



ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023 REPORT ⁽¹⁾

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FEMISE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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(1) The views, analyses, and conclusions expressed in this report are solely those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of FEMISE, IEMed, the AECID, or any affiliated institutions.

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The global economy is undergoing major geopolitical and economic paradigm shifts. In addition to its profound political ramifications, the war on Ukraine has exacted major economic and social development costs on the global economy, especially for a developing world that is still reeling from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, climate change's impacts are intensifying and threatening the environment and societies with the poorest paying the heaviest price.

Within this context, the Euro-Mediterranean region has an important role to play as a major centre of global trade, connecting three continents of the world. In fact, while representing only 1% of the world's waters, the Mediterranean Sea generates around 15% of global maritime traffic and 20% of related economic value, making it a fundamental global economic and social crossroads. It has become even more central today following the discovery of giant natural gas fields in the Eastern Mediterranean.

As such, as the countries in the Euro-Mediterranean region are facing their new and existing challenges and resetting their priorities, new opportunities are emerging towards deeper Euro-Mediterranean integration. For the Southern Mediterranean countries (SMC), the consequences of climate change, slow economic growth and increasing youth unemployment are particularly challenging. Nonetheless, there is a huge potential for the SMCs to exploit their comparative advantages to position themselves to meet economic, climate and human development challenges, while developing and strengthening a robust reciprocal, self-reinforcing, win-win partnership with the EU. Naturally, the SMCs' youth will need to be the centrepiece of such a strategy and should be amongst the main beneficiaries of the envisaged deepening cross-Mediterranean integration.

Hence, as global geopolitics is shifting, the Euro-Mediterranean relations could be on the threshold of a new era where the two shores are working closer together to build a more resilient and sustainable region. The present common challenges in the region demand such integration and cooperation between North and South.

Objectives

- Bring forward Euro-Mediterranean region issues and explore how to turn challenges into opportunities for a deeper and closer partnership.
- Exchange on how to build a Euro-Mediterranean region that is better integrated and resilient to shocks while putting its young population at the heart of this partnership to allow them to play their role as the Mediterranean Change-Makers.
- Explore ways through which this deeper integration between the EU and SMCs, notably enhanced trade and investments, could lead to better opportunities for the youth while contributing to the Regional Team Europe Initiative on "Jobs through Trade and Investment in the Southern Neighborhood"

WELCOMING REMARKS & OPENING SPEECHES



His Excellency Ambassador Nasser Kamel, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), states that, although regional integration has continuously improved over the past 10 to 15 years, the Mediterranean region remains one of the least integrated regions in the world. Ambassador Kamel states that there is a huge opportunity that exists beyond the Euro Mediterranean region, particularly when looking at the African continent as one of the fastest growing continents in the world and the potentials of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that involve 1.3 billion persons with US\$ 3.4 trillion of GDP. “If we group the Euro-Med region and Africa, what we can achieve together, if the right policies and approach are taken when it comes to region integration, is limitless”, stated His excellency. “ Regionalisation of our supply chain and looking towards other regions” blocks will be essential. He added that if we do not look at how the private sector can get involved in this effort to achieve more integration and more digital transition in order to become more competitive in this new globalized, but segmented global economy, we will not succeed in meeting the expectations of citizens. Mr. Nasser highlights the importance of Eastern gas which will allow Europe to be less dependent on other sources of natural gas.

He provided the example of renewable energy and highlighted that studies clearly show that the southern region has the capacity to produce twice Europe’s actual consumption in terms of renewable energy, solar, wind energy and what goes with it in terms of green hydrogen and all other derivatives which are sources of energy, but, to do this, we need investment, interconnections and infrastructure. However, he highlighted that, we do not yet see a comprehensive regional policy that would integrate the southern Mediterranean’s potential for producing huge amounts of clean energy into the broader energy market of the Mediterranean region. To build a more inclusive development model that leaves no one behind and creates decent employment for all, there is a need to have a clear understanding of the regional dimension. Dealing with many regional challenges, such as disparities in social economic development between north and south, migration, etc. implies strengthening our economic cooperation. He concluded by stating: “Integration is an opportunity to build sustainable development and growth not only to deal with the climate emergency we face but also the incredible potential of our common sea (including blue economy)”



