



Navigating through COVID-19 in the Mediterranean Act 1 : Strategies for Integration and Resilience

December 8th 2020, 14:30-17:00

Tags: Covid-19 / Economy / Integration / Employment / Entrepreneurship / Youth / Women / Environment / Resilience / Social / Transportation / Digital /

Location: Virtual

By: Center for Mediterranean Integration and FEMISE

Context : The recent coronavirus crisis threatens the health, economies and societies of any country, regardless of its level of development. In the countries of the East and South of the Mediterranean the fight against the pandemic is even more complicated. It must be done with limited healthcare and economic resources compared to other regions. In addition, it takes place in a social and geopolitical context which is unique in its divisions.

There is a need to relaunch cooperation in the Mediterranean following the crisis and to develop EU-Med strategies in key sectors. Among them, the **transportation sector** is exposed to significant paradigm shifts and financial difficulties due to Covid-19 and requires holistic and comprehensive policies that respect the environment. Meanwhile, the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the **digital transformation** strategy of firms, which have followed the technological path to support business continuity online, in response to government restrictions. Developing digital financial education strategies is fundamental to encourage more rapid economic recoveries. Regional policies in **the financial sector** are also needed, that would allow Mediterranean countries to overcome the current crisis and access required funding to respond to short-term and medium-term challenges. Meanwhile, **each country has its specific challenges** and needs to support the hardest-hit, which include the **youth and women**.

In this context, this Mediterranean Webinar will give a voice to the authors of the recently launched « CMI-FEMISE COVID-19 MED Briefs » and open-up a dialogue between researchers, stakeholders and the civil society in the Mediterranean. This will contribute to the policy debate on implications and ways forward on how to deal with the crisis and pave the way for **defining a Mediterranean framework for priority action** to continuously assess the regional response to COVID-19. The Webinar will be structured around three sessions, each will include a presentation by the authors of their findings followed by a discussion with esteemed panelists.

- SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS¹ -

14:30-14:40

Opening by Blanca Moreno-Dodson (CMI, World Bank) and Ibrahim Elbadawi (ERF, FEMISE) on **Connecting Med Knowledge Creators, Policymakers & Technical experts**

14:40-15:20

Session 1. Financial Reform strategies and the role of digitalization

¹ Subject to confirmation

Moderator: Constantin Tsakas (CMI, World Bank)

Paper presentations :

- [Financial reforms for more resilient societies in the Mediterranean](#) by Thomas Lagoarde-Segot and Luis Reyes-Ortiz (KEDGE Business School)
- [A Digital Financial Education to Support the "New Normal"](#) by Valeria Stefanelli and Marco Trinchera (University of Salento)

Discussants :

- Blanca Moreno-Dodson (CMI, World Bank)
- Simon Neaime (American University in Beirut, FEMISE)

15:20-16:00

Session 2. Environmental Policy Landscape in a post-covid world

Moderator: Stéphane Pouffary (ENERGIES2050, FEMISE)

Paper presentations :

- [Towards Responsive Transportation-Oriented Policies](#) by Beste Şensöz, Linus Platzer and Armin Wagner (TUMI, TU Berlin, GIZ)
- [Policy Responses to the Environmental Challenges of COVID-19](#) by Vera Danilina (Aix-Marseille University)

Discussants :

- Stéphane Quefelec (European Environment Agency)
- Frederic de Dinechin (CMI, World Bank)

16:00-16:50

Session 3. Country-specific implications

Moderator: Maryse Louis (General Manager FEMISE)

- [COVID-19 and Households in Egypt: Implications and Responses](#) by Hussein Suleiman (Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies).
- [Lebanon's Revolution in times of Pandemic](#) by Jamal Bouoiyour, Refk Selmi and Amal Miftah (Univ. of Pau & Pau Business School).
- [Challenges and Opportunities in Tunisia](#) by Hajer El Ouardani (Higher School of Economic and Commercial Sciences of Tunis, University of Tunis)

Discussants :

- Patricia Augier (Aix-Marseille-University)

16:50-17:00

Closing statement by Constantin Tsakas and presentation of **Priority Issues for Round2 of the Policy Brief series.**

