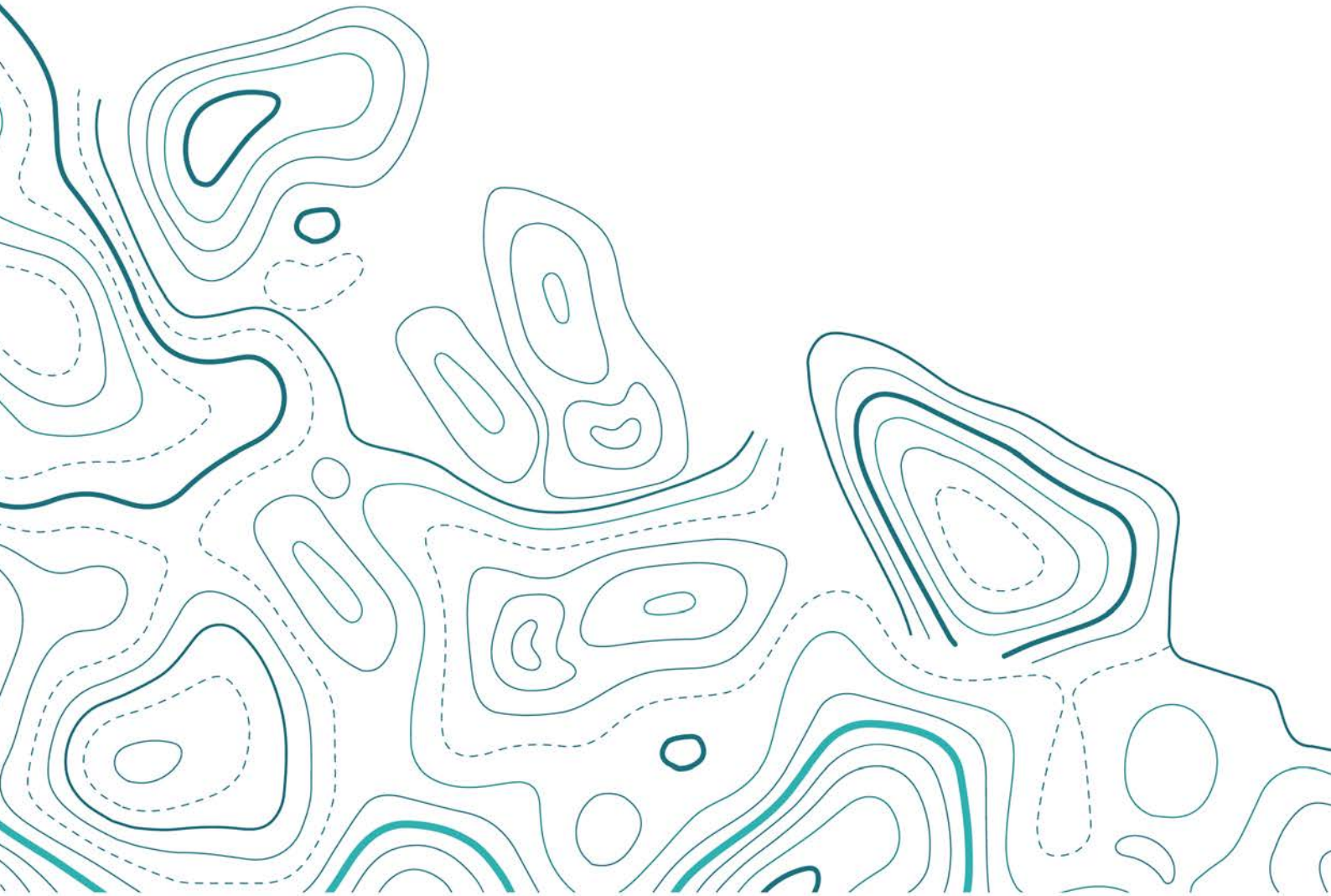
turning blue

Intervention training manual



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose, Scope and Use of the Manual

This manual is designed as a practical guide for trainers involved in the Turning Blue Intervention. Its primary purpose is to support professionals in preparing, delivering, and sustaining training activities that help (ex-)prisoners transition into sustainable employment opportunities within the Blue Economy.
It provides:

- A clear overview of the project's background and objectives.
- Profiles of the key target groups and their responsibilities.
- Core knowledge on the Blue Economy and its potential for reintegration.
- A step-by-step description of the Turning Blue Transition Model.
- Practical guidance for the use of the Turning Blue Job-Matching Platform.

1.2. Background of the Turning Blue Project

The Turning Blue (Integrating Young Offenders Through the Blue Economy) project (EMFAF-2023-BlueCareers) aims to create new cooperation mechanisms and training materials on sustainable Blue Economy (BE) to inspire and engage disadvantaged young people in conflict with the law (between 16 and 30 years old) to pursue a sustainable 'blue career' in one of the BE sectors.

The Turning Blue Project was established to address the gap between detention and sustainable labour market integration. By focusing on the Blue Economy, sectors that promote sustainable use of seas, oceans, and coastal resources the project offers innovative pathways for (ex-)prisoners to build new careers and contribute to society.