Dr. Ibrahim Elbadawi, President of FEMISE and Managing Director of the Economic Research Forum (ERF) in Egypt delivered his inaugural speech and stated that the conference theme is an epitome of the challenges and opportunities we are experiencing. He characterised the theme by addressing 5 important pillars: first the global supply chain disruptions that have shaken the global economy, particularly in the southern part of the Mediterranean and in Africa, in terms of inflation and the endangerment of food security given the countries' high dependence on food imports (from Ukraine and Russia). This highlights the importance of relocation and regional cooperation in a given neighbourhood including neighbours of neighbours. Second, it is about the balance between politics and economics to support the agenda of deeper economic integration. Third pillar relates to climate change, which involves an energy transition that must be meaningfully and systematically integrated into any initiative. He asserts the fourth pillar to be about regional and global value networks that must rely on technology, especially digital technology. Finally the youth of the Mediterranean will have to play a leading role in making this happen and also benefit from it while securing their future with access to employment.

Pau Solanilla, Commissioner for City Promotion, Barcelona City Council, highlights the need to rethink the global value chains that can be integrated in the Mediterranean. According to him, we must be economically connected. Today, we need a global economic program in the Mediterranean which is in some way an extension of the European Green Deal. A Mediterranean Green Deal is about competitiveness, sustainability, equality and social justice. As Mr Pau says, Europe should take responsibility for extending this program to the South. Economic development is above all a question of innovation, the main protagonists of which are young people and women. However, as he says, "there is a ceiling from some elites who fear unlocking the region's talent potential", which is another "uncomfortable truth". Mr. Pau believes that the region has potential but that we must have the courage to remove obstacles.





Carmen Magariños, Director of Cooperation with Africa and Asia of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) reiterates that the Mediterranean is a priority region for Spanish foreign policy which is reflected in its support for the Barcelona process of the Euromed Mediterranean Association and the 5+5 dialogue of the Western Mediterranean Forum. As Ms. Carmen states, it is time for the regional program to evolve to make way for new strategies, new objectives and a new vision adapted to the current reality of the Mediterranean. There is a need to focus on creating employment and vocational training opportunities. Spain and the European Commission will continue to support initiatives aimed at deepening the understanding of the challenges ahead and, within this framework, AECID has decided this year to provide this grant to FEMISE to develop a research and dialogue program for the promotion of inclusive entrepreneurship among young people and women in the South neighbourhood.

Senén Florensa, Executive President of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), states that the region cannot be an exception in the world and it will catch up with the general trend towards more stable societies. We have all contributed to trying to foster economic growth and development in the region. This improvement was not sufficient. We need a rhythm of development greater than 7% sustained for more than 15 years to make further progress while overcoming the incredible accumulation of conflicts and wars that have hit and are still hitting the region in incredible ways. It takes time but we will persist.



Plenary Session 1 – Towards Greater Euro-Mediterranean Regional Integration: Rebalancing the Geopolitical Landscape with Economic Opportunities



The Mediterranean region is witnessing a new era of changing geopolitical landscape. Given the central role that this region is playing in global trade, economic and social development, it will be key to enhance its integration to secure its place within the global trends while meeting common challenges.



CHAIR

Roger Albinyana, Managing Director of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), states that the covid 19 pandemic and the effects of Russian aggression against Ukraine (which has accelerated multipolarity in a highly fragmented landscape both between countries but also within countries) coupled with the climate emergency have accumulated to a number of persistent challenges that existed before 2019. Even more worrying, we have also witnessed in recent years a social and economic collapse in some countries which is very difficult to redress and combat to counter the lack of appetite for reforms. We need to talk about a positive agenda for the Mediterranean and look at the possibilities of this untapped potential

