

Young participants of the Model UfM at the World Youth Forum. Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

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Agents of change

The Euro-Mediterranean is one of the youngest regions in the world. The UfM has therefore placed youth at the heart of its action, giving a strong impulse to youth engagement within the region's priorities, in view of further empowering young people, meeting their needs and bringing into play their potential as agents of change. The organisation has made it a priority to guarantee the representation of young experts, leaders or project beneficiaries, in order to have their opinion voiced and accounted for when charting future actions and shaping the Mediterranean development agenda.

Building on the outcomes of youth-related activities organised in the past years, the UfM Secretariat has been working on the development of a structured and coordinated youth strategy in the Euro-Mediterranean area. In this context, it held a focus group during the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe's University on Youth and Development (15-18 September 2019, Molina, Spain), to discuss the development of this strategy, and more generally the structuring of its youth programme.

The focus group gathered experts on youth programmes and policies, as well as representatives of the main youth-led and youth-serving organisations from the Euro-Mediterranean region to identify inclusive processes and participatory approaches that will help build a relevant grassroots youth strategy for the UfM. They advised the organisation on how to actively involve young people in the definition of its priorities and actions, helped to define how to mainstream the youth dimension in other UfM activities, as well as how

to create synergies with other existing strategies in the region.

Shaping the young leaders of tomorrow

The World Youth Forum (16 December, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt) hosted in 2019 the first-ever Model Union for the Mediterranean (Model UfM), where 90 young delegates exchanged ideas for action and recommended initiatives to decision-makers and influential figures. In a simulation of UfM Ministerial Conferences, the participants drafted mock ministerial declarations to address pressing issues such as youth unemployment and climate change.

Youth delegates stressed that only improved regional cooperation and integration would be capable of tackling climate change. A big part of this would be the provision of opportunities for the development of circular economy models as well as blue and green financing. In line with this, they called for better training for younger generations that will take into account the constraints imposed by climate change for the region. They also emphasised the urgent need to create jobs for women and youth, foster entrepreneurship and develop cross-border projects in the Mediterranean, in order to equip young people with the skills that are required in a time of technological innovation and a rapidly changing job market.

The Model UfM encouraged participants to appreciate the importance of building consensus in a region that has great potential for integration, and inspired them to learn more about the dynamics of building mutual understanding right across the Mediterranean.

Read more about UfM activities on young people:



On 4 December 2019 in Barcelona, the UfM gathered young entrepreneurs to exchange ideas on their projects and success stories in the tourism area, with a view to discussing the sector's role as a catalyst for job creation on both shores of the Mediterranean, especially for youth and women.

The group discussions focused on youth entrepreneurship and job creation, women in tourism and the role of digital transformation in the sector. The

exchanges concluded that policy dialogue on tourism in the Euro-Mediterranean region cannot be neglected, and neither can the transfer of knowledge and best practices in the field. Specific capacity-building, standardisation and training skills in the tourism sector would also help to alleviate youth unemployment and create various opportunities for women.

Read more about the conclusions of the event:
<https://ufmsecretariat.org/tourism-job-creation/>