

ESG — LAB —

NEWSLETTER VOL. 6



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1. Successful Event : “SMEs, ESG and the Blue Economy”

A highly successful event entitled “Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), ESG and the Blue Economy” was held on Friday, 5 June 2026, at the Piraeus Municipal Gallery, as part of the “Sea Days 2026” initiative organized by the Municipality of Piraeus. The event was organized within the framework of the ESG LAB by project partners SARONIS and Ethos Lab.

The event brought together representatives of local government, academics, sustainability and ESG experts, executives from Blue Economy businesses, business consultants, professionals active in sustainability, entrepreneurship and environmental governance, as well as citizens interested in ESG and the Blue Economy.



The conference was honored by the presence of Mr. Dimitris Karydis, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Piraeus, who delivered the opening remarks and highlighted the importance of ESG and the Blue Economy for SMEs operating in Piraeus

A welcoming message was also sent by Ms. Alexandra Palli, President of CSR HELLAS, who emphasized the importance of understanding the ESG framework for SMEs as they transition towards sustainable business models and improve access to financing. Regarding the Blue Economy, she noted that the challenges are even greater due to the large number of SMEs and micro-enterprises operating in the sector.

The event was moderated by Dr. Nikolaos Melios, ESG LAB partner and Co-Founder of the Ethos Lab Centre for Governance & Sustainability Research, while the overall organization and coordination of the event were supported by Ms. Maria Psyrris, ESG LAB Project Officer at SARONIS SA.



Roundtable Discussion: Blue Economy, ESG and New Perspectives

The first panel focused on the challenges and opportunities of transitioning to more sustainable business models, with particular emphasis on the Blue Economy and the integration of ESG criteria.

The discussion was moderated by Ms. Nektaria Marava, External Expert at SARONIS SA. During the discussion, participants highlighted both the challenges and opportunities arising from the integration of ESG criteria into the Blue Economy, as well as the role of innovation, circular economy practices and maritime spatial planning in supporting the transition towards more sustainable business models. Special emphasis was placed on SMEs' needs for new skills, sustainability data utilization, enhanced competitiveness and adaptation to evolving European ESG requirements and standards.



Speakers included:

Stella Sophia Kyvelou-Chiotini, Professor, Department of Economic and Regional Development, Panteion University; CEO, SDMED Maris Angelos Tsakanikas, Professor, National Technical University of Athens (NTUA); Director, IOBE

Konstantina Kottaridi, Professor, University of Piraeus; Director of the MSc Programme in Bioeconomy, Circular Economy and Sustainable Development; Director of the Sustainable Development and Circular Economy Laboratory

Nikos Avlonas, Founder and President, Centre for Sustainability & Excellence (CSE)

Roundtable Discussion: Blue Economy Stakeholders and Businesses Discuss the ESG Community of Practice

The second panel brought together representatives from businesses, organizations and institutions active in the fields of the Blue Economy, sustainability and entrepreneurship.



The discussion was moderated by Dr. Nikolaos Melios (Ethos Lab). Speakers explained how their organizations are connected to sustainable development, the Blue Economy and ESG principles, while sharing experiences, challenges and valuable lessons learned from their professional activities. Their contributions highlighted the importance of collaboration among businesses, institutions and local communities in creating a more sustainable and resilient development model.

Participants included:

Theoni Panteli, Head of Entrepreneurship & Blue Growth Department, Municipality of Piraeus

Marina Alysandratou, Business Consultant and Business Architect

Christina Kalatha, M.Sc. Forestry and Environmental Scientist, Director of Development Programmes Management, Municipalities Cooperation Network of the Attica Islands Regional Unit

