

ANNUAL REPORT




DAY OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN
NOVEMBER 28

Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



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Message from the Secretary General Nasser Kamel



Tangibly impacting lives on the ground for the citizens today and working to build a better future.

2022 has been a cumbersome year for the Euro-Mediterranean region: against a backdrop of post-pandemic socio-economic crisis and an increasingly overriding climate emergency, the region's geopolitical crises have further enhanced its existing fragility and vulnerability, and brought new challenges to the forefront of regional concerns.

Amidst this context, the UfM has been able to deliver both at the policy and the operational level, making strides to ensure that we **leave no one behind**.

We have guided work towards two ambitious renewed regional strategies, on employment and labour on the one hand and on women empowerment on the other both focused on **policies for the most vulnerable**.

In this framework, we launched the new UfM Hub for Jobs, Trade and Investment, with a budget of €11 million, to notably help set up more editions of the region-wide UfM Grant Scheme on Employment Promotion. Aimed at young people and women, this Grant Scheme saw its first results in 2022, benefitting more than 18,000 individuals in 7 UfM Member States through four projects.

Moreover, the UfM has integrated in the last year the protection and inclusion of people with disabilities within its mandate, to truly reach all populations at risk and fully achieve our objectives of **social inclusiveness and equality**.

In 2022, the Union for the Mediterranean has also built up its activities to promote existing and potential solutions to prepare for a better future, in light of the climate emergency faced throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region, and the need

to further **build resilience and sustainable development to protect both the environment and the people**.

In this framework, the first UfM Ministerial Conference on Research and Innovation (R&I) was held to promote cooperation on science and knowledge in the region, notably on climate change, renewable energies, and health. Through these new regional roadmaps, we will seek to increase our shared resilience against the environmental or food security challenges we pressingly experiencing.

All in all, the progress achieved on the ground in 2022 has crystallised in a key milestone: the creation of a **Mediterranean Pavilion** for the first time in the history of climate negotiations, in the framework of the COP27.

The initiative, conceived by the UfM Secretariat, aimed to raise awareness on the Mediterranean, often overlooked in climate negotiations, and provided an exceptional opportunity for the region **to talk and act as one**, bridging the voices of public and private, scientific and academic, technical, policymaking, civil society, finance, and business actors.

This initiative and others have demonstrated how the UfM, 15 years after its creation, has established itself as the multilateral institutional framework for dialogue and cooperation in the Mediterranean, **tangibly impacting lives on the ground for the citizens today and working to build a better future**.

I invite you to go through this publication to discover our action and activities for 2022, in our efforts to make the Mediterranean adapt to adversity and bounce back always stronger.

The UfM at a glance

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is an inter-governmental organisation that brings together 43 countries to enhance regional cooperation and dialogue through the implementation of concrete projects and initiatives addressing inclusive and sustainable development, stability and integration in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

As a direct continuation of the Barcelona Process, the launch of the UfM in July 2008 was a true reflection of its Member States' shared political commitment to the enhancement of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Established in March 2010, the UfM Secretariat is the first permanent structure dedicated to the implementation of this partnership. Ever since its creation, the organisation has continuously worked to promote political dialogue across the Euro-Mediterranean region, in view of creating an area of peace, security, stability and shared prosperity that addresses the legitimate aspirations of its citizens.

The last few years have marked a turning point for the organisation, exemplified by the adoption of a roadmap for action by the Member States in January 2017. This roadmap, entitled **The Union for the Mediterranean: an Action-driven Organisation with a Common Ambition**, underlines the key role of the UfM as a unique framework for political dialogue and regional cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area whilst focusing its work on the socio-economic root causes of the growing challenges that the region is facing.

In 2022, the roadmap for action remained the comprehensive strategic framework for the work of the UfM, reinforced by five priority areas recognised by its Member States to ensure the organisation plays a crucial role in the post-pandemic recovery, leaving no one behind and paving the way for the creation of more resilient societies and economies in the region.

On 24 November 2022, the UfM welcomed for the first time a new member state, North Macedonia, on the occasion of the 7th UfM Regional Forum.

Read the joint declaration of the UfM Member States on the accession of North Macedonia:



A leap in operational activities with a true commitment on the ground

In 2022, the UfM has enhanced its action on the ground through milestone initiatives, bringing the organisation closer to its highest mandate: tangibly improving lives for the citizens, especially those in vulnerable populations such as **women** and **youth**.

The UfM has launched its **first grant scheme** to actively support non-profit organisations in the Mediterranean that work to give people opportunities in view of the COVID-19-induced crisis (see its full results in p. 10-11).

Moreover, in the face of another yet pressing challenge such as climate change, the UfM Secretariat led a Mediterranean coalition to

This has been recognised by several partners throughout the region: on the one hand, the **European Union** has continued to substantially strengthen its unwavering commitment to the UfM, notably through the co-funding of the Secretariat. On the other hand, partnerships with the **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)** and the **German Development Cooperation** have also been renewed in 2022 and expanded.

The cooperation agreement with Sida was renewed for the period 2022-2025 and is moving from an operating grant to a programmatic approach, geared towards presenting how the action of the UfM brings changes in the region. With a total budget equivalent to €4,9 million over a four-year period, cooperation with Sida will aim at enhancing regional activities in MENA countries, under three priority areas, namely **Women Empowerment; Water, Environment and Blue Economy and Energy and Climate Action**.

The support from Germany to the UfM also entered a second phase (2022-2025) and will continue being implemented through a **GIZ project based at the UfM Secretariat, under the "UfM Hub for Jobs, Trade and Investment"**. The project's activities will include measures dedicated to **gender, digital solutions** and the **support to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**. This second phase has an increased budget of €10.5 million, compared to €5.5 million for the 2018-2022 period.

First UfM Grant Scheme Closing Ceremony.



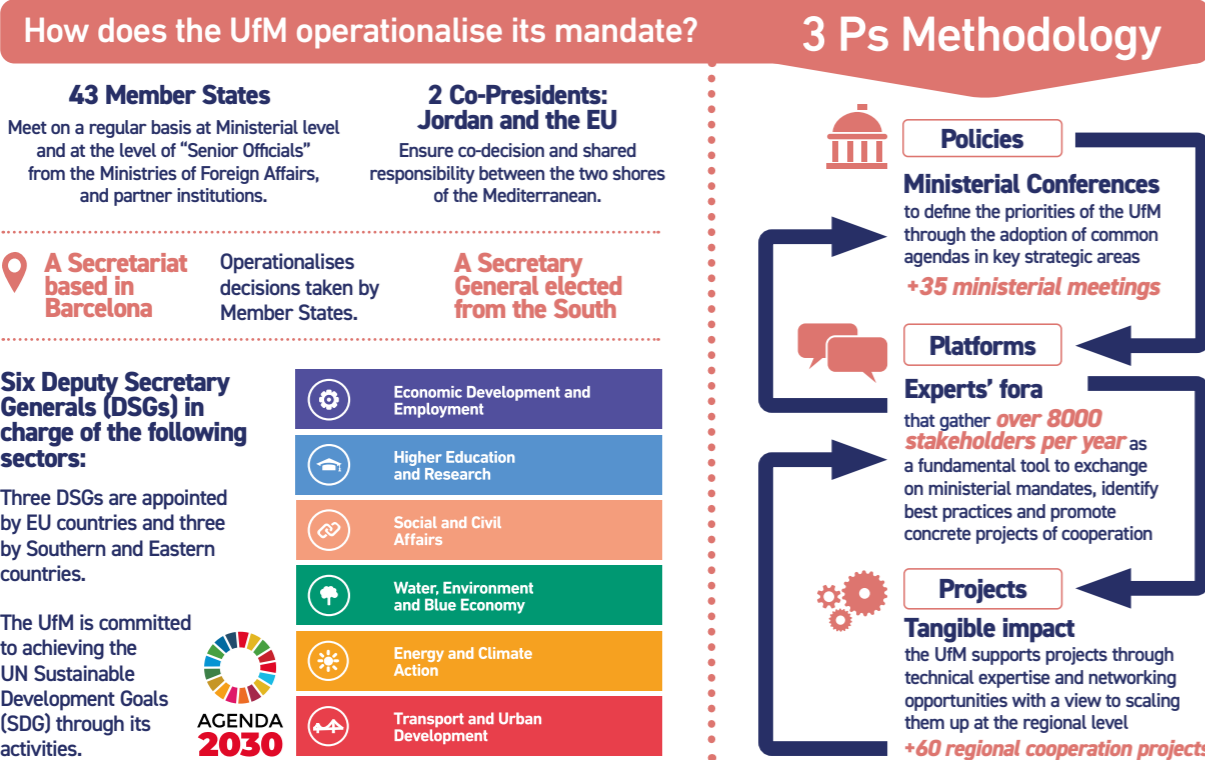
voice the region's challenges at the 27th Conference of the Parties' (COP). For the first time in the history of climate negotiations, a **Mediterranean Pavilion** was conceived to highlight not only the urgent impacts of

Leaving no one behind, building resilience for the future.

climate change in the Mediterranean, but also the innovative solutions already being developed throughout the region (read on the results and impact of the Mediterranean Pavilion p. 29-31).

Along many other impactful UfM initiatives on the ground, these two milestones demonstrated tangible results for the Mediterranean citizens and stakeholders, effectively contributing to building an inclusive and sustainable development in the area.

Right: The Mediterranean Pavilion at the 27th Conference of the Parties' (COP27).



Day of the Mediterranean 2022: Feeling Mediterranean

The Day of the Mediterranean was declared in November 2020, following a unanimous decision taken by the UfM Member States, to create an annual momentum to reinforce Mediterranean unity, celebrate its shared identity and enhance the visibility of a positive agenda in the region.