SPEAKERS



Birgit Loeser, Head of Division MENA, Regional Affairs at the European External Action Service (EEAS) states that there is a clear momentum to reflect on the Southern partnership, based on the agenda of the Mediterranean adopted in 2021. Increased complexity is observed in terms of regional dynamics within the region. New alliances have been formed to which we must adapt. In terms of interconnection beyond the Mena region, we face the consequences of Russian aggression against Ukraine. There is a misperception due to the persistence of narratives in the region targeting the Mediterranean Partnership and we have a responsibility to detect from the outside such disinformation that seeks to divide. It is important to strengthen the partnership with the southern neighborhood and reinforce regional cooperation within the neighboring region, but also linking with sub-regional and cross-regional cooperation with both sub-Saharan Africa and the Gulf. It is also necessary to strengthen the role of the EU in solving conflicts. The EU has financial assistance measures to attract investments and mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise. It is essential to keep the private sector in place to help create jobs and give a future to young people in the region.

Alia Moubayed, Founder, Association of Women Economists Across the Middle East & North Africa (AWEAMENA), states that the covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine have exacerbated existing macroeconomic vulnerabilities that were at the forefront of the socio-economic problems leading to the Arab Spring in 2011. The multilateral solidarity that the South Mediterranean countries need to face these macroeconomic challenges is waning. The region is affected by the changing priorities of the region's main donors. The GCC aid paradigm, which has become a much larger donor in recent years since the Arab Spring, particularly in supporting countries like Egypt, is increasingly tied to geoeconomic interests.



The perception of SMCs is shaped by new emerging alliances within the region and outside the region. We should, when thinking about further integration, build on these two key issues of “constructive engagement”: food security and energy security. It is necessary to rethink the modalities of international cooperation to support the economic fragility of the region, thus achieving greater financial stability. Structural reform is needed to open up opportunities for the private sector requiring EU financial assistance. Also, it is important to invest in climate resilience which clearly threatens future stability at both macroeconomic and social levels.



Massimo Deandreis, Director general, S.R.M., Grupo Intesa Sanpaolo, states that the maritime perspective is important for the global economy and the Mediterranean as 90% of the global trade is carried out by Maritime mode. The Mediterranean is benefiting from regionalization: container traffic annual growth rate forecast 2022-2027 is +3.5% (world average is +2.8%). As he points out, some industrial sectors are reorganizing into shorter chains with new opportunities for North Africa and the Adriatic Balkans. Clearly, the Energy sector is crucial for EU targets and for Euro-Mediterranean economic and political relations. Mr. Massimo states that ports are the meeting points of all economic and geopolitical factors, thus increasing their roles as boosters of development and strategic energy asserts. Mediterranean ports, according to him, are growing in efficiency. They are not only logistics nodes but also strategic digital and energy hubs.

Carlos Conde, Head of the Middle East and Africa Division, OECD Global Relations Secretariat, states that the geographical location and the advantages of the trade taking place in the Mediterranean provide significant economic opportunities, in particular through this way of functioning of the global economy and the better positioning in global value chains. As Dr Carlos points out, trade integration is limited to a large extent due to insufficient diversification of the economy. It is essential to take advantage of and adapt to the digital economy.

Dr. Carlos states that FDI-related activities generally create more quality jobs, including for women, while generally being more respectful of environmental considerations. Technology transfer can have positive impacts on the local economy. It is also important to organize better systems between national and regional research and innovation networks which are increasingly linked to the localization of industries and the provision of skills to new activities. Geopolitics changes but also perceptions about positioning in the world change. Integration in the Mediterranean requires shaping the political agenda in order to build narratives that can move in this direction.





Katarzyna Sidło, Director of the Middle East and North Africa Department, CASE, stresses on the importance for the EU to change the way it plans and programs its policies which must focus more on sustainability for the future. Corruption is one of the main factors hindering long-term sustainable socio-economic development. The EU should assess whether funds allocated to climate-related actions in countries in the region are sufficient and perhaps consider compensating them for some potential losses and disadvantages. Appropriate investment on a bigger scale in the region can only happen if the environment to conduct business is improved.