The project brings together prisons, career counsellors, industry stakeholders, and civil society organisations, creating a collaborative ecosystem that enhances reintegration prospects and supports a fairer and greener economy.

Turning blue is build up in 3 different key factors.

1. Awareness training
2. Network of professionals from the maritime and justice sector
3. A job matching / informational platform

2. Target Groups

The Turning Blue Intervention involves a diverse set of actors. Each group brings unique expertise, perspectives, and challenges to the reintegration process. Understanding who they are and how they operate is essential for trainers, since collaboration across groups is the foundation of the programme's success.

2.1. Prison Professionals

Prison professionals include educators, social workers, rehabilitation officers, and custodial staff who interact daily with inmates. They are often the first point of contact for participants in the Turning Blue programme.

- **Profile**: Experienced in correctional systems, but with varying levels of exposure to labour market developments.
- **Motivations**: Support rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and contribute to more constructive prison environments.
- **Challenges**: High workloads, institutional constraints, and limited knowledge about new industries such as the Blue Economy.

2.2. Career Counsellors

Career counsellors are specialists in vocational guidance, coaching, and skills assessment. They play a central role in building realistic career pathways for participants.

- **Profile**: Often trained in psychology, social work, or career development. Familiar with labour market trends and training opportunities.
- **Motivations**: Empower individuals to take ownership of their future and match them with sustainable employment.
- **Challenges**: Balancing participants' aspirations with realistic opportunities, dealing with low confidence or limited formal education, and ensuring continuity after release.

2.3. Blue Economy Stakeholders

Blue Economy stakeholders include employers, industry associations, training providers, and innovators working in sustainable ocean-related sectors. These range from fisheries and aquaculture to coastal tourism, renewable energy, shipping, and marine conservation.

- **Profile**: Businesses and organisations focused on sustainability, growth, and innovation within maritime sectors.

- **Motivations**: Secure a skilled workforce, contribute to corporate social responsibility (CSR), and strengthen the sector's sustainability credentials.
- **Challenges**: Limited awareness of reintegration programmes, concerns about hiring ex-prisoners, and the need for specific technical skill sets.

2.4. Civil Society Organisations (after-detention support)

Civil society organisations include NGOs, community-based initiatives, charities, and faith-based groups that provide holistic support to individuals post-detention.

- **Profile:** Active at the local level, offering services such as housing, mental health support, addiction counselling, and community integration.
- **Motivations:** Reduce social exclusion, foster resilience, and support successful reintegration.
- **Challenges:** Often underfunded and dependent on short-term projects; may lack sector-specific knowledge about the Blue Economy.

3. Understanding the Blue Economy

The Sustainable Blue Economy refers to the sustainable use of ocean, sea, and coastal resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs, while preserving the health of marine and coastal ecosystems. For trainers, it is essential to provide participants with not only knowledge about this sector but also inspiration, showing how their skills and motivation can connect to real opportunities.

3.1. Definition and Principles

The Sustainable Blue Economy is guided by three main principles:

- **Environmental Sustainability**: economic activities must safeguard marine ecosystems and biodiversity.
- **Social Inclusion**: the sector should create fair, inclusive, and accessible employment opportunities.
- **Economic Growth and Innovation**: promoting new jobs, businesses, and technologies that respect ecological boundaries.

It is not only about traditional sectors like fishing or shipping but also about emerging industries such as offshore renewable energy, marine biotechnology, and eco-tourism.

3.2 Relevance for Reintegration and Employment

The Blue Economy holds particular promise for reintegration because:

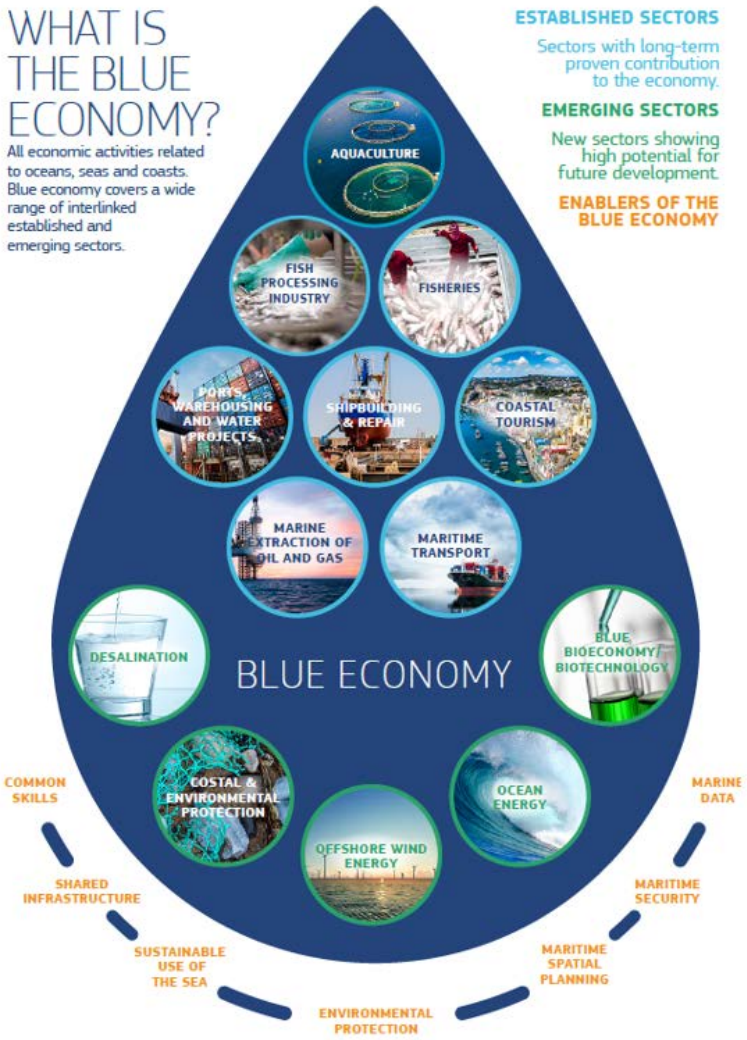
- Many sectors face labour shortages, opening opportunities for new entrants.
- Jobs range from entry-level positions requiring basic training to skilled technical roles, offering multiple entry points.

