



Euronext and JA Europe expand the blue economy challenge to reach more young entrepreneurs

Two new countries are added to the pan-European entrepreneurship programme for this academic year

Amsterdam, Brussels, Copenhagen, Dublin, Lisbon, London, Milan, Oslo, Paris – 3 November 2021 – Building on a successful pilot during the last school year 2020-21, Euronext and JA Europe today announced the expansion of their entrepreneurship education programme, The Blue Challenge, to Denmark and Italy. Euronext and JA Europe will now be able to boost financial literacy and encourage innovation to limit climate change and to foster the Blue Economy amongst young entrepreneurs in nine countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The programme aims to inspire students aged 16 to 18 about sustainable finance and help them develop core skills such as teamwork, problem solving and entrepreneurial skills. At the same time, this is a unique opportunity for Euronext employees to engage directly with Europe's youth in schools through regular mentoring and coaching activities.

From November 2021 until May 2022, 250 JA Mini-Company Programme students in these nine countries will participate in a number of activities educating them on the Blue Economy and financial literacy. All this will culminate in a European-level final competition for the Blue Innovation Award. Themed e-mentoring and webinars will be provided by Euronext volunteers in two key areas:

- **Financial literacy:** As a market infrastructure, Euronext is at the centre of financial markets and communities. Improving the financial knowledge and skills of young Europeans will impact the broader community of stakeholders at the local level, including businesses, teachers, parents and the wider school community.
- **Climate change and the Blue Economy:** All participating countries are adjacent to the ocean, and it is vital to protect the resource base on which economic activities depend. Euronext's goal is to be a leader in advancing the Blue Economy to address the threats to the oceans and contribute to enhanced coastal resilience.

One mini-company from each participating country will be selected to compete in a final online challenge in May 2022. The "Blue Innovation Award" is given to the mini-company that best embodies a sustainable use of the ocean resources for economic growth. Last year, the winner was 'Marival UB', an innovative youth enterprise formed by students from Romsdal Upper Secondary School on the northwest coast of Norway. Their product allows the fishermen to locate their lost fishing equipment immediately thanks to an echo sounder, therefore reducing waste in our oceans. Finding such solutions to climate change-related issues will be highlighted even more in this year's edition of the programme.

Salvatore Nigro, CEO JA Europe, said: *"The blue economy is key to the global efforts of climate change mitigation and developing sustainable future business models. Together with Euronext, we want to inspire the next generation of Europeans to embrace the opportunities of the blue economy while ensuring that they are equipped with the necessary financial literacy skills to develop viable businesses."*



Stéphane Boujnah, CEO and Chairman of the Managing Board of Euronext N.V., said: *"The programme is unique in equipping youth across Europe with concrete business skills while inspiring innovation in the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth. It allows the participating students to take advantage of the mentorship from Euronext volunteers, benefitting from their mentors' real-life experiences as they build their ideas. I am sure that it helps each of these students, as individuals, to reflect personally on their next steps, on how to combine motivation and drive to create something with a larger purpose that can be beneficial for society and, hopefully, the planet as a whole."*

Notes to Editors:

1 Climate change and the Blue Economy - As an Official Supporter of the United Nations' Sustainable Stock Exchanges initiative since 2015, Euronext is firmly committed to the UN's "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The Blue Economy is one of the Sustainable Development Goals, embraced in Euronext's ESG roadmap, specifically "Goal 14: Life Below Water". On 2 June 2020, Euronext became the first exchange to sign the nine Ocean Principles with the ambition to take a leading role in advancing the Blue Economy. Euronext contributed to the UN Global Compact Sustainable Oceans Business Group formalising the UN Blue Bond principles, available since April 2020.

2 Our Society - Sustainable Finance is one of the key pillars of the Euronext Strategic Plan, and the commitment to developing ESG initiatives has been formalised around five impact areas: *Our Markets, Our Partners, Our People, Our Society and Our Environment*. The Euronext Blue Challenge is part of the company's *Our Society* ESG material impact area, one of five comprising Euronext's Empowering Sustainable Growth dual ambition: "drive investment in innovative, sustainable products and services through secure and transparent markets, in continuous collaboration with our financial community"; and "inspire and promote tangible sustainable practices within the company and towards our community, by respecting and developing our people and by supporting our ecosystem". Under the *Our Society* scope, Euronext supports institutions in each of its main locations, focusing on two key areas: financial literacy and the Blue Economy, including oceans, seas and marine resources, with Euronext employees actively encouraged to contribute to local communities.

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About Euronext

Euronext is the leading pan-European market infrastructure, connecting local economies to global capital markets, to accelerate innovation and sustainable growth. It operates regulated exchanges in Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal. With close to 1,920 listed issuers and around €6.5 trillion in market capitalisation as of end September 2021, it has an unmatched blue chip franchise and a strong diverse domestic and international client base. Euronext operates regulated and transparent equity and derivatives markets, one of Europe's leading electronic fixed income trading markets and is the largest centre for debt and funds listings in the world. Its total product offering includes Equities, FX, Exchange Traded Funds, Warrants & Certificates, Bonds, Derivatives, Commodities and Indices. Euronext also leverages its expertise in running markets by providing technology and managed services to third parties. In addition to its main regulated market, it also operates a number of junior markets, simplifying access to listing for SMEs. Euronext provides custody and settlement services through central securities depositories in Denmark, Italy, Norway and Portugal.

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About JA Europe

[JA Europe](https://www.ja-europe.org) is the largest non-profit in Europe dedicated to preparing young people for employment and entrepreneurship. JA Europe is a member of JA Worldwide® which for 100 years has delivered hands on, experiential learning in entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy. JA creates pathways for employability, job creation and financial success. Last school year, the JA network in Europe reached almost 4 million young people across 40 countries with the support of nearly 100,000 business volunteers and over 140,000 teachers/educators.



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