Living the Mediterranean through our senses

Following a successful first celebration in 2021, the Day of the Mediterranean rallied 2022 UfM partners, stakeholders and civil society around one simple question: how does one feel the Mediterranean through the five senses?

From aromatic spices to a cool sea breeze on your skin or the lively streets of colourful neighbourhoods, the Mediterranean is a true journey through the senses. **Together we celebrated this year's Day of the Mediterranean using all our senses, in a spirit of inclusion, diversity and cooperation.**

Targeted outreach actions to

400+ key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders

The Day of the Mediterranean 2022 campaign kicked-off with targeted outreach actions to 400+ key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders to invite them to live the Mediterranean through their senses and join the movement!

60+ official partners

A brand-new visual identity



SENSES

tailored to the 2022 campaign **“The Mediterranean, a journey through the senses”!**

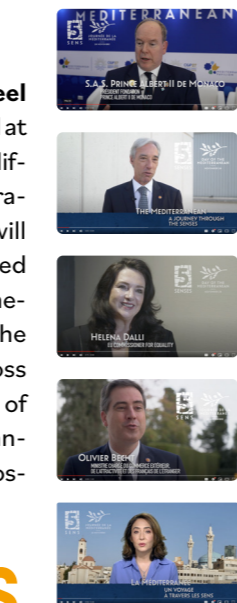
A website in **8 languages** and a collaborative agenda, **with over 20k page views**

Feeling the Mediterranean through our partners' eyes

The UfM Secretariat launched the **“Feel Mediterranean” video campaign**, aimed at showcasing the similarities found in our differences. When asked what the Mediterranean means to you, everyone's answer will be different, and yet a reminder of a shared identity. The music and food that can immediately evoke fond memories. Sitting in the shade of an olive tree or looking out across any of the unique skylines in a moment of peace and connection with nature. Transcending cultures and generations, the possibilities are endless.

900K+ views throughout the year

Check out the complete playlist here



mediterraneanday.com



Ranging from institutional conferences, expert workshops or cultural celebrations, the 2022 Mediterranean Day saw more than 65 activities registered under its framework, including more than **35 musical performances** across the region following a Call for participation by the **Anna Lindh Foundation**.

- The **European Union** mobilised its networks this year again to reaffirm its commitment to the Mediterranean region and share how its citizens feel the Mediterranean.
- The **UfM Member States** have also shown their commitment to the Mediterranean and each celebrated the 2nd edition of the Day of the Mediterranean in their own way.
- The Day of the Mediterranean also brought several **high-level personalities** to reflect on how they feel the Mediterranean and why our region should be protected.



The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs illuminated its headquarters at night with the word "MED DAY" in celebration of the Mediterranean Day which is observed annually on November 28



65+ registered activities

held under the framework of the **Day of the Mediterranean** in

25 countries from the region

Discover a selection of activities here:



Together with the UfM Regional Forum, the Day of the Mediterranean was

featured in more than 1,600 media articles, radio and TV shows reaching a

potential audience of more than 2.5 billion



Media impacts in more than 23 countries



Over 1.5K posts/tweets/stories across social media, including visuals, videos and quizzes using the official hashtag **#MediterraneanDay** (over 230 on UfM Platforms)

77K engagement actions



Leaving no one behind...

Tackling the employment and employability challenges of the most vulnerable

The economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are enormous and have led to unprecedented economic shocks that are directly felt by households worldwide. According to the ILO, ca. 94 % of the worldwide labour force lives and works in countries that are affected by company closures. The economic crisis will ultimately account for a loss of working hours equivalent to 305 million full-time employees.

“Job creation, especially in the aftermath of the negative repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market, represents a major challenge for all the Mediterranean countries. This calls for multiplying efforts of coordination and cooperation between both shores in order to reduce unemployment rates, with an emphasis on developing vocational and technical training to include new sectors that would benefit the youth.

Nayef Stetieh
Minister of Labour, Jordan (2021-2022)

In the Euro-Mediterranean region, the economic consequences of the pandemic threaten to undo years of economic development. With the citizens at risk of losing their employment and livelihood, they are forced to adapt to a new world of work and

Protection and empowerment of populations in their entirety and diversity has been a priority for the UfM amidst the current regional and global context; with the aim of tackling unemployment rates, gender equality, and social inclusion, but also preparing for the jobs of the future and creating opportunities for all in a more fair and equitable Euro-Mediterranean region.

economic activity. People already more vulnerable to economic shocks and restricted mobility, such as informal workers, blue-collar workers, youth and women, are especially affected.

In light of this reality, Union for Mediterranean Ministers in charge of employment and labour met for the 5th UfM Ministerial dedicated to this thematic on 17 and 18 May 2022 in Marrakech (Morocco), to discuss the most pressing labour market challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean region, in particular how to ensure an inclusive, green, digital and sustainable recovery for all, and particularly for the most vulnerable. Ministers reiterated their commitment to promote an economy that works for people through employment and social policies that respond to youth and gender-specific issues. Governments will focus on a stronger participation of young people

and women in their societies and economies. They also stressed the need to continue measuring the impact of labour market policies, and agreed to launch a “Community of Practices on Youth Employment” to exchange best practices.

A UfM Roadmap for Action 2022-2025 on Employment & Labour to:

- Focus on young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs);
- Explore innovative options to make vocational education and training systems more modern, inclusive, attractive, flexible, labour market-relevant and fit for the digital and green transitions;
- Promote the transition to formal employment for so-called “informal workers”, especially women, that often do not have employment contracts, lack important rights and adequate social protection;
- Foster diversified and sustainable financing mechanisms to support education, training and employment policies;
- Recognise the social economy, social entrepreneurship and social innovation as a resilient model for more decent job creation that will also serve the most vulnerable;
- Pay particular attention to well-functioning monitoring processes of employment and social policies for a better understanding of the impact of the policy actions notably on youth and women;
- Encourage and further develop the use of so-called “Communities of Practice”, notably on youth employment, where national authorities can discuss and exchange on best practice.

Shifting regional efforts on trade, investment and entrepreneurship policies towards the creation of decent jobs

On occasion of the 5th UfM Ministerial on Employment and Labour in Marrakech, the UfM Secretariat signed a Joint Declaration of Intent with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation that will significantly increase the support of Germany and Spain to the

UfM and its Secretariat. This support entails the creation of a “UfM Hub for Jobs, Trade and Investment”, run by the German and Spanish Development Cooperation.

Indeed, despite the strong ties and dependencies across the Mediterranean, economic development in the region remains highly fragmented. With a budget of €11 million, the Hub will reinforce the UfM’s dialogue platforms in the areas of employment and regional economic integration, provide targeted assistance to individual UfM Member States and contribute to promoting South-South trade and sustainable investments in North Africa.

Within this framework, the UfM will be able to set up more editions of its region-wide Grant Scheme on Employment Promotion, with a stronger focus on young people and women. Launched in August 2020, the first edition of the UfM Grant Scheme, aiming to improve the employment situation of the most vulnerable populations impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, financed four region-wide projects benefitting 18,000 individuals in 7 UfM Member States, namely, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco and Tunisia. These projects tackled the labour challenges in the fields of entrepreneurship, women empowerment, sustainable tourism, as well as education and research with an overall budget of €1.13 million (see pp.10-11).

This Hub will also support and complement the objectives of the regional Team Europe Initiative on “Job creation through trade and investment”, also kicked-off at the Ministerial Meeting in Marrakech, by the European Commission with France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the EIB and the EBRD, and aiming at aligning efforts and better focus trade, investment and entrepreneurship policies towards creating decent jobs.

The UfM Grant Scheme for Employment Promotion: creating opportunities, protecting the vulnerable



Launched in August 2020

to respond to the employment crisis generated by the Covid-19 pandemic, **with the financial support of the German Development Cooperation**



4 region-wide projects funded

RISE Resilience and Innovation through Strengthened Entrepreneurship



FLOWER Fostering Local Market Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Resilience



SEARCHED Strengthening Employment and entrepreneurial Activities to Recover COVID-19 Epidemic Damages



MAST Mediterranean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism post COVID-19



Benefitting 18,000 individuals in 7 UfM Member States:
Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco and Tunisia



Across the fields of **Entrepreneurship, women empowerment, sustainable tourism, education and research**

An overall budget of **€1.13 million**

3 priorities

- Improving the economic resilience of citizens, especially vulnerable demographic groups, through employment-related capacity development.
- Promoting new channels of training and skills attainment in order to foster employability and economic activity.
- Supporting entrepreneurial activity and building the capacities of MSMEs to enable income generation and job creation.



Although MSMEs account for **90–95%** of all registered companies and employ a great majority of the labour force in the Mediterranean region, **they are particularly excluded from financial markets.**



Stimulating growth through entrepreneurship in the digital age

Launched in 2013, the Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4Jobs) is a UfM flagship project-based cross-sectoral initiative, that has eventually become a pipeline of projects addressing a broad spectrum of employment-related

line on 28 April 2022, with a focus on youth and their role in creating jobs and stimulating growth through entrepreneurship in the digital age, in the framework of the European Year of Youth 2022. The Dialogue brought together representatives from a broad spectrum of partners and stakeholders, along with successful young entrepreneurs, in order to discuss their respective experiences, share lessons learned and conceive actions for the future, producing an outcome document of recommendations that should guide future efforts in this area.

The Dialogue was followed by a restricted meeting of the Med4Jobs Advisory Board, which yielded some ideas for future projects and initiatives, including the creation of an informal community of practice for Med4Jobs, holding frequent informal brainstorming sessions, and engaging Social Partners and the Civil Society in the future editions of the Stakeholders' Dialogue.

challenges. Med4Jobs currently has 13 labelled projects under its umbrella, with over 100,000 beneficiaries, mostly young people and women in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region.