Skills learned in prison (discipline, teamwork, technical training in carpentry, mechanics, cooking, etc.) can often be transferred to Blue Economy contexts.

3.3 Key Sectors and Opportunities

The Blue Economy spans a wide variety of fields, many of which have skill needs that can be matched with (ex-)prisoners' abilities and training potential. Key sectors include:

- **Fisheries and Aquaculture**: Sustainable Fishing and fish farming, processing, and distribution.
- **Coastal and Maritime Tourism**: Hospitality, guiding, and eco-tourism services in coastal areas.
- **Renewable Ocean Energy**: Offshore wind, tidal, and wave energy projects.
- **Maritime Transport and Logistics**: Shipping, port services, and supply chain management.
- **Marine Biotechnology**: Use of marine organisms for pharmaceuticals, food, and industry.
- **Marine Conservation and Environmental Protection**: Coastal clean-up, habitat restoration, and monitoring projects.



4. The Turning Blue Transition Model

4.1. Rationale and Objectives

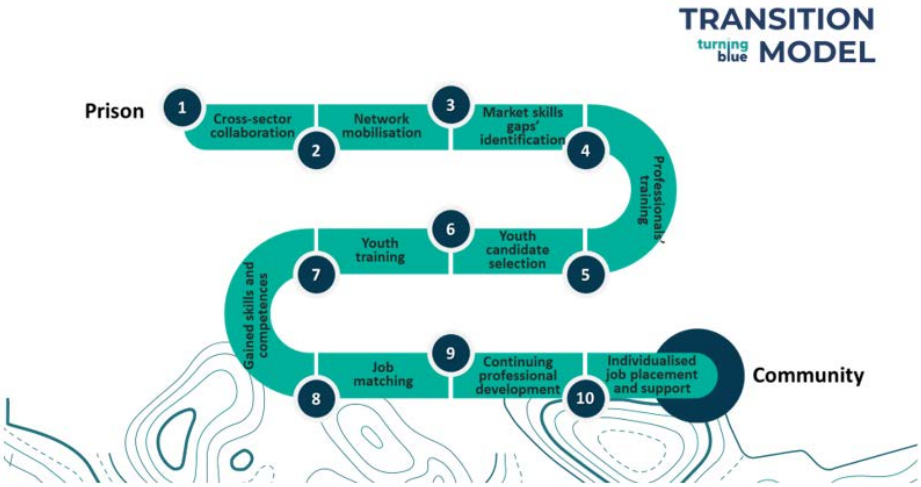
The 'Transition Model for the Blue Economy' underpins the Turning Blue Intervention Model, which aims to create new mechanisms and tools to ensure the sustainability, scaling-up and transferability of the project's main results.

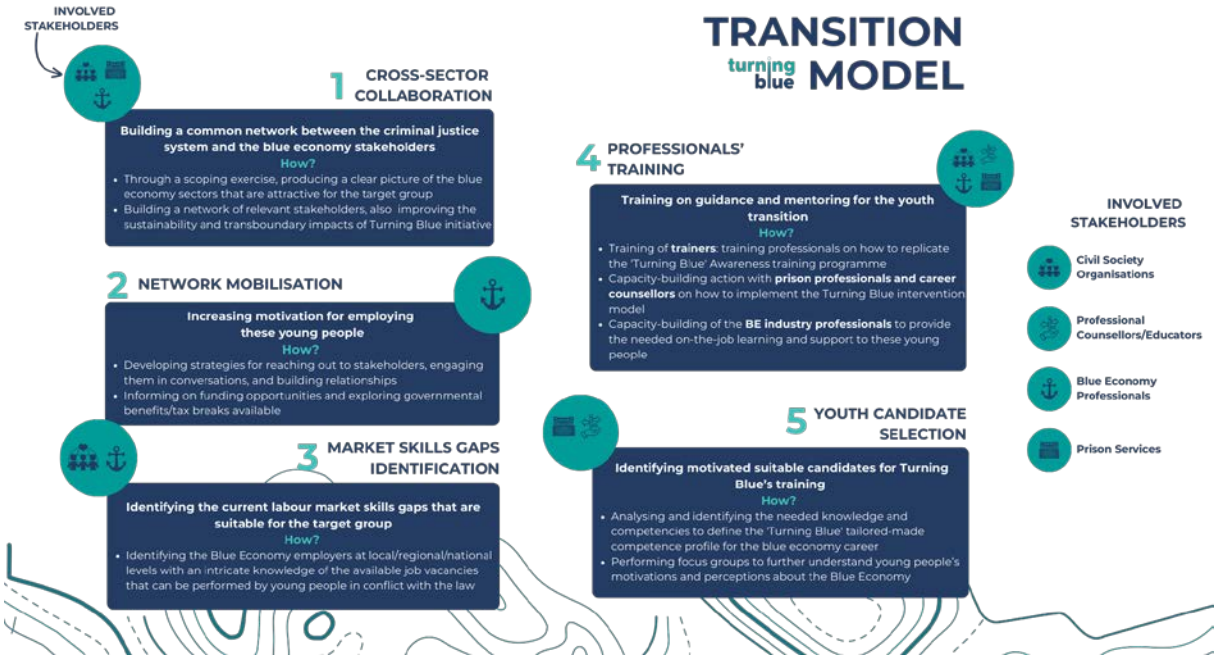
The Transition Model presented main objective is to conceptualise a clear, articulated EU-wide process to ensure that the collaboration between prison services, professional counsellors, BE sectors and civil society organisations providing after-detention support to these young people is well understood and successfully implemented.