Plenary Session 2 – A Better Integrated Euro-Mediterranean Region to Meet Common Challenges: Enhancing the Region’s Resilience Through Regional Value Chains



Following the recent disruptions in the global supply chains due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, the idea of near-shoring gained momentum in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This represents an opportunity for both shores as it would not only enhance intra-regional trade but will open new opportunities for cooperation on issues such as energy and food while reaching out further to SMCs' neighbours, including Africa



CHAIR

Dr. Maryse Louis, General Manager of FEMISE, states that nearshoring is becoming an important opportunity for the Euro-Mediterranean region. Trade from southern Mediterranean countries represents only 4.5% of EU total trade. She mentioned that in a recent FEMISE joint study with CMI, it was found that there are more than 400 goods that are imported by the South Med countries and exported by the EU, however not among themselves, which provides lost opportunities. As Dr. Maryse states, the way forward for the region is to seize opportunities of integration with the EU through value chains.

SPEAKERS



Ingrid Schwaiger, Deputy Head of Unit at the European Commission, states that there are challenges and imperfections in the region's regulatory framework in relation to the market economy, as well as a lack of reforms which have resulted in a history of low growth and limited job creation, excluding very important parts of the populations particularly young people and women. There is also the question of market size, competitiveness, but also modern transport and digital infrastructure that connect economies across borders as well as access to financing. Following the disruption of the global value chains in the context of post-covid, nearshoring has come to the fore. According to Ms. Ingrid, there is a need to move towards an equal playing field between the state owned enterprises and private firms and to promote the digital transition both in the public and private sectors. It is also important to better target subsidies that really reach the most vulnerable which would allow for more competition but also to include social and environmental concerns in trade and investment policies and regulatory convergence on some of these issues which would greatly facilitate the development of the EU and the Mediterranean as well as within Mediterranean value chains. Ms. Ingrid believes that energy and climate actions can become vectors of economic development and also job creation in the region.

Mohamed El Razzaz, Head of Sector at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), states that the heterogeneity of sub-regions within the greater Euro-Mediterranean region means that the “potential for a more integrated value chains in the region would be even more opportune”. However, political will is needed to mobilize an action-oriented agenda in the region for the development of more integrated value chains. Following the current disruptions, namely covid 19 and the crisis or war in Ukraine, there has been speculations on how to envision a reconfigured region in terms of value chains. Scenarios were put forward such as potential proximization, reshoring and friend shoring towards which the empirical evidence has not necessarily shown a trend due to impediments. Mr. Mohamed points out certain areas highlighted in a first edition of a report produced on regional integration, by OECD with the financial support of German development cooperation, the integration of which would promote a win-win situation in the region: trade, financial markets, infrastructure movement as well as higher education and research.





Marc Lautier, Professor of Economics at University Rennes 2 in France states that while in the last 70 or 60 years most of the growth in the global workforce came from Asia, in the next 30 years, 7.1 billion workers will enter the labor market in Africa, which requires creating between 20 and 30 million jobs each year. The main change over the last period has been the explosive increase in China's number of sectors, with market shares reaching 40-50% of the global market. However, China's successful economic development and the competitiveness of Chinese producers in a number of sectors are declining. Dr. Marc states that the decline of this market share opens windows of opportunity for other producers in low-wage developing countries. The fall of the garment industry which reached almost 10 percent led a number of new manufacturing exporters from East Asia to seize this opportunity. In the case of Africa, at current levels of exports or manufacturing production, the export potential for 2033 is estimated at \$60 billion just for the three main labor-intensive industries. According to Dr. Mark, EU policy should promote regional integration through trade and boost export competitiveness, particularly for North African countries.

