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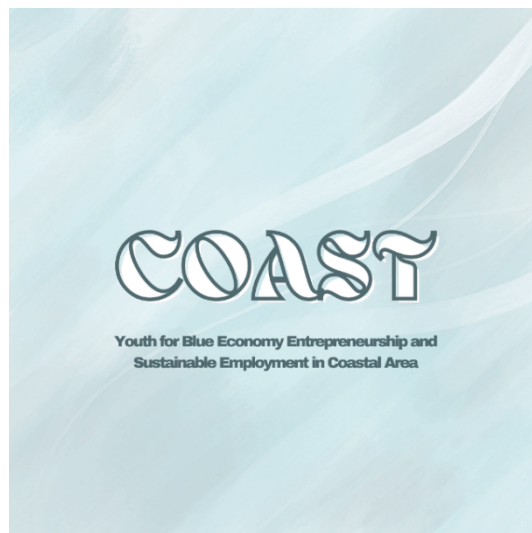
COAST

Youth for Blue Economy Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Employment in Coastal Area

2023-3-FR02-KA210-YOU-000174337

Activity 4 : Mobility Report

Transnational Report



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1 Introduction

The purpose of this Transnational Workshop Report is to provide an overview of the pilot workshops conducted within the frame of the COAST - Youth for Blue Economy Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Employment in Coastal Area (2023-3-FR02-KA210-YOU-000174337) project, co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The workshops were designed for young people with fewer opportunities to raise awareness about sustainable entrepreneurship and employment opportunities within the blue economy. This report details the workshop settings and implementation across France, Germany, and Italy, including descriptions of the activities carried out in each partner country. It also presents the evaluation results, reflecting the feedback and impressions of the young participants.

It is important to note that the evaluation results reflect the specific experiences and perspectives of the target groups in each local context. Therefore, the findings are indicative of these contexts and cannot be generalised to a broader population. Nonetheless, the feedback offers valuable insights into the needs, expectations, and responses of young people regarding the workshop content and format.

1.1 Germany

In Germany, two workshops were organised in cooperation with a local youth worker. The workshops targeted NEETs and young people with fewer opportunities in the coastal regions of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, specifically in:

- Velgast on 28 March 2025
- Ribnitz-Damgarten on 7 April 2025

The activities aimed to support career guidance for young people across multiple locations, including those in coastal areas.

The objectives of the German workshops were to:

- Provide training opportunities on blue economy sectors, highlighting their role in sustainable development and their potential to strengthen employment opportunities for young people in the region.
- Test the training guide with young people in practice, receiving their feedback for adaptation to local needs.
- Foster practical discussions on how blue economy sectors can be leveraged for regional development and sustainable employment.

The workshops were conducted in cooperation with a school social worker who provides career guidance to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including NEETs, across various locations in coastal regions.

1.2 France

In France, the workshop was conducted by Association Community, a youth organisation supporting the social and professional inclusion of young people facing socio-economic barriers, including NEETs, in the Audomarois region. The workshop took place on 19th and 20th June 2025 in Arques, in the Hauts-de-France coastal area, in cooperation with local youth workers, with a field visit to Boulogne-sur-Mer (Capécure district), France's first fishing harbour.

The objectives were to provide young people with:

- An introduction to blue economy sectors, their potential for sustainable development, and the opportunities they offer for youth employment in coastal areas.
- Practical, interactive learning using games, quizzes, group discussions, and a creative entrepreneurship challenge to foster engagement.
- An inspiring field visit to Capécure to discover real-life blue economy initiatives in their region.

The workshop also tested the training guide in practice, collecting feedback from participants on how the training approach could be adapted to their needs and interests.

1.3 Italy

In Italy, the workshop was conducted by Absentia in cooperation with local youth workers in Sardinia, focusing on the challenges and opportunities of rural and remote coastal areas. The workshop took place on 20th June 2025, with a field visit to the town of Stintino.

Absentia's mission is to promote social innovation and sustainable economic growth in rural areas, aiming to foster year-round added value rather than seasonal economic models.

The objectives of the Italian workshop were to:

- Provide learning opportunities on blue economy sectors and their role in sustainable development and youth employment in rural coastal areas.
- Test the training guide in practice and collect feedback from participants for future improvements aligned with their interests and needs.
- Foster a creative and interactive learning environment through quizzes, group discussions, and a creative entrepreneurship challenge.
- Offer a field visit to the Museo della Tonnara in Stintino, allowing participants to explore the history and traditions of the local fishing industry, providing tangible examples of how blue economy initiatives can support both cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Across France, Germany, and Italy, the COAST workshops aimed to:

- Strengthen the skills, knowledge, and motivation of young people facing socio-economic barriers.

