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Union for the Mediterranean  
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## TOWARDS MORE INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES

Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment  
in the Mediterranean Region

**20 and 21 September 2023**

Palau de Pedralbes, Barcelona



### Senén Florensa

President of the Mediterranean Commission of the European League of Economic Cooperation (ELEC), Executive President of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

Senén Florensa is the President of the Mediterranean Commission of the European League of Economic Cooperation (ELEC), Executive President of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), Chair of EuroMeSCo General Assembly, and director of the quarterly afkar/ideas and of the IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook.

A diplomat, he holds a degree in Economic Science and in Law from the Universitat de Barcelona. He studied for his doctorate in Economics at the Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne (1973-1974); as a Fullbright scholarship holder at New York University, Ph. D. Program (1974-1976), and at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, where he presented his doctoral thesis in 1979 with the highest qualification of Outstanding Summa Cum Laude. Diploma in International Studies from the Diplomatic School of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

He has been Ambassador to Tunisia, Consul General to Rome and Berlin and Ambassador Permanent Representative of Spain to United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna (2018-2020).



### Francesc Homs

President of the Spanish Committee of the European League of Economic Cooperation (ELEC).

Francesc Homs is currently Executive Chairman of INEO CORPORATE, member of the Board of Trustees of the La Caixa Foundation, Director of Criteria and Advisor and Director in several companies. He also serves as President of the Advisory

Council of the International University of Catalonia and as President of the Spanish Committee of the LECE.

He began his professional career as a professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Later, he was a Deputy in the Congress of Deputies, Economic Spokesman (1986 – 1999), and President of the Industry and Energy Commission. He was Councilor of the Barcelona City Council and Deputy in the Parliament of Catalonia. During the years 2001 to 2003 he was Minister of Economy and Finance of the Generalitat de Catalunya. He has also been President of the Consell Català del Moviment Europeu.



### **John Paul Grech**

Deputy Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean (UpM)

John Paul Grech is the Deputy Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean in charge of Social and Civil Affairs since September 2021. His diplomatic career spans over 30 years of service during which he has served as Head of Mission in both bilateral and multilateral missions overseas. In addition, he also held various positions within the Ministry of Foreign & European Affairs of the Republic of Malta, including that of Permanent Secretary.

He has served as ambassador of Malta to Germany, Poland and Belarus. He also served as Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations Specialized Agencies in Geneva and Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the OSCE and UN Agencies in Vienna. Besides, he has been assigned duties as Special Envoy on behalf of the Government of Malta on a number of assignments.



### **Natalia Bayona**

Executive Director, World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO)

Natalia Bayona is a pioneer in public administration who began her career working with the government of her native Colombia.

During her tenure at ProColombia, the national government tourism agency, she spearheaded the promotion of Colombian tourism in the MERCOSUR trade block (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay) and served as the inaugural director of Colombia's commercial office for Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. In 2013, at the age of just 27, Ms. Bayona became the youngest manager responsible for promoting her country's tourism worldwide.

Since 2016, Natalia has resided in Spain, working first as Vice President of Spain Startup-South Summit, before joining UNWTO to lead its newly created Innovation, Education, and Investment Department. Under her guidance, the Organization has undertaken ground-breaking initiatives, which to date include more than 10 global entrepreneurship competitions, numerous national challenges, and over 20 innovation and technology forums. These efforts have fostered an extensive Innovation Network comprising over 10,000 entrepreneurs, 1,200 companies, 400 public institutions, 500 educational institutions, 40 accelerators, and 250 investors. This dynamic ecosystem has facilitated the acquisition of over US\$214 million in financing for disruptive companies. Furthermore, Natalia has been instrumental in establishing the first UNWTO Tourism Online Academy, boasting over 20,000 students and offering 24 courses with scholarships available to students worldwide.

Ms. Bayona is an Eisenhower Fellow, recognized for her leadership and commitment to fostering a more prosperous and just world through her work in the tourism sector. Acknowledging her achievements, in 2022, the Colombian government named her one of the 10 most influential people from her country residing in Spain.

Natalia holds a degree in International Relations from Universidad Externado de Colombia, an Executive MBA from IE Business School, and has completed an executive program in innovation and digital transformation for tourism at the same institution. She regularly delivers lectures and masterclasses at renowned universities worldwide, including Harvard, Cornell and MIT.



**Petra Mateos**

Professor at the Complutense University of Madrid

Petra Mateos is a professor of financial economics at the Complutense University of Madrid. She holds a PhD cum laude in Economics and Business Administration from the Complutense University of Madrid. She has been Vice President of the Spain-US Chamber of Commerce since February 2011 and an independent director of Técnica Reunidas SA since February 2016.



