ASCAME ACTION PLAN 2022
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1. Introduction

As every year, ASCAME presents its Action Plan for the incoming one. 2022 will be remembered as the kick off of a progressive but slow recovery after the huge post COVID-19 crisis. The coronavirus pandemic has left a large number of human victims in its wake and has deeply affected many key economic sectors, leading to high levels of unemployment, business bankruptcies and leaving many families on the poverty line. Massive vaccination has proved to be a key solution and has brought about hope, but there is still work to be done if we are to reach long-term, sustainable and inclusive development for everyone.

For this reason, the ASCAME 2022 Action Plan builds on the accomplishments of 2021 to continue ASCAME’s work for the well-being of the unite Mediterranean basin. This plan is fully adapted to the post COVID-19 situation, with the aim of reviving the different economies composing the region by launching several initiatives and activities.

As a matter of fact, this Plan is the result of a high adaptability capacity to lay the foundations for a new Mediterranean economy. ASCAME, from a regional perspective, will make available to its members and the Mediterranean private sector a series of events, projects, institutional meetings and other initiatives to contribute to their recovery.

ASCAEME’s 2022 Action Plan furthers the implementation of the ‘Recovery Plan and a New Economic Model for the Mediterranean’ with several activities aimed at enhancing the region's recovery and its promotion in these difficult times.

Furthermore, as on previous occasions, the 2022 Action Plan executes the ‘ASCAEME 2018-2022 Strategic Plan’, with the usual and also innovative events of the Association, as well as the numerous activities of the international cooperation projects of the ASCAME network. In this regard, a noteworthy and promising initiative is that of promoting the Mediterranean beyond the region, and strengthening ties with other regions and continents.

Now is the time to act. Together we will be stronger to defeat the economic pandemic... for a future in common.
2. ASCAME 2022 Events Plan

**Mediterranean Meetings (MedaMeetings) - Exploring Mediterranean Markets**

- A series of conferences and business meetings within the framework of ASCAME’s Recovery and New Development Plan, through the Mediterranean Digital Live Platform
- Organisers: ASCAME, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and other partners

- **Business Opportunities between the Mediterranean and the world - Promoting Mediterranean Markets**
  - Mediterranean - Brazil Economic Forum
  - Mediterranean - Gulf Region Economic Forum
  - Mediterranean - USA Economic Forum
  - Mediterranean - Africa Sub-Saharan Economic Forum

- **Sectoral and multi-sectoral B2B’s**
  - Sectoral and multi-sectoral B2B’s (Mediterranean Digital Live Platform)

**The Way Forward: From COVID to the Russia-Ukraine Crises, the Impact on Supply Chain & Products Availability & Prices**

- 10th of March 2022 – Cairo, Egypt (hybrid event)
- Organisers: Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and ASCAME
Foro Turístico de las Islas Mediterráneas
- TBC – Mallorca, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, Mallorca Chamber of Commerce

6th Industry Week: From Needs to Solutions
- 23-26 March 2022 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and other partners

B4PLANET: Planet in Need, Business in action. (Global platform for critical sustainable solutions)
- May 2022 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: Fira de Barcelona with the collaboration of ASCAME
- Barcelona, FIABCI

Mediterranean Logistics and Transports Summit (MedaLogistics Summit)
- 31st May to 1st June 2022 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona, ASCAME, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and other partners
  - 18th Mediterranean Transports and Logistics Forum
  - 13th Mediterranean Ports and Shipping Summit
  - 1st Africa Logistics Meeting
  - 1st Mediterranean & Africa SEZs Summit

3rd Mediterranean Real Estate Forum: The Next Resetting
- June 2022 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona

International Smart City Congress
- 21st June 2022 – Algeria
- Organisers: Symbiose Communications and Event One Solutions International, with the partnership of ASCAME and the patronage of the Algerian Minister of Energy Transition and Renewable Energies and the Algerian Minister of Environment
CETA Business Forum 2022

- 22nd and 23rd of June – online
- Organisers: Malta Business Events. In collaboration with ASCAME as an institutional partner and other partners.

