

# WATER IS LIFE. IT IS A PRECONDITION FOR HUMAN, ANIMAL, AND PLANT LIFE AS WELL AS AN INDISPENSABLE RESOURCE FOR THE ECONOMY AND FUNDAMENTAL IN CLIMATE REGULATION.

PoVE Water Scale-up is a joint initiative of 8 VET schools, 7 Water industry professionals, 4 academic partners and 4 support partners in Europe and beyond to educate our VET students to become agile, digitally skilled and sustainable oriented water sector professionals that our future desperately needs.

PoVE Water Scale up builds on the partnership that was initiated in the Pilot PoVE Water project.

## Our ambition: Scaling up the Platform of Vocational Excellence Water

The new PoVE Water Scale-up facilitates the further development of PoVE Water into a world-class reference point for vocational training in the Water sector. It brings together the Regional CoVEs Water that, as a result of the PoVE Water pilot project, share a common interest and approach in the Water sector, including digitalisation, stakeholder involvement and sustainability aspects. The new project will also establish North-South collaboration by connecting to an existing water and water smart agriculture cluster including 6 VET schools via Stellenbosch University in South Africa. This link also brings on board additional learning materials to all partners and a dissemination platform for these materials across Africa.

The **aim of the project is to integrate Vocational Excellence in the Water sector**, thus ensuring high quality skills and competences that lead to quality jobs and careers, meeting the needs of an innovative, inclusive and sustainable economy.



# Global warming and the Water sector

Global warming has caused serious changes to the planet and are very often water related, such as rising sea levels and extreme weather events.

The fight to reduce CO2 and climate change and slow down global warming, needs to be addressed with Water related education for VET students. Today's VET student is tomorrow's Water sector professional and therefore needs to be infused with the changing way we need to deal with Water.

In comparison to other sectors, European cooperation (on strategic level AND for vocational student exchanges) is even more pressing for the Water sector as the environment is changing in such a rapid way that knowledge exchange and sharing of experiences is crucial. Where long periods of draught and immense rainfall in short periods was once a challenge of the Mediterranean only, Western and Central Europe is dealing with this matter progressively more and can learn from Mediterranean best practise. The other way around, innovations that were developed in the Western EU (e.g. solutions to keep and reuse water in Green houses without an excess of salt in the water) can benefit Mediterranean partners as they struggle with environmental care and biodiversity when transforming salty groundwater into freshwater for agriculture. Cooperation can help regions to share and apply solutions to issues related to the [Water Framework Directive \(WFD\)](#).

## Vocational Excellence

Vocational educated Water sector professionals are the operators in the field that work directly with water resources of Europe and have, when educated appropriately as circular economy ambassadors, the power to contribute directly to the transition towards a regenerative growth model that gives back to the planet more than it takes.

PoVE Water Scale-up deems that VET has to take a central position in innovation ecosystems. Excellent and inclusive European VET is more than a response to developments and challenges that individuals and organisations face. Connecting to stakeholders is not just for the sake of updating the curricula that are being taught. VET can act as a nucleus that streamlines innovation. From its local basis and practical mindset, VETs can like no other institution understand what it takes to achieve green and sustainable growth. These Vocational Water sector professionals have a unique position to act as linking pins between the various Water stakeholders, and develop and coordinate innovation ecosystems that address challenges and solutions with research & innovation partners and Water industry clusters. Innovation often springs from the urge to address emerging challenges and not necessarily from scientific research.

## The need for EU partnerships

Local water-related issues do not come together spontaneously at EU level.

Many local problems are best addressed through cooperation between Vocational operators, i.e. the people in the field, as they have the best knowledge on what happens on local level. VET is thus a crucial partner and needs to have a front seat in the regional water innovation ecosystems. VET is in a favoured position to be the linking pin between innovation ecosystems and "escalate" problems and challenges they experience to research & innovation partners and Water industry clusters. When truly having VET in an operational position on board of the innovation ecosystems, they will act as an extra sensor for spotting opportunities for cooperation and solutions in Europe. This contributes to a further reduction in the fragmentation that often occurs in the water sector in Europe.

