



**The project:** The need to promote a low carbon economy provides many business opportunities. The Small Business Law points out that the EU and Member States should allow SMEs to seize these opportunities. There are many examples of good practices that enhance the capacity of green and blue companies, but unfortunately, many of them are not adopted in many areas and remain unused. The aim of GRESS is to improve the competitiveness policies of SMEs by enhancing their ability to activate and set up sustainable and competitive enterprises and spin-off businesses in the green economy.

**The partners will implement a five-step policy learning process:**

- 1) recording the state of green growth in each region;
- 2) sharing experiences and identifying good practices for mutual learning;
- 3) peer review and classification of relevant practices by SMEs;
- 4) creating ideas for political intervention with interregional knowledge transfer
- 5) development and monitoring of regional action plans.

**The improvements aim:**

- to create more opportunities for SMEs' in the green and blue economy,
- to increase the number of participants and improve the quality of training programs for green startups,
- to attract more SMEs to participate in public procurement of green products and services,
- to provide access to SMEs to venture capital outside the local region, making cities and regions more attractive for young entrepreneurs in the green areas,
- to increase the number of competing start-ups and spin-off in the green economy.

**The role of the Municipality of Piraeus**

Piraeus is considered to be the maritime capital of Greece and specializes in the smart blue economy, including sustainable fishing, transport, clean technologies, ICT, new materials, shipbuilding, and tourism.

The Region of Attica and Piraeus will focus on measures for green and blue start-ups. Until now, this has been achieved by the BlueGrowth Initiative which supports business start-ups associated with the blue economy and the environment and by the newly established business innovation center for blue growth (blue lab).

The participation of the Municipality of Piraeus in GRESS is expected to contribute to the production of quality projects to support start-ups, the implementation of smart and sustainable logistics, the promotion of environmental technology and ICT and the creation of new and sustainable materials and the construction of low emission vessels.

By participating in the GRESS project, the Municipality of Piraeus will acquire considerable experience in dealing with capacity building measures, conservation measures of blue start-ups and facilitate SMEs' access to funding sources in this area.

**Partnership:** Municipality of Kristiansand - Norway (lead partner), Municipality of Piraeus (Greece), West Pomeranian Region (Poland), Metropolitan city of Bologna (Italy), Foundation Cleantech Bulgaria (Bulgaria).

**Duration:** 30 months, August 2019 – January 2022 (1<sup>st</sup> phase)

**Total Budget:** € 1,054,671.00 €

**Municipality of Piraeus:** 166,840.00 €