40th Anniversary of ASCAME and 100th Anniversary of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce

- 6th and 7th October 2022 – Alexandria, Egypt
- Organisers: ASCAME and Alexandria Chamber of Commerce

Previous event (date TBC): Chambers 4.0

Previous event (date TBC): Climate change and the role of the private sector

14th Mediterranean Women Entrepreneurs Forum

- 7th October 2022 – Alexandria, Egypt
- Organisers: ASCAME, AFAEMME, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce

16th Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders (MedaWeek Barcelona 2022) – ‘Shared Value’

- 16th, 17th and 18th November 2022 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and other partners

10th Mediterranean Economic City Forum (MedaCity)

- Date to be confirmed – Rijeka, Croatia
- Organisers: Croatian Chamber of Economy – Rijeka County Chamber with the collaboration of ASCAME

3rd Adria4Blue – Blue Economy Forum

- Date to be confirmed – Rijeka, Croatia
- Organisers: Croatian Chamber of Economy – Rijeka County Chamber with the collaboration of ASCAME

Mediterranean Cosmetics Forum (MedCosmetics) - Morocco
• Date to be confirmed – Rabat, Morocco
• Organisers: Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of the Rabat region with the collaboration of ASCAME

**10th Mediterranean Tourism Forum (MediTour)**

• Date to be confirmed – Fes Meknes, Morocco / Oran, Argelia
• Organisers: ASCAME and Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of the Fes Meknes region

**6th Mediterranean Finance Forum (MedaFinance)**

• Date to be confirmed – Cairo, Egypt
• Organisers: ASCAME and other partners

**5th International Egypt Investment Forum**

• Date to be confirmed – Cairo, Egypt
• Organisers: ASCAME, Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce (FEDCOC) and other partners

**International Conference: Rebuilding the Port of Beirut – Lebanon***

• Organisers: ASCAME, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut & Mount Lebanon and other partners
• *To be held in the framework of MedaWeek 2022*
3. ASCAME 2022 Institutional Meetings Plan

**Bureau** | March 2022

**Executive Committee** | April 2022

**Executive Committee** | November 2022

**General Assembly** | November 2022
ASCAME and its network aim to support initiatives and projects conducted by the European Union, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) or any other institutional entity that offers chances to create opportunities in the Mediterranean region.

More than 80 ASCAME members are involved in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation projects adding strong value to the consortiums through their unique set of expertise and extensive networks in the Mediterranean region’s private sector. All of these projects presented in this “International Cooperation Projects Plan” section aim to serve as an instrument to tackle important elements on economic activation, green economy, energy efficiency, cultural heritage, innovation, investment, and technology. They offer great opportunities to take action towards the recovery of the region and to establish synergies with other members and networks of stakeholders.

The Joint Monitoring Committee, decision-making body of the ENI CBC Med Programme, has recently approved 22 projects under the call for strategic projects out of the 198 proposals submitted. ASCAME’s members are present in more than half of the approved projects as leaders, partners and/or associated partners, representing many Chambers of Commerce and other similar entities of the ASCAME’s network.

The Programme has now a pool of 63 projects, involving over 450 organisations from both shores of the Mediterranean, worth over €188 million (€169 million EU contribution). The ultimate goal of the Programme is to ensure enduring cooperation in the Mediterranean in order to make the region more competitive, innovative, inclusive and sustainable.

In this context, ASCAME is pleased to congratulate its members, who have once again shown their involvement and willingness to continue their work in the service of Mediterranean economic development.
**MEDUSA - Development and promotion of Mediterranean sustainable adventure tourism**

The overall objective of the MEDUSA project is to develop a competitive form of adventure tourism in the Mediterranean, which is based on environmental, social and economic sustainability values. Therefore, firstly MEDUSA aims to identify and valorise territorial assets for developing Adventure Tourism (AT) products, especially off-season, based on a thorough understanding of market demand drivers, supply and competitiveness variables. Secondly, to promote a multi-stakeholder engagement to capacity building and exchange of experiences and adopt strategic alliances that will formalise roles and responsibilities for AT destination stewardships. Finally, to implement pilot actions rolling out improved and new AT products, as well as develop and promote tourism packages through a cross-border marketing alliances to international source markets. More information about the project [here](#).