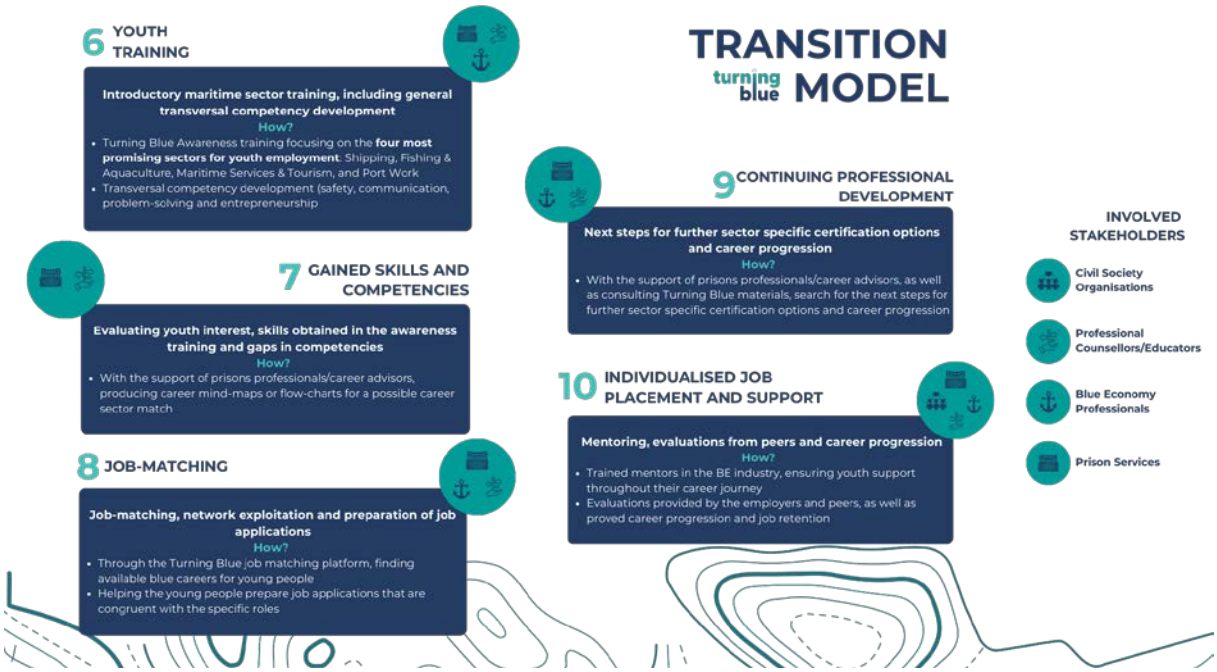
Its specific objectives are to:

- Provide an overview of the issues and challenges related to different type of transition processes occurring in these young people's lives, and how these transitions interconnect and affect sustainable reintegration into society.
- Detail the Turning Blue Transition Model and its unique approach to integrating young justice-involved individuals into the BE sectors.
- Identify and recommend the necessary adaptations for the relevant sectors of the blue economy, including a description of the main stakeholders and their responsibilities.
- Present the challenges and opportunities related to the inclusion of justice-involved young people in BE careers.