Anna Ferragina, Associate Professor at the Department of Economics and Statistics of the University of Salerno, states that smaller companies are not able to serve the international market as much and cannot afford a complex type of integration. Joining a global value chain would allow SMEs to reduce the cost of trade and have a better chance of exploiting their comparative advantage without having to afford the whole production process. Firms must replicate quality certification for different destinations of their production. It is important to have increased specialization, economies of scale, knowledge spillovers and improved performance. Achieving the necessary level of productivity would make it possible to penetrate foreign markets as a "participant" in a global value chain





Sana Afouaiz, Founder and CEO of the Womenpreneur Initiative, states that over 50% of the MENA population are actually women who are excluded from data, studies and policies, reflecting the amount of work that needs to be done in terms of gender inclusion at all levels. Female entrepreneurship is still very unstructured, with women operating in poverty in very small businesses and this is exactly what is happening in the Mena region. More than 60% of women in the region work in the informal economy, raising the question of how to regulate trade and opportunities. They do not have the right to own land and have very limited access to the benefits of agriculture. Although the Mena region has the largest number of females studying in the world, they remain invisible in job markets due to cultural and social norms. As Ms. Sana states, we need to “advocate for the voices of women” and “invest” in them.

Plenary Session 3 –Towards a Green Transition of the Euro-Mediterranean Region: Challenges and Opportunities on the Way to Resilient Net-Zero Economies



Putting the green transition at the heart of the Euromed partnership, while finding solutions to sustainability challenges will help the region progress in achieving its goals in terms of resilience, prosperity, and development. While a number of opportunities arise in the region, especially with regard to clean energy production, challenges call for greater cooperation and integration to mobilise investments, build sustainable infrastructure, transfer knowledge and technology, create decent jobs, and green the productive tissue.



CHAIR

Rafael de Arce, Professor of Econometrics at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, states that the Mediterranean region is experiencing a decline in atmospheric conditions 20 percent faster than the rest of the world. He presents the two questions that will be examined during the plenary session: the challenges to achieving the green transition in the southern Mediterranean region and how to stimulate this transition through different policies.

SPEAKERS



Adel Ben Youssef, Professor of Economics at the University of Nice Sophia-Antipolis, states that the Mena region is currently experiencing a double transition: an ecological and digital transition. Technologies are skills-based and benefit the most skilled and talented people. When it comes to technological change, we need to differentiate between the speed and direction of technology while mastering both. As Dr. Adel points out, climate change is real, happening now and hitting our economies in several ways. Sustainable pathways for using the resources and moderate footprint are needed. We need a “big shift”, which requires the implementation of mitigation policies. This new paradigm is to achieve this costly change in a limited time. By 2030, an estimated 700 million people will be at risk of being displaced by drought. 1 billion children are at extremely high risk due to climate change. Digital transition can foster the ecological transition. Technology offers industries the opportunity to adapt and become more efficient by reducing resource usage and is a powerful awareness tool to encourage people to change their habits. As Dr Adel says, it is important to deepen EU Mediterranean integration through complementary regulation on digitalization and values.

Majd Al Naber, Director of Science for Society Centre at the Royal Scientific Society, states that food security has a concrete role in shaping the region’s economy, stability and sustainability of its livelihoods. It is estimated that 10 percent of the world’s population suffers from hunger. In the Middle East, around 100 million people face food insecurity due to external and internal shocks intensified by climate change. Globally, the agri-food system accounts for 70 percent of freshwater use, 30 percent of energy consumption and generates 90 percent of biodiversity, clearly demonstrating the close interlinkage between water, energy, food and the ecosystem (WEFEN). Despite advocacy efforts in favor of WEFEN Nexus which, as Dr Magd states, is a healing tool that allows and promotes efficient use of resources, this approach is still not concretely implemented in the region.



When we look at the policies that govern the water, energy and food sectors, we observe gaps that need to be defined and potentially reduced. This requires the introduction of new policy recommendations that examine the system as a whole in order to achieve sustainability. We must find alternative water sources to groundwater in order to maintain water use efficiency in our region's agricultural food system. Ms. Majd recommends increasing the share of treated wastewater in order to reduce dependence on fresh water, which however requires social acceptance and concrete, affordable and accessible technology to the end user. Also, as she states: "in our region, we produce much more than we consume and we do not recycle, reuse, reproduce these foods efficiently". It is necessary to use food waste in a way that composts it, introducing a new way of using fertilizers. The availability and sharing of data between different countries in the region is also vital as is how to use this data converted into knowledge for policy development.