The third edition of the initiative's Stakeholders' Dialogue took place on-

Med4Jobs currently has 13 labelled projects under its umbrella, with over 100,000 beneficiaries.

Zoom on Euro-Mediterranean projects

Euro-Mediterranean Guarantee Network (EMGN)

The EMGN project aims at facilitating access to finance, in particular for MSMEs, by gathering guarantee schemes active in the Euro-Mediterranean region, which is one of the priorities of the UfM regional dialogue on Industrial Cooperation, as well as in the new EU agenda for the Mediterranean. The project was granted the UfM label for its regional added value in June 2022.

How?

Through 4 related actions:

Trainings Academies

Ex: Digitalisation; Enterprise Risk Management; Future Thinking and Strategy Transformation for CGIs; Green guarantee products

Research and Development

Working Groups: data collection and analysis; setting up a regional counter guarantee scheme; digitalisation

Advocacy

Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct for Credit Guarantees; Webinars and Annual Conferences

Communication and Knowledge

Sharing website, publications, newsletters, etc.

Duration 60 months

Total cost € 1,315,449

Promoters IEMed (Lead promoter), EMEA, and supported by GIZ, with 12 associated partners throughout the region

Location

Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Greece, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, France, Croatia

Beneficiaries

The EMGN first beneficiaries are the Credit Guarantee Schemes, constituted as full members of the network. However, the project's goal is to create the conditions for MSMEs to have easier access to credit markets. In particular, the project intends to more than double the number of participating national

member institutions from the original 10 member organisations to 16 member organisations, covering new beneficiary countries. The project also intends to develop 5 credit guarantee product for MSMEs and start-ups, one of them specifically targeting women-led enterprises.

Expected Results

- BRIDGE the knowledge gap as regards MSMEs access to finance in the region.
- EXPAND guarantee schemes in the Northern and Southern Mediterranean and the advancement of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the area of credit guarantees.
- INCREASE COOPERATION between the EU, the Northern and Southern Mediterranean institutions active in the development of MSMEs and their access to finance, through i.e. the recently established European External Investment Plan.
- SUPPORT the development of Northern and Southern Mediterranean guarantee schemes' product range and particularly in the MSME segment.
- ENHANCE the operating environment of Northern and Southern Mediterranean guarantee schemes.

The UfM women empowerment agenda: From data to policy...

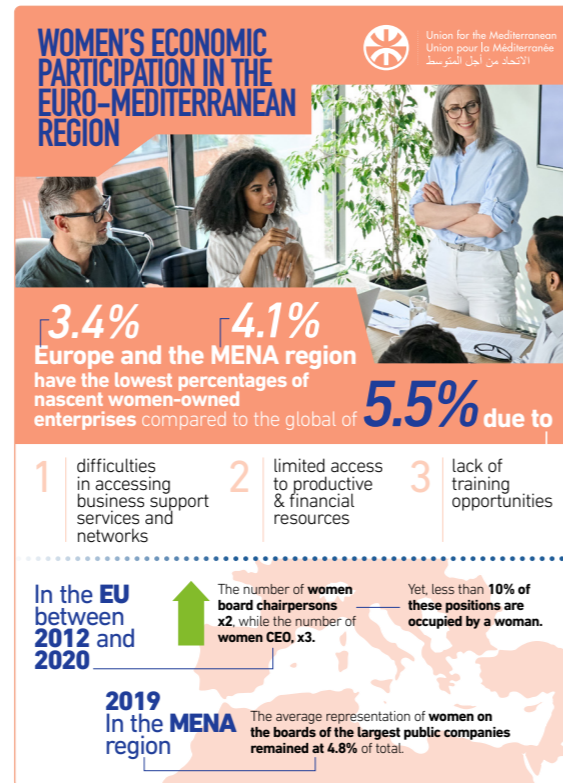
In the past five years, the UfM Secretariat has worked on the implementation of a regional mandate set by the 4th UfM Ministerial conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (Cairo, 27 November 2017), which identified four priority areas in the Mediterranean:

1. To raise women’s participation in economic life.
2. To improve women’s access to leadership and decision-making positions.
3. To change stereotypes through education and culture.
4. To combat gender-based-violence.

women-owned enterprises, representing the largest gender gaps worldwide. Despite strong variations amongst countries, entrepreneurship in the Euro-Mediterranean region continues to bear a male face, with countries like Portugal and Croatia leading the ranking nowadays with only 37.2% and 31.5% of female entrepreneurs, respectively.

Despite initial progress, the COVID-19 crisis has had a retroceding effect on the economic situation of women and has clearly demonstrated a need for stronger commitment from the countries to protect women’s rights.

In view of monitoring progress in those areas, UfM Member States agreed to set the first-ever **Intergovernmental Monitoring Mechanism on Gender Equality in the Euro-Mediterranean region**. After extensive consultations, a set of 20 indicators across four priority areas were agreed upon for the mechanism, and a regular monitoring exercise was set up to publish reports every two years in order to measure the progress made in women’s rights. This ongoing reporting exercise allows the opportunity to provide policy recommendations to close the gender gap at country and regional levels.



In March 2022, the UfM Secretariat published the first results of the monitoring mechanism, which stressed that women’s economic empowerment continues to represent one of the regional priorities. Indeed, according to the report, Europe and the MENA region are below the 6.2% global average of female entrepreneurs who own established businesses. These regions also have the lowest percentages of nascent

To know more

Read the conclusions of the report here:



“ We must turn crises into opportunities for change and regeneration, and remain true to our commitment to gender equality. Through the commitments agreed together, we can deliver tangible results for the future of women and girls, in all their diversity, across the Euro-Mediterranean. We must see an end to violence against women and girls, and work towards the fostering of societies where we can all be in employment, partake in decision-making, and be represented in public life.

Helena Dalli
European Commissioner for Equality

(STEM); expand gender-responsive finance for climate and environmental action reaching women’s organisations, enterprises and cooperatives; and adopt comprehensive laws that define and criminalise all forms of violence

against women and girls, including cyber-violence.

Back-to-back with the meeting, the UfM High-level Conference on Women for the Mediterranean was held on 26-27 October, to gather the eco-system of actors engaged in closing the gender gap in the Euro-Mediterranean region. These included representatives from governments, Civil Society Organisations, the private sector, regional and international organisations, including financial institutions and international donors, which exchanged on the adopted Ministerial Declaration and shaped the roadmap for its implementation, ensuring its effectiveness, applicability and ownership by all stakeholders throughout the region.

...and from policy to action
The MENA region has the world’s largest entrepreneurial disparity between men and women – 5% of women-led business compared to a global average of 23%-26% – and one of the weakest female labour participation rates.

Under the title “Gender-smart financing to unlock Women’s entrepreneur-



rial potential in the MENA region”, the UfM co-organised with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) its **2022 Women Business Forum**.

Based on six years experience of dialogue between women entrepreneurs, national women business organisations, international organisations and business support schemes from the Euro-Mediterranean region, the UfM Women Business Forum is a regional platform taking place every year to offer women-owned and women-led

of Italy and Sweden, sought to identify financial inequalities that remain gender-based and promote successful gender-smart financing models. In fact, studies show that investing in women entrepreneurs also makes sense from a business perspective: Once women-led start-ups and enterprises dispose of reasonable financial means, their return on investment exceeds average. A white paper, presented in the framework of the Forum by UNIDO, highlighted relevant knowledge accumulated by the organisation over the years, identifying the lessons learned, and good practices carried out, including on access to finance.

To further stimulate the creation of business networks for women entrepreneurs and women-led businesses in the region, UNIDO and the UfM have joined forces with Business Club Africa, a network with a reach of 6000+ executives across the African continent and around

the world, to create and launch the MENA Women Business Club.

Members will have access to an extensive ecosystem of entrepreneurs, lawyers, consultants, executives and investors in sectors as varied as energy, agriculture, mining, tech, construction, finance, retail and distribution to network and grow their business. It will ultimately further intensify Euro-Mediterranean and South-South business linkages, fostering investment opportunities including with the diaspora.

A white paper, presented in the framework of the Forum by UNIDO, highlighted relevant knowledge accumulated by the organisation over the years, identifying the lessons learned, and good practices carried out, including on access to finance.

businesses a unique opportunity to grow their business to the next level, by learning from successful and innovative business models, and building connections with diverse and high-level international business leaders, policy-makers and experts from the world’s leading companies.

As the venture capital industry is 92% male, gender bias seems to play a role in men funding other men, overlooking the female entrepreneurs who are also seeking business funding. The 2022 edition, supported by the Governments



What is it?

Gender-smart financing

Gender-smart financing is defined as an investment strategy that seeks to intentionally and measurably use capital to address gender disparities and better inform investment decisions. Gender as

a factor of analysis can highlight opportunities and reveal risks that can strengthen investment decision-making to achieve greater financial and social outcomes.

Joint Conclusions by the Jordanian and EU co-presidency on the 7th Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean:



Voicing youth concerns and vision for the Mediterranean to policy-makers

Throughout 2021 and 2022, more than 200 young people from across 20 Euro-Mediterranean countries met to join their voices and draft a common advocacy statement gathering their aspirations, expectations, and recommendations towards building a more sustainable, prosperous and integrated Mediterranean horizon 2030. This white paper was entitled “Plaidoyer pour la Méditerranée 2030”.

This Plaidoyer was presented in the framework of the “Forum des Mondes Méditerranéens”, in February 2022 in

tionalisation of their ideas for a better future.

In this sense, UfM experts have conducted meetings with the young participants throughout fall 2022 to discuss the ideas put forward and draw a roadmap for those that could be put into action in collaboration with the UfM, the ALF and other potential regional actors.