4.2. Step-by-Step Guide to Implementation


TRANSITION
turning blue MODEL
Prison
1
Cross-sector collaboration
2
Network mobilisation
3
Market skills gaps' identification
4
Professionals' training
5
Youth candidate selection
6
Youth training
7
Gained skills and competences
8
Job matching
9
Continuing professional development
10
Individualised job placement and support
Community


INVOLVED STAKEHOLDERS
TRANSITION
turning blue MODEL
1 CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION
Building a common network between the criminal justice system and the blue economy stakeholders
How?
• Through a scoping exercise, producing a clear picture of the blue economy sectors that are attractive for the target group
• Building a network of relevant stakeholders, also improving the sustainability and transboundary impacts of Turning Blue initiative
2 NETWORK MOBILISATION
Increasing motivation for employing these young people
How?
• Developing strategies for reaching out to stakeholders, engaging them in conversations, and building relationships
• Informing on funding opportunities and exploring governmental benefits/tax breaks available
3 MARKET SKILLS GAPS IDENTIFICATION
Identifying the current labour market skills gaps that are suitable for the target group
How?
• Identifying the Blue Economy employers at local/regional/national levels with an intricate knowledge of the available job vacancies that can be performed by young people in conflict with the law
4 PROFESSIONALS' TRAINING
Training on guidance and mentoring for the youth transition
How?
• Training of trainers: training professionals on how to replicate the 'Turning Blue' Awareness training programme
• Capacity-building action with prison professionals and career counsellors on how to implement the Turning Blue intervention model
• Capacity-building of the BE industry professionals to provide the needed on-the-job learning and support to these young people
5 YOUTH CANDIDATE SELECTION
Identifying motivated suitable candidates for Turning Blue's training
How?
• Analysing and identifying the needed knowledge and competencies to define the 'Turning Blue' tailored-made competence profile for the blue economy career
• Performing focus groups to further understand young people's motivations and perceptions about the Blue Economy
INVOLVED STAKEHOLDERS
Civil Society Organisations
Professional Counsellors/Educators
Blue Economy Professionals
Prison Services



4.3. Roles and Responsibilities of Professionals

In order for a transition model to be successfully implemented it is required the enthusiastic collaboration of multiple sectors, professionals, partners and organisations to ensure the successful socio-labour re-entry of young people into BE based trainings and roles.

Prison Services

Prison services play an important role in ensuring the successful socio-labour transition of those serving sentences back into the community. This is reflected in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), which emphasises that “prison administrations and other competent authorities should offer education, vocational training and work” (Rule 4.2) to inmates, furthermore, “vocational training in useful trades shall be provided for prisoners able to profit” (Rule 98.2), namely to “maintain or increase the prisoners’ ability to earn an honest living after release” (Rule 98.1). At the European level specifically, the European Social Charter (revised) further exemplifies individuals’ right to work, and right to vocational guidance, which should not be forfeited while serving a sentence.
Prison services thus play a primary role in achieving the smooth implementation of transition models by ensuring that legislation and policies concerning training and work are in place within their institutions. They are further pivotal initiators of the early stages of the transition into work. In this sense, prison services responsibilities may include ensuring the availability of training and education during sentencing, building their

network to establish partnerships with organisations/ companies/employers (in BE sectors) and promoting the benefits of offering offenders a second chance. Prison services should focus on upskilling their staff through continued professional development opportunities to mentor and guide individuals into training and employment, as well as implement newly developed tools and initiatives to streamline the transition process.

Prison practitioners

Prison practitioners (including correctional counsellors) are integral to the success of the transition model due to their unique position of direct contact with youths during their sentences. While their roles and responsibilities may vary between countries, this direct interaction enables them not only to motivate the young individuals they engage with, but also to provide crucial support in identifying suitable career paths. Consequently, they play a vital role in recommending the appropriate education or training to be provided both during and after the youths' sentences, as well as assisting in identifying employment opportunities. If equipped with appropriate knowledge of the BE, through networking with BE professionals, prison practitioners will be better prepared to assist at various stages of the blue transition model. With this enhanced knowledge they have the potential to assist in: with youth candidate selection, via observing and assessing youth competencies, identifying motivated students for training, and assisting with soft skills to improve job attainment prospects as these young people transition into the blue labour force.

Blue Economy professionals

Blue economy professionals possess sector-specific knowledge that enables them to offer guidance, training, and mentorship to youths seeking to transition into a blue career. They therefore occupy a unique position to collaborate at various stages within the transition model. Their roles may include, identifying skills shortages in BE sectors, providing competency guidelines specific to their profession, guiding training programmes, and offering volunteer opportunities, work placements, traineeships, and entry-level employment. Additionally, they can provide ongoing mentoring and career guidance.

During the initial project research, consultative sessions were conducted with identified BE stakeholders. These sessions revealed key potential professional employers (see Table 1), and a starting point to grow the TB network of BE professionals, progressively throughout the project.

5. The Turning Blue Job Matching Platform

5.1. Purpose and Added Value of the Platform

Who is it for?

- Professionals in detention centres
- Youngsters in closed (detention) settings / in conflict with the law
- Maritime organisations that are open to work with this type of youngsters
- Any other interested people, who want to get inspired by this project

How is the platform set up?
The platform can be divided into two parts: a fixed part and a variable part.

The fixed part of the platform contains all the information that stays more or less the same over time. This includes the general information about career pathways, the different educations, certificates and schools, the different maritime sectors and organisations, exercises and theory for the youngsters to prepare for maritime education and jobs, and helpful information for professionals in both the maritime and the detention sectors. In short, this covers the public information described in section 5.2 (Resources, Pathways and Education), everything except the job opportunities and the youth profiles used for matching.