# Our objectives and activities



# A bottom-up approach to Vocational Excellence

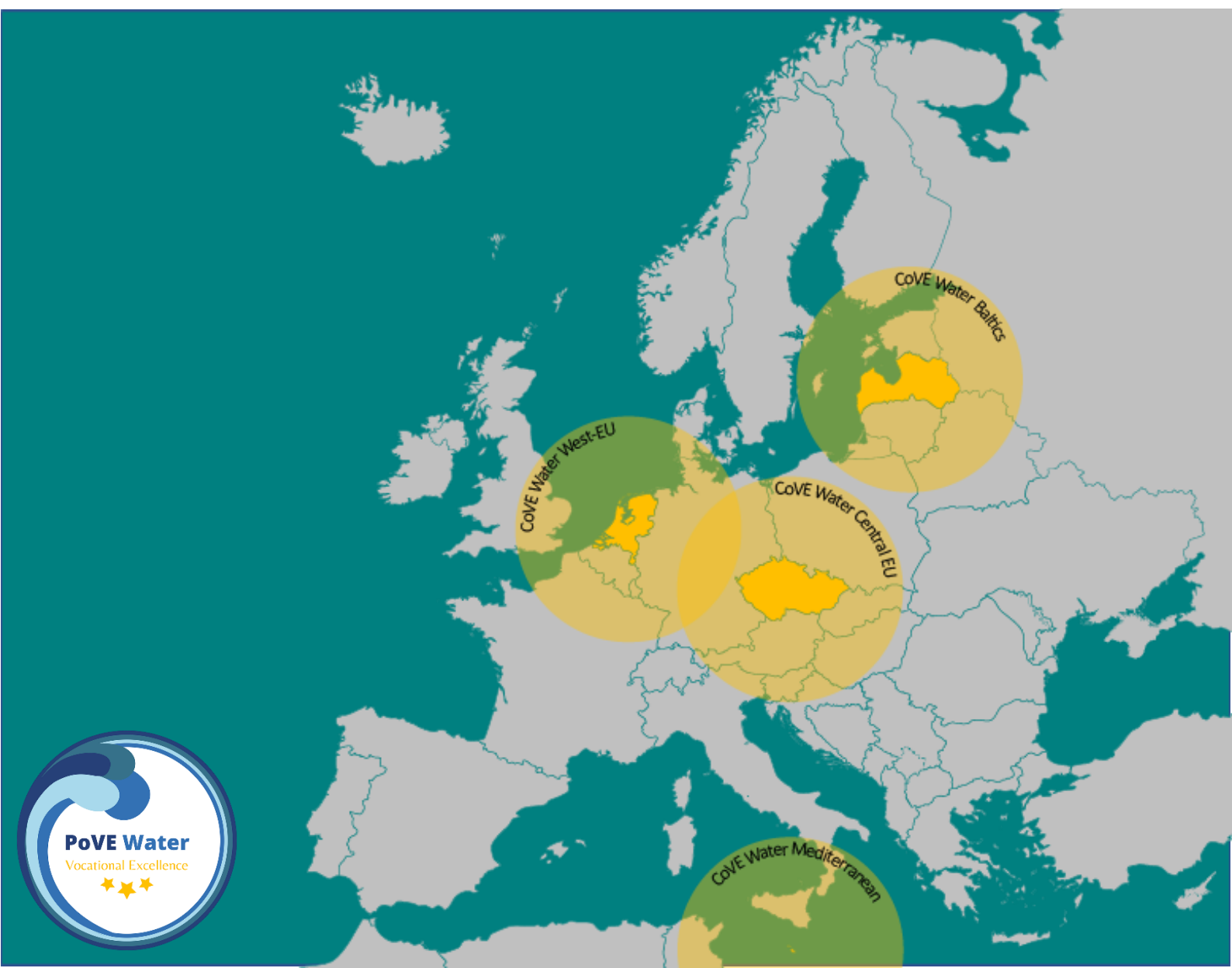
PoVE Water Scale-up will take the next step in the bottom-up approach to Vocational Excellence in the European Water sector.