**Leila Belkhiria Jaber**

President, Chambre Nationale des Femmes Cheffes d'Entreprises (CNFCE)

Leila Belkhiria Jaber is the current president of Chambre Nationale des Femmes Cheffes d'Entreprises (CNFCE). She holds a bachelor's degree in Marketing from Higher Institute of Management of Tunis (ISG) a postgraduate degree in

International Trade Law from Faculté des Sciences Juridiques Tunis II, and an MBA in Communication and Leadership from Dale Carnegie Training. She is the CEO and co-founder of Stelfair Tunisia, a pioneering organization in the field of e-marketing and web design since 1996.

As a Vice-President of CNFCE from 2012-2017, Leila participated in the development of strategies for gender-equal opportunities, women entrepreneurship development, and the increase of women's access to decision-making positions. Moreover, she established the Businesswomen's Academy. Among her many accolades, Leila was the Female Entrepreneur of the Year in the ICT sector in 2015 and 2008 and was named Woman of The Decade in Business and Leadership in 2019. She is a decorated businesswoman who was honored by the President of the Republic of Tunisia and named Commander of the Republic in 2019.



### **Andrea Tinagli**

EIB Representative at the Union of the Mediterranean

Andrea Tinagli is the European Investment Bank Representative to the Union for the Mediterranean. He holds a PhD in Economics and Administration from Università Bocconi. With a long track record in the fields of development finance, infrastructure and investment finance, financial instruments, and securitization of SMEs and Midcaps portfolios, he has held senior managerial positions at the European Investment Bank (EIB), including Head of the Spanish Delegation; Head of Holding Funds, Southern Europe; Head of Italian Delegation and Head of Energy and Public sector and Project Finance Italy and Malta; before becoming Head of Banks and Energy Baltic Sea and Northern EU Countries, prior to his current position.



### **Soukaina Bouraoui**

Executive Director of the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR); President, Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation

Soukaina Bouraoui is the Executive Director of the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR); President, Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation. She holds a PhD in Law at the Université Saint-Joseph of Beirut, with her areas of expertise being criminal, civil and environmental law, women's and human rights, and gender justice. She is a founder and directed (1991-1997) the National Center for Information, Documentation, and Research on

Women (CREDIF), as well as the Executive Director of CAWTAR since 1999, a Tunisian organization working with the 22 Arab countries to promote the status and role of women in development in the region.

Since 2000, she is also a member of the International Court of Environment Arbitration and Conciliation (ICEAC), Vice President of the International Center of Comparative Environmental Law (CIDCE), and a member of the Board of Advisors at the International Development Law Organization (IDLO). Dr. Bouraoui is also the President and founding member of the Fondation Des Femmes de l'Euro-Méditerranée, a foundation based in Barcelona which actively fosters the dialogue between Arab and Euro-Mediterranean women and promotes networking among different social groups as a key to sustainable development.



### **Victoria Tur Gómez**

Head of the Department of Cooperation with the Arab World and Asia, directorate for Cooperation with Africa and Asia, AECID

Victoria Tur Gómez is the Head of the Department of Cooperation with the Arab World and Asia, directorate for Cooperation with Africa and Asia, AECID. She has worked under the General Directorate (GD) of Integration and Coordination of General Affairs of the EU and the GD of International Economic Relations and been based in the Spanish Embassies in Zimbabwe and Jamaica, working on cultural affairs. Furthermore, she has been the General Adjunct Deputy Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, and Adviser at the Spanish Embassy in Berlin.



### **Gaëlle Ferrant**

Economist and Gender Specialist, Global Relations and Cooperation, Middle East and Africa, OCDE

Gaëlle Ferrant is an Economist and gender specialist, Global Relations and Cooperation, Middle East and Africa, OECD. Dr. Ferrant holds a PhD in development economics from the Paris School of Economics, engaging in post-doctoral research at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium and the University of Laval, Canada. She also worked at the French Development Agency, UNFPA, UNESCO and for African-based NGOs.

Gaëlle joined the OECD in 2013 as economist, working for the OECD Development Centre and the OECD Directorate for Development Cooperation. In

the current capacity, Gaëlle manages the MENA-OECD Women's Economic Empowerment Forum (WEEF) and leads the Gender Projects of the OCDE Country Programs -notably in Morocco and Egypt-, including policy-oriented analysis, policy dialogue and gender data capacity building.