In the framework of this series of meetings, the UfM Secretariat invited more than 50 participants to Barcelona on 23 November, to offer an opportunity for the young representatives to continue discussing their ideas and proposals with the regional experts, as well as to come upon innovative projects and programmes of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation that could be relevant for their work.

In parallel to the different sessions that took place, two representatives of the Plaidoyer group had the unique opportunity to deliver a statement in front of the UfM Ministers of Foreign Affairs at the 7th Regional Forum the day after, on 24 November 2022, in view of underlining youth’s aspirations and recommendations for enhanced sustainability, prosperity and integration

across the Mediterranean region. It was the first time external participation was welcomed at the UfM annual meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers.

Reinforcing the innovation-employability nexus in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean is a young region, with 45% of its population being under the age of 25. The region is also experiencing economic, environmental, and social challenges which negatively

“ Youth represent an immense human capital in the Euro-Mediterranean region and will remain at the heart of UfM action. We highlighted the need to amplify an inclusive youth voice in public policymaking as global actors of change across the Mediterranean region. With this preoccupation in mind, we have listened to a presentation by two Youth representatives highlighting their recommendations and expectations.

Joint Conclusions of the UfM 7th Regional Forum

Marseille (France), to the UfM and the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF), as the two institutions bound to the Barcelona Process and to enhancing Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and cooperation. In line with the mandates of both organisations, which strive to empower Euro-Mediterranean youth, the UfM Secretary General and the ALF President committed to walk the talk with the young civil society representatives and guide them towards the opera-

affect youth employment, such as lack of innovation, inflation, environmental and climate change, and disruption in global supply chains.

Therefore, imparting key knowledge and skills can offer solutions to the many challenges by empowering youth as agents of innovation and increase the resilience and inclusive economic development of the Mediterranean region. For that, a stronger and more structured dialogue is required between academia, governments, the business sector and civil society, in view of supporting environmental sustainability and job creation.

framework of the “Arab SMEs Summit: Opportunities Beyond Borders” from 30 October to 1 November in Amman (Jordan), supported by the German Development Cooperation. The two-day event saw the participation of representatives from UfM Ministries of Research and Labour, Higher Education and Research institutes and initiatives, business and university networks, development funds as well as experts in innovation and employability.

During the Forum, three sessions were held, delving into the triple helix, green innovation through research, and employability.

Dialogue between academia and industry has deepened; nevertheless, more discussion is needed to understand how to increase positive impact in the region. Students, graduates, and researchers must play a key role in reinforcing national economies through the

potential of innovation-based sustainable economies, especially in food, renewable energy, water, and digital transition, as well as green and blue economies.

This requires a higher degree of cooperation among sectors on skills, cu-

between the three stakeholders: businesses have first hand access to new technologies, scientists receive feedback from entrepreneurs about the commercial viability of their research, and governments obtain insights into the types of policy interventions that spur industry-research cooperation.

Source: OECD

Students, graduates, and researchers must play a key role in reinforcing national economies through the potential of innovation-based sustainable economies.

This was commonly agreed upon among the participants of the “UfM Forum on Green Innovation and Careers for Empowering the Mediterranean Youth: Triple Helix in Action”, a joint endeavour between the UfM and the Jordanian Higher Council for Science and Technology. The event was hosted in the



What is it?

The triple helix

The triple helix model of innovation refers to a set of interactions between academia, industry and government, to foster economic and social development. The Triple Helix model advocates the notion that value creation in innovation is accelerated when the actions of these three stakeholders are coordinated. This acceleration of value creation comes from synergies arising

To know more

Read the complete UfM Handbook for Academia, Industry and Policymakers on the Innovation-Employability Nexus in the Mediterranean:



Don't miss the UfM strategy on developing new vocational pathways in Higher Education!



ricula, study paths, and a crucial dialogue with the private sector to support academia's role in contributing to local development, far from a silos-approach.

Acutely aware of these interrelations, the first UfM Ministerial Conference on Research and Innovation held in June 2022 (see more on p. 22) highlighted the importance of strengthening long-term regional cooperation through sustainable economies and linking scientific and technological innovation with employment opportunities.

Breathing new life into higher education cooperation in the Mediterranean

The 3rd UNESCO World Higher Education Conference took place in Barcelona (Spain) in May 2022 and provided the opportunity for the UfM Secretariat to gather stakeholders from the region for a multiparty dialogue that was organised in its framework. By bringing together representatives from Ministries of Higher Education of the UfM Member States, the European Commission, key regional partner organisations and relevant academic stakeholders, the meeting allowed to start devising a renewed strategic regional agenda. The focus was on cooperation on higher education in the Euro-Mediterranean area, and especially youth employability and intercultural dialogue. This renewed agenda will be designed by building upon lessons learnt from experience, updating priorities, and ensuring proper follow-up mechanisms for future implementation.

Participants congratulated the efforts made by the Union for the Mediterranean to raise awareness among Member States and academic stakeholders of the crucial importance of higher education as a tool to achieve an inclusive and sustainable development. In addition to underlining the need to address skill mismatches, youth unemployment, fostering partnerships, academic mobility and the recognition of qualifications, while improving shared knowledge on internationalisation trends and policies. The importance of facilitating continuous peer learning on policies and practices addressing common challenges and priorities, as well as fostering the implementation of joint projects and initiatives was also highlighted.

Given the necessary revitalisation of Higher Education in the region, the UfM Secretariat launched a study to investigate the potential role of Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems to tackle the issues of youth unemployment, and skill mismatching prevailing in Southern Mediterranean countries. Divided in two main chapters, the report first outlines the outcomes of mapping the existing interventions in the region, including highlights of best practices and an analysis of empirical data collected through focus group discussions with stakeholders, as well as an online survey disseminated among the UfM network. The second part of the report details recommendations and policy actions aiming to fuel the discussion during a proposed regional dialogue where regional stakeholders can further explore ways towards a robust strategy for developing Higher Education and VET collaboration. It also includes a conceptual framework that outlines the key pillars needed to design a workforce development initiative to tackle youth and women's employment and skills development.

UfM and the European Investment Bank partner for trainings in Mediterranean universities

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, it is essential for university students involved in business or political science to receive hands-on training on topics such as multilateral policy frameworks and project financing mechanisms. These skills are critical for success in today's global economy and are highly sought after by employers. In Europe, almost half (48%) of these same employers have difficulties filling job vacancies due to skills mismatch, while similar rates can be found in the MENA region where 42% of employers report skills shortages. These statistics highlight the urgent need for policies and initiatives to address skills mismatch and help bridge the gap between the expertise that employers need and workers' abilities.

To contribute to reducing this gap, the Union for the Mediterranean and the European Investment Bank (EIB) joined forces to bring pilot trainings on the Euro-Mediterranean multilateral policy frameworks and the EU project financing mechanisms to Mediterranean Universities.

Following the signing of a dedicated agreement, the two institutions have opened discussions with three initial

universities in Morocco, Egypt and Jordan. For the first time students will receive dedicated training from the UfM Secretariat and the EIB Institute on fields such as the EU financial architecture for development, the mandate of the UfM and its role in the formulation of policies, and a focus on the EIB role and business cycle within EU architecture.

Providing students with this type of training will give them a better understanding of the complex policy frameworks underpinning the Euro-Mediterranean region and the financing mechanisms that drive its development. This knowledge will equip them with the tools they need to make informed decisions on how to contribute meaningfully to the region's economic and political development.

In November 2022, a first two-day training session was held at the Euro-Med University of Fez (Morocco), a flagship UfM-labelled project, involving selected students from the EuroMed Business School and the EuroMed Institute of Political and Juridical Science. The year 2023 will see more training opportunities in Egypt and Jordan.

In Europe, almost half (48%) of employers have difficulties filling job vacancies due to skills mismatch while similar rates can be found in the MENA region, where 42% reported skills shortages.



Read more on the outcomes of the 1st Conference on Disability and Social Inclusion in the Euro-Mediterranean Region here:



Inclusion with a big I: the UfM extends its mandate to work with people with disabilities

The UfM Secretariat has launched in 2022 works in a new area of action, to fully implement its mandate on inclusion.

Indeed, over 1 in 7 persons are experiencing some form of disability globally, and face many barriers in some key aspects of society, even more so in the context of the current crises. In light of these facts, the UfM held the 1st Conference on Disability and Social Inclusion in the Euro-Mediterranean Region, in collaboration with ONCE, to explore the limitations that people with disabilities face to access employment, the importance of a gender perspective in inclusion-related agendas and recovery programmes, and the role of accessible tourism.

The event brought together representatives of regional, national and international organisations of persons with disabilities (OPD), along with the League of Arab States and the Spanish Agency for International cooperation on behalf to explore ways of reinforcing the dialogue between civil society and governments in developing an agenda on disability in the region.

The different panels provided the audience with insights and data, which highlighted both challenges as well as possible solutions when it comes to the social and economic inclusion of persons with disability. Among others, panellists discussed how, compared to men without disabilities, women with disabilities are three times more likely to be illiterate, two times less likely to be employed and three times more likely to have unmet needs for health care.



Humans of the Mediterranean

Women challenging disability in the Mediterranean



Patricia and Jahda live on opposite sides of the Mediterranean but share the same fight: ensuring that people living with disabilities can enjoy a dignified and financially independent life. From Spain to Lebanon, both are firm believers in the need for enhanced regional cooperation to ensure social inclusion and economic empowerment for all.

Read on to learn more about their journey!



“Cooperation in the region cannot overlook the specificities of the challenges faced in each country. [...] We will achieve greater results through the strength found in our differences.”

Building resilience and sustainability

Read the complete UfM research and innovation roadmaps on climate change, renewable energies and health:



Solutions for a better future: enhancing the power of research and innovation

The current generation is facing some of the most pressing challenges that the modern world has seen. From the threat of climate change to the need for renewable energies and improvements in healthcare, we must act quickly and effectively to tackle these issues. That's where research and innovation policies come in.