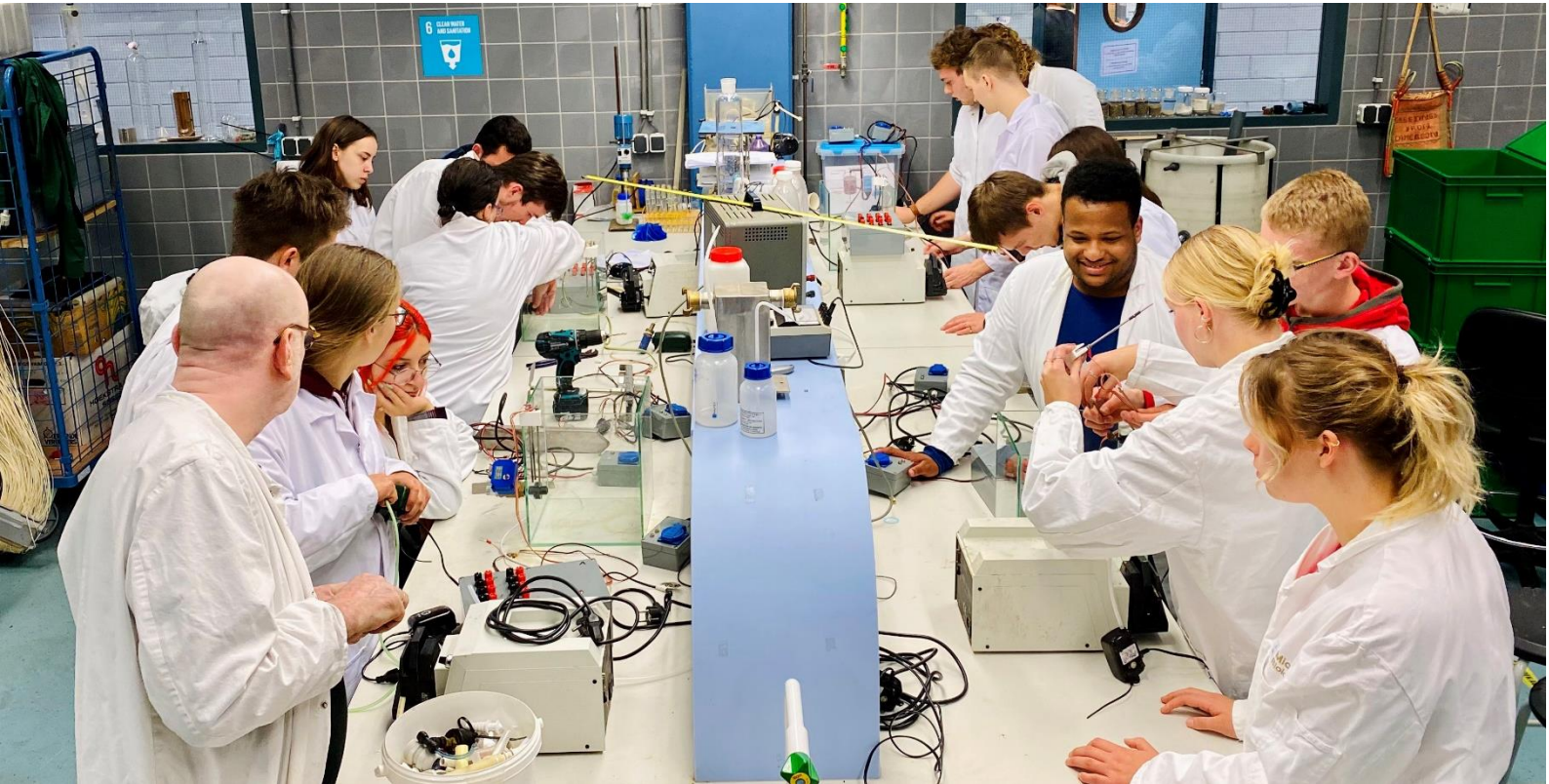
It will implement a structure of autonomous teams that work on a regional level and yet are united in their vision and ambitions under and by the umbrella of PoVE Water. This bottom-up approach gives room and flexibility to address the cultural and socio-economic differences and respects Europe's rich cultural and linguistic diversity.

By continuing to build on the national CoVEs Water in the Netherlands, Malta, Czech Republic and Latvia, which were established in the pilot project, each CoVE expands by including neighbouring countries in the partnership. The following four CoVEs Water are, united under the international PoVE Water umbrella, operating as self-managing teams:

- **CoVE Water West-EU** under the coordination of CIV Water.
- **CoVE Water Mediterranean** under the under the coordination of MCAST.
- **CoVE Water Baltics** under the coordination of Riga Technical University.
- **CoVE Water Central EU** under the coordination of Mendel University

*A first step towards a fifth and new **CoVE Water** will be established in **South Africa**.*





MCAST

Mendel University in Brno



water services corporation



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Yuverta



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