



Youth Employment in Ports of the MEDiterranean

# YEP MED Closing Ceremony Special Issue





**YEP MED**  
Empowering the Youth with Blue Skills



The **YEP MED project**, funded by the EU's ENI CBC Med Programme, was born out of the need to better match the labour market skills needs and dual Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) offers in the Mediterranean port communities' sector in order to contribute to jobs creation and facilitate productive economic growth. With a particular focus on the benefits for youth, especially NEETs and women's opportunities, YEP MED will increase local employment opportunities through the strengthening of the skills sought for by SMEs and start-ups.





**Lluís Salvadó**  
President at the Port of Barcelona

## The YEP MED International Project

The YEP MED project, dedicated to promoting youth employment in Mediterranean ports, aimed to enhance opportunities throughout the Mediterranean region. It involved actors from Spain, Italy, France, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan. This collaborative effort showcased the power of cooperation in developing impactful projects that contribute to the Mediterranean's growth.

The port community of Barcelona plays a vital role in our ports' economic and social development, generating opportunities and prosperity for all. The Port of Barcelona's Strategic Plan emphasizes our social responsibility to create quality employment and provide effective mechanisms for employee training. Projects like YEP MED bring us closer to achieving this commitment, particularly by supporting vulnerable groups like women and at-risk youth.

We extend our appreciation to the ENI CBC Med Programme and European initiatives for their financial support, which made this project possible, and express our gratitude to the Training and Employment Working Group of the Port Community's Governing Board for their unwavering commitment. We also appreciate the active participation of the Institutes and Occupational centres in Barcelona and el Prat de Llobregat.



**Roger Torrent**  
Business and Work Councillor at the Generalitat de Catalunya

## Training and Employment in a local and international scale through the YEP MED Project

The YEP MED project has become a lighthouse for new active policies to come through, ones specifically benefiting training and employment in the sector. Through this project we have established a bridge between local business opportunities in the port-logistics sector, improving and benefiting the creation of qualified talent in Barcelona. One of the fundamental pillars of this project has been to increase youth's employability and, at the same time, to promote the competitiveness and productivity of companies.

The YEP MED project has placed special emphasis on collaboration and consensus between social, educational and employment actors, bringing new opportunities for all the actors involved. With this, I would like to express my gratitude to all participants that made the YEP MED project possible, and to the Port Community of Barcelona. Your dedication and commitment have been central to achieving such good results. Congratulations to the Port of Barcelona and the Escola Europea for what has been accomplished.

# PIONEERING COLLABORATION AND DIGITALIZATION IN MEDITERRANEAN PORT COMMUNITIES

An overview and context of the project with its trajectory, figures and evolution towards new collaborative initiatives with the creation of the PLIKA organization.

## Eduard Rodés

Director of the Escola Europea – Intermodal Transport

This month we gather to present the results of the EU-funded YEP MED project, which aimed to bridge the gap between the skills needed in the labour market and vocational training opportunities in Mediterranean port logistics communities. The project focused on creating employment opportunities for NEETs (young people Not in Employment, Education, or Training) and women in 8 ports from 7 countries from the both the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean.

Over the course of three years YEP MED achieved significant milestones, including the adaptation of 17 TVET (Technical Vocational and Education Training) curricula and the training of more than 3.000 NEETs and women. The project also established collaborations with more than 160 companies in the seven countries represented in the initiative.

We all embraced digitalization, we had to manage the start of the project during lockdown and pandemic, this meant that we were faced with the need to adapt quickly, incorporating new technologies into the courses. This is how the Port Virtual Lab platform was born. What initially represented a space for simulated exercises became a cluster of more than 24 simulated companies. This simulated environment, a virtual port, made it possible for us to train students from different port communities in technical knowledge, as well as soft skills.

Following the data collected from 2021 until June 20<sup>th</sup> 2023 from Barcelona only is shown.



## 8 types of courses

where developed, from which there are Occupational Trainings, Vocational Trainings, Training of Trainers and the final course YEP MED Talent.



## 918 students

in Barcelona



## 40 courses

were completed among the different types of courses created



## 30-year-old

Average age



55% Women / 45% Men



## 72 teachers



## 96 companies

from the transport-logistics and other sectors were involved in the job placement of students.



## Job placement in companies

- *Vocational Training Students*: more than 90% of the students that successfully finished their studies throughout 2023 got an internship.
- *Occupational Training Students*: from the surveyed participants, more than 95% reported to have found a job.



