

EXECUTIVE REPORT of the MATES project' Final Conference

Overall impact of setting up a Maritime Technologies Skills Strategy: MATES project' main achievements and Sustainability plan

Brussels, 29 March 2022

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Full conference report is available [here](#)

Presentations are available [here](#)

Sustainability and long-term Action Plan document is available [here](#)

Legacy brochure and Strategic Plan is available [here](#)

For more information about the MATES Project, visit <https://www.projectmates.eu/>

Video of the Final Conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I91a5tI8TXw>

A hybrid Final Conference was held to provide a general overview of the **MATES** project's impact, its sustainability and long-term action plan. 111 attendees from 17 countries participated, representing a balanced group of different types of organisations from the industry, academia and public administrations. An evaluation questionnaire was distributed after the event. The overall rating of the workshop from 26 responses was 4.65/5.

In the first instance, the EU Policies which both frame and support the development of the MATES Blueprint Project were addressed: the skills challenges for a sustainable blue economy were presented by **Ms. Andreea Strachinescu**, who highlighted the **DG MARE** expectations on blue skills contribution to the *Green Deal*: **increasing the capacities in the offshore renewable energy; greening maritime transport and ports; and alleviating pressures on land for food production and protein sourcing.**



The next speaker, **Ms. Julie Fionda**, presented some of the initiatives developed by the **DG EMPL** to support the Just Transition to new jobs in promising sectors, such as **Individual Learning Accounts and Micro-credentials**, which will facilitate the uptake of the new skills that will be required. She highlighted some of the most relevant outcomes of the MATES project for the skills agenda development, **stating that the MATES collaborative approach to develop a skills strategy has inspired the Pact for Skills, one of the flagships of the EU skills agenda.**

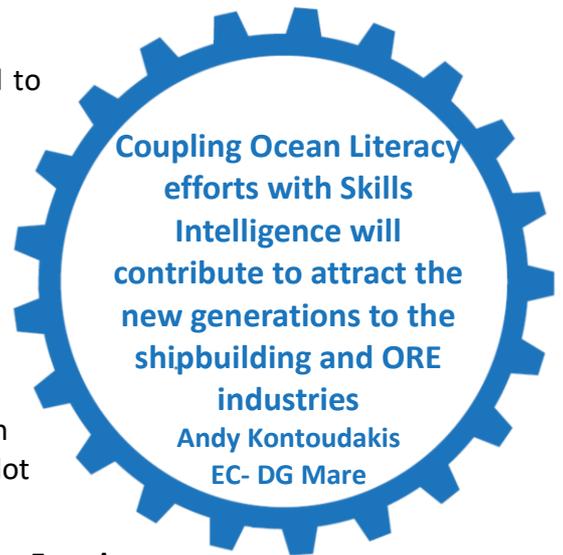
Following this introductory session, **Ms. Lucía Fraga (CETMAR)** presented, on behalf of the project partnership, an overview of the MATES [Maritime Technologies Skills Strategy](#) and the [MATES Legacy brochure](#), an executive document synthesising the main impacts made by the MATES project. **Mr. Renato Pires, (FRCT-Azores)**, showed how the MATES project had designed its [Sustainability and long-term Action Plan](#)

and **Mr. Miguel Marques, (Skipper and Wool)**, outlined the structure of the report, which contains an inventory of the project results and knowledge outputs, a blueprint of actionable steps for practical application of the Skills Strategy, and also an analysis of available funding opportunities for re-skilling and up-skilling.

Two panels composed of end users of the project outputs were invited to share their views of the impacts achieved over the four years of intensive work since the launching of the project in January 2018.

Panel 1, moderated by **Ms. Evelyn Paredes (University of Gent)**, was devoted to showcasing some success stories concerning the sustainability of the project outputs, from a selected group of panellists who presented the views and interests from companies and VET centres:

- **Ms. Virginia Álvarez-Acevedo, NAVANTIA**, described how the Pilot Experiences simulating industrial spaces at the VET Centre are triggering DUAL programmes as well as more applied training.
- **Ms. Laura Alonso, CT Engineering Group**, focused on how the MOOCs developed by MATES are being used to prepare new workers in the enterprise.
- **Mr. Tom Hill, Marine Energy Wales**, commented as to how a strategic approach can support innovative training programmes, such as the Offshore Renewable Energy Courses Skills for a greener shipbuilding industry.
- **Mr. Andrés Rodríguez, Marine Instruments Ltd** showed how the blended learning approach is being used to attract new talent with the theme of Ocean Literacy, applying the results of the MOL2 Pilot Experience.



Panel 2, with three speakers, was moderated by **Mr. Frederico Ferreira (Forum Oceano)** who demonstrated how the core of the MATES Skills Strategy is being transferred for its roll out at different levels. The panel speakers approached the discussion and made contributions both from the European and the regional level.



- **Ms. Chiara Stramaccioni, ESCO Secretariat**, addressed the use of skills intelligence outputs to update the occupational profiles.
- **Mr. Iván Pineda, WindEurope** focused on the contributions of sectoral clusters to the skills assessment and the Pact for Skills.
- **Ms. Zeltia Lado Lago & Ms. Antía Guillén, Directorate General of Training of the Galicia Regional Ministry of Employment and Equality**, showed how the Galician regional Administration is tackling the skills intelligence processes.

In conclusion, several messages were highlighted during the event:

- **There is a need for hands-on experience, combining academic progress or VET with hands-on apprenticeships**, so that the theory can be applied in everyday practice. Traditional

approaches and innovative instruments such as dual trainings may be combined with work-based learning at the Training Centre.

- **Digital applications can complement and enrich curriculum development so that both transversal and hard skills can be acquired.** Blended approaches should guarantee a good balance between the digital and hands-on learning.
- **Ocean Literacy has been highlighted as providing an opportunity to attract new talent to the maritime sectors.**
- There is agreement as to the **need for a collaborative approach between the industry, and all relevant stakeholders** at the EU, national and regional levels to better identify the skills needs and develop strategies to overcome the barriers impeding the emergence of a better qualified workforce.
- The need to **update skills identification and assessment of future needs is continuous** and seems to be increasingly demanding, in particular in relation to digital and green skills.

The MATES partners expect the current project to be a starting point for these processes which will continue within the framework of the Pact for Skills, and eventually the new instruments issued under the Skills Agenda.

About this Report

This document was developed within the framework of the **MATES project, Maritime Alliance for Fostering the European Blue Economy through a Marine Technology Skilling Strategy**. The objective of the project is to develop a skills strategy that addresses the main drivers of change to the maritime industry, in particular shipbuilding and offshore renewable energy. Both sectors are strongly linked and require new capacities to succeed in an increasingly digital, green and knowledge-driven economy. Project duration: 2018 – 2022 www.projectmates.eu

Document information	
Short description	This document is an executive report describing the outcomes of the MATES Final Conference, in which a general overview of the MATES project impact was provided by invited stakeholders. At this meeting also the Sustainability and Long-term strategy was presented.
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MATES website link	www.projectmates.eu
Lead authors	Susana Bastón & Lucía Fraga
Contributors	Margaret Eleftheriou, Flor Arenaza
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