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EUROMED CLUSTERS POLICY SEMINAR

Introduction & Context

Clusters are increasingly recognized as an efficient tool to boost industrialization, generate externalities, enhance innovation and improve value chains in emerging economies. Countries of the South and Eastern Mediterranean (SEMCs) (South Med), like many countries across the world, are seeking to enhance their economic performance and reap the benefits of cluster development. From a development perspective, these clusters are key to improve their competitiveness, exports potentials, integration into value chains, and thus generate jobs in sectors where they have a comparative advantage.

Despite many challenges, many Clusters in South Med countries are active with different timelines, approaches, and specializations and operating at different levels of development and maturity. Some of challenges include the lack of legal recognition and coherent national framework, underdeveloped innovation ecosystems, financial constraints, skills mismatch and weak linkages between public policies and private sector dynamics. These barriers make it difficult for clusters to scale up or align with broader industrial, trade, or development strategies and limit their potential of integration into regional and global value chains and advancing green transition goals.

Against this background, the Euro-Mediterranean Forum of Institutes of Economic Science (FEMISE) and the Economic Research Forum (ERF) introduces a flagship series of high-level policy seminars launched under the EuroMed Clusters Forward (ECF) project. It brings together policymakers, cluster leaders, private sector representatives, and international experts to foster policy innovation and collaboration across the Mediterranean.

Through this seminar series, participants will explore challenges and opportunities in developing regional value chains (RVCs), exchange on successful policy experiences, and identify actionable best practices for cluster development. The aim is to generate practical, tailored policy recommendations that support clusters' development, industrial cooperation and innovation within and across EuroMed countries.





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Three seminars will take place across the EuroMed region:

- Maghreb Seminar (Tunis, March 2026)
- Mashreq Seminar (2026)
- EuroMed Regional Seminar (2026)

Each seminar contributes to the development of a comprehensive Policy Package, including synthesis reports, expert interviews, and national policy briefs to support long-term strategy building.

DRAFT





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EUROMED CLUSTERS POLICY SEMINAR- MAGHREB EDITION

Policy Dialogue for Cluster-Driven Innovation & Regional
Value Chains

25 March, 2026 - TUNIS, TUNISIA

AGENDA

09:00 -09:30	Registration & Coffee
09:30 – 10:00	<p>Welcome & Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryse Louis, General Manager, FEMISE • Tarak Chérif, President of ANIMA Investment Network • Omar Bouzouada, General Director, APII Tunisia <p>Keynote speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Fatma Thabet Chiboub, Minister of Industry, Mines, and Energy, Tunisia • EU Delegation in Tunisia (TBC)
10:00- 10:20	<p>Panel 1: Clusters role in driving competitiveness, innovation, and regional integration- special emphasis on the green and digital transition</p> <p>Moderator: APII</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan-Philipp Kramer, European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)/ Prognos AG • Adel Ben Youssef, Professor of Economics at the Université Côte d'Azur, France





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Challenge 1: Industry Upscaling, Innovation & Climbing the Value Chain

Chair: Maryse Louis, General Manager, FEMISE

Moderator: Expert 1

10:20-10:40 (20 mins)	<p>Session 1.1. Understanding the Challenge: Industrial Upgrading and Innovation Challenges in the Maghreb</p> <p><i>Clusters in Maghreb countries remain concentrated in low- to mid-value-added sectors. Upscaling is critical for competitiveness, export diversification, and attracting new clients. Moving up the value chain also enables job creation, adoption of digital and Industry 4.0 technologies, and greener production practices.</i></p> <p>Speakers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taoufik Moucharraf, Secrétaire général du Ministère de l'Industrie et du Commerce & Président du comité de pilotage du fonds d'appui aux clusters, Morocco • Omar Rekkache, Director General, Algerian Investment Promotion Agency (AAPI), Algeria • Inès ZEGNANI, Agency for the Promotion of Industry and Innovation (APII), Tunisia
10:40-11:20	<p>Session 1.2. Policy Best practices in Industrial upgrading and Value Chain Integration:</p> <p>Morocco (10 mins):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahmed Bennis, Tanger Med Zones • Abdelaziz Meftah, Moroccan Association of the Automobile Industry and Automobile Manufacturers(AMICA) • Anouar Alaoui Ismaili, Agence Nationale pour la Promotion des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises – MarocPME • Meriame Gam, General Confederation of Enterprises of Morocco (CGEM) <p>Tunisia (10 mins):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hichem Turki, CEO, Novation city (sousse) • Rim Saeid, Technopole El Ghazala • Amine Sellami, Cluster Mecatronic de Tunisie <p>Algeria (10 min):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adel Bensaci, Cluster Mécanique de Précision • Yacine Rahmoun, Capture Doc Digitalisation • Mustapha Bouzada, Agence de Développement de la PME et de la Promotion de l'Innovation (ADPMEPI) <p>Europe (10 mins):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattia Miglietta, ENVI Park and Polo CLEVER, Italy