Authors and Panelists Bios

Mrs. Blanca Moreno-Dodson is the Manager of the Center for Mediterranean Integration, the World Bank, Marseille, France. She is an experienced development economist with more than twenty four years of World Bank service, including operational work worldwide, with deeper regional expertise in Africa and Latin America. She is accomplished in macroeconomics and fiscal policy for developing countries, with a focus on growth, inequality and poverty reduction. She is skilled in public expenditure analysis, fiscal sustainability, public finance, tax policy reforms and transfer pricing. Previously, she worked as junior economist at the European Union (European Commission and European Parliament). She has published three World Bank books: "Reducing Poverty on a Global Scale", 2005, "Public Finance for Poverty Reduction", 2007, and "Is Fiscal Policy the Answer? A Developing Country Perspective", 2012, as well as numerous papers on macroeconomics, public expenditures, tax policy and growth, and other development issues, at the National Tax Association Journal, Banca d'Italia Fiscal Policy Annual Volume, Hacienda Pública Española Journal, Bulletin of Economic Research, and the World Bank Working Papers series. She has been guest lecturer at the Duke University Tax Executive Program and at John Hopkins University, and a frequent speaker in a variety of international Development Conferences and Workshops. Blanca obtained her PhD in International Economics and Finance from the Aix-Marseille II (Université de la Méditerranée) in France and her Masters in Economics from the Autónoma University of Madrid, Spain. She is fluent in Spanish, French, English and Portuguese.

Ibrahim Elbadawi is the Managing Director of ERF, President of FEMISE and former Minister of Finance and Economy in Sudan (September 2019 - July 2020). Earlier he served as the director of research at the Dubai Economic Council, which he joined in March 2009. Before that, he was lead economist at the Development Research Group of the World Bank, which he joined in 1989. He has published widely on macro-economic and development policy, democratic transitions and the economics of civil wars and post-conflict transitions. He was the thematic leader of the Natural Resource Management and Economic Diversification theme at the ERF for five years and is a member of the Advisory Board of the Arab Planning Institute. He holds a Ph.D. in economics and statistics from NC State and Northwestern Universities. He is the co-editor (with Hoda Selim) of *Understanding and Avoiding the Oil Curse in Resource-Rich Arab Economies*, Cambridge University Press: 2016.

Constantin Tsakas joined the CMI in 2020 as Senior Policy Analyst / Fundraising Consultant. He contributes to the Center's fundraising & partnerships strategy. In addition, he produces policy-relevant research feeding into the CMI's knowledge creation component. Prior to joining the World Bank, he was the General Manager of Institut de la Méditerranée working for the emergence of sustainable models of development and for a greater involvement of civil society in public policies. As General Secretary of the FEMISE think-tank network he also worked on the reinforcement of dialogue and research on economic and social issues in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Dr Tsakas is also lecturer at SciencesPo. His thematic interests and publications include issues related to : Innovation, Social Entrepreneurship, Education, Women Empowerment, Climate Change and Trade Integration. He holds a PhD in International Economics from Aix-Marseille University (France).

Thomas Lagoarde-Segot is Professor of Economics and International Finance at KEDGE Business School, where he was director of research. Author of about forty scientific articles on development financing and ecological transition issues, particularly in the Mediterranean, he currently heads the "Sustainable Finance" axis of SDSN France (United Nations) and the Post-Crisis Finance Network with the College of World Studies of FMSH (Paris).

Luis Reyes is a modeler and macroeconomist. His research focuses on the international monetary system, financialization, the exchange rate, macro-financial modeling and other

related topics. His teaching experience includes micro and macroeconomics, international finance, econometrics, time series analysis, modeling and development economics. After two years of working at the Agence Française de Développement he joined Kedge Business School as finance professor.

Prof. Valeria Stefanelli is Associate Professor at University of Salento (Italy). She holds B.Sc. (Economics) at University of Salento and Ph.D. in Banking and Finance, University of Rome Tor Vergata. Her interests include: corporate governance in banks and cooperative banks; compliance and transparency; digital banking ; financial education.

Dott. Marco Trinchera is a Temporary Research Fellow at University of Salento. He holds a B.Sc and M.A. in Economics, Finance, and Insurance at the University of Salento. His interests include: Experimentation of methodologies and technologies for data management generated in the organizational and business processes of the banking and financial sector.

