

Day 1

Opening Remarks

Joan Borrell

Joan Borrell is a Spanish diplomat and Deputy Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), leading the Higher Education and Research Division since August 2024. A member of Spain's diplomatic service since 2010, he has focused on Euro-Mediterranean and Euro-Latin American relations, holding roles in Tunisia, the UN in New York, Bolivia, and Panama.

Önder Kul

Dr. Önder Kul is the General Manager of the Bilgiyi Ticarileştirme Merkezi (BTM), an incubation center established by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce to support entrepreneurship. Appointed in February 2025. Dr. Kul holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Yıldız Technical University, a master's from Politecnico di Milano, and a PhD in engineering economics from Istanbul Kültür University. Beyond his role at BTM, he serves on the executive board of MÜSİAD.

Session: How AI is Reshaping Businesses and Industries

Moderator: Roia Zenata

Roia Zenata is a Communication and Marketing Professional who serves as Head of the Communication and Marketing Department at the National Company for Recovery and Valorisation (SNRV) in Algeria. With a strong background in social dialogue, sustainable development, and advocacy for decent work. She leads initiatives that enhance stakeholder engagement, promote environmental responsibility, and support the company's mission in circular economy and industrial recovery. She brings a cross-cultural perspective and a values-driven approach to every project.

Speakers

Adel Ben Youssef

Dr. Adel Ben Youssef is a Professor of Economics at Université Côte d'Azur and a member of the GREDEG-CNRS research laboratory. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics and specializes in digital economics, environmental economics, energy economics, and climate change. He is an associate researcher at the Economic Research Forum in Cairo and the Global Labor Organization in Bonn. Dr. Ben Youssef has coordinated several research projects for

international institutions, including the European Commission and the African Development Bank.

Felix Caspar Fach

Felix Fach is a consultant at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), specializing in youth employability and gender equality initiatives. He has been instrumental in implementing programs aimed at enhancing employment opportunities for young people in Egypt, notably contributing to the success of a groundbreaking youth employability program that positively impacted local communities.

Merve Ayyüce Kızrak

Dr. Merve Ayyüce Kızrak is an AI specialist with over 16 years of experience in academia and public sector innovation. She holds a Ph.D. in Electronics and Communication Engineering from Yıldız Technical University, where her research focused on deep learning methods for crowd surveillance. Since 2019, she has served as an AI Specialist at the Digital Transformation Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, contributing to the National AI Strategy and leading projects like the Public Data Space initiative

Asmae Ben Bahida

Asmae Ben Bahida is a Belgian-Moroccan engineer and founder of Just BIM It, a firm driving digital innovation in the construction sector. She specializes in smart cities, BIM, AI, and blockchain. With over seven years of experience, she advises on sustainable digital transformation and inclusive tech. She sits on the board of the European Technology Chamber and promotes gender diversity through WomInTech. Her work has been recognized internationally for its impact on innovation and development.

Session: AI Risks and Ethical Aspects

Moderator: Camila Cela

Camila Cela Marty is Deputy Director and Head of Communication at the Creative Business Network, where she also manages EU-funded projects supporting the cultural and creative industries. She has over 14 years of experience in cultural dissemination, project management, and creative consulting across sectors like television, museums, and cultural organizations. Her work includes developing documentaries, cultural marketing plans, and audience engagement strategies.

Speakers:

Julien Pillot

Julien Pillot is an economist and researcher at INSEEC Grande École, specialising in competition, innovation, and digital economy. He holds a PhD in economics from the University of Nice and is also an associate professor at Université Paris-Saclay. He leads the research valorisation unit at OMNES Education and is affiliated with CNRS GREDEG. His previous roles include scientific director at Precepta (Xerfi Group) and economist at Vedecom, focusing on business models for new mobility.

Anas Al Natsheh

Anas Al Natsheh is a technology business advisor and principal lecturer at Kajaani University of Applied Sciences in Finland. He specializes in commercializing technologies, developing business models, and supporting innovation in SMEs. He leads the AIKA ecosystem and Data Nexus Solutions Lab, focusing on AI applications in business. His research includes topics like technology-based entrepreneurship and the challenges of commercializing high-tech innovations. He is affiliated with the Centre for Measurement and Information Systems (CEMIS)

Nour Naim

Dr. Nour Naim is an AI ethics expert and founder of AI Minds Academy, with over 8 years of experience across Turkey, Lebanon, and Qatar. She holds a PhD in Artificial Intelligence Management from Istanbul Aydin University. Her work focuses on AI bias, digital rights, and ethical AI integration in organizational change. She has trained over 450 individuals in AI literacy, including virtual robotics and coding. She actively collaborates with local and international organizations to promote AI literacy and ethical practices.

