANI. GARANZIA GIOVANI Programme, given the nature of the services and measures envisaged, is mostly implemented by the Regions as intermediate bodies. ANPAL centrally managed some national projects. ANPAL Servizi S.p.A. operates institutionally as an instrumental body of ANPAL which determines the guidelines and objectives for the promotion of employment in Sicily. The sole shareholder of ANPAL Servizi S.p.A. is the Ministry of Economy and Finance. ANPAL Servizi S.p.A. supports ANPAL in the implementation of the following tasks:

- Implementing active employment policies for job seekers;
- Strengthening employment services for the particularly disadvantaged (migrants, victims of trafficking and labour exploitation, disadvantaged persons within the meaning of Law 381/1991 and Legislative Decree 276/2003 and beneficiaries of inclusion income);
- Relocating unemployed people through the use of Naspi, Dis-Coll or Asdi.


Moreover, two important public employment schemes deserve attention, such as The Youth Guarantee Programme and the New SELFIEmployment initiative [17].

Both schemes are the most relevant national measures in Italy. These two schemes are public employment schemes. Of course, these two national measures apply to the context of Sicily Region and its Provinces (Palermo, Catania, Enna, Siracusa, etc.).

[15] ARCES Association is qualified by the Ministry of Labour as "Job placement provider" (according to art. 6 of Legislative Decree 276/2003). At last, from May 2015 the association is accredited by the Sicilian Region (DDG n. 1704/2015 of 21/05/2015) as "Employment Agency", thus expanding the activities of vocational guidance and placement implemented by its Career guidance centre since 1981.

[16] Source: <https://silavora.it/centro-per-limpiego-di-palermo/>

[17] Source: <https://www.invitalia.it/cosa-facciamo/creiamo-nuove-aziende/nuovo-selfiemployment>



The Phase 2 Youth Guarantee Programme is the European initiative [18] born from the necessity to address the difficulties of employment and youth unemployment. It's addressed to Young NEETs aged 15-29 of all the regions and the Autonomous province of Trento. Young people up to 34 years of age living in Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Molise, Puglia, Sardinia and Sicily [19] whether or not engaged in training or education, can take advantage of the opportunities of Axis 1bis. Young people shall receive a high-quality offer of work, education or training within a limited period of time following the onset of unemployment or the abandonment of formal education. The Youth Guarantee Programme includes: job offer, continuation of studies, apprenticeship or internship. The offer is personalised and considers the elements that make the employment more difficult (e.g. territorial, demographic, family and individual variables). The offer must be made within 4 months of the start of unemployment or the exit from the education or training system. The Youth Guarantee Programme is implemented through the support of CIAPI [20]. CIAPI represents a historical reality in the panorama of Sicilian regional training and guidance interventions in support of students and jobseekers. The organisation assists the Region of Sicily with planning and implementing training interventions targeting students, workers, unemployed, companies, public administrations, with the final aim of enhancing the quality of life of the people and creating job opportunities. Below are mentioned the main measures of Youth Guarantee phase two, managed through the web platform by CIAPI [21]:

- **Orientation:** Cognitive interview to identify the path of insertion customized according to the individual, formative and professional characteristics.
- **Formation:** Specific training path oriented towards work or reintegration into the training paths.
- **Apprenticeship:** Employment contract for the integration of young people which provides training content.
- **Traineeship:** Training period in the company with a monthly attendance allowance.
- **Civil Service:** Experience of civic and social participation in projects of solidarity, cooperation and assistance that provides a salary.
- **Self-employment:** Services in support of entrepreneurial attitudes, with training, assistance in writing the entrepreneurial project, support to the start-up, access to credit instruments.
- **Professional mobility:** it encourages mobility in Italy and other EU countries and provides a voucher to cover travel and accommodation costs for 6 months.