Simon Neaime obtained his PhD in 1997 in Economics from York University, Toronto - Canada. He holds an MA in Economics from the University of Toronto, and both a Master of Money & Banking and a BA in Economics from the American University of Beirut – Lebanon. Dr. Neaime is currently Professor of Economics and Finance, Director of the Institute of Financial Economics, and former Chair of the Department of Economics at the American University of Beirut. He is also Chair of AUB's Council of Economic Advisers. Dr. Neaime is Associate Editor of the Journal of International Financial Markets, Institutions, and Money; Finance Research Letters; Research in International Business and Finance; And the International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management. In between 2017 and 2019, he was Visiting Scholar at York University, in Toronto, Canada, and has previously served as Chief Economist at the United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and as Technical Advisor of the International Monetary Fund. He has numerous academic articles published in top field finance and economics journals on emerging economies in general and the MENA economies in particular. His most recent articles have appeared in Economic Modelling, Emerging Markets Review, Journal of Banking and Finance, Finance Research Letters, Research in International Business and Finance, North American Journal of Economics and Finance, Open Economies Review, and the Review of Middle East Economics and Finance. Simon has also published several textbooks on emerging markets Finance and Macroeconomics.

Stéphane Pouffary works in the field of international cooperation for more than 30 years. He is the Chief Executive Officer and the Founder of ENERGIES 2050 (www.energies2050.org). Stéphane's areas of expertise are climate change, sustainable development, cities and territories, renewable energy and energy efficiency, building and construction, governance and behavioural change. He is a specialist in low carbon and resilient development strategies as well as climate finance. During his career, he has worked for several international and national institutions and has set up, coordinated and participated in more than 200 multi-partner international projects. Stéphane has worked extensively with a significant number of countries worldwide in Africa, South and East of the Mediterranean, Asia, Small Islands States, Latin America and Europe. Stéphane is also doing numerous lectures in French and international Universities, Engineer schools and professional courses.

Beste Şensöz is an architect and urban manager with experience in sustainable urban mobility planning and architectural & urban design. She recently graduated from MSc. Urban Management at TU Berlin. She enjoys creating more liveable urban environments and communities.

Linus Platzer is a Transport Policy Advisor with experience in research, project management and policy. Linus has a Master of Public Affairs from Indiana University and brings in strategic

thinking and ample expertise in sustainability to address digital solutions and urban mobility reform holistically.

Stephane Quefelec is Senior Expert - Energy and Environment at the European Environment Agency. Prior to that, he was the Senior Climate change Expert of the international NGO ENERGIES 2050. He worked with several local, regional and international institutions (EC, UNEP, PAM, FEMISE) on questions of environmental policies and adaptation and mitigation measures. The Mediterranean area is the region of the world he knows the best. Under the MEDSTAT Project, he was responsible in analyzing socio-economic and external trade trends and patterns in the euro med region (Eurostat, 2001-2004), he then in charge of monitoring environment and economic integration in the area (Plan Bleu, 2005-2008) where he was involved in the study on the impact of euro-med free trade area in terms of sustainable development study and other economic programmes related to energy and financing. Right after, he completed academic researches at the Université de la Méditerranée on the impact of climate change (2008-2011). Additionally, he is responsible (since 2010) for delivering a course on “Sustainable Development and Management” at the Euromed Marseille Business School (Marseille, France). He holds a PhD in Economics from Aix-Marseille University.

Frederic de Dinechin joined the Center for Mediterranean Integration in April 2019 as Senior Knowledge Management Officer. He works on CMI resilience pillar: mitigation and adaptation to external stresses and shocks mainly climate change. Prior to this assignment, Frederic worked in multilateral development banks including the World Bank and the Council of Europe Development Bank and had experiences in the private and public sectors in France. He graduated from the Ecole Polytechnique in France and holds masters’ degrees in Geographic Information Systems, and Urban Planning. He is fluent in French, English and Spanish.

Armin Wagner is a Traffic and Transport Engineer and Team Leader of the Sector Project Sustainable Mobility. He is specialised in urban mobility and international fuel prices. He has almost 20 years of experience in the field of sustainable transport project management.

