



Training students for the wind energy workforce

Promising Practice

Implemented by:
Maritime School Complex in Darlowo

Where:
Poland

Status:
Started in September 2023

Summary:
The programme provided students at the Maritime School Complex in Darlowo with additional qualifications related to the offshore industry and wind turbine operation.

Overview

The Maritime School Complex in Darlowo is the oldest of Poland's three secondary maritime schools and the only one with a training ship. Over 4,000 graduates have already graduated from the school. Many of these sailors, officers and captains work on seas and oceans worldwide. The school provides the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical preparation for the profession of a sailor, ship mechanic and navigator.

Description

Getting into the windmills

The Maritime School Complex in Darlowo has been implementing the project titled "Get into the windmills and perform at the highest level" since 1 September 2023. The project partners are the Polish Wind Energy Association (PWEA) and Vulcan Training and Consultancy (Vulcan). The project is aimed at adult students of sailing professions, i.e. marine navigator technicians and ship mechanic technicians. From 2025, offshore wind farms will begin operating in Poland. Therefore, the wind industry will be looking for experienced and qualified employees who will join the market both at the stage of farm construction and later during their operation.

Additional qualifications

Since the school has many years of experience training maritime staff operating on vessels worldwide, providing students with additional qualifications related to offshoring and wind turbine operation will make them sought-after specialists both in Poland and abroad. That is why the school established cooperation with PWEA and Vulcan, which specialize in training and are certified centres for the offshore industry.

Necessary training

As part of the project, students will receive the training necessary to work in the operation of offshore wind farms. The training package is worth over PLN 20,000 per person. Additionally, due to the implementation of the task, the school will host a series of meetings with industry representatives. As a result, young people will learn the specifics of work and establish real contacts with employers. The Maritime School Complex in Darlowo is the only school in Poland that carries out this type of project.

Objectives

The project's primary goal is to provide additional qualifications to enable students to work in companies in the country and worldwide. Another goal is to expand the school's educational offerings and respond to the needs of the labour market. Last but not least, the project aims to establish cooperation with employers and industry representatives in Poland and abroad.

Establishing a training centre for offshore wind farm specialists

The whole world is struggling with problems related to lack of energy. The Baltic Sea has enormous wind energy potential. The Danes built the first wind farms in the Baltic Sea in 1991. Poles still needed this type of farm, so decisions were made to create Polish offshore wind farms. It is estimated that the construction of the investment at sea will create 77,000 new jobs. Poland will need trained specialists to operate these farms. Therefore, it is essential to establish training centres in this field. Our project is a pilot, and we hope our activities will become the basis for creating training centres in Poland.

In the port area of Ustka, there are plans to establish a Centre of Competence for Maritime Wind Energy. This centre will train future employees to maintain and develop offshore wind power infrastructure. Due to the significant demand for skilled personnel required to operate offshore wind farms, leveraging the educational background and experience of the Maritime School Complex in Darlowo is valuable. The school is ready to provide education and training tailored to the needs of the maritime wind energy sector. It is equipped with the necessary tools for training in the Maritime Educational Unit Type C and holds recognition from the Ministry responsible for maritime education. It has also implemented the ISO Quality Management System. The facility includes laboratories for mechanical and navigational simulators, naval rescue and communication.

The initiative to train specialists operating offshore wind farms will contribute to Poland gaining energy independence. Since the offshore industry will need thousands of qualified specialists, it will create an innovative training system to allow graduates to obtain high-paid jobs.

Outcomes and impact

Obtaining additional qualifications for students of floating classes.

It is expected that 60 students will be qualified to work in the offshore industry and operate offshore wind farms.

Gained experience and established cooperation with the wind energy industry

It is expected that that young trainees will establish contact with representatives of companies working in the industry. Furthermore, thanks to the implementation of the project, the school will be able to introduce a new education model in Poland, allowing it to expand its educational offers. The training conducted by the school will respond to the needs of entrepreneurs.

Acquiring knowledge about ecological energy sources and contributing to their development

By implementing the project, young people will learn about ecological energy production forms. This will also contribute to Poland gaining energy independence.

The Maritime School Complex in Darłowo has expressed interest in cooperating with Baltic Power Ltd. and is planning to upgrade its equipment to provide students with the best possible preparation for their future professions. To improve the quality of training, the school plans to create a multimedia workshop on wind turbines. The workshop will have computer hardware, furniture and a professional set of wind turbine simulations to replicate its operation under actual conditions.

Challenges

Difficulties in establishing cooperation with PWEA and Vulcan

School representatives prepared a presentation outlining the expected outcomes of the project. Representatives of Vulcan and PWEA were invited to attend the meetings where desired outcomes and project requirements were thoroughly presented. They were also introduced to the school's facilities, staff and equipment. The school's experience in training young people was shared as well. As a result, partners signed on to get involved in the project implementation.

Engaging and motivating young people to participate in the project

Several informative meetings for students were conducted, thanks to which young people were eagerly involved in implementing the project.

Developing coherent project assumptions

As a result of constant contact with partners, the school regularly modified project activities to meet all parties' needs.

Insights

Offshore wind farms are gaining traction globally as a sustainable source of energy. With the increasing demand for renewable energy, the development of offshore wind farms has become an essential component of the global energy transition. As such, training students in this field can give them a competitive edge, allowing them to find their place in the Polish and international labour markets. By investing in offshore wind farm training, Poland can prepare its workforce for the future and contribute to the growth of the renewable energy sector.

Next steps

Since a training system for offshore wind energy has yet to be established in Poland, the school is holding conversations with institutions responsible for implementing the system. They hope to make offshore training available to secondary schools. If the system provides access to additional installations and information about operating wind turbines at sea, the students will become sought-after specialists in the country abroad.

Learn more

Magdalena Miszke, The Head Maritime School Complex in Darlowo, helped to compile this document.

For more information, please contact:
zespolszkolmorskich@gmail.com

To learn more about The Maritime School Complex in Darlowo, visit:
<https://www.zsm.darlowo.pl/>

Discover other practices

The **UNESCO-UNEVOC Innovative and Promising Practices database** presents successful projects tackling key themes in TVET, such as entrepreneurship, youth employment, the green transition, digitalization, private sector engagement and more.

Learn more on our website at:
<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/promisingpractices>

Questions or comments? Contact our team at:
unevoc-pp@unesco.org

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The ideas and opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

© UNESCO, 2024

This document is available in Open Access under the Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO (CC-BY-SA 3.0 IGO) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/igo/>). By using the content of this publication, the users accept to be bound by the terms of use of the UNESCO Open Access Repository (<https://en.unesco.org/open-access/terms-use-ccbysa-en>).

Cover photo: © Maritime School Complex in Darlowo
Design: UNESCO-UNEVOC