Hala Abou-Ali, Vice President of the Institute of National Planning and Professor of Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) at Cairo University, states that Southern Mediterranean countries are richly endowed with solar and wind energy resources that are considered the highest in the world, giving them the potential to emerge as significant producers of green energy. However, the energy mix remains below five percent in almost all countries of the Southern Mediterranean Countries. How can we harness this potential to meet all national energy demands while seizing the opportunity to build partnerships with the northern Mediterranean countries and the European Union? According to Dr. Hala, realizing this potential necessitates investments in infrastructure and technologies and policy frameworks that support the renewable energy development and cross-border cooperation on the water, food and energy Nexus.

However, legal and regulatory barriers hinder investments in different southern Mediterranean countries in addition to disruptive factors such as the convertibility of the currencies, inflation and the lack of foreign reserves. The transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies and societies has far-reaching implications for labor markets and can really generate employment opportunities for young people, including women. As Dr. Hala states, green investments oriented towards sustainable and environmentally responsible projects have actually the power to reshape the South Mediterranean countries economies and drive innovation and create decent jobs. Civil society participation can also play a central role in promoting green policies that hold governments and corporations accountable while stimulating sustainable initiatives. As Dr. Hala states, "by working together north and south and all the players, we can unlock the immense potential of green energy and green jobs, paving the way for a brighter more sustainable future for the southern Mediterranean region and beyond".

Plenary Session 4 –Towards a Youth-Driven Euro-Mediterranean Region: Policies to Boost Training, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation



The Euro-Mediterranean region is home to the youngest population in the world. While youth can be among the most vulnerable, they are also the most creative and innovative and they aspire for a better future for their region. They deserve to be the main beneficiaries of a deepened regional integration with better education, job, and mobility opportunities. Unleashing the potential of the Mediterranean youth can only be achieved by providing them with the needed support in terms of training, access to finance, as well as the tools and knowledge to develop their entrepreneurship activities in innovative and sustainable sectors.



CHAIR

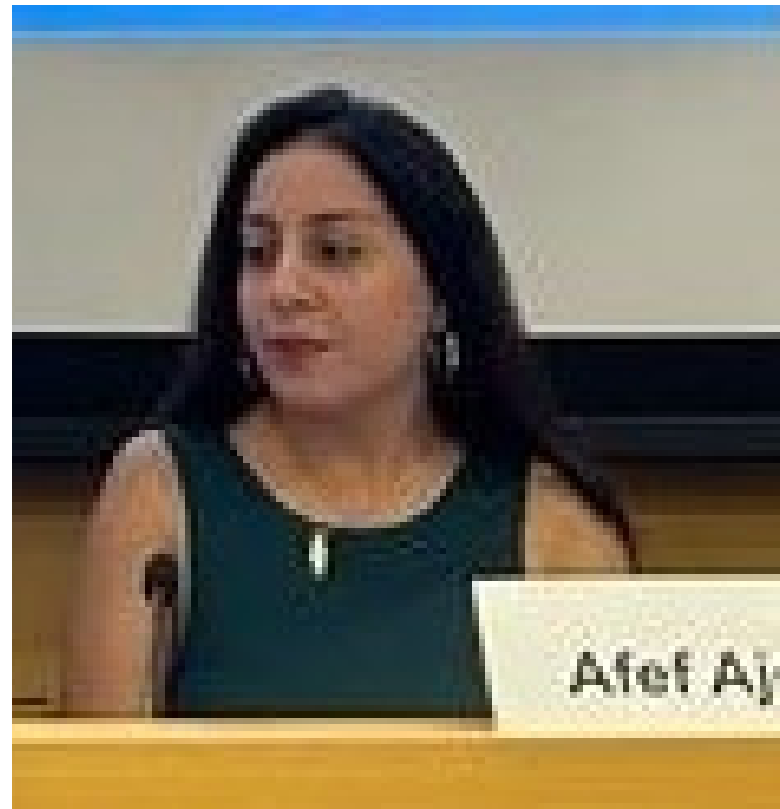
Majdi Hassen, Executive Director, The Arab Institute of Business Leaders (IACE), states that public policies in southern Mediterranean countries should involve young people and be oriented to stimulate training, entrepreneurship and innovation..