- Foster their active participation in the blue economy.
- Increase their opportunities for sustainable employment in coastal regions.

This transnational report captures the lessons learned, the methods tested, and the feedback gathered to further improve and adapt the COAST training approach to young peoples realities within different coastal areas in Europe.

2 Workshop settings in partner countries

2.1 Germany

In Germany, the workshops were held in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, a large, sparsely populated coastal region where young people face significant mobility challenges due to long daily travel times (up to 2.5 hours) and underdeveloped public transport infrastructure. These factors limit participation in extracurricular activities, as returning home outside regular hours is difficult. To maximize participation, workshops were organized during regular school hours, ensuring accessibility without disrupting participants' routines.

Planning and adaptation of workshop duration, format, and content were carried out in close collaboration with a school social worker. Based on her in-depth knowledge of the young people's needs, workshops were planned, balancing content depth with the participants' capacity to remain engaged. The sessions took place in seminar rooms, allowing young people to choose their seating arrangements freely, fostering a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere conducive to learning and participation.

The workshops focused on practical, low-threshold content related to sustainable entrepreneurship in the blue economy, with real-life examples relevant to the participants' local coastal context. Theoretical input was kept to a minimum, emphasizing the connection between new concepts and the participants' lived experiences. Activities were designed to encourage active participation, co-creation, and self-expression, helping participants to see their potential role in creating sustainable initiatives in their communities.

In Velgast, 10 young people participated, while in Ribnitz-Damgarten, 23 young people took part, bringing the total to 33 young participants, supported by 2 school social workers. Registration was handled by school social workers to ensure low-barrier access, with flexibility to accommodate fluctuations in participation due to young people's personal circumstances. The workshops were delivered by MMT Academics within the familiar environment, ensuring a safe, supportive setting where young people felt comfortable engaging in discussions and activities.

2.2 France

In France, the workshop was held in Arques, located in the Hauts-de-France coastal region, where young people face mobility challenges due to limited access to personal transportation and insufficient public transport, especially between rural and urban areas. To facilitate participation, the workshop was organized within time slots that matched the availability of young people, ensuring they could attend without interfering with their daily commitments.

The workshop took place over two days at Community's premises in Arques, an informal learning space that provides a safe, familiar, and flexible environment for local youth. The

format allowed for gradual learning, combining interactive sessions and a field visit to provide an engaging and holistic learning experience. The duration and structure were planned in collaboration with Community's youth workers, who have deep insight into the needs and schedules of the participants.

The content was designed to be practical, relevant, and accessible, using hands-on activities, real-life examples, and interactive discussions to introduce sustainable entrepreneurship and blue economy opportunities in a local context. The informal, human-scale approach allowed the facilitators to adapt to the group's mood and dynamics while maintaining a structured learning experience.

A total of 12 young people attended the workshop, including 8 referred by the Mission d'Insertion Professionnelle pour l'Emploi (MIPE) and 4 engaged directly by Community. The participants were young NEETs with or without formal qualifications, seeking professional opportunities and exploring pathways to build their future. MIPE played a key role in outreach, ensuring that the participants were informed, encouraged, and supported to attend.

The sessions were designed to maintain a low threshold for participation while ensuring a rich learning experience. Trainers communicated the workshop's objectives and practical outcomes transparently, encouraging curiosity, engagement, and the connection of new knowledge to the participants' local environment. By emphasizing real-life applications and facilitating co-creation and self-expression, the workshop helped young people build confidence in their capacities to contribute to sustainable initiatives in their communities.

2.3 Italy

In Italy, the workshop was held in Stintino, a coastal town in Sardinia, where young people often face challenges linked to seasonal employment patterns and limited mobility due to the region's remoteness and sparse public transport. The local economy's heavy reliance on tourism creates instability, with few stable, year-round employment opportunities, increasing the need for youth to acquire specialized skills to develop alternative, sustainable livelihoods.