Through cutting-edge research and innovative solutions, we can create a brighter future for ourselves and future generations. By investing in these policies, we can develop new technologies and practices that reduce our carbon footprint, transition to cleaner and more sustainable energy sources and improve our understanding and treatment of diseases.

It is against this background that a Ministerial conference on research and innovation was held for the first time under the Union for the Mediterranean framework in June 2022. Hosted by Sylvie Retailleau, Minister for Higher Education and Research of France, and under the co-presidency of the European Union, represented by Commissioner Mariya Gabriel and

“ This very first Research and Innovation Ministers meeting under the umbrella of the UfM comes at a very timely moment. Today, we take political important steps forward in levelling up R&I cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region on climate change, renewable energy and health.

Sylvie Retailleau, Minister for Higher Education and Research of France

In light of the climate emergency faced throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region, and the need to further build resilience and sustainable development to protect both the environment and the people, the UfM has built up its activities to promote existing and potential solutions to tackle current challenges and prepare for a better future.

Jordan with the participation of Minister Haifaa Najjar, the gathering aimed at promoting international cooperation on science and knowledge in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

In the face of ongoing and future challenges for the region, Ministers have adopted a declaration that paves the way to further strengthening scientific cooperation, fostering linkages on research, innovation and skills, as well as supporting capacity building, coordination and joint actions, including on sustainable development and employability.

Furthermore, the Member States' representatives acknowledged eight new research and innovation (R&I) roadmaps on climate change, renewable energies, and health that will act as a catalyst for future cooperation. Swift action is needed, and an implementation plan is being prepared by the UfM Regional Platform on Research and Innovation, which will transform the jointly agreed priorities into specific actions and review its progress while fostering synergies with existing instruments. Ensuring that the agreed roadmaps are implemented is crucial for the desired outcomes in the region, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. The roadmaps aim to engage actors in the region (NGOs, scientific institutions, researchers, networks of universities and citizens, the private sector and decision-makers), as well as international organisations, financial institutions and donors.

Discover initiatives and partners advancing research and innovation in the Mediterranean

Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe is the EU's funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth.

Learn more about the programme here:



Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean (PRIMA)

PRIMA is a joint programme that is being undertaken in the frame of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. By funding R&I through competitive calls, PRIMA focusses on building research and innovation capacities and developing knowledge and common innovative solutions for agro-food systems to make them sustainable, and for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area.

Learn more about the programme here:



BlueSkills: Blue Jobs and Responsible Growth in the Mediterranean

Labelled by the UfM, the BlueSkills project promotes opportunities for "Blue" marine and maritime careers by developing skills, exchanging knowledge and valorising research for more sustainable Mediterranean Sea. Its aim is to develop new curricula and increase employability in the marine and maritime sectors.

Learn more about the project here:



MedECC – Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change

An initiative supported by the UfM, MedECC is an open and independent international scientific expert network founded in 2015 and providing information to decision-makers and the general public on the basis of available scientific information and on-going research. MedECC prepares assessments and a comprehensive synthesis of global change knowledge in the Mediterranean region and their risks.

Learn more about the network and its key findings here:



Sustainable Food Systems – MED Platform

The SFS-MED Platform is a community to leverage the existing knowledge, experience and skills of food systems actors across the Mediterranean region. The SFS-MED Platform is led by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the UfM Secretariat, in collaboration with PRIMA, as an affiliated project of the One Planet Network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme.

Learn more about the platform here:



BlueMed Initiative

BlueMed is a political initiative aiming at advancing a shared vision for a more healthy, productive, resilient, better known and valued Mediterranean Sea, promoting the citizens' social well-being and prosperity, now and for future generations, and boosting economic growth and jobs. In 2021 the new Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda was developed, preparing the path for the implementation of the Mediterranean lighthouse of Horizon Europe Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030.

Learn more about the initiative here:





When science, policy and diplomacy meet

At the national level, science-policy platforms can help governments make evidence-based policy decisions by providing expert advice on scientific matters. They can also identify emerging trends and issues, assess the impact of policies and regulations, and facilitate communication between scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Additionally, these platforms can encourage public engagement with science, therefore raising awareness of scientific issues and building trust between science and society.

At the regional level, science-policy platforms can support regional policy coordination, especially in areas where cross-border cooperation is necessary. They also facilitate the exchange of scientific knowledge and best practices between regions, leading to more effective and efficient policymaking.

In response to this need, the UfM Secretariat organised in September 2022 a working and brainstorming session. The discussion aimed at mapping the key stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean science-policy interfaces and finding answers to the following questions: how can we engage universities in science-policy processes? And how can Euro-Mediterranean institutions better share knowledge amongst themselves?

Held in collaboration with the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) and the Euro-Mediterranean University of Fez (UEMF), two long standing partners and labelled projects of the UfM, the discussions were articulated around three main panels: they tackled the opportunities and challenges faced by national science-for-policy ecosystems and platforms, the existing and potential regional science-for-policy structures, as well as how science-policy interfaces best serve 21st-century learning innovations.

The UfM Secretariat and EMUNI also joined forces again through two additional webinars on “Scientific cooperation for sustainable regional development”, which was open to all R&I stakeholders in the Mediterranean, and “Science diplomacy for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region” which promoted the recently endorsed UfM Agendas on Research and Innovation as a tool for scientific cooperation in the Mediterranean.

Although science diplomacy is not a new concept, it has received strong impetus in recent years and is closely connected with cultural and economic diplomacy. These areas must be approached holistically to realise cross-border and region-wide cooperation.

What is it? Science diplomacy

Science diplomacy is the practice of using scientific collaboration to promote peaceful relations between nations and to solve related global challenges. It has emerged as a powerful tool for promoting sustainable development by fostering global cooperation and sharing knowledge on critical issues such as climate change, energy security, and health. The tangible dimension of science diplomacy thus lies

within science-policy platforms, which are essential tools to facilitate the interaction between science and policy-making processes, ensuring that scientific knowledge is effectively integrated into policy decisions. These platforms bridge the scientific community and policymakers and provide a space for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing.

Learn more on Malta's Integrated River Basin Management:



Water scarcity in the Euro-Mediterranean: acting today for a sustainable tomorrow

Water reuse is a great way to save water in areas where it is scarce. It means using water more than once before it goes down the drain. This can be done in many ways, such as using treated wastewater for irrigation or industrial processes. Reusing water can help reduce the amount needed to be pumped from distant sources, which can ultimately save energy and reduce pollution. It can also help farmers by providing a reliable source of water during the irrigation period, which can limit the risk of crop failure.

The UfM-labelled LIFE Integrated Project (IP) aims to achieve optimised management of all water resources on the Maltese islands, which face challenges such as water scarcity and drought conditions coupled with a high population density, putting additional stress on Malta's water resources. Supporting the implementation of Malta's 2nd River Basin Management Plan (RBMP), the project takes various actions to optimise water demand by increasing awareness and efficiency in use. It also develops sustainable use conditions for a diverse range of water resources such as rainwater and groundwater, while aiming to increase efficiency in the national water cycle by supporting wastewater re-use and optimising the management and protection of surface

and coastal water bodies. With a budget of €17 million, **the project expects to reduce domestic water demand by around 5%, thereby generating annual savings of around 850 000m³ in the municipal water supply** and achieving a net increase in the mean annual water recharge of around 1.2 million m³, coming from alternative water sources such as rainwater.

Connecting the dots between initiatives and projects within the Mediterranean region, the UfM Secretariat attended in November 2022 the closing ceremony of the AQUARUS project, closely linked to the UfM-labelled LIFE IP as it developed an Action Plan to establish links between best practices identified by project partners and the operative framework for wastewater treatment reuse in Malta. The Action Plan was presented during the closing ceremony, which also provided the opportunity to discuss best practices gathered on the identification of funding opportunities, innovative solutions for water resource recovery and efficiency as well as wastewater reuse safety procedures. Following the event, the UfM Secretariat and the Government of Malta agreed to integrate AQUARUS' best practices repository within the UfM Water Agenda 2030, a strategic document mandated by UfM Member States, which is updated and adapted each year in an ongoing bottom-up approach.

In Europe, 1 in 3 people are currently affected by water scarcity every year.



Source: European Environment Agency

Learn more about the Plastic Busters initiative here!



Litter-free is the way to be

Marine litter, the vast majority of which is made of plastics, is globally acknowledged as a major environmental and societal challenge of our time. The Mediterranean is one of the most affected seas by marine litter, with more than 130 marine species affected by debris originating primarily from shoreline activities.

The new project “Plastic Busters CAP: Fostering knowledge transfer to tackle marine litter in the Mediterranean”, financed by Interreg NEXT Med, kicked off in January 2022 under the umbrella of the UfM-labelled Plastic Busters Initiative, to become an instrument to improve Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), resulting in better local development planning.

Led by the University of Siena (Italy), the overall Plastic Busters initiative, from which this new project stems, is mainstreaming its work through four lines of action:

- **Action 1:** addressing data gaps with regard to marine litter through harmonised monitoring approaches.
- **Action 2:** implementing demonstration projects showcasing actions to prevent, reduce and mitigate marine litter in the Mediterranean.
- **Action 3:** providing governance support by strengthening the science-policy interface on marine litter.
- **Action 4:** coordinating awareness-raising campaigns and capacity-building activities.

Unlocking access to finance for the blue economy and water sectors

Access to finance plays a vital role in the growth and development of the water and blue economy sectors. These sectors encompass a broad range of industries such as fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, tourism, and coastal infrastructure, all of which require significant investments to operate, expand, and innovate. Without access to finance, businesses within these sectors may struggle to secure the necessary funding for critical activities such as purchasing equipment, conducting research and development, and improving infrastructure.