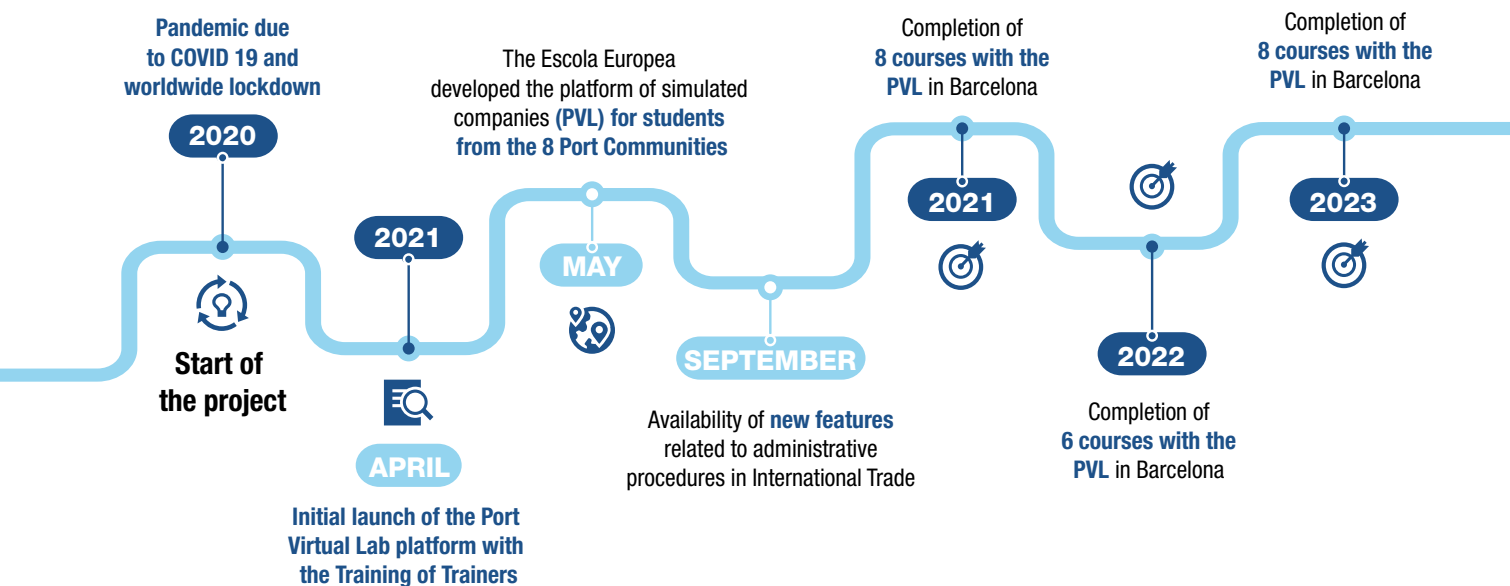


# BIRTH AND EVOLUTION OF THE PORT VIRTUAL LAB

The YEP MED has established the foundation for future actions by fostering ongoing collaboration among partners, engaging with the MEDports Association, it proactively searches for the collaboration between new port communities. This is why the project partners have given birth to a new organisation that will gather training centres, institutions, and companies to continue working on the future of what the YEP MED has settled. The **Port Logistics Knowledge Academy (PLIKA)** continues the steps of the YEP MED project and will welcome any institution who wants to join this new model.



Scan the QR code and get to know more about the PLIKA organization.





# EMPOWERING WITH BLUE SKILLS

## Students



### Santiago Izquierdo, YEP MED graduate

I found the YEP MED course to be totally practical, which gives a complementary training to the studies in the centre and in the company. Undoubtedly, the trainings make you have another perspective both professionally and personally.

I liked that the courses are updated to the labour market as well as to the reality of our world.

The big difference between the YEP MED courses and what is seen in the career is that the topics are applied directly to the company, in the functioning of international trade operations; during studies the topics are seen in a more theoretical way. It is undoubtedly a unique experience that makes you grow as a person and a professional; a great step for your career and future. If I was asked to describe the YEP MED courses in one word I would say: Unique.



### Yiqun Lin, YEP MED graduate

Currently Export Specialist at MOVILPAQ, S.L.

The highlight of the YEP MED courses is the practical approach. By learning through practical activities such as case studies we have learned many things thanks to the Escola Europea. This gave me the opportunity to understand different points of view, to consider and seek more sustainable, profitable solutions, and so as far as possible improve the conditions of the established requirements, among many others.

Regarding the YEP MED programme, if I had to describe it in a few words, I would have to say “Talent”. It has been a very enriching experience since I have worked on the case together with colleagues from different countries and they have demonstrated professional excellence. For this reason, I can say that the strong point of each one is the Talent they have, and what the YEP MED project has allowed us is to boost our intrapersonal skills and understand our Talents.

## Teacher



### Anna Castañeda, YEP MED trainer

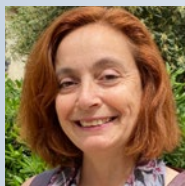
Professor of Commercial Activities at the Barcelona Institute for Logistics

As a teacher, I try to provide my students with a full view of what I teach from a theoretical and practical point of view. This by trying to give examples and real cases to support and enrich the learning process, even though the common educational approach does not always follow this way.

Different from the common learning methodologies YEP MED offers a 360-degree experience, both for students and teachers. Proving to be an environment for learning critical thinking and problem solving with creative solutions and applications. Without question this challenging experience makes them show their best face, overcome difficulties, and succeed. If I was to describe the YEP MED learning experience in one word it will be: intense.



# Occupational Centre



## Lourdes Sugranyes, Occupational Centre Representative

Director of Guidance and Training at Barcelona Activa

As representatives of local entities, we strive to ensure that companies offer high-quality job opportunities and that individuals possess the necessary skills for these positions. This can only be achieved through effective coordination between our training department and the business world, particularly in strategic sectors such as the Blue Economy and Foreign Trade, which are crucial pillars for the city of Barcelona today.

In the specific case of the YEP MED project, we have achieved a remarkable level of job placement and a tremendously high satisfaction rate among participants. They have not only grown through the courses but have also gained empowerment through the exceptional quality of the programs, teaching staff, and methodologies employed. We remain committed to fostering this coordination between training providers and businesses. Through continued collaboration and innovation, we will continue to empower individuals and facilitate the growth of our city's key sectors.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Engagement towards the future

In March 2021, the different actors involved in the development of the Port activity in the Port Community in Barcelona and social agents linked to the education and occupation entities, converged in the signing of the strategic agreement for the Promotion of Vocational Training within the framework of the Port, Maritime, Logistics, Transport, International Trade and Maritime Economy sector.

We extend our deepest appreciation to all the institutional partners, public administrations, training centres, and private companies:



# JOIN THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION



## YEP MED



[www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/yep-med](http://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/yep-med)



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Watch the video