Session: AI & creativity x ThinkSustainability

Moderator : Rasmus Wiinstedt Tscherning

Rasmus Wiinstedt Tscherning is the founder and CEO of the Creative Business Network, which supports creative entrepreneurs globally. He has led initiatives like the Creative Business Cup, connecting startups with investors and policymakers. His expertise lies in innovation, creative industries, and international collaboration. He has a background in European integration, international relations, and macroeconomics.

Speakers

Carlo Ferretti

Carlo Ferretti is an advisor in innovation and digital transformation with experience across Europe. He focuses on sustainable development, digital innovation, and smart cities. He has worked with international organizations, governments, and startups. Carlo also engages in

research on public policy and digital governance. Carlo Ferretti work aims to drive practical solutions for societal challenges.

Jordi Sellas

Jordi Sellas is a cultural entrepreneur with strong experience in creative industries and digital innovation. He has led major cultural and media projects, including as director at Arts Santa Mònica. Jordi has a background in radio, television, and film production, with a focus on merging culture and technology. He co-founded companies and initiatives that drive digital transformation in the arts. His work centers on expanding cultural access through new media and platforms.

Mohamed Okasha

Mohamed Okasha is the Founder and Managing Partner of DisrupTech Ventures, a VC fund supporting early-stage fintech and digital startups in Egypt. He previously co-founded and led Fawry, Egypt's top e-payments company, through major funding rounds and a successful IPO in 2019. He held leadership roles at Vodafone Egypt and Raya Holding, where he was General Manager of its IT subsidiary

Mohammed Salam

Mohammed Salam, Director of International Development at PCCDS, leads EUfunded initiatives on sustainable economic integration, cultural industries, and postcrisis recovery. A legal counselor (LL.B. in International Humanitarian Law) led the Palestine Award for Creativity and Excellence in Technical Solutions for Sustainable Development Projects. He cofounded Palestine's first women's incubator (IRADAH), the Supreme Council of Arab Scholars in Minnesota, and the "Green Shelter for Future Generations" campaign. With over 15 years of experience in green entrepreneurship, heritage preservation, and community empowerment, he brings a multidisciplinary perspective to leveraging AI for creative industries.

Session: Skills Development to Leverage AI

Moderator: Aida Kandil

Aida Kandil is the founder and CEO of MyTindy, an e-commerce platform supporting Moroccan artisans. She holds a bachelor's degree in marketing and Strategy from McGill University. Her background includes digital marketing roles with L'Oréal and LVMH. Through MyTindy, she helps rural and marginalized artisans expand their global market access. She was named Mediterranean Young Entrepreneur of 2024 and supports women's empowerment through tech.

Speakers:

Fabio Nascimbeni

Fabio Nascimbeni is a digital education expert and researcher at the University of Milano. He focuses on digital learning, open education, and education policy. He has worked with the European Commission, UNESCO, and several international organizations. His experience spans academia, consulting, and public policy. He promotes inclusive and accessible digital education systems.

Ecem Buse Sevinç Çubuk

Ecem Buse Sevinç Çubuk is an Assistant Professor in Management Information Systems at Aydın Adnan Menderes University. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and Public Administration from Pamukkale University and a bachelor's in international relations from Bilkent University. Her research focuses on digital government, public sector innovation, and digital competencies. She contributed to national digital transformation initiatives in Türkiye. Her work includes studies on e-participation, cybersecurity, and public trust in digital services.

Maysaa Chedid

Maysaa Chedid is a business management expert, corporate governance specialist and a digital education expert. Maysaa Chedid is the founder of Absal Association and the CEO of MaysaCourse platform. With over 13 years of experience in applying business strategies and technology in education. Maysaa Chedid focuses on empowering individuals and small organizations to adapt to digital transformation and achieve success through professional training, while also improving company performance by developing their governance systems.

Yaakoub Benarab

Yaakoub Benarab is the founder and CEO of [Snai3i](#), a pioneering EdTech startup based in Algeria. With a background in Control Systems Engineering from the National Polytechnic School of Constantine, and a Master's degree in Learning Design and Technology from Arizona State University, Yaakoub combines deep technical expertise with a strong foundation in educational innovation.

In addition to his entrepreneurial pursuits, Yaakoub is an accomplished business developer and digital marketer, driving growth and engagement across diverse platforms. His work has earned international recognition, including being named to the Forbes 30 Under 30, the Arab Youth Pioneers, and receiving numerous other prestigious awards.