To overcome these barriers, the workshop was organized at times that fit the daily rhythms of the participants, respecting their local commitments and the realities of rural life. The training was led by Giovanni Conti and Fabrizio Contini, experienced trainers familiar with Stintino's context, in close cooperation with Absentia, an organization focused on social innovation and sustainable development in rural areas. Their understanding of the socio-economic landscape allowed them to tailor the workshop content to the specific challenges and opportunities present in the community.

The workshop utilized a mix of interactive methodologies, including group discussions, creative exercises, and practical activities designed to keep participants engaged while introducing key concepts of the blue economy and sustainable entrepreneurship. Real-life examples connected to local opportunities in the blue economy were used to illustrate

pathways for youth to break the cycle of seasonal employment and contribute to the sustainable development of their community.

Ten young people from Stintino and nearby villages participated, including members of the local youth council (Consulta Giovanile), whose active involvement enriched discussions and activities with insights from their engagement in the community's social and political life. Hosting the workshop in a local, familiar venue provided a comfortable, safe space that encouraged participation and open discussion.

The workshop was designed to be practical and immediately relevant, empowering participants to explore how blue economy initiatives could be applied to their context while supporting the needs of their community. The trainers maintained a flexible, participant-centered approach that respected each young person's pace and capacity, ensuring the learning process was engaging and accessible. Through collaborative activities, the young people were not only recipients of knowledge but active contributors, shaping the discussions with their perspectives and laying the groundwork for future community-driven initiatives in sustainable development.

3 Method and content of the workshops

3.1 Common methodology

Across Germany, France, and Italy, the workshops were designed to be interactive, participatory, and adapted to the learning needs and local contexts of young people. The aim was to raise awareness about the blue economy and entrepreneurship while equipping participants with practical tools to develop ideas aligned with sustainability.

The methods used across countries included:

- Presentations to introduce key concepts (blue economy, sustainability, entrepreneurship).
- Brainstorming and open discussions to capture and activate participants' existing knowledge while encouraging critical reflection.
- Group activities and collaborative exercises to foster teamwork and peer-to-peer learning.
- Pitch preparation and presentation sessions to develop public speaking and structuring ideas.
- Gamification elements (France) to enhance motivation and learning retention.
- Visual facilitation tools (mind maps, word clouds, photo language) for collective sense-making.
- Adaptation of simple, clear language to ensure accessibility for young people with diverse educational backgrounds.
- Integration of best practices and local examples to ground learning in participants' regional realities.
- Dynamic adjustment of content pacing based on the group's mood, engagement, and feedback.

These methodologies ensured that young people were not passive recipients of information but active contributors, building confidence and developing practical competencies relevant to their personal and professional futures.

3.2 Specific approaches per country

3.2.1 Germany

The workshops in Germany were structured to gradually introduce young people, many of whom had no prior knowledge of entrepreneurship, to the fundamentals of the blue economy and business creation while maintaining an informal, encouraging environment.

- Introduction and informal discussion: Trainers presented the workshop objectives and engaged participants in sharing their current understanding of the blue economy and entrepreneurship, creating an open space for dialogue and relationship-building.

- Sectors in the blue economy: Participants identified and discussed locally relevant sectors such as maritime transport, coastal tourism, and marine renewables, reflecting on opportunities and best practices.
- What is entrepreneurship?: Trainers explained the basic principles of entrepreneurship, followed by group discussions on its pros and cons. Participants explored their perceptions of entrepreneurship as a pathway for personal interests beyond traditional careers but also shared concerns about the risks and initial workload involved.
- Sustainability and social responsibility: Using real-life business examples, trainers illustrated how companies integrate sustainability and social responsibility, such as eco-friendly production or fair working conditions. This helped participants understand entrepreneurship as a tool for positive change.
- Basic financial literacy: Delivered through presentations and discussions, this session introduced funding opportunities, taxes, fixed and variable costs, and types of insurance, aiming to equip participants with practical, foundational financial knowledge for personal and entrepreneurial use.
- Marketing strategies: Trainers explained practical methods for promoting products or services, including online channels, word-of-mouth, and social media, complemented by group exercises where participants identified real examples and discussed applicability.
- Developing sustainable business ideas: Using the Business Model Canvas (optional), participants worked in groups to design business ideas addressing community needs while aligning with sustainability. They defined target audiences, identified problems, and explored suitable marketing strategies, concluding with presentations and group discussions on linking ideas to the blue economy.

3.2.2 France

The French workshop emphasized experiential learning and community-based engagement through structured activities and innovative methods.