### **Carmen Geha**

Co-Principal investigator, Support and Accelerate Women's inclusion (SAWI) project; Founder of Soltara Consulting and Senior Gender and Migration Researcher, University Pompeu Fabra (UPF)

Carmen Geha is a Co-Principal investigator, Support and Accelerate Women's inclusion (SAWI) project; Founder of Soltara Consulting and Senior Gender and Migration Researcher, University Pompeu Fabra (UPF). She holds a PhD in International Relations from the University of St. Andrews (2014). Through Soltara Consulting, of which she is the Managing Director, she is implementing projects in 10 countries in Europe and the MENA region on gender inclusion, displacement and employment policies. She is also a Senior Researcher on gender and migration, and lecturer of migration studies, at the Department of Political Studies at Pompeu Fabra University while also a lecturer in gender and development at the Barcelona Institute for International Studies (IBEI). Carmen is a Fulbright Scholar and has been a visiting scholar at Harvard University, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Watson Institute in Brown University, and the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

Before moving to Spain in 2022, she was a Tenured Associate Professor of Public Administration and Leadership at the American University of Beirut (AUB), where she co-founded the Center for Inclusive Business and Leadership (CIBL) for Women, and acted as Founding Director of the Afghan Women scholarship program.



### **Yeganeh Forouheshfar**

Economist and Researcher, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA)

Yeganeh Forouheshfar is an Economist and Researcher, EMEA. She holds a PhD in Economics from the Université Paris-Dauphiné. Since 2013, she has collaborated with the organization of the Annual International Workshop on Pension, Insurance and Savings at the Université Paris-Dauphiné, and since 2020 she works as a Researcher at the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), at the CREAT4MED and INVESTMED projects, promoting youth and women in cultural and creative industries in the Mediterranean Region, and promoting new and sustainable business opportunities for young people and women in the Mediterranean Region respectively.



**Anna Estrada**

Economist, ELEC Board Member

Anna Estrada is an Economist, ELEC Board Member. She holds a Master’s in European Economics at the College of Europe through a grant from the Catalan Pro Europa Trust and a Master’s in International Relations at CIDOB (Barcelona Center for International Affairs), as well as PhD studies in Mediterranean Cultural Studies at Universitat Rovira I Virgili. Currently a European League for Economic Cooperation, she has previously held a role as Deputy Director of Executive Coordination and Partnerships. Through a long career in both Development and Commerce, she managed the first agreements between the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation and the UNHCR, as well as being a Board Member at the Catalan Branch of UNICEF between 2006 and 2010. Furthermore, as a Head of Unit, she established the diplomatic body of Catalonia (DIPLOCAT).



**Enrico Giordano**

Secretary General, ELEC Italy

Enrico Giordani represents Italian and international issuers and investment banks in a wide variety of public and private finance transactions.

He has worked on major Italian and foreign privatisation transactions and has significant experience in IPOs, other public and private equity and equity-hybrid securities offerings, as well as debt offerings. He also advises Italian and international clients with regard to corporate and securities law matters, as well as debt, tender offers, exchange offers and other restructuring.



**Miriam Izquierdo**

President, Woman Forward Foundation, ELEC Board Member

Miriam Izquierdo is the President, Woman Forward Foundation, ELEC Board Member. She holds a degree in Law and Economics from the University of Deusto, a Master’s in European Law from the University of Deusto, a Magister Iuris Europeis from the University of Saarland (Germany), an MBA from the Vrije Universiteit van Brussels (ULB), and a PDG from IESE. Her recent education includes training on Boards of Directors at Harvard Business School and Negotiation with the Karras Group in the United States, as well as a Master’s in Social Media Management from the University of Alcalá and Digital Business

Management from La Salle. She is currently on the verge of completing a Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Witten-Höerdecke in Germany.

Until the year 2000, she served in the European Community's public sector at the European Commission, in the Directorate-General for Industry. Afterwards, she held the position of Director of Institutional Relations and Corporate Affairs at the Leche Pascual Group, where she became a personal advisor to President Tomás Pascual Sanz, focusing on internationalization and corporate affairs. She then founded the international and digital strategy consulting firm, Comerciendo Global, of which she is the CEO. Currently, she also serves as the President of the Woman Forward Foundation, a member of the board of trustees of the Independent Foundation, and an honorary member of the Fundatech Foundation. She is the Academic Director of the "Wo-Men Joining Boards" corporate governance course and sits on the advisory boards of Corporance Asesores de Voto, Top Boards at Headspring (a joint venture between IE and the Financial Times), and Agranda. She teaches at various European universities, including Pisa (Italy) and BI Business School (Norway).



