

# Employment



UfM-labelled project CEED Grow - Med4Jobs Initiative (Albania)

The Euro-Mediterranean region has **one of the highest unemployment rates in the world**, affecting mostly young people and women, making job creation a pressing priority for UfM countries. Inclusive, sustainable and decent employment for all has thus acquired a priority position in policymaking in the region, being indispensable for economic growth, social cohesion and the eradication of poverty.

In this context, the UfM aims to develop employment opportunities and promote inclusive growth in the Euro-Mediterranean region, addressing youth employability and women's socio-economic empowerment with a particular focus on the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

impact and its engagement in human and sustainable development efforts.

Promoters, partners and young beneficiaries from 10 UfM-labelled projects were given space to share their experiences, success stories and best practices. The testimonials presented by the young participants emphasised the role of Med4Jobs projects in **cultivating an entrepreneurial culture**, and the impact they had on developing the necessary skills for their beneficiaries.

IN 2017, YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT  
→ WAS 2 TO 3 TIMES  
HIGHER THAN ADULT  
UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE  
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION.

Source: World Bank



## Med4Jobs Stakeholders' Dialogue: youth at centre stage

During the **3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Regional Forum**, the UfM Secretariat held the first stakeholders' dialogue for its flagship initiative **Med4Jobs**, with the aim of evaluating progress achieved and the lessons learnt. It brought together over 50 participants to discuss the private sector's social

## THE MED4JOBS INITIATIVE

**Med4Jobs** is a flagship UfM initiative that aims to help increase the employability of young people and women, close the gap between labour demand and supply, and foster a culture of entrepreneurship and private sector development. It is a cross-sector initiative driven by the need for an integrated regional response to job creation.

Launched in 2013, Med4Jobs currently includes 13 labelled projects that **benefit over 100,000 young people and women**, in addition to supporting the development of MSMEs in the region.

The initiative benefits from the expertise of the Med4Jobs Advisory Board, whose members include the ILO, UNIDO, OECD, ETF, GIZ and UNCTAD. Regular meetings bring the advisory board together with other influential organisations and institutions working in employability, job creation and with SMEs in the region.

The board's objectives are to:

- Select good practices that address gaps in the region's labour markets for the Med4Jobs initiative, whilst providing feedback on project proposals submitted for UfM labelling.
- Contribute to the promotion of job creation and the development of SMEs by identifying potential synergies with other related programmes.
- Coordinate action across the range of available tools and programmes, and render it more effective.

Some key challenges across the Euro-Mediterranean region have been identified and will be addressed at the upcoming ministerial conference. These include the need to foster employment opportunities, reduce youth unemployment, address skills mismatches, tackle the challenge of people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and low-skilled individuals, promote gender equality and decent work for all, as well as to develop social dialogue.

**"Med4Jobs is exactly the sort of initiative that we need, to give young people the opportunities they deserve and businesses the qualified staff they are looking for. This is Union for the Mediterranean at its best."**

*Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission*

## EMPLOYMENT FOR INTEGRATION

A proposal to develop a campus that provides Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes for Syrian refugees and local host communities was presented during a brainstorming meeting organised by the UfM Secretariat in 2018.

Over two and a half years, the campus would allow beneficiaries to receive EU-level accredited training, as well as internship placements that would help them access the labour market. During the meeting, government officials, UN agencies, and specialised educational and training entities agreed that critical success factors for this initiative would include: the active engagement of the private sector, the delivery of certifications and academic titles, and the creation of an environment where the psychological and social issues that keep refugees from better integration are addressed.



## Employment at the heart of plans for the region

The **UfM High-Level Working Group on Employment and Labour** met twice during 2018 to prepare for the 4<sup>th</sup> UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour, to be held on 2-3 April 2019 in Cascais (Portugal). The working group analysed the progress achieved by public authorities and social partners since the last ministerial conference in 2016, looking at action in the area of social dialogue, the social economy and the UfM-labelled project **YouMatch**, which matches labour supply and demand.

## ALSO ON THE AGENDA...

- 5<sup>th</sup> Med4Jobs Advisory Board meeting on the Private Sector and Technology
- YouMatch II Planning Workshop

[ufmsecretariat.org/what-we-do/](http://ufmsecretariat.org/what-we-do/)