



Concept Note

UfM Conference on enhancing MSMEs resilience in face of future shocks

Towards more resilient MSMEs – key learnings from the pandemic crisis

Nicosia (Cyprus) – 6 and 7 October 2022

In Southern Mediterranean economies, Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) represent as much as 90-95% of all registered companies and are major job providers and economic value generators. Hence, there is a significant commitment of all Governments in the region to secure the best possible conditions for their inclusive and sustainable development.

Despite their prominent role in the region's economy, MSMEs continue to be a vulnerable segment as they have been facing pressing challenges such as lack of access to finance, limited digitalization, barriers to access to international markets, skills mismatch, among others. These challenges have been unfortunately accentuated by the negative fallout of the unprecedented Covid-19 crisis. In addition to short term “fire-fighting” measures, it is crucial to reflect on innovative policies and forward-looking strategies to build more resilient MSMEs to future shocks.

In this context and acting upon at the outcomes of the relevant UfM Ministerial meetings, the conclusions of the Fifth Regional Forum in 2020 as well as the Work programme of the UfM Regional Platform on Industrial cooperation, the Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat will organize in Nicosia on 6 and 7 October 2022 a Conference on enhancing MSMEs resilience to future shocks, bearing in mind the key learnings from the current crisis. In this sense, this Conference will also be in line with the Southern Neighbourhood Regional Team Europe Initiative which aims, inter alia, at supporting MSMEs as generators of decent job opportunities.

This event will take place in the margins of the 9th Environment for Europe (EfE), which is a unique regional platform of the highest level for dialogue on environment and



sustainable development, to be held from 5 to 7 October 2022 in Nicosia (Cyprus). [Nicosia Efe](#)

It will bring together prominent speakers and active participants from various backgrounds from the Mediterranean region who will be discussing the most effective solutions and best practices on how to support MSMEs so they can thrive in normal times and weather potential shocks in the future. The discussions will aim to address, inter alia, the following questions:

- Why do MSMEs matter for the economy of the region?
- What has been the impact of Covid-19 on MSMEs?
- What policy measures have been adopted to support MSMEs during the crisis and how effective have been they?
- What can be done to make MSMEs more resilient in case of future shocks?
- How can international cooperation contribute in this endeavor?