Day 2

Session: Enabling Policies for Inclusive AI

Moderator: Said Charna

Said Charna is an Algerian career diplomat and, since 2019, Senior Economic Advisor in the Union for the Mediterranean's Economic Development & Employment Division, where he works on trade, investment and industrial-co-operation topics.

Earlier posts include the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010-13, 2018-19), focused on EU-Algeria and wider Euro-Mediterranean relations, and Deputy Head of Mission at the Algerian Embassy in Croatia (2013-17).

He holds a PhD in Economics (University of Algiers, 2018), a specialist postgraduate diploma in Diplomacy (University of Zagreb, 2017) and is a 2005 graduate of Algeria's National School of Administration.

Speakers:

Mouloud Khelif

Mouloud Khelif is the founder of SPG Advisory, a strategy and governance consultancy based in Geneva, Switzerland. With over 30 years of international experience, he advises public, private, and non-profit sectors on digital transformation, sustainable technology policies, and innovation ecosystems. He serves as a member of the Scientific and Technical Council for Algeria Venture and has been involved in various initiatives supporting entrepreneurship and digital governance.

Lama Arabiat

Lama Arabiat, Director of Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Technologies at the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, Jordan. As the first AI Director in the Jordanian government, Lama Arabiat plays a pivotal role in shaping the AI ecosystem and advancing digital transformation. Her expertise in policy development and strategic projects drives the adoption of AI across vital sectors.

Valentina Primo

Valentina Primo is the founder and CEO of Startups Without Borders, an organization that empowers migrant and refugee entrepreneurs in the Middle East and North Africa. She holds a Master's in Peace Studies, Human Rights, and EU Policies. Since 2017, she has been instrumental in launching Egypt's largest entrepreneurship platform, Startup Scene Middle East. Valentina Primo is also an advisor for SXSW Pitch and serves on the board of Roma Startup.

ThinkSustainability Activity

Mohamed Okasha

Mohamed Okasha is the Founder and Managing Partner of DisrupTech Ventures, a VC fund supporting early-stage fintech and digital startups in Egypt. He previously co-founded and led Fawry, Egypt's top e-payments company, through major funding rounds and a successful IPO in 2019. He held leadership roles at Vodafone Egypt and Raya Holding, where he was General Manager of its IT subsidiary

Muammer Dolmacı

Mehmet Dolmacı is an entrepreneur and generalist and the founder of YellowWorks, ConnectiveWorks, VisitRise and five other ventures. He pairs this start-up experience with a corporate background in business development and project management.

A graduate of Boğaziçi University (B.A. Mechanical Engineering; M.A. Engineering Management), he is passionate about productivity, technology, start-ups, innovation and sustainability.

Key-note speech:

Reimagining Finance for a Regenerative Future

Cumhur Coşkun KÜÇÜKÖZMEN

Prof. Dr. Coşkun Küçüközmen is a finance and economics expert with a focus on digital finance, fintech, and risk management. He holds a Ph.D. in Finance from the University of Exeter and has taught at institutions like METU and Ankara University. He is currently a professor in International Trade and Finance at Izmir University of Economics. His research interests include Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), structured finance, and data visualization in risk management.

Day 3

Introductory remarks

Dhouha Najjar

Dhouha Najjar is the UfM Deputy Secretary General for Transport and Urban Development. A Tunisian diplomat, she brings over 20 years of experience in foreign affairs, public administration, and international cooperation. She has served in senior roles, including Director Inspector at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focusing on the evaluation of diplomatic missions and oversight. She was posted at the Tunisian Embassy in Bern, leading economic and cultural cooperation and representing Tunisia at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Dhouha Najjar holds a higher education diploma from the National School of Administration and a law degree from the University of Tunisia.

Alicia Figueroa

Graduated from the University of Hamburg with a master's degree in international business administration and with further studies in executive programs on international trade policy. Prior to her actual position, she worked as a Business Development Manager in the private sector and in the trade area in the diplomatic service. She has been at GIZ for more than 8 years and is currently working in the project "UfM Hub for Jobs, Trade and Investment" in the focus fields of trade and investment. Alicia has been collaborating in the conception and organization of the UfM Trade and Investment Forum since its first editions.

Key-note speeches

Mustafa Başkara

Mustafa Başkara is an expert in climate change, environmental policy, and marine protection. He holds significant leadership roles as the CEO of DEHUKAM and Director of the Climate Change Regional Activity Centre (CC/RAC). Başkara's work involves developing regional initiatives for climate change mitigation and adaptation, particularly in the Mediterranean. He has contributed to environmental diplomacy, focusing on sustainable development and marine conservation.