- Coffee welcome and introduction: Trainers presented the workshop objectives, the COAST project, and the blue economy, followed by an informal discussion to capture participants' prior perceptions and adjust training delivery to their needs and energy levels.
- Discovering the blue economy in Hauts-de-France: Using Kahoot quizzes, photo language exercises, and moving debates, trainers made learning about local blue economy sectors interactive. Young people identified and reflected on maritime fishing, aquaculture, marine renewable energy, port logistics, and coastal tourism as regional opportunities while discussing sustainability challenges and employment potential.
- Visual facilitation (word clouds, mind maps) was used to collectively identify key challenges and emerging sectors in the local context.
- Visit to Capécure, Boulogne-sur-Mer: Participants were guided by a local expert through this key maritime and industrial area, learning about different companies, recruitment opportunities, and career pathways, including required qualifications and salary expectations. The visit connected workshop content with the real-world landscape of the blue economy in their region.

- Blue Economy Escape Game: An immersive escape game, *The Last Council*, allowed participants to apply learning in a gamified environment, tackling challenges around biomimicry, recycling, and blue economy innovations while practicing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.
- “Who Wants to Be My Business Partner?” activity: A real company case was presented to illustrate entrepreneurship practically. Participants then used waste objects or photos to brainstorm new business ideas focused on reusing or transforming waste, fostering creativity and connecting environmental responsibility with entrepreneurship. This was followed by a collective feedback discussion.

3.3.3 Italy

The workshop in Stintino, Sardinia, focused on contextualizing the blue economy and entrepreneurship for rural and coastal settings, with trainers using simple explanations while keeping sessions interactive.

- Introduction and informal discussion: Trainers presented workshop goals and invited participants to share their understanding of the blue economy and entrepreneurship, building rapport and a participatory atmosphere.
- Sectors in the blue economy: Young people discussed the relevance of sustainable fisheries, eco-tourism, and marine renewable energy for Sardinia, reflecting on local opportunities and best practices for sustainable use of resources.
- What is entrepreneurship?: Trainers explained entrepreneurship fundamentals in simple terms, followed by a group brainstorming session on pros and cons. Participants viewed entrepreneurship as an opportunity for personal fulfillment but raised concerns about risks and the challenge of managing alone at the outset.
- Slow entrepreneurship: Trainers introduced this concept, emphasizing businesses that prioritize local impact, sustainability, and long-term growth over rapid expansion. Participants discussed examples of small-scale eco-tourism and sustainable fishing initiatives, exploring how thoughtful business practices could positively impact communities while protecting the environment.
- This concept resonated with many participants, encouraging them to envision non-exploitative, community-based business pathways.
- Developing sustainable business ideas: Using the Business Model Canvas, participants worked in groups to design business ideas targeting local needs while aligning with sustainability principles. They identified target audiences, defined problems to address, and explored suitable marketing strategies. Ideas were presented to the group, followed by discussions on their potential contributions to the blue economy.

4 Description of workshops

4.1 Activities in Germany

The young participants were attentive and actively engaged throughout the workshops. They approached the topics with openness and showed genuine enjoyment, a sentiment that was also reflected in the evaluations. Open discussions, group work, and integrated role-play activities proved effective in capturing their interest and maintaining motivation.

The workshops emphasized practical, real-life examples and challenges, offering participants relatable and applicable content. Special attention was given to equipping them with concrete communication techniques and behavior patterns relevant to entrepreneurial settings.

Developing business ideas and engaging in creative work was a particularly enjoyable part for many. Trainers provided hands-on support, especially in helping participants identify target groups, design solutions through their products as well as connecting business ideas to sustainability and the blue economy.

4.2 Activities in France

The 12 young participants, including 8 referred by MIPE (an organization supporting youth in professional integration) and 4 brought by Community, were attentive and actively engaged throughout the sessions. These NEET youth, whether graduated or not, approached the training with openness and genuine interest, as reflected in their feedback.

The workshop took place in an informal learning environment, adapted to the group's mood to maximize their performance despite the non-formal setting. Activities included the discovery of the blue economy in the Hauts-de-France region, a guided visit to the Capécure neighborhood in Boulogne-sur-Mer, where participants learned about local companies, recruitment opportunities, required training, salaries, and visited several enterprises externally.

An immersive Blue Economy Escape Game provided interactive challenges that fostered teamwork, problem-solving, and communication skills, reinforcing participants' understanding of sustainability, biomimicry, recycling, and local innovation.