- **Training to local guides on Adventure Sustainable Tourism**
  - February to May, Spain, Tunisia, Lebanon, Italy and Jordan (date to be confirmed)

- **Launch of “Mediterranean Adventure Treasure” brand**
  - April, Spain, Tunisia, Lebanon, Italy and Jordan (date to be confirmed)

- **MEDUSA Meeting**
  - June (date and place to be confirmed)

- **Cross-border Adventure Tourism Trade Mission and Networking Event**
  - Adventure Travel World Summit, October, Switzerland (date to be confirmed)

- **Mediterranean Adventure Treasures FAM Trips**
  - November to December, Spain, Tunisia, Lebanon, Italy and Jordan (date to be confirmed)

**MAIA-TAQA - Mobilizing new Areas of Investments and Together Aiming to increase Quality of life for All**

The MAIA-TAQA project deals with the fact that in the Southern Mediterranean countries there is a growing need for Resource Efficiency (RE) services (consulting, engineering and operations) because of the pressure on the environment. Through the creation of real demonstration cases with local companies, MAIA-TAQA raises awareness among SMEs and policy-makers of innovation practices and policy instruments in the area of RE services. Furthermore, the established “Innovation One Stop-Shops” offering innovation support services will create an enabling environment for the development of the RE sector in the Southern Mediterranean countries. Finally, a SMEs network will pave the way for tackling the regulatory frameworks and trade barriers. More information about the project [here](#).

- **Official presentation of the groundworks of the Egyptian pilot**
  - February, El-Ameria wholesale market, in Alexandria, Egypt (date to be confirmed)

- **Completion of the installation of six innovative Resource Efficiency Services in the three pilot countries (Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan)**
  - 1st Semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)
Monitoring and evaluation process of the six installed Resource Efficiency Services in the three pilot countries (Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan)

- 1st Semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

Testing of the Innovative Resource Efficiency Services in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan

- 1st Semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

Training sessions addressed to SMEs in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan

- 1st semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

Establishment and working of the One-stop-shops in every one of the three pilot countries (Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan)

- 1st semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

Launching the innovation vouchers and beginning of their Implementation in SMEs in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan

- 1st Semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

Process of implementation of the innovation vouchers through knowledge providers in SMEs in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan

- 2nd Semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

B2B events and SME matchmaking activities

- 2nd Semester 2022 (date and place to be confirmed)

MoreThanAJob - Reinforcing social and solidarity economy for the unemployed, uneducated and refugees

The financial crisis in Europe, as well as the unstable financial and political situation in many Mediterranean Partner Countries, sorely tested the applied economic model. Furthermore, around 15 million persons (migrants and refugees) born in a third country currently live in the region and need to find a job or enter the education system. It has become apparent that new and credible alternatives to the mainstream economy are needed. These transformations in the economy and the society have brought increased attention to the social and solidarity economy (SSE) actors that have been capable of helping to turn the challenges into opportunities. Nevertheless, for the SSE initiatives to be efficient, effective collaboration with the public authorities is fundamental. MoreThanAJob will deliver and demonstrate a framework of best practices, previously identified and studied for the inclusion of the unemployed (including refugees
and uneducated) in the work and education system. The framework is based on the collaboration of SSE actors and public authorities for delivering in a more effective way their services. This will be done through pilot sub-projects aiming to ensure a long-term impact and the creation of jobs. More information about the project [here](#).

**Train-the-trainer workshops** (to be confirmed)

**Training sessions for social and solidarity economy (SSE) actors** (to be confirmed)

**Public officers training in employment and education schemes for refugees** (to be confirmed)

**MEDSt@rts - Med microfinance support system for start-ups**

Young people with promising business ideas abound in the Mediterranean region. However, young entrepreneurs encounter severe credit constraints and gathering enough money to start or scale up their enterprise is often impossible. MEDSt@rts wants to help young people jump that deterrent hurdle. To do so, the project will develop an innovative supporting model to facilitate access to funding for “non-bankable” people. It will target strongly committed young Mediterranean people with innovative business ideas, either in initial or consolidation stage. Scouting, training and funding will be the three main steps of MEDSt@rts’ approach, and, as a result, new MSMEs will be launched in each participating country and new jobs will be created. More information about the project [here](#).

