



### **Working together - Policy makers and European Commission facing the grass-root**

The EU Maritime Day, or should we now refer to it as Maritime Days as the event is held over two days, one day primarily led by EU/EC on topical issues and the second day primarily led by the stakeholder/grass-root organisations presenting their interest and concerns.

The review of proceedings over two-days clearly showed that it was a harmonious set of events providing insight into what MARE is, and to some extent other DGs are, doing, in and for the maritime sectors.

C4FF with support from Piri Reis University, its partner in TR, raised several key questions to various panels during the two day event, and with the assistance from its European partners organised a workshop in conjunction with Gdynia Maritime University in Poland.

C4FF, with support from Piri Reis University, took the opportunity of organising the EU funded SeaTALK partner meetings during the EU Maritime day events. This was a novel notion viz., promoting EU efforts in specific areas of direct interest to the theme of EU Maritime Day event. Many accidents and incidents at sea are due to linguistic problems and many inhibitions for freedom of movement at seas are due to the countries in the region do not recognise each others seafaring qualifications. Mutual recognition of each others' sea certificates by EU member countries should be a matter for urgent consideration by the EC/EU. Lack of recognition in this respect has and will dampen the effectiveness of the EC/EU drive for Blue Growth initiative. C4FF and its partners have already recognised this problem and have become involved or initiated several projects see [www.trecvet.eu](http://www.trecvet.eu) and [www.unimet.pro](http://www.unimet.pro).

The C4FF Chairman, and Vice Rector of Piri Reis University, commented on the EC's efforts regarding Blue Growth initiative and posed several interesting questions to the panel chaired by the head of DG MARE with regard to TRECNET. He argued that "to increase the impact of the Blue Growth initiative more targeted actions are necessary. He asked, is the panel aware that there is a specific problem in the SCV sector regarding the mutual recognition of comparable qualifications in different EU Member States within this sector? In the TRECNET project C4FF and other partners involved in the project are trying to find a solution to this problem. Professor Ziarati, stated that if all European countries recognise each other qualifications in the SCV sector including certificates needed for yachting this could help mobility of trade and help tourism. He believes that the EC should target solving these problems if it intends to promote Blue Growth initiative in the EU more effectively".

One very important problems identified by Professor Ziarati was youth unemployment in Europe, citing over 55% youth unemployment in Spain and over 50% in Greece. He stated that generations are being lost in the continent by citing youth unemployment in Spain and Greece, two member states with promising opportunities for tourism in the context of the Blue Growth initiative. On this basis, he advised the Commission to target youth unemployment throughout the continent with more emphasis in countries with high youth unemployment. He argued that this is what the EC is there to do and should do. He also asked if the EC has considered that by encouraging tourism at times of economic downturns this could adversely impact other sectors, giving the example of a family encouraged do spent on tourism, and the possibility of the family deciding to postpone their plan to replace the family car or leave the intended purchase of a new TV to a later date, a decision which would reduce the fragile recovery in the manufacturing sector.



### **C4FF Workshop**

C4FF organised a workshop as the stakeholder in the second day of the EU Maritime event.

After a short introduction from Professor Ziarati referring to deficiencies of current maritime education and training standards and inconsistencies in the IMO conventions, Dr Martin Ziarati, gave a summary of how MariFuture has responded to these deficiencies. His speech included a summary of MariFuture's efforts in targeting several solutions to the identified problems and referred to a number of recently concluded projects such as Maider ([www.maider.pro](http://www.maider.pro)), an online and stand alone project led by C4FF's Dutch partner (MIWB) initiated to reduce accidents at sea by developing scenarios based on previous accidents; and SAILAHEAD ([www.sailahead.eu](http://www.sailahead.eu)), an online initiative to create opportunities for seafarers to find jobs ashore after serving time at sea.

Capt. Heikki Koivisto, presented a short summary of SURPASS project and EGMDSS. SURPASS is an interesting online and stand alone project in that it was developed based on an IMO report stating that the accidents due to automation failures are a cause for concern. EGMDSS project led by C4FF's Slovenian partner (Spinkaker) concerns a novel online platform helping users to gain qualification in maritime communications, a timely development and one that would increase the impact of the Blue Growth initiative by enabling ordinary people to learn to sail and gain Short or Long Range Certificates (SRC and/or LRC). C4FF and Piri Reis University have already gained recognition from major awarding and licensing bodies for EGMDSS. The platform currently has over 35000 registered users. This is amazing achievement.

Capt, Professor Dr Janusz Urias, presented a short summary of MarTEL and UniMET, both initiated jointly by C4FF and Piri Reis University. MarTEL project was initiated based on the concerns raised at the IMO MSC sub-committee (2006, Istanbul) that there are many accidents related to English language competence of seafarers. The project led to development of a set of standards for maritime English for all types and ranks of officers and later was complemented by MarTEL Plus project developed to create a similar standard for Ratings (non-commissioned officers) and develop a set of new features for MarTEL standards including mobile applications. The UniMET project was developed to harmonise the existing maritime education and training programmes worldwide and to go beyond the minimum standards set by IMO. As well as current standards, UniMET established two new standards viz., Degree Class and Captains of Industry; Degree Class to give the officers credit if they go beyond the current minimum standards set by IMO and also to encourage progression to higher learning levels and hence help to make the seas safe at source.