### **Carme Hortalà Vallvé**

Manager at GVCGaesco Valores & Member Economic Commission at FC Barcelona, ELEC Board Member

Carme Hortalà Vallvé is the Manager at GVCGaesco Valores & Member Economic Commission at FC Barcelona, ELEC Board Member. With extensive experience in management, having been at the front of GVCGaesco for over 25 years, and an independent advisor for multiple entities ranging from the food industry to biotech, and finance to telecommunications, she is currently working for the Economic Commission of FC Barcelona, as well as Parlem Telecom and others. She also holds an Economics Degree from Universitat de Barcelona, as well as Law Studies at the UOC. She is also a cofounder of Women Hispanic Executives.



### **Fairouz Habache**

President, Women in Business of Algeria (WIBA)

Fairouz Habache is an expert in female entrepreneurship, participated in the development of the ISO / IWA Standard, identification of the female entrepreneur. Mentor to Cherie Blair Foundation for Women. She has also been responsible for national and international programs since November 2020 at CMESACONSULTING ET SCALY Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. She was also a member



of the AME association “Algerian managers and entrepreneurs” and of the national council of the Mowgli-Algeria program. She is currently president of the WIBA community.



### **Anna Dorangricchia**

Project Manager Gender Equality, Social and Civil Affairs Division, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Project Manager on Gender Equality at Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat (UfM), Ms Anna Dorangricchia coordinates the UfM Regional Policy Dialogue on Women empowerment and she is in charge of the UfM Monitoring exercises on gender indicators since 2020.

She has a long-lasting experience as Senior expert in programming, monitoring and evaluation in the area of economic inclusion of women and youth under the framework of European Neighbourhood Instrument in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



### **Cristina González Viu**

General Manager, MicroBank

Cristina Gonzalez is the General Manager of MicroBank, CaixaBank's social bank, created in 2007 to facilitate access to credit for groups that have the most difficulty accessing the traditional financial system. Cristina is part of the women's group PROMOCIONA Executive Program for Women in Senior Management at ESADE. She is also the chair of the Impact Bridge Impact Fund Advisory Committee.



### **Anne France Wittman**

Programme Officer, Regional Cooperation Southern Neighbourhood, DG NEAR

Anne-France Wittmann works in the unit in charge of Regional Cooperation in the Southern Neighbourhood, at the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission. She notably focuses on women economic empowerment.



**Lilia Hachem Naas**

Chief Office for the Middle East and North Africa (OMENA), International Trade Centre

Lilia Hachem Naas is the Chief Office for the Middle East and North Africa (OMENA), International Trade Centre. She focused on improving the business environment, enhancing capacity, and strengthening the competitiveness of MSMEs with a focus on women and youth.

Hachem Naas has worked for the United Nations for 20 years. Before joining the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Ms Hachem Naas was Chief at the Office for Arab States at the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Geneva, since October 2013. During her tenure at ITC, Ms Hachem Naas was able to strengthen the strategic position of ITC in the Arab region by increasing the portfolio of projects, and by expanding and enhancing relationships with institutions at national and regional levels including with development partners and the donor community. Ms Lilia Hachem Naas took up her functions as Director of the ECA Office for North Africa in Rabat (Morocco) on 2 October 2017.



**Giorgio Mosangini**

Team Leader – Green Entrepreneurship & Civil Society, MedWaves

Giorgio Mosangini is currently the Team Leader of Green Entrepreneurship & Civil Society at MedWAVES. He is involved in projects related to green entrepreneurship, civil society strengthening, local and rural development, gender and women rights or food security.



**Gemma Aubarell**

Director of the Culture, Gender and Civil Society Department, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

Gemma Aubarell has a long career dedicated to Mediterranean relations.

Linked to the Catalan Institute of the Mediterranean since 1989, she was Director of Programs (2000-2008) when the Institute had already become the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). She has been Head of Programme and Networks Unit of the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (Alexandria, Egypt) 2009-2016. As Head of the Mediterranean Relations and European Networks Service at the Government of Catalonia, she has coordinated the Government’s Mediterranean Strategy MedCat 2030 (2018-2023).

With extensive experience in the fields of Euro-Mediterranean relations, migration policies, civil society and intercultural dialogue, she has been involved in the organization of international events such as the first Euromed Civil Forum in 1995 or the World Migration Congress in year 2004 in Barcelona. She has coordinated research teams and directed European projects in the Arab world with a special focus on the issues of education and youth. She has published articles and edited books on these subjects and has directed periodical publications in the Mediterranean area.