**Launch of microfinance packages mixing direct support (sub-grant) and crowdfunding to support the growth of the best business ideas selected** (to be confirmed)

**MED PEARLS - The Mediterranean as an innovative, integral and unique destination for Slow Tourism initiatives**

Most models of tourism in the Mediterranean area are based on mass tourism and follow a fragmented vision of the region as a sum of different markets. Med Pearls aims at internationally positioning the Mediterranean as a unique and integral destination to experience the Med lifestyle through Slow Tourism (ST), inviting travellers to discover sustainably and responsibly new destinations while taking time to have direct contact with local communities. The project will deliver a set of 26 new ST products created by local Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and ICT enterprises thanks to financial and technical support called Product Development and Innovation Facilities. The idea is to create similar experiences based on the typology of products and themes agreed among partners, therefore, visitors will live similar experiences, of the same quality, in any of the 13 areas targeted by Med Pearls. The project will address both local and international markets, like the USA, Canada, Northern Europe, Russia or Asia, organising a comprehensive commercialisation and marketing strategy. More information about this project [here](#).

**2nd Med Pearls BRIDGE event in Barcelona to bring together travel agencies and ICT MSMEs**

- From 3 to 5 March, Barcelona

**Training on Slow Tourism products development, marketing and promotion** (to be confirmed)

**Marketing and visibility initiatives to promote the developed tourism products and destinations** (to be confirmed)
**MedArtSal - Sustainable management model for Mediterranean Artisanal Salinas**

Today salinas across the Mediterranean are suffering from environmental pressures and economic stress. Their products face strong competition from cheaper land-produced salt and from the world trade. To stay viable, salinas are confronted with the choice of closing, industrializing the production or changing the business orientation towards sustainable tourism and new artisanal products. This third option is the idea behind MedArtSal. The project will define a sustainable and adaptable management model for artisanal salinas including, among others, a marketing strategic plan and a biodiversity strategy. With this aim, MedArtSal project addresses both salinas managers and institutional policy-makers. On the one hand, salinas managers will receive up-to-date training on how an artisanal salina should be managed in order to remain competitive, especially by diversifying products. On the other hand, institutional policy-makers will help build the management model which will be further tested in two artisanal salinas in Spain and Tunisia. Finally, a network of Artisanal Mediterranean Salinas will be created to capitalize the project results in the long run. More information about the project [here](#).

- **Demonstration projects on the diversification of salinas products/services carried out in Spain (La Esperanza) and Tunisia (Sidi Al-Hani)** (to be confirmed)
- **Pilot actions for the development of new products/services in selected salinas** (to be confirmed)

**MedBEESinessHubs - Mediterranean Bee Hubs in support for sustainable economic prosperity in deprived rural areas**

MedBEESinessHubs project goal is to help impoverished areas’ economies by empowering and connecting local people in the creation and management of handcraft honeybee products companies and related tourism service networks. The project intends to contribute to the development of an actual Mediterranean BEE-economy by connecting clusters in five countries. It will go a lot further than just producing and selling honey. A vast range of side products is concerned from cosmetics to handcrafting souvenirs and even to the consolidation of “bee-tourism”. On its way, the BEE-economy will use another abundant natural resource: youth. Young people will bring fresh BEESiness ideas while the project will pollinize them by granting financial and technical support. By the end of the journey, new products will be developed, and a sustainable cross-border network will be in place. And, on top of all this, vital bee population will be encouraged to come back to where they belong. More information about the project [here](#).

- **Young people training in technical aspects of handcrafting honeybee products in food, cosmetics, and gifts** (to be confirmed)
- **Young people training in business management and finance** (to be confirmed)
- **Online exhibition hall to promote the Mediterranean honeybee businesses, products and destinations** (to be confirmed)
- **B2B meetings at cross-border level to pollinize BEESiness ideas** (to be confirmed)
MEDWAYCAP - MEDiterranean pathWAY for innovation CAPitalisation toward an urban-rural integrated development of non-conventional water resources

Challenge-driven cooperation is a crucial shot to provide coherent and continuous cross-border dialogue and process including sustained awareness-raising of public authorities and policy-makers at regional/national level, capacity building, easy access to information and a friendly use of tools for mutual learning. This approach can contribute to mitigating local water crisis, a common challenge in the Mediterranean, through facilitating general access and promotion of best practices including the improvement of treated wastewater reuse as a non-conventional water resource (NCWR). Moreover, indication shows weakness in the multi-level governance and law enforcement, in planning, managerial and operational capacities, further than low-level involvement of the stakeholders in the decision-making process. MEDWAYCAP project will face these issues and address the final beneficiaries, to be equipped with state-of-the-art knowledge on NCWR techniques, management, planning and skills to reuse at territorial level for domestic and agricultural purpose thanks to the well organised capitalization platforms for networking and knowledge transfer and capacity building tool box. The project has been structured to: transfer and “upgrade” knowledge; reinforce new/existing networks & alliances; raise awareness among public authorities, policy-makers and “challenge owners” about NCWR measures and related opportunities for planning policies and related funding measures. More information about the project here.