The other part of the platform is the constantly changing offer of job opportunities and the availability of active youngsters on the Turning Blue platform. This part is kept up to date by the users themselves: Employers create and publish job opportunities (manually, or with support from an AI tool that scans relevant websites), and Youth Representatives create and update the profiles of the young people they support. The Country Manager does not fill in this content, but oversees it, as described below.

What is the role of the moderator?
Every country will have its own moderator. It is the responsibility of the moderator to make sure the content of the platform is up to date, this means that it might do smaller updates on fixed parts, for example schools might change their courses and requirements for specific jobs might change.

It is also the task of the moderator to check if the email addresses of the contact persons at maritime and detention organisations are still in use.

An other task for the moderator is to delete non active / out dated accounts.

This does not mean that the moderator is a content creator, but the moderator does have an active role in reaching the right partners / people to make sure all the content is on the platform and up to date.

5.2. Key Features and Functionalities

The Turning Blue Job Matching Platform (JMP) is built to be simple to use for all target groups described in this manual. Its main functionalities are described below. Please note that the platform is still in its pilot phase: some functionalities described here may be refined before the end of the project.

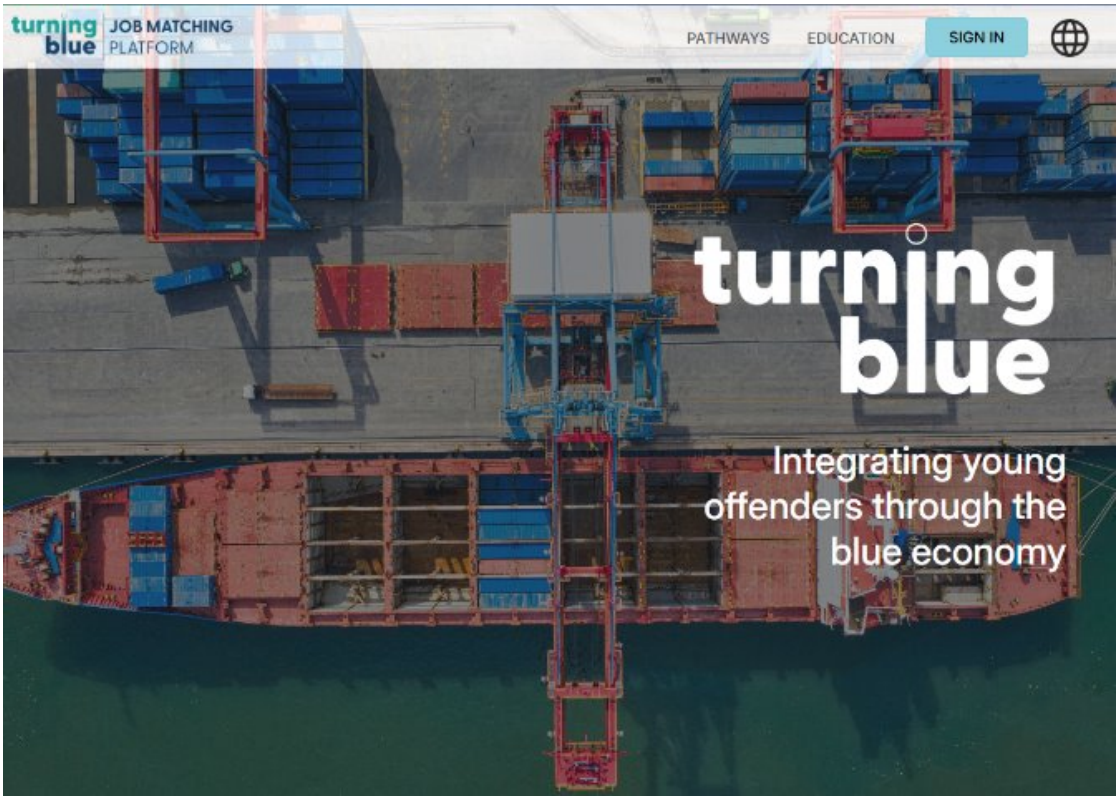
Multilingual access
The platform is available in the official languages of the project's partner countries and includes an automatic translation feature, so professionals, employers and young people can all use it in their own language.

Two implementation phases
The platform is used in two different phases, each with its own level of access.

- **During the project:** a controlled environment with limited registrations. Youth profiles and organisations are restricted to Turning Blue participants, and access is limited to the Turning Blue network to allow for testing, safety checks and validation. Only youth taking part in the Awareness Training are accepted, and each partner country manages access through its own Country Manager.
- **After the project:** a fully open environment. Any young person under 30 who is interested in Blue Economy opportunities can be registered by a Youth Representative, any employer can register and publish vacancies, and the platform is designed to scale beyond the project.

Public information (no account needed)
Some parts of the platform are visible to any visitor, even without an account. The horizontal menu on the homepage gives access to:

- **Pathways:** a list of job opportunities and what is needed to qualify for them, including job title, description, required skills and location.
- **Education:** a summary of educational institutions per sector (Fishing & Aquaculture, Shipping, Port Work, and Maritime Services & Tourism), including where they are located, how long courses take and where to obtain specific certificates.