Furthermore, the water and blue economy sectors are often subject to unique challenges such as climate change impacts, resource depletion, and environmental regulations. Access to finance can help businesses adapt to these challenges by supporting investments in new technologies, more sustainable practices, and mitigation measures. Additionally, access to finance can facilitate the growth of SMEs within the water and blue economy sectors, which are critical to local econo-



What is it?

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is a planning and management approach that aims to balance the environmental, economic, and social objectives of coastal development. It is a process that enables the sustainable use and conservation of coastal resources while ensuring that the needs of current and future generations are met. It involves the integration of different disciplines, sectors, and stakeholders in the planning and management of coastal areas.

The project, which will be implemented in Egypt, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia over the course of two years and with a budget of over €1 million, will aim at providing hands-on trainings on marine litter monitoring and at creating a network of coastal cities for a litter-free Mediterranean.

The project will be implemented in Egypt, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia over the course of two years and with a budget of over €1 million.

Zoom on Euro-Mediterranean projects

Scaling up forests and landscape restoration in the Mediterranean



Forests play a key role in providing and protecting ecosystem services and biodiversity. The maintenance of healthy forested landscapes is essential for reducing the impacts of climate change. Effective planning, implementation, and monitoring of large-scale programmes mainstreaming Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) and promoting joint mitigation and adaptation approaches are critical to achieving climate and restoration goals in the Mediterranean region.

With a total budget of €1,850,000 over a four-year period, the project, promoted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and financed by the German Cooperation, is building regional and national capacities for the implementation of FLR programmes. As part of the UfM GreenerMed Agenda, in particular Axis 3 on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Restoration, it received the UfM label, as it directly contributes to the implementation of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on environmental and climate action of Cairo (4 October 2021).

How?

Regional key actions

- Provide technical assistances aimed at integrating Forest and Landscape Restoration programmes into Nationally Determined Contributions' investment frameworks
- Organise three capacity-building workshops while ensuring the equitable participation of women
- Raise awareness on FLR options within Nationally Determine Contributions' plans through a high-level conference held in the Mediterranean region

National key actions

- Implementation of national FLR programmes through intersectoral coordination and relevant policy
- Restoration approaches implemented in each target country in selected sites
- Monitoring of socio-economic and environmental impacts through indicators adapted to national and regional contexts

Check out the UfM website to learn more about the project:



Location

National component: **Morocco, Lebanon**
Regional component: Open to UfM Member States pertaining to the FAO Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions-Silva Mediterranea



Humans of the Mediterranean

Citizens in action: fighting plastic pollution at the grassroots level



Each year, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), in collaboration with partners and the UfM Secretariat, grants an award to young entrepreneurs from the Mediterranean region. In a post-pandemic context, the collaboration of local and regional authorities is much needed to overcome its social and economic consequences. The ARLEM Award aims at showcasing successful examples of these collaborations, to inspire, motivate and replicate best practices.

Read on to learn more about Banlastic's mission!



In 2022, the ARLEM Award was awarded to Manar Ramadan and her start-up Banlastic, which aims at banning single-use plastic and creating a more sustainable future for her community.

Check out the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy:



mic development and employment generation. SMEs often face difficulty in securing financing due to their size and limited collateral, making access to finance crucial to their success.

In June 2022, the UfM Secretariat partnered with the European Commission's Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) to organi-

se the UfM Blue Finance Conference, which was financed by DG MARE and aimed at encouraging investments in - and funding of - sustainable blue economy projects and initiatives in the Mediterranean region, especially in the Southern countries. Bringing together multilateral and national financial institutions, private investors and industry representatives, the conference was structured around sessions addressing the opportunities and modalities for investments in blue economy sectors and relaying best practices as well as much-needed matchmaking sessions between country representatives and financial institutions, where participants could present concrete project proposals, receive in-situ feedback as well as plan together their viability.

To know more

Read the full conclusions and recommendations of the EU-UfM High-Level Meeting on Water Finance and Investment - Cairo Action Agenda:



Learn more about the UfM Water Agenda 2030:



Later that year, in October 2022, the EU and the UfM Secretariat joined forces again to hold the EU-UfM High Level Conference on Water Finance and Investment in Cairo (Egypt), organised in partnership with the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources and with the financial support of Sweden. Held as a prelude to the COP27, this annual conference addressed the urgent question of water financing to ensure water security, in a region where freshwater availability is set to decrease by 15% due to climate change.

While regional discussions about water and climate change often focus on technical solutions and investment

and the innovative solutions already being developed. At the initiative of the UfM Secretariat, the Mediterranean Pavilion was a coalition of like-minded partners: co-led together with the PRI-MA Foundation and UNEP-MAP, along with a group of relevant organisations and a scientific committee, headed by the Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC) network, which gathers 600 scientists, and who produced the first scientific assessment on climate and environmental change in the region.

Representing one of the main climate change hotspots in the world, the coalition partners joined to bring a strong message to the international stage: only together can we raise awareness of climate challenges in the Mediterranean and take action to find solutions.

Located in the COP27 Blue zone, the Mediterranean Pavilion hosted more than 60 events and working meetings, and provided an exceptional opportunity for the region to talk and act as one, bridging the voices of public and private, scientific and academic, technical, policymaking, civil society, finance, and business actors. Over the course of two weeks, more than 300 institutions were represented while 400 speakers intervened during events held under the Pavilion's framework. **Always striving to ensure gender-balanced interventions, the Mediterranean Pavilion saw the representation of almost 42% female speakers, compared to an average 37% female representation across all party delegations at COP27.**

Check out the recap video on the Mediterranean Pavilion!



Check out the video on the EU-UfM High-Level Meeting on Water Finance and Investment:



projects, the new financial realities imposed by climate change, and how water sector policies need to evolve to face this situation, tend to be left aside. The event ended with the definition of a high-level action plan, the Cairo Action Agenda, which provided a set of recommendations and guiding principles that fed the subsequent COP27 discussions and provide the basis for future actions and collaborations in the water sector, in particular under the framework of the UfM Water Agenda 2030.

Browse through the complete list of events organised within the Mediterranean Pavilion



Acting as one in the face of climate change: the first Mediterranean Pavilion at the COP27

For the first time in the history of climate negotiations, the COP27 (6-18 November 2022) hosted a Mediterranean Pavilion, seeking to highlight both the urgent challenges the region faces,

The Mediterranean Pavilion at COP27: voicing concerns, finding solutions

mediterraneanpavilion.com

Over the course of two weeks, the Mediterranean Pavilion became an exchange arena for international and national stakeholders and saw the launch of several large-scale initiatives contributing to the fight against climate change:

- The presentation of the **Blue Mediterranean Partnership** by the EIB and the EBRD, which aims to foster a sustainable blue economy in the Mediterranean region of the European Union's Southern Neighbourhood countries, was one of the noteworthy features of the Mediterranean Pavilion.
- The launch of the 1 billion \$USD **PAMEX 2030 Local Finance Investment Facility (PLIFF)** which is aimed at supporting various initiatives, such as waste management and sanitation, electrification of ports, the use of bio-energy for maritime transportation, and the preservation and restoration of the biodiversity of coastal regions.

- The UfM Secretariat was also represented at the signature of the **"Sustainable Electricity Trade Roadmap"** by France, Germany, Morocco, Portugal and Spain. The initiative aims at promoting the exchange of renewable electricity in a mutually advantageous manner between Morocco and the four EU countries, acknowledging the advantages of integrating the regional electricity market.
- Another development that occurred during the Pavilion was the launch of the **International Drought Resilience Alliance**, in collaboration with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, Spain, the European Commission, and the UfM, which holds observer status. This alliance aims to create a cooperative platform that can generate political support and gather resources for specific measures that improve drought resilience in countries, cities, and communities.

More about the Blue Mediterranean Partnership:



More about the International Drought Resilience Alliance:



66 events

17,000 online viewers

Gender Mainstreaming

58.5%  **41.5%** 

More than **45,000 participants at COP27**



More than **50 bilateral meetings** were held



More than **300 institutions** and **400 speakers**

37 different media organisations interacted with the Mediterranean Pavilion



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Towards more liveable and healthy cities

Currently 60% of the Mediterranean's population is living in urban areas. With one of the fastest urbanisation rates worldwide, the region's urban population is expected to increase by an additional 22.5 million by 2030 due to persistent rural-urban migrations and endogenous urban growth. Moreover, Mediterranean cities are also experiencing high vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as water scarcity, droughts, forest fires and heat waves. Therefore sustainable urban development plays a central role in ensuring the wellbeing of citizens and the resilience of the region.

To know more

The UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040

The UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040, adopted by UfM Member States in July 2021, establishes a common vision to tackling urban challenges in the region. Discover it here:



In 2022, the UfM Secretariat focused on several issues related to this topic, as part of the implementation of its Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040 and the UfM Housing Action Plan. On 21 March, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), it held a webinar on "Urban Nature, Green Spaces and Health" to address the positive impacts of urban nature and green spaces on health and wellbeing in Mediterranean cities. Indeed, urban green spaces, such as parks, playgrounds, and residential greenery, can promote mental and physical health by reducing exposure to air pollutants, noise and excessive heat. The webinar sought

therefore to highlight good practices and perspectives for action towards more liveable and healthy cities, against a background of profound and negative impacts of urbanisation, competing land usages, global trade and industrialization on nature, biodiversity and ecosystems across the world.

On 24 March, the UfM Secretariat followed up with a meeting on how to improve the availability and quality of data to have better evidence-based urban policies. Held in the framework of the UfM Working Group on Evaluation, Monitoring & Reporting Systems on Sustainable Urban Development, the meeting aimed at analysing the main challenges and advancements in the implementation of the United Nations Statistical Commission methodology for delineation of cities, urban and rural areas, namely the "Degrees of Urbanization" method. The experience of Lebanon in applying this classification method was discussed, along with other issues such as urban health and how UfM Member States could address urban health-related indicators.