The workshop also included a "Who Wants to Be My Business Partner?" activity, where participants explored entrepreneurship through a real company presentation and brainstormed creative business ideas based on repurposing waste materials provided as objects or photos. This exercise encouraged innovation, practical problem-solving, and linked entrepreneurial thinking to environmental responsibility.

Throughout the workshop, participants appreciated hands-on support from trainers, especially in identifying target groups, designing solutions through their products, and

connecting their business ideas to principles of sustainability and the blue economy. The focus on practical, real-life examples, group discussions, and creative work contributed to a motivating and productive learning experience.

4.3 Activities in Italy

In Italy, the workshops focused on empowering young participants with practical skills and entrepreneurial mindsets aligned with blue economy opportunities, using non-formal and engaging learning methods.

Participants engaged in role-playing activities simulating real-life maritime scenarios, such as managing sustainable aquaculture, designing eco-tourism services, and planning waste management in coastal areas. These activities helped develop teamwork, communication, and creative problem-solving skills while fostering a better understanding of the blue economy.

Scenario-based learning was used to encourage participants to develop solutions for realistic challenges, including coastal sustainability initiatives and innovative circular economy practices linked to marine resources.

Experiential learning components were integrated, with participants conducting local research to identify community needs and opportunities within the blue economy, supporting the design of feasible business ideas while aligning them with environmental and sustainability goals.

A dedicated segment on entrepreneurial opportunity development guided participants in defining value propositions, conducting market research, and identifying target groups for potential blue economy ventures. Trainers provided personalized support to help participants link their business ideas with principles of sustainability, environmental responsibility, and blue economy practices.

The workshops adopted a learner-centered, participatory approach, maintaining participant motivation while building confidence to engage with blue economy opportunities, entrepreneurship, and pathways to employment.

5 Results of evaluations and comparative analysis

5.1 Germany

Evaluations conducted through voluntary group discussions revealed that only a few of the 33 participants had previously engaged with entrepreneurship in the blue economy, highlighting a clear gain in knowledge and awareness. The workshops successfully introduced new perspectives, making the concept of the blue economy tangible through practical examples.

Participants found the workshop content highly relevant to their lives and future aspirations, appreciating the clear structure and the balance between theory, practical exercises, and group activities. The interactive and hands-on approach was particularly effective in helping them understand complex topics, with many expressing surprise at how engaging and interesting the subject matter turned out to be.

The workshops significantly expanded participants' knowledge of entrepreneurship and the blue economy, illustrating real-world applications and connections to their everyday environment. Many participants expressed curiosity and a willingness to explore these topics further, with some considering future internships in the sector. All participants agreed that their feedback was valued, and they felt actively included throughout the sessions.

5.2 France

In France, trainers observed strong engagement and enthusiasm from the 12 young participants, who actively participated in discussions, group work, and interactive activities such as the blue economy escape game and the “who wants to be my business partner?” ideation session.

The hands-on and creative exercises fostered teamwork, problem-solving skills, and the practical application of entrepreneurial concepts in a motivating and inclusive environment. Participants demonstrated increased awareness of the blue economy and its relevance to their personal and professional futures, frequently asking questions and sharing reflections during sessions.

The collaborative and informal learning environment created a space for open discussions, allowing participants to express their ideas confidently while building interest in the blue economy and entrepreneurship. Overall, the active involvement and curiosity demonstrated indicate that the workshops were impactful in sparking further exploration of sustainable entrepreneurship pathways among the participants.

5.3 Italy

In Italy, the workshop evaluations indicated a significant increase in participants' awareness of the blue economy and its potential for local economic development, particularly in sectors such as sustainable fisheries and eco-tourism.

The workshops deepened participants' understanding of entrepreneurship within a rural context, shifting mindsets towards slow, sustainable business models aligned with environmental responsibility and community needs. Financial literacy also improved, with participants gaining confidence in managing funding, costs, and risk assessment, enabling them to view entrepreneurship as a viable path.

Using tools like the Business Model canvas, participants developed business proposals addressing local challenges while emphasizing sustainability and community impact. The workshop fostered ownership, creativity, and empowerment, motivating participants to pursue entrepreneurial ventures aligned with their values and contributing positively to their communities and the environment.