- Inventories for business opportunities for non-conventional water resource (NCWR) solutions in the context of the circular economy (to be confirmed)
- Forum on adaptation to climate change (to be confirmed)

GREENinMED - Speeding up the MED SMEs’ uptaking of eco-innovative solutions in energy and water management

The hotel industry in the Mediterranean is one of the most important worldwide and continues to register significant growth. This success with local/international tourist comes with several environmental drawbacks such as the substantial consumption of water and energy. With the aim of helping hotels to stay competitive and improve at the same time their capacity of eco-innovation, GREENinMED project proposes an integrated approach for the development of new products and services addressed to the efficient use of water and energy and reduction in consumption by 10% in the hotel industry. The project will develop eco-innovative products such a seawater air conditioning, water and energy-saving devices for spa, garden irrigation and industrial cold generation. To reach this ambition, consulting services focusing on the identification of the eco-innovative products and services on and their adaptation to actual needs/contexts will be delivered to selected hotels. Furthermore, the purchase of new equipment to improve research and testing capacities of SMEs and the creation of spin-offs will be facilitated through sub-grants. More information about the project here.

- Sub-grants to purchase innovative products, services, equipment (to be confirmed)
ORGANIC ECOSYSTEM - Boosting cross border Organic Ecosystem through enhancing agro-food alliances

Organic agriculture represents a solution to achieve food safety and security and environmental sustainability that account for joint challenges, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals. However, organic agriculture is still relatively underdeveloped in Mediterranean countries. Main shared challenges are inconsistent or lacking support policies from national/local governments, low innovation capacities, limited knowledge of sustainable farming practices, and a weak value chain where MSMEs operate in a disaggregated way. ORGANIC ECOSYSTEM project aims at reducing these obstacles and make the MSMEs operating in organic agriculture more competitive and better integrated. The project intends to establish a cross-border agro-food ecosystem, which will set the ground for the development of the Mediterranean whole organic sector. This will be encouraged through new business alliances, creation of innovative value chains, and specialized support provided to MSMEs to increase the quality and the commercialization of products and their capacities to access to new markets. More information about the project here.

3rd ORGANIC ECOSYSTEM Meeting
- March, Lebanon (date to be confirmed)

Launch of Cross-border Labs for Organic Agriculture in the Mediterranean region
- July, Tunisia (date to be confirmed)

Seminar for Stakeholders working on Organic Agriculture in the Mediterranean
- October (date and place to be confirmed)

Mediterranean Organic Agriculture Alliance Meeting at MedaWeek
- November, hybrid, Barcelona (date to be confirmed)

IPMED - IP Capacities for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the MEDiterranean Region

A solid bond between Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), research and innovation constitutes a fundamental pillar for knowledge-based societies. Crucial for the development and competitiveness of start-ups, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs, IPR is, however, the element of the axis most often unknown or overlooked by these groups in business decision-making both in Europe and beyond. Recent studies on firm competitiveness and economic performance highlight that only 9% of SMEs make use of IPR in Europe (against 40% of large companies). Yet small firms owning IPR perform better than those that do not (increased reputation, strengthening of long-term business prospects and increased turnover). In the Euro-Mediterranean area, changing this pattern of low interest/access to IPR is critical to help regions of both shores of the basin achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. IPMED intends to contribute to that change by helping local authorities understand how they can better support entrepreneurs in accessing, using and optimizing the growth potential of IPR, and enhancing the IPR of young entrepreneurs. More information about the project here.

Training sessions on IPR use and management (to be confirmed)
TEX-MED ALLIANCES - Textile Mediterranean Alliances for Business Development, Internationalization and Innovation

Like many others, the textile sector has changed dramatically during the last decades. Advanced countries have brought in high performance and high added-value technologies while emerging countries, mainly from Asia, have sharply reduced the costs putting insane pressure on Mediterranean traditional clothing SMEs. In contrast, the Mediterranean textile sector has traditionally been a weak innovation performer. TEX-MED ALLIANCES aims at