Sustainable urban models for European and Mediterranean countries

In the framework of the implementation of the UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040 and its Housing Action Plan, the UfM explored in 2022 various models of sustainable urbanisation.

On the one hand, it held a workshop on housing cooperatives in the margins of the International Social Housing Festival 2022, in collaboration with Housing Europe, on 16 June in Helsinki (Finland). The event gathered representatives of both housing cooperatives and the Ministries in charge of Housing from European and neighbouring countries, and presented different existing models of housing cooperatives, in view of discussing their success factors, how they can be replicated and, most im-

Learn more on the central role of port cities in the Mediterranean here:



portantly, how the institutional setting can facilitate the spread of cooperative housing.

The International Social Housing Festival explored housing as the foundation of good life and highlighted the role of social, public and co-operative housing in achieving socially and ecologically sustainable living in our cities now and in the future. It brought together the international housing community – housing practitioners, policymakers, architects, researchers and tenants and invited the different Finnish and international stakeholders to take part in this critical conversation and to come up with answers together. The seminars, site visits and workshops explored both policy and practice of putting people first.

Urban green spaces, such as parks, playgrounds, and residential greenery, can promote mental and physical health.

On the other hand, the UfM also focused on the importance of port city transformation to address sustainable urban development in the Mediterranean region. On 28 and 29 September 2022, the UfM Secretariat held a conference, in partnership with the Barcelona City Council and the Port of Barcelona, to provide a unique opportunity for representatives of Mediterranean ports and adjacent cities, government representatives, and other key regional and international stakeholders to exchange on this crucial issue for the region.

Participants discussed the co-creation of port city regeneration projects, dissemination of best practices in the

region and identification of concrete urban regeneration ideas, to be replicated and developed into bankable projects. The Conference underlined, once more, the importance of stronger dialogue and working relationship between ports and port cities, as well as with governments and other stakeholders in general, with a view to realising urban development visions in port cities. Taking this reality into consideration, the event also launched a process of annual gatherings of ports and port cities, which will take up different aspects of this relationship.

Digitalisation challenges and opportunities for Mediterranean ports: towards a more sustainable and resilient shipping industry

For several years now, and especially since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, digitalisation has emerged as one of the key drivers for the development of a more sustainable and resilient global shipping industry. Widespread awareness of climate change, the need for greater safety and security in port operations but also the race for greater logistical efficiency, have led to the emergence of many digital-related initiatives and projects around the world.

As a maritime space connecting three continents and a true crossroads of international trade, the Mediterranean is at the heart of this digital revolution.

The MEDports Forum 2022 focused on the challenge of digitalisation in the Mediterranean, and was held in Civitavecchia (Italy) on 7 and 8 July 2022. The Forum was co-organised by the MEDports Association and the Port System Authority of Central Northern Tyrrhenian Sea – Port of Civitavecchia, jointly with the UfM. It provided the opportunity to examine the state of the art of digitalisation in the Mediterranean, its challenges and key success factors, through the exchange of

knowledge and best practices among representatives of the international institutions, including the World Bank and the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH), experts of maritime transport and port activities,

ports representing about 70% of the total traffic in the Mediterranean. Its goals are to enhance co-operation between member ports to face new international logistics and commercial challenges and highlight the pivotal position and importance of the Mediterranean in new global cargo flows. The MEDports Association also aims to facilitate the creation of new maritime trade links between ports affiliated with MEDports by enhancing the exchange of data and by collaborating in the implementation of sustainable, secure and

efficient transport corridors, promote and support interests of MEDports' members before international organisations and institutions; and study problems relating to port activities and/or port and maritime sector in the context of international treaties or regulations with a focus on impacts on the Mediterranean.

and leading port members, in order to assist Mediterranean ports in building a resilient, progressive, and vibrant maritime sector through the use of digitalisation.

The MEDports Association, a long-time partner of the UfM in the field of transport, gathers 24 major Mediterranean

As a maritime space connecting three continents and a true crossroads of international trade, the Mediterranean is at the heart of this digital revolution.

Port of Naples, Italy.



With over **20% of the world's trade in goods in 2018**, the intra-regional market of the UfM continues to be one of the most relevant global markets, and yet, the region is one of least economically integrated worldwide.

Source: UfM-OECD

70%

of all cargo traffic in the Mediterranean is between European ports

15%

between Europe and North Africa

5%

is between MENA countries

Read more on the findings and recommendations of the 4th UfM Trade & Investment Forum here:



With over 20% of the world's trade in goods in 2018, the intra-regional market of the UfM continues to be one of the most relevant global markets today, and yet, the region is one of the least economically integrated worldwide. Indeed, integration has progressed unevenly, across and within sub-regions of the UfM, in all policy domains. Trade and inadequate infrastructure for transport and energy connectivity remain important challenges. The UfM is firmly working on this front to increase the resilience of the region in the future through the enhancement of its integration.

Digitalisation in this sense would also enhance regional trade and investment relations, and support resilience.

Promoting sustainable trade and investment for a more resilient region

Within the framework of their partnership, the UfM Secretariat and the German Development Cooperation have co-organised the fourth edition of the UfM Trade and Investment Forum in Istanbul (Türkiye), on 4 November 2022, under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Trade and in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). This 2022 edition brought together 150 participants from different sectors of the Euro-Mediterranean region to discuss the current regional economic dynamics in a changing global context with a focus on three interrelated themes, namely:

- 1. Making trade work for a green transition**
- 2. Making regional value chains work for emerging economies**
- 3. Making intraregional trade act as a cushion against global disruptions**

The key recommendations emanating from the Forum will feed into the preparatory work for the coming UfM Ministerial on Trade, which will be convened during the last quarter of 2023. Among these recommendations, participants underlined the need to keep digital processes coherent and lean to enhance trade capacities and abilities of actors with weaker infrastructure and provide them space to grow towards (green) technology orientation and digital processes. Digitalisation in this sense would also enhance regional trade and investment relations, and support resilience.

In this light, the sectors that have been identified with the highest potential of north-south collaboration for green trade and investments and to enhance resilience in the region were: (Green) Energy, Green technology,

E-commerce, Green tourism, Automotive, Agrifood industry, Fertilisers and pest control, Medical/ Sanitary, Logistics, Education and Textile.

Integration in times of crisis: towards a responsible economic integration

In view of reinforcing their efforts in enhancing trade and investment around the Mediterranean, UfM Member States met in July and December 2022, in the framework of the UfM Regional Platform on Trade and Investment. They followed up on the planned work encompassing the three main pillars of Sustainable Trade, Sustainable Investment and Regional Integration, along the lines of the Joint Declaration by UfM Trade Ministers of November 2020.

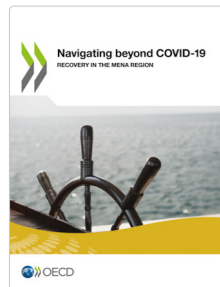
- Sustainable Trade:** participants discussed the impact of the geopolitical crises on trade in the UfM Region, notably its effects on food and energy security, and reviewed actions taken and planned to address these challenges. Participants called to step up engagement on

the issue of food security in view of the critical situation faced by several countries of the region. They also reviewed tools to enhance the resilience of value chains, as well as the green and digital transition.

- **Sustainable Investment:** UfM Member States exchanged on strategies and tools to promote additional and more sustainable investments in the UfM region, notably the recent experience in applying the OECD FDI Qualities toolkit in policy dialogue with countries of the region as part of the EU-supported project on investment in the Mediterranean.
- **Regional Integration:** Finally, UfM Member States welcomed the soft

launch of the upgraded Euromed Trade Helpdesk, implemented by the International Trade Centre with support from the EU, in partnership with the national focal points. The new Euromed Trade Helpdesk integrates a number of new features and new data, and is available for free to economic operators and decision makers from the region. The International Labour Organization (ILO) also presented their newest report “The nexus between trade, investment and employment. A regional overview”.

To include larger stakeholders in the conversation, the UfM Secretariat, together with Casa Mediterráneo and the Center for Mediterranean Integration



Report – Navigating beyond COVID-19: Recovery in the MENA Region

Over the past two years, since the outbreak of COVID-19 and the economic crisis it induced, we have become familiar with the notion of “building back better”. Recovery plans building on this notion provide an opportunity to design and implement much-needed reforms for sustainable economic growth and fairer societies.

Commissioned by the UfM, this OECD report presented in 2022 policy considerations for a post-pandemic recovery in the MENA region, reflecting in particular on the types of impacts and emerging trends in MENA economies and asks whether these necessitate modifications to the reform agendas.

It notably shows that MENA countries should reinforce their efforts to promote a structural reform agenda that improves economic resilience, inclusive societies, sustainability, welfare provision, and to promote deals responding to the urgency

of climate change capitalising on green and digital transitions. It must, however, be kept in mind, that realistic strategies also depend on fiscal affordability.

The pandemic and the geopolitical crises in the region have strengthened the rationale for cooperative solutions to address challenges that while regional, generate global consequences. Policy reforms are for the national level, but international cooperation is key to develop sound policy tools to help the reform process. MENA countries are encouraged to further strengthen their collaboration with multilateral platforms, such as the UfM and the OECD, engaging with peers across the world, to benefit from the exchange of experiences and best policy practice.



(CMI), organised a Seminar on “Integration in Times of Crisis: Towards a Responsible Economic Integration”, in Alicante, Spain, on 13 June 2022. The seminar presented a follow-up to the UfM Progress Report on Regional Integration that was launched in May 2021. It focused on two thematic areas, namely Clean Energy Integration and Sustainable Value Chains, where panelists exchanged their views on economic integration modalities, investment attractiveness, trade facilitation and new energies in the UfM region.