[18] <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=en>

[19] Source: <https://www.regione.sicilia.it/istituzioni/regione/strutture-regionali/assessorato-famiglia-politiche-sociali-lavoro/dipartimento-lavoro-impiego-orientamento-servizi-attivita-formative/avvisi-bandi-fondo-sociale/garanzia-2-fase>

[20] Source: <https://www.ciapiweb.it/>

[21] Source: <https://garanziagiovani.ciapiweb.org/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2f>



Private employment scheme

ARCES, set up in 1976, operates in the field of vocational guidance and training with the main goal of working as channeling vehicle between the labour market's supply and demand. It is a not for Profit private Association.

ARCES is accredited by the Ministry of Labour as "Job placement provider" (according to art. 6 of Legislative Decree 276/2003). From May 2015 ARCES is accredited by the Sicilian Region (DDG n. 1704/2015 of 21/05/2015) as "Employment Agency", thus expanding the activities of vocational guidance and placement implemented by its Career guidance centre since 1981. The new employment services focus on providing tailored individual assistance to unemployed and job seekers (NEETs and Women) being a broker between demand and supply of labour. ARCES association plays an important role in the design and implementation of initiatives and projects supported by the National/Regional actors, such as ANPAL Servizi S.p.A., and CIAPI, etc.

ARCES is one of the main partners of both organisations, namely ANPAL Servizi S.p.A. and CIAPI, being enrolled in several initiatives carried out by these structures, such as GOL Programme and Youth Guarantee Programme.

ARCES supports the design, promotion and implementation of training courses targeting NEETs through its employment unit. ARCES is accredited by the Sicilian Region (DDG 2374 of May 23, 2014) as a Counselling and Career guidance centre for continuous training activities targeting students, young unemployed people and adult learners interested in improving life and soft skills, technical, digital and marketable skills in several areas including ICTs, Business development, Environmental protection, Blue economy, Green and circular economy, Sustainable mobility.

Several courses have been implemented over the last 3 years through GARANZIA GIOVANI PROGRAMMA, and the main topics of the training courses promoted by ARCES were ICT, English languages, ECDL European driving licenses [22].

Moreover, several traineeships were implemented by ARCES by using the funds of this Programme, and all the placement measures contributed significantly to reducing unemployment and NEETs rates in Sicily [23].

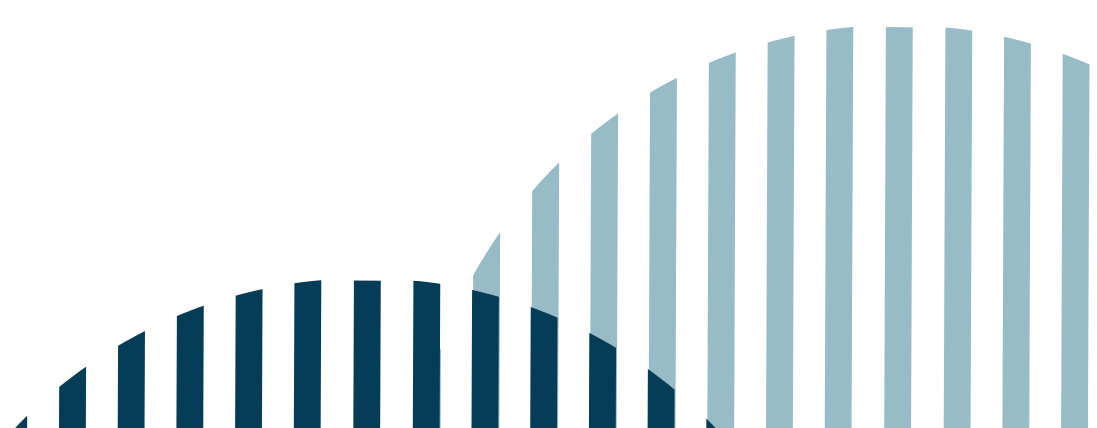
Since the accreditation of ARCES, more than 1,000 users have been using the training courses of ARCES and the Placement measures and there has been a significant change in the resident's social condition and economic status.

[22] Source: <https://www.arces.it/category/garanzia-giovani/>

[23] Source: <https://www.arces.it/garanzia-giovani-tirocini-retribuiti/>



PAR. 8
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