### **Raghda Kurdi**

Board, Arab International Women's Forum

Raghda Kurdi is the Board, Arab International Women's Forum. Ms. Kurdi has a B.S.C. in Pharmacy from the American University of Beirut, and a diploma in Management from the Swedish Institute of Management. Along a long record in the pharmaceutical industry, being the first Jordanian female founding CEO of a pharmaceutical manufacturing company, Hayat Pharmaceutical Industries, and campaigning for women's issues through the founding of the Jordan chapter of the International Women's Forum (IWF), of which she served the first four years as president of, she was awarded the Women in Business Awards from the United Nations Commission for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 2012.

Currently, she is still on the Board of Directors of Hayat Pharmaceutical Industries, and the Head of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, as well as on that of the Arab International Women's Forum and the Integrated Young President's Organization, Jordan Chapter. She has formerly formed part of the Economic Consultative Council of His Majesty King Abdullah II, Board of Directors and Executive Committee.



### **Maria Teixidor**

President, Women and Enterprise Committee, Micro, Small and Medium-sized enterprises (PIMEC)

Maria Teixidor is a lawyer and businesswoman. She is the founder of Vuca Solutions, a member of the board of directors of the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises of Catalonia (Pimec) and president of its Women and Business Commission. From July 2015 until April 2020, when she resigned, she was a member of the board of directors, secretary and head of women's football at FC Barcelona. Subsequently, she was in charge of Circuit de Barcelona-

Catalunya. In March 2022, she announced her pre-candidacy for the presidency of the Professional Women's Football League, together with lawyer Reyes Bellver.



### **Noha El-Mikawy**

Dean, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP), American University in Cairo (AUC)

Noha El-Mikawy is the Dean of the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) at the American University in Cairo (AUC). She holds a PhD and a MA from the University of California, Los Angeles, and has authored two books and multiple articles on institutional reform and governance in MENA. Before 2005, she led comparative research on the political economy of MENA at the Centre for Development Research at the University of Bonn and lectured on politics of the Middle East at the American University in Cairo, Free University of Berlin and Erlangen Nuremberg. From 2007 to 2009, Dr. El-Mikawy was a Policy Advisor at the UNDP Oslo Governance Center.

Dr. El-Mikawy served as Team Leader for Governance at the UNDP Regional Center (based in Lebanon and Egypt, afterwards) between 2005 and 2012, providing support on governance reform in Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, Jordan and Kuwait. In 2011, her team organized the UNDP's first international conference on transitions to democracy, bringing together officials and civil society actors from Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen, and offering a space to share their experiences with counterparts from Latin America, Asia and Africa. She is the former Regional Director of the Ford Foundation, Office of the Middle East and North Africa (2012-2022).



### **Javier Arias**

President, ELECI

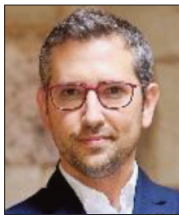
Javier Arias is President of ELEC-LECE International since December 2020. He is Partner and Senior Consultant providing advisory services on Digital related issues transforming the Industry of Financial Services for the Brussels-based consultancy firm Europe-Insights and Senior Advisor of EUROFI.

With more than 35 years of experience in the financial sector he was Managing Director of Corporate Development (M&A) and Director of Strategic Alliances of BBVA. Head of Investment Management, Chief Controller and CRO for the Private Banking of BBVA in Spain, he was also Regional Director of International Financial



Institutions Europe, Middle East & North America, Head of CIB and Treasury of GESBANQUE and Head of BBVA Belgium, among others executive positions within the BBVA Group and other associations and financial forums in Europe.

He holds an Executive master's in business administration by Insead (EMBA) and a Master's in Economics from the City University of London.



### **Gerard Vives Fernández**

Director General for European Union Affairs, Government of Catalonia

Graduate in Political Science and Administration (specialisation in International Relations, UAB, 2001). Master's degree in Diplomacy and International Relations (specialisation in EU Affairs, Diplomatic School, 2007).

Director General of the Representation of the Government Abroad and the European Union since July 2021.

Previously and since 2015, he held the position of advisor for strategic and prospective analysis in the Directorate General for Multilateral and European Affairs, in the Secretariat for Foreign and European Affairs and in the Cabinet of the Counsellor of the Departments of the Presidency (2015) and of External Action, Institutional Relations and Transparency (2016 to 2021).

Between 2011 and 2015 he worked in Brussels, in the field of design and implementation of advocacy strategies towards EU institutions and Member States as a technician in the European NGO Confederation for Development (CONCORD) and as coordinator for Europe of Beyond 2015, a campaign created in 2010 to influence the negotiation process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.