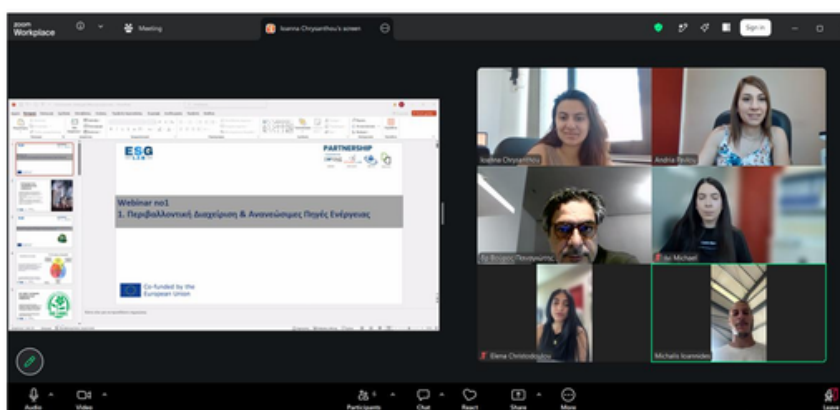
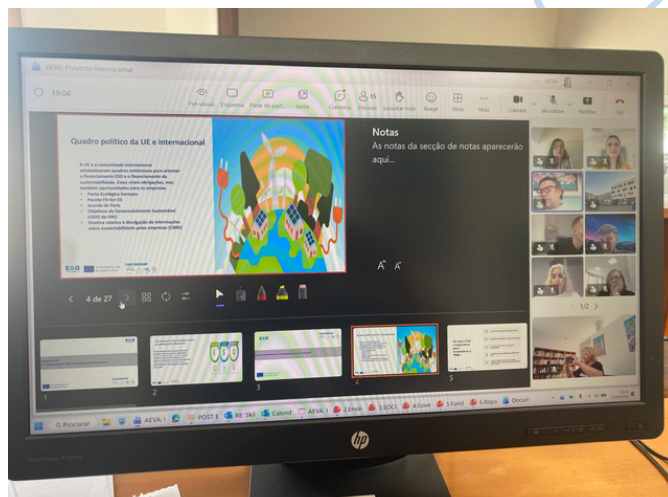
Eliza Karampetian-Nikotian, Public Relations & Advertising Officer, Safe Water Sports

Nikos Michalitsis, M.A. Communication Specialist, Strategic Communications Consultant and Vice President of the Institute of Greek Food Culture and Gastronomy (IEG)

2. Advancing to the Webinar Phase

The ESG LAB project has entered the implementation phase of its webinar programme, marking an important step in supporting SMEs on their journey towards sustainable business practices.

Webinar in Portugal by Dialogue Diversity



Webinar in Cyprus by CIBIT

Building on the educational resources developed throughout the project, the webinars provide participants with practical knowledge and hands-on guidance to strengthen their understanding of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles and their application within the Blue Economy sector.

ESG LAB WEBINAR SERIES



— 5 KEY THEMATIC AREAS —

1



Environmental
Management &
Renewable Energy

2



Natural Disasters,
Climate Change &
ISO Standards

3



The Social and
Governance
Dimensions of ESG

4



ESG Reporting
for SMEs

5



ESG Funding &
Financial Planning

Designed for SME managers and employees, the webinars combine theoretical knowledge with practical examples, encouraging active participation and the exchange of experiences. By strengthening participants' ESG competencies, the programme contributes to improving organisational resilience, enhancing competitiveness, increasing investment readiness, and supporting the long-term adoption of sustainable practices across the Blue Economy ecosystem.

3. Raising ESG Awareness among Students at SAEK Piraeus

As part of the dissemination activities of the project, an informative session was held with students of SAEK Piraeus, aiming to introduce them to the concept of ESG and highlight its growing importance for businesses, society, and sustainable development.



For the majority of the students, the term ESG was completely new. The session therefore provided an excellent opportunity to discover what ESG represents, why it has become a key priority at European and international level, and how it influences the future of employment, entrepreneurship, and responsible business practices.

The session successfully increased awareness of ESG principles among young learners and encouraged them to view sustainability not only as a global challenge but also as an opportunity for innovation, professional development, and positive social impact.

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