Dr. Vera Danilina is Associated Member in Aix-Marseille School of Economics, Faculté d’Economie et Gestion, Aix-Marseille Université, where she obtained her Ph.D. in Economics. Her main fields of expertise are International Economics, Environmental Economics, Environmental Policy, Trade and Environment. Dr. Danilina is particularly interested in the Mediterranean region economic and environmental development. She has been conducting her research in France, Russia, the USA, the UK, and the Netherlands. She also has a vast experience in teaching a range of disciplines in Economics in France and Russia.

Maryse Louis, PhD, is the General Manager of FEMISE (Marseille, France) since 2015, a network of more than 100 members’ institutes from the Euro-Med region that aims to reinforce dialogue through research, workshops and dissemination. Prior to that, Dr. Louis was the Programs Manager at the Economic Research Forum (ERF, Cairo Egypt) where she was granted this role after holding several positions in this institution. She holds a PhD in Economics from Aix-Marseille University, France and an MA in Economics and a B.Sc. in Statistics from the Faculty of Economic and Political Science, Cairo University. With more than a decade of experience in project management and economic research, Dr. Louis has completed many projects (with donors such as the EU, World Bank, EIB, Arab Fund, etc.) and participated in a large number of research reports across the two organizations. She is also a referee in economic and social journals. Her main research interests are on issues related to migration and refugees’, inequalities, labour markets in the EU-Med region and she recently developed expertise in innovation and technology transfer issues.

Hussein Suleiman is a researcher at the economic department of Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies. He holds a Master’s degree in political economy from King’s College

London. His research interests are political economy, public finance, trade, and governance. Mr. Suleiman's work focuses on Egypt and the Middle East, and he has published in journals and platforms in the MENA region, and more recently with the Euro-Mediterranean network of research centers, EuroMeSco.

Dr. Jamal Bouoiyour is an associate Professor of Economics at University of Pau. IDEAS/RePEc ranks him among the top 5% economics researchers in its program (1% in Arab World). His publications appeared in well-ranked journals including Economics of Transition, Economic Modelling, Economics Letters.

Dr. Amal Miftah is currently associated researcher at the Pau Business School and research fellow at DIAL, an IRD / University Paris-Dauphine research center (France). She holds a PhD in International Economics and Development from Paris-Dauphine University. She has been involved in many European research projects on migration issues and development cooperation.

Dr. Refk Selmi is associate professor of Big Data at ESC Pau Business School. She has a Ph.D. in Economics from University of Pau and more than 30 articles in journals such as Applied Economics, Economic Modelling, Energy Economics, Journal of Economic Integration and Scottish Journal of Political Economy. Her areas of research include, Macroeconomics and International Finance.

Dr. Hajer El Ouardani received her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis, France, in 2002. Her doctoral thesis focused on FDI and the attractiveness of the Tunisian economy. Since then, Dr. El Ouardani has joined the Department of Economics at the Higher School of Economic and Commercial Sciences in Tunis (University of Tunis) as Associate Professor of Economics. Since December 2017, she has been the head of the «Department of Economics and Quantitative Methods» of the Higher School of Economic and Commercial Sciences of Tunis (University of Tunis). Her research focuses on macroeconomic policies and the labor market. She is co-author of several FEMISE reports on the economies of the MENA region and of collective books published in collaboration with CEMAFI. In 2011, she participated in the study and drafting of the «White Paper on Regional Development» conducted by the Ministry of Regional Development.

Patricia Augier, PhD, is Professor of Economics at Aix-Marseille University since 2015 and teaches on modules such as Development in Mediterranean countries. She was the President of the Scientific Committee of Institut de la Méditerranée (IM) & FEMISE (Marseille, France) between 2015-2020, a network of more than 100 members' institutes from the Euro-Med region that aims to reinforce dialogue through research, workshops and dissemination. Prior to that, she was Assistant Professor at Aix-Marseille University (AMSE), from September 1995 to September 2015. She was also Deputy Director of DEFI (Economic Development and International Finance) from January 2008 to September 2012 and Director of CEFI (Centre of International Economics and Finance, EA 3782, University of Mediterranean) from January 2004 to December 2007. She holds a PhD in Economics from Aix-Marseille University, France and a Graduate M.S. in International Economics and Finance from the same University. Her fields of expertise include Development Economics, Trade, Firms productivity, Non-Tariff Measures, Rules of origin.