The public front page of the Job Matching Platform

Four user roles

The platform recognises four types of users, each with a different set of rights and tasks.

Overview of the four user profiles on the platform

- **Public view (no profile):** visitors can browse the public information described above.
- **Country Manager:** oversees all stakeholders and users in a country, approves or refuses new registrations, and monitors overall platform use. This is the role referred to as “moderator” in section 5.1.

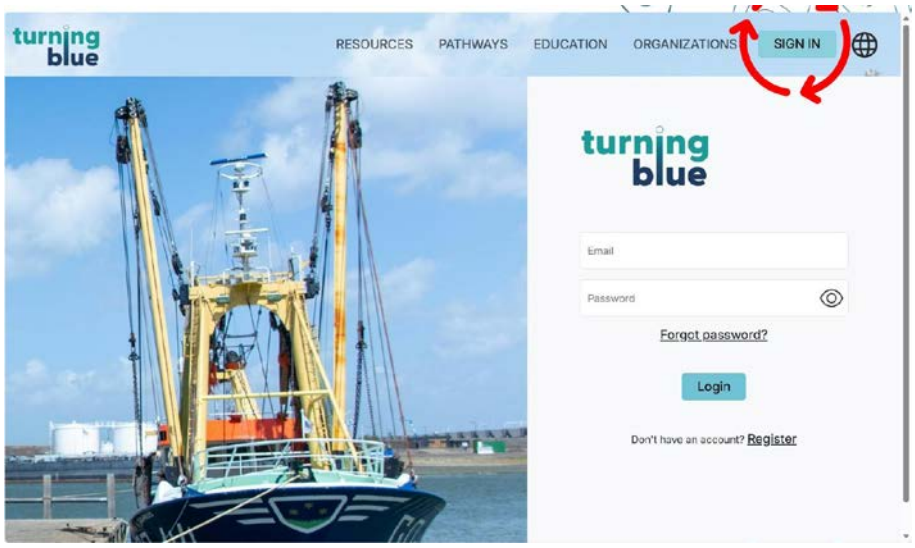
- **Youth Representative (Prison Professional / Career Counsellor):** creates and manages profiles for the young people they support, and helps them search for and apply to job opportunities.
- **Employer (Blue Economy professional or organisation):** creates a company profile, publishes job opportunities and searches for candidate profiles.

Matching
Employers can create job opportunities manually on the platform. In addition, an AI tool scans relevant websites to help generate further opportunities. A match is created when the profile entered by a Youth Representative and an opportunity entered by an Employer correspond; both parties then receive an automatic notification.

5.3. User Guidelines (Step-by-Step)

This section explains, step by step, how each type of user works with the platform.

Step 1. Open the platform and sign in
The platform can be reached at https://turningblue.cloudscape.software/ (in the future it will also be accessible through www.turning-blue.org). The homepage is public and gives access to general information about the Job Matching Platform. From here, users with an existing account can sign in; the process only requires an email address and a password.



Signing in to the Job Matching Platform

Step 2. Create an account
Users without an account can register as either:
- **Prison Professional / Career Guide** (Youth Representative), or
- **Business Entity** (Blue Economy company or professional / Employer).

During the pilot phase, new registrations must be approved by the Country Manager of that country, so it can take some time before a new account becomes active.

Step 3. For Country Managers

Each partner country has at least one Country Manager (the "moderator" role described in section 5.1), who is responsible for:

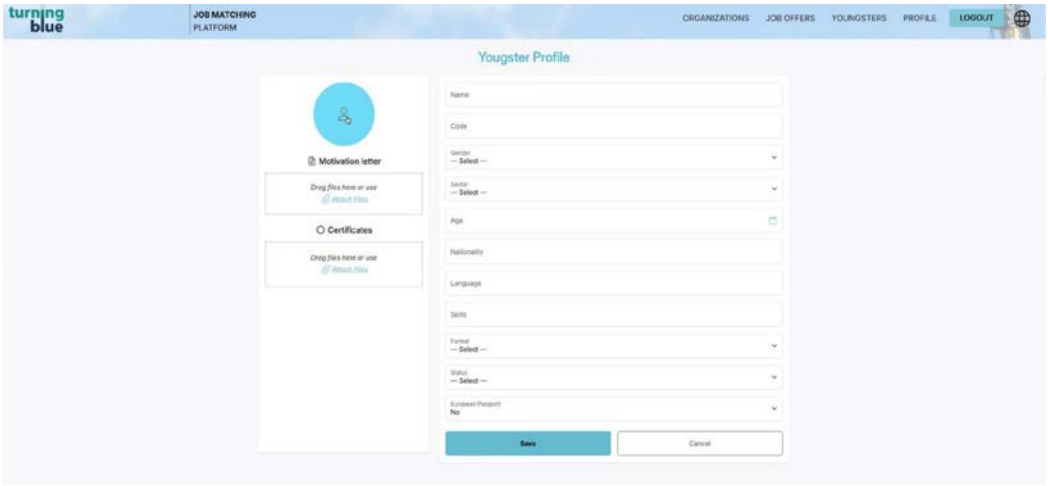
- accepting or refusing new members (Youth Representatives and Employers)
- overseeing the youth-job matches made within their country
- monitoring the activity of all users in their country
- keeping the fixed content of the platform accurate and up to date, and removing inactive or outdated accounts.

