

## PRESS RELEASE

### COMMON MARITIME AGENDA FOR THE BLACK SEA 2021 - COORDINATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

REGIONAL WEBINAR - BLACK SEA BLUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP WORKSHOP: FOLLOW-UP ON BUSINESS  
ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT  
4 OCTOBER 2021 (14:30-18:10 EET) ONLINE

On Monday 4 October 2021, stakeholders from across the Black Sea gathered online for a collaborative workshop dedicated to supporting the region's Blue Entrepreneurship business ecosystem, hearing from innovative current initiatives and working together to further elaborate emerging project ideas. The webinar entitled **'Black Sea Blue Entrepreneurship: Follow-up on business ecosystem support'** was held under the Turkish annual coordination of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA), in cooperation with the CMA's Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for the region and the [Black Sea CONNECT](#) project.

The workshop set out with the clear aim of facilitating concrete advancement on project ideas while ensuring strong synergies with existing activities. To do so, the webinar firstly provided space for discussion of the concrete challenges and opportunities of the blue economy business ecosystem, followed by a project hackathon.

After introductory remarks from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG-MARE) and Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism and Black Sea CONNECT, attendees got an insight into the ongoing work of EU-funded initiatives such as [BRIDGE BS](#), [DOORS Black Sea](#) and [DigiCirc](#). This was followed by additional input from the Black Sea Trade Development Bank, the [Blueing the Black Sea](#) initiative (World Bank, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation) and DG MARE on the challenges and opportunities in supporting innovative SMEs in the Black Sea region.

The floor was then open for the afternoon's hackathon. Throughout 2021, CMA National Hubs have worked to support Black Sea stakeholders in the definition of projects contributing to CMA goals and objectives. During the hackathon session, the project concept "Up Blue" which aims to 'Accelerate uptake of innovation in Blue Value Chains' through the establishment of a regional incubator for blue SMEs was presented by Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency. Additionally, the [Atlantic Smart Ports-Blue Acceleration Network](#) was presented by the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions for consideration as a potentially transferable initiative for the Black Sea region. Both projects were thoroughly discussed with webinar participants including potential donors and sponsors. In addition, DG MARE briefed participants on the new EMFAF call for a ['Black Sea blue economy investment and innovation capacity building pilot'](#).

For more details on the event, the Common Maritime Agenda and the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism, please see [www.blackseablueeconomy.eu](http://www.blackseablueeconomy.eu).



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