5.4 Comparative analysis

Across all three countries, the workshops achieved:

- A clear increase in awareness and knowledge of the blue economy and entrepreneurship among young NEETs, many of whom had no prior exposure to these topics.
- High levels of engagement and motivation, driven by practical, interactive, and non-formal learning approaches.
- Recognition of the relevance of the blue economy to participants' lives and career aspirations.
- Appreciation for the hands-on support from trainers in developing business ideas linked to sustainability and local community needs.
- An inclusive and participatory environment that allowed for open discussion, fostering confidence, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- Increased curiosity and willingness among participants to explore entrepreneurship and blue economy opportunities, with some considering internships, further training, or business development in the sector.

Overall, the evaluations confirmed the effectiveness of the workshops in creating a motivating and impactful learning environment, empowering young people to consider entrepreneurship within the blue economy as a potential pathway toward personal growth, employment, and environmental responsibility.

6 Conclusion

The COAST pilot workshops implemented in Germany, France, and Italy have demonstrated the effectiveness of using non-formal, practical, and engaging learning methods to introduce young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including NEETs, to the concepts of entrepreneurship within the blue economy. Across all contexts, participants showed significant growth in awareness, knowledge, and interest in these topics, despite most having no prior exposure.

The interactive structure, combining theory, real-life examples, and hands-on activities, was critical in maintaining motivation and fostering a positive learning environment. Participants were able to identify local opportunities, connect entrepreneurial thinking with sustainability, and develop business ideas addressing community needs while aligning with environmental responsibility.

The workshops also fostered confidence and creativity, empowering participants to view entrepreneurship as a viable and meaningful path toward personal development, employment opportunities, and active contribution to local sustainable development.

The results confirm that tailored, experiential training within the blue economy can serve as an effective tool for engaging NEET youth, equipping them with concrete skills, and broadening their horizons towards sectors with growing opportunities. This pilot initiative lays a strong foundation for scaling and adapting the COAST methodology in other regions and contexts to further support young people in their transition to employment and active citizenship in alignment with sustainability and blue economy principles.

Annex - Illustrations and testimonials from the Mobility Report

This annex illustrates, through photographs, copies of teaching tools and quotes from participants, the activities carried out as part of Activity 4 of the COAST project, in order to demonstrate the commitment of young people and the diversity of methods used.

FRANCE



Photo 1 – Welcome breakfast

Participants welcomed with a breakfast and introduction to the workshop objectives.



Photo 2 – Visit to Capécure in Boulogne-sur-Mer

Exploring the Capécure site in Boulogne-sur-Mer, showcasing real-life examples of the blue economy.



Photo 3 – Blue economy escape game

Escape game on the blue economy theme, promoting collaborative thinking and hands-on learning.



Photo 4 : Word cloud created by participants at the end of the training course.

<https://view.genially.com/6810bc7ce7556b13bb132987/presentation-escapegameledernierconseilpptx>

Link to the escape game created specifically for the training course

GERMANY



Photo 1 – Presentation slide

Workshop introduction: objectives, the concept of the blue economy, and entrepreneurial opportunities for young participants.

Photo 2 – Two girls brainstorming

Participants discussing ideas for entrepreneurial projects in the blue economy, exploring challenges and opportunities.

Photo 3 – Slide with idea collage

Summary of ideas developed by participants for sustainable and innovative projects in the blue economy.

ITALY

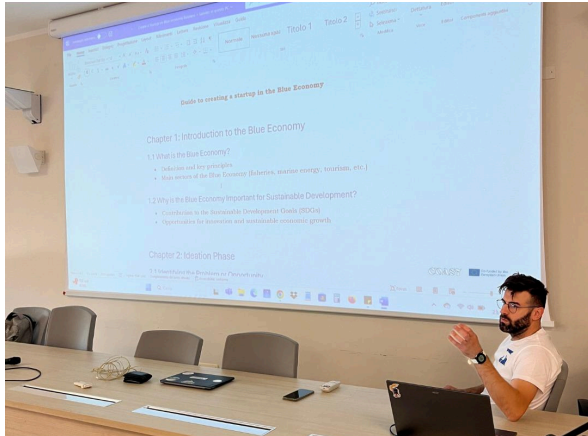


Photo 1 – Introduction to the Blue Economy

Exploring the basics of sustainable entrepreneurship and key principles of the Blue Economy.

Photo 2 – Interactive Lecture

Discussion on innovation and the role of people and communities in driving growth.

Photo 3 – Sustainable Development Goals

Connecting the UN SDGs with entrepreneurship opportunities in the Blue Economy.