Country Manager view: overview of registered users

Step 4. For Prison Professionals / Youth Representatives

Once signed in, a Youth Representative can:

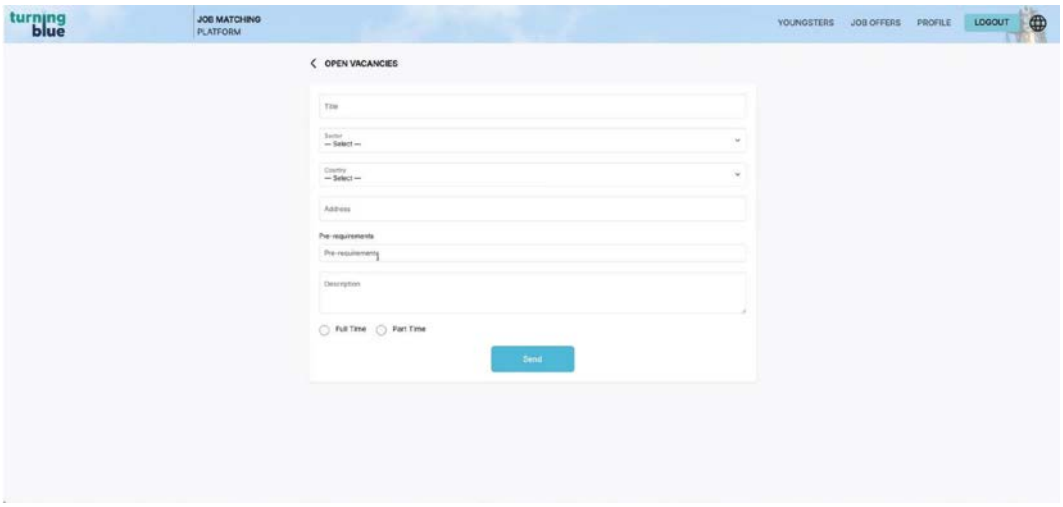
- create a profile for each young person they support, including gender, age, sector of interest, nationality, language, skills, preferred job format, passport, motivation letter and relevant certificates. The young person's name is never shown to employers; only the rest of the profile is visible to them
- search for job opportunities and companies that match the young person's profile
- publish the profile so that employers can find it, and connect directly with Blue Economy companies
- receive an automatic notification whenever a match is generated.



Creating a profile for a young person

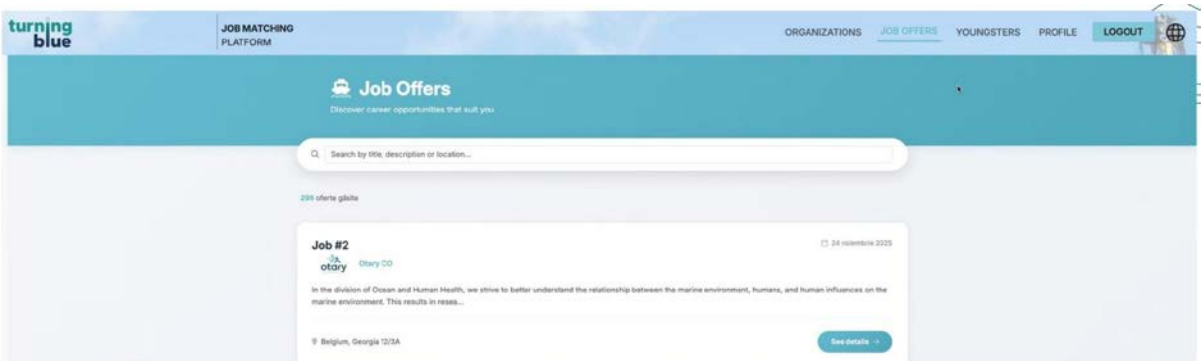
Step 5. For Blue Economy Employers
Once signed in, an Employer can:

- create and complete an organisation profile, including sector, country, contact details, website and a short description
- create and publish job opportunities, indicating the title, sector, country, address, pre-requirements, description and whether the position is full-time or part-time
- search for candidate profiles, without seeing the young people's names
- receive an automatic notification whenever a match is generated.



Creating a new job opportunity

Step 6. Browse and make the match
Both Youth Representatives and Employers can browse the list of published job opportunities at any time.



Browsing the list of job offers

A match is made once the profile created by a Youth Representative and the opportunity created by an Employer correspond. Once a match is found, both parties are notified and can get in touch to develop the opportunity further and prepare the young person for employment, either before release or as part of the transition process.

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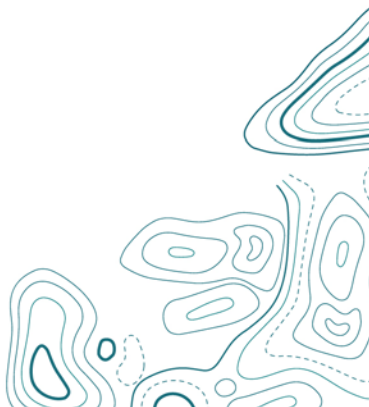

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