Nathalie Hilmi

Dr. Nathalie Hilmi is an environmental economist and lead author for the IPCC's Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere. She leads the Environmental Economics Section at the Centre Scientifique de Monaco, where she focuses on the socio-economic impacts of climate change. Her research evaluates the economic value of marine ecosystems and develops nature-based solutions for climate adaptation. Dr. Hilmi also advises on regional climate policy as a member of the High Council for the Climate of the Nice-Côte d'Azur Metropolis.

Session: National Efforts

Toward Sustainability and Key Challenges

Moderator: Ola AlHalabi

Ola Halabi is an architect and entrepreneur with over 18 years of experience in design, project management, and quality assurance. She is the founder and COO of Olistic, a platform that empowers sustainable creativity. Olistic focuses on ethical art and leverages digital tools to scale its impact.

Speakers:

Amal Abdelrahman

Amal Abdelrahman Ahmed Abdelrahman is Head of the Central Administration for Information Systems and Digital Transformation at the Ministry of Trade and Industry in Egypt. With a degree in Communication Engineering from Ain Shams University (1990), she has over 30 years of experience in data analysis, software development, database administration, and project management. She advanced from data analyst in 1992 to General Manager in 2012, using Oracle and Microsoft technologies throughout her career. She led major digital projects, including the Egypt Digital Industrial Platform and nationwide document digitization efforts. Her work focuses on automating government services and driving digital transformation in public administration.

Abderrahmane HadeF

Mr. Abderrahmane HadeF holds an Executive MBA in strategy and change management as well as an Electrical Engineering diploma and a Postgraduate in marketing for economic and business development. He is an International Senior Economic Development Consultant specialized in promoting private sector Strategy development in Algeria with over 25 years of relevant professional experiences. Currently, being Consultant to the EU Delegation to Algiers, Abderrahmane is Managing «Sustainable Investement Partnership SIP» Project and Team member of EU-Algeria Renewable energies and Cleantech Algerian Value Chain Project. During his career Abderrahmane developed extensive expertise in economic research, market analysis, and sectorial development planning and demonstrated strong leadership skills. He held senior management positions in ministries and state agencies.

Manel Sakhri

Dr. Manel Sakhri is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of Blida 2 in Algeria. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and specializes in environmental policies, environmental governance, and sustainable development. She actively contributes to discussions on climate change, environmental crises, and their impact on migration and conflict. Her work aims to promote sustainable practices and policies in the region.

Session: AI as an Enabler of Sustainable Supply Chains and Investment

Moderator: Ghalia Mahjoub

Ghalia Mahjoub is an Investor Relations Specialist. Her professional experience includes roles in investor relations, where she has been involved in managing communications and relationships between companies and their investors. Ghalia is also engaged in writing and research, contributing to various publications. Her work reflects a commitment to enhancing transparency and fostering strong investor relationships.

Speakers:

Sonia Fernández Mañas

Sonia Fernández Mañas is the Director of the Project Unit at AMEC, a Spanish association supporting internationalized industrial companies. She holds a degree in Business Administration and Management from the University of Barcelona. Her expertise includes project management, internationalization, and sustainable development. Sonia has led initiatives such as the Euromed Clusters Forward Academy, focusing on sustainable finance for clusters in the Mediterranean region.

Emilija Trajkovska

Emilija Trajkovska is an Investment Promotion Expert at Invest North Macedonia. She holds a bachelor's degree in data science. Emilija specializes in attracting foreign direct investment and promoting economic growth in North Macedonia. Emilija Trajkovska actively contributes to shaping the country's investment landscape through strategic initiatives and policy advocacy.

Tarek El Kady

Tarek El Kady is a serial entrepreneur and angel investor with over 20 years of experience in marketing and advertising. He is the Founder and Chairman of multiple ventures, including the Mediterranean Business Angel Network, aimed at promoting cross-border investment in the region. He also founded Techne Summit, an international event that has attracted thousands of attendees, speakers, startups, and investors. Additionally, he is the Founder and Chairman of Alexandria Angel Network and a Founding Curator of the Global Shapers Community, an initiative of the World Economic Forum.

Amira Kaddour

Dr. Amira Kaddour is an Associate Professor at King Khalid University, specializing in financial management. She holds a Ph.D. in Finance from the University of Manouba and a master's in management and finance. Dr. Kaddour's research focuses on FinTech, sustainable finance, and inclusive development. She is a Principal Researcher at Includovate and has contributed to international projects like the Elite Innovation College at Cambridge University.