SPEAKERS



Giuseppe Provenzano, Project Manager, Higher Education and Research Division at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), asks this question: how can Mediterranean youth be empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to access labor markets and achieve the green transition? The region has a young and growing population which constitutes an under-utilized asset. As Mr. Giuseppe states, in the Euro-Mediterranean region, we have more than 30 million university students. It is also predicted that, by 2030, we will see enrolment rates at universities, higher education institutions and research centers increase by 40%. Young people hold the key to the future and are the leaders of tomorrow. However, they do not have all the necessary tools to change their countries, create new economies and open new startups. This is why it is necessary to further link education to the labor market in order to provide them with the skills they need, adopting the triple or quadruple helix model of innovation, in which all actors, namely government, academia, civil society, and the private sector are involved, can provide a structural approach to resolve the unemployment problem and update study programs for the green transition.

Afef Ajengui, Senior Program Manager at the Tunisia Foundation for Development, states that the Mediterranean region has the highest unemployment rate in the world at over 29% and the MENA region has the highest unemployment rate for 25 years. In Tunisia, 30% of higher education graduates are unemployed due to two main factors: an economic model that has failed to generate the skilled jobs needed for a balanced labor market and the mismatch between qualifications of graduates and the needs of businesses. Many countries in the region are now focusing on developing more and more entrepreneurial ecosystems within their strategies and within their communities. Innovative sectors are essential to foster economic growth and sustainability. As Afef points out, it is important to better promote youth entrepreneurship through education and training while providing them with the necessary financial assistance, to facilitate the implementation of accelerators and incubators in the green sector and to advocate in favor of policies that ease the regulatory burden on startups and simplify business registration. It is also necessary to encourage public-private partnerships to create joint initiatives that support youth entrepreneurship and promote success stories.





Houssam El Hajj, Instructor at the General Directorate of Vocational Education and Training in Lebanon, states that the Euro-Mediterranean region has immense potential for growth and development and it is essential to fully exploit this potential by empowering young people who constitute a significant part of the population. There is a big social stigma that technical and vocational education is normal for those who fail in the regular education. However, some people are more technically qualified than academically. Most vocational or technical education graduates are competent, qualified and find employment more easily. Our role is to give them adequate education and training that truly meets the needs of the market. It is essential to promote cross-border collaboration to support young people and empower women and minorities to combat social stigma.

Ghaleb Hijazi, General manager at Business Development Center, states that Jordan has taken great steps in promoting entrepreneurship by launching the Economic Modernization Vision whose most important drivers are entrepreneurship and innovation with a focus on digitalization. As Mr. Ghaleb points out, there is a need to bridge the gap between the education system and market needs by building the capacity of young entrepreneurs, including women, who want to start their own businesses. It is also necessary to strengthen policies such as the National Youth Policy in Jordan by improving and developing a good network between young entrepreneurs in Jordan and from different countries.



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About FEMISE

FEMISE, the Forum Euroméditerranéen des Instituts de Sciences Économiques, is a Euro-Mediterranean network of over 100 economic and social research institutes from both shores of the Mediterranean. Established in Marseille, France, in 2005 as an NGO, FEMISE promotes dialogue on economic and social policies to foster cooperation and mutual benefit between Europe and its Mediterranean partners. Coordinated by the Economic Research Forum (ERF) in Egypt, FEMISE focuses on strengthening research capacity, fostering public-private dialogue, disseminating research findings, and building partnerships to support regional collaboration and sustainable development.

About IEMed

The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), founded in 1989, is a think-and-do tank focused on Euro-Mediterranean relations. Guided by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), it promotes cooperation, mutual understanding, and intercultural dialogue to build a shared space of peace, stability, and prosperity. IEMed is a consortium of the Catalan Government, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the EU, and the Barcelona City Council, with contributions from civil society through its Board of Trustees and Advisory Council.

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