Preparing the economy to face the challenges of climate change

In light of the pressing realities experienced across the Euro-Mediterranean region, the promotion of sustainable, green, low-carbon and circular resource-efficient sectors seems today to be

The promotion of sustainable, green, low-carbon and circular resource-efficient sectors is key to unlocking an inclusive and sustainable economic recovery in the region.

not only a contribution to an inclusive and sustainable economic recovery in the region: indeed, it also presents an opportunity to build a new and long-term green economic model in the countries of the Mediterranean region, that promotes job creation, circular economy, sustainable supply chains, and green investments. It will also help achieve the European Green Deal, including the EU’s bilateral and regional cooperation and trade policies, as well as the EU’s demand for clean energy from producer countries in the South. In this context, in December 2022, the UfM organised a workshop on “Green Economy Promotion: how to make green economy work for sustainable

development and regional integration?” in Algiers (Algeria), on 15 December, in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry of Algeria and with the support of the German Development Cooperation. This event, that brought together over 100 participants representing a wide range of relevant stakeholders, aimed at discussing three axes:

- The importance of green economy in terms of sustainable economic development, fight against climate change and environment protection, job creation and developmental gap reduction.
- The key role that a green economy can play in enhancing the much needed regional integration given the huge demand for clean energy because of the green deal in the North, on the one hand, and the tremendous potential to produce this type of energy in the South, on the other hand.
- The requirements to unlock the full potential of green economy, including through setting favourable strategies, green skills development, innovation and research.

Moreover, participants highlighted best practices on how to harness the green economy’s full potential for the interest of the whole region through the adoption of a favorable legal and regulatory framework, government incentives and capacity building for the benefit of relevant stakeholders.

Read more on the new Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean region 2021-2027:



On the road towards a new regional agenda on transport connectivity

In view of enhancing a more sustainable, smart, resilient, cleaner and inclusive mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region, UfM Member States sought in 2022 to continue working towards a new regional agenda on Transport. Throughout several meetings, they discussed a common vision for trans-Mediterranean integration in the infrastructure sector, through notably a renewed Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean region (RTAP) for the period 2021-2027.

Indeed, ongoing changes in global trends, climate, digital technologies, and infrastructure, are having a profound effect on trade, global and regional supply and value chains, as well as on passenger transport, tourism, cities, and ultimately, people's lives. These trends are creating uncertainties and have already been impacting transport demand. But at the same time, they offer great opportunities for better quality of life, as well as for the industry, across the value chains both in the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean. They modernise, create high-quality jobs, develop new products and services, and strengthen competitiveness.

In this context, the new RTAP would assist UfM countries in mitigating risks and considering adaptation options to build resilience, future-proof national transport policies, as well as strengthen the region's culture of preparedness and evidence-based anticipatory policy-making, with strategic foresight on a regional level. It would define the short- and mid-term priorities towards achieving the overall long-term goal of regional integration in the transport and mobility sector.

To make this vision a reality, the new RTAP would build on and complement previous and current regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation frameworks, initiatives, programmes, and action plans in the transport sector in the Mediterranean region, in particular the 2013 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Transport and the recommendations and suggestions in the Evaluation report of the previous Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP 2014-2020).

The meetings brought together national transport coordinators and focal points for land, air and maritime transport and logistics from the Ministries of Transport of UfM Member States, the European Commission and the European Transport Support project (ETSP), as well as delegates from

key regional and international partner organisations, such as Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) and the Center

Enabling Energy Transition in the Mediterranean Region (meetMED) initiative was announced, in view of raising further awareness and increasing action in the region on those crucial issues.

The three partners notably launched the Programme for Energy Efficiency in Buildings' investment facility in the Mediterranean region (PEEB Med).

PEEB will expand its financing support to 7 Southern Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia) from 2022 onwards in partnership with the European Commission. With a total budget of €460 million, PEEB Med will directly benefit 14 million people in those Mediterranean countries, and help avoid 1 million tons of CO₂ equivalent over a 50-year period.

PEEB Med will combine technical project assistance integrating energy and climate targets in line with the respective Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and provide investment grants to cover the extra cost of energy efficiency measures.

With a total budget of €460 million, PEEB Med will directly benefit 14 million people in 7 Mediterranean countries, and help avoid 1 million tons of CO₂ equivalent over a 50-year period.

for Transport Studies for the Western Mediterranean (CETMO).

Boosting energy-efficient buildings in the Mediterranean region

In the framework of COP27, the UfM Secretariat focused on the need to boost action through national commitments and international cooperation towards enhanced energy efficiency in the Mediterranean region.

Through a dedicated side-event during the Conference, the commitment of the European Commission to support energy-efficiency in the Mediterranean region was highlighted, and stronger cooperation between the UfM, the Programme of Energy Efficiency in Buildings (PEEB) and the Mitigation

Málaga (Spain).



Building a regional dialogue to anticipate, prepare and respond to disasters

Civil protection is the protection of people, the environment and property against all kinds of natural and human-induced disasters. Along with the deployment of forces and equipment in response to an emergency, it also involves the planning and preparation for such events. This includes carrying out risk assessments and agreeing on protection and rescue plans and procedures.

notably due to the climate emergency, civil protection is more than ever at the heart of regional cooperation.

In line with past meetings of the UfM civil protection Director-Generals and their recommendations, as well as with the leadership of the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and other key partners, the UfM Secretariat launched its Regional Dialogue Platform on Civil Protection in 2022, which will create a space for regional dialogue and consultation.

The objectives of this platform will mainly entail developing a comprehensive regional strategy on civil protection; and paving the way to a fourth UfM Directors-General Meeting on Civil Protection.

To know more

Discover the timeline of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on Civil Protection here:



Firefighters fighting a forest fire.

In light of the growing number of disasters in the Euro-Mediterranean area,



Zoom on Euro-Mediterranean projects

PROCULTHER: Protecting Cultural Heritage from the Consequences of Disasters

Italy, France, Spain and Turkey are risk-prone countries and, at the same time, extremely rich in cultural heritage assets, some of these designated by UNESCO as World Heritage sites. Moreover, these countries have gained significant experience in the growing sector of cultural heritage protection in emergencies and can contribute to this with their valuable background in this field.

Between 2019 and 2021, the International Centre for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and the Fondazione Hallgarten - Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca (Italy)

partnered with these four countries, along with the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, to pool together professional skills and competences to:

How?

- Place cultural heritage protection at the top of national civil protection agendas and make cultural heritage protection a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder issue
- Improve collaboration and coordination arrangements among national disaster management players to promote better-organised and more effective national civil protection systems
- Create tools and concrete technical support with the purpose of initiating or further developing national discussions on the development of national capacities in this field
- Increase the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) capacities and better-protected cultural heritage worldwide through the availability of a UCPM led capacity in support of national response actions in case of emergency.

With an overall budget of €800,000 (co-financed by 75% from the European Commission), the PROCULTHER team supported the implementation of:

A European methodology for the protection of cultural heritage in emergency



Establishing a European civil protection capacity to provide guidance and support globally for Cultural Heritage first aid during emergencies



Based on its success, the project today has been extended for a new phase (2022-2023) and expanded to Germany and Portugal as well. It was presented during the pre-event of the 7th UfM Regional Forum on 23 November, in Barcelona.



Acronyms and abbreviations

AfCFTA African Continental Free Trade Area	GDP Gross Domestic Product	PEEB Programme for Energy Efficiency in Buildings
ALF Anna Lindh Foundation	GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Cooperation)	PEEB Med Programme for Energy Efficiency in Buildings' investment facility in the Mediterranean region
ARLEM Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly	IAPH International Association of Ports and Harbors	PRIMA Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
BMZ German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation	ICCROM International Centre for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property	RBMP River Basin Management Plan
CETMO Center for Transport Studies for the Western Mediterranean	ICZM Integrated Coastal Zone Management	R&I Research & Innovation
CIHEAM International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies	ILO International Labour Organization	R20 Regions of Climate Action
CMI Center for Mediterranean Integration	MedECC Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change	RTAP Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean Region
COP Conference of the Parties	Med4Jobs Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs	SDG Sustainable Development Goal
DG MARE European Commission's Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	meetMED Mitigation Enabling Energy Transition in the Mediterranean Region	Sida Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
DSC Deputy Secretary General	MENA Middle East and North Africa	SME Small and medium-sized enterprise
EIB European Bank of Investment	MSMEs Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises	STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
EMGN Euro-Mediterranean Guarantee Network	NDCs Nationally Determined Contributions	UCPM European Union Civil Protection Mechanism
EMP Euro-Mediterranean partnership	NEETs Those not in employment, education or training	UEMF Euro-Mediterranean University of Fez
EMUNI The Euro-Mediterranean University	OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	UfM Union for the Mediterranean
ETSP European Transport Support project	OPD Organizations of persons with disabilities	UN United Nations
EU European Union	OTIF Organisation for International Carriage by Rail	UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations		UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization
FLR Forest and Landscape Restoration		VET Vocational Education and Training
		WBF Women Business Forum
		WHO World Health Organization



Union for the Mediterranean
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الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



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The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is an intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organisation which brings together all countries of the European Union and 16 countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. The UfM's mission is to enhance regional cooperation, dialogue and the implementation of projects and initiatives with tangible impacts on our citizens, with an emphasis on young people and women, in order to address the three strategic objectives of the region: stability, human development and integration.



ENVIRONMENTAL
 AND CLIMATE ACTION



SUSTAINABLE AND
 INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC
 AND HUMAN
 DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL
 INCLUSIVENESS
 AND EQUALITY



DIGITAL
 TRANSFORMATION



CIVIL PROTECTION

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY
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