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11:20-11:40	<p>Session 1.3. Interactive session</p> <p><i>Open discussion and Q&A and Participant reply to a digital questionnaire (3 QS) about the applicability of these practices in their countries</i></p>
11:40-12:00	<p>Coffee break and networking</p>
<p>Challenge 2: Expanding innovation-oriented financing, and private co-investment</p> <p><i>Chair: Emmanuel Noutary, General Delegate, ANIMA Investment Network</i></p> <p><i>Moderator: Expert 2</i></p>	
12:00-12:20	<p>Session 2.1. Understanding the challenge: Unlocking the potentials of financing innovation for Clusters</p> <p><i>Most clusters rely on limited public or donor funding, with few instruments tailored to support R&D, technology adoption, or collaborative projects. The absence of clear legal status often restricts clusters' eligibility for national funds, while weak investor confidence limits private participation. Strengthening dedicated financing tools and co-investment mechanisms is essential to scale innovation and ensure cluster sustainability.</i></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ilyes Boumahdi, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco • Zakaria Madani, Maroc Clusters, Morocco • Rep de l'Assemblée des représentants du peuple (ARP), Tunisia • Jauad El Kharraz, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, WECEN
12:20-13:00	<p>Session 2.2. Policy Best Practices in Innovation Financing and Private Co-Investment for Clusters</p> <p>Morocco:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yasmine Soufiani, Moroccan Investment and Export Development Agency (AMDIE) • Mourad Hajaji, Cluster Green H2 • Chafik Elouriaghli, Maroc Numeric Cluster • Tatwir innovation fund <p>Tunisia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mariem Maamouri, Crowdfunding, APII • Tarek Triki, Smart Capital • Kamel Hindaoui, Fonds de Développement de la Compétitivité (FODEC) <p>Algeria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meriem Benslama, Algerian Center for Social Entrepreneurship





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	Europe : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nathalie Jardinier, Team Henri Fabre, France • Sonia Fernández, AMEC, Spain
13:00-13:20	Session 2.3. Interactive session <i>Open discussion and Q&A and Participant reply to a digital questionnaire (3 qs) about the applicability of these practices in their countries</i>
13:20-14:20	Lunch
Challenge 3: Skills mismatch and research–industry collaboration <i>Chair: Yasmine Fahim, Director of Research and Programs, Economic Research Forum</i> <i>Moderator: Expert 3</i>	
14:20-14:40	Session 3.1. Understand the challenge: Skills mismatch and R&D needs in Cluster development <i>Across the Maghreb, clusters face persistent gaps between workforce skills and industry needs, limiting innovation and competitiveness. Collaboration between universities, research centres, and firms remains weak, with few structured mechanisms for joint R&D or technology transfer. Strengthening vocational training, co-designed curricula, and cluster-based innovation platforms will be key to bridging these divides and fostering a dynamic innovation ecosystem.</i> Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chedly Abdelly, National Agency for Scientific Research Promotion (ANPR) • Abdelkader El Khissassi, Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the European Union and NATO • Donatella Di Vozzo, European Training Foundation • Nesrine Ziad, Leancubator, Algeria • Chekib Ben Mustapha, Expert, Tunisia
14:30- 15:10	Session 3.2. Policy Best practices on successful skills upgrading and research–industry collaboration Morocco (10 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aicha Hadraoui, Cluster ENR • Kaoutar Filial, Cluster Menara • Hakim Reda, CETIEV-Centre Technique Des Industries Des Equipements Pour Véhicules • Abdelghani El Fadil, Office of Vocational Training and Employment Promotion (OFPPT) Tunisia (10 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narges Hammar, L'Association des Centres Techniques Industriels





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	<p>Tunisiens (ACTIT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anouar Zouari, PACE-AMIT • Ourida Chalouati, Qualitative Growth for Employment (CQE) (Fonds Co-innov) • Douja Gharbi, Red Start, Tunisia <p>Algeria (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boukhalfa Yaici, Green Energy Cluster • Sarah Ait Hamou, WomWork <p>Europe (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marius Alexa, ICONIC Cluster, Romania • Irena Łobocka, Sustainable Infrastructure Cluster, Poland
15:10-15:30	<p>Session 3.3. Interactive session</p> <p>Open discussion and Q&A and <i>Participant reply to a digital questionnaire (3 qs) about the applicability of these practices in their countries</i></p>
15:30-15:40	<p>Coffee break</p>
15:40-17:00	<p>Working/FOCUS Groups</p> <p><i>Split the participants in 3 Groups (by Country) including EU, think-tanks, according to their profiles. Each group will be moderated by one of the 3 Experts assisted by FEMISE/ERF/ANIMA. Answers of the questionnaires will be collected for each challenge.</i></p> <p>For each challenge in each group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak about the challenge • Reveal the answers <p>Open discussion within the group with the aim to reach the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can this policy be implemented at the national level in your country? • What specific policy/regulation is needed? <p>How can clusters leverage this policy for digital, Industry 4.0 adoption and job creation?</p>
17:00 – 17:15	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryse Louis, General Manager, FEMISE • Emmanuel Noutary, General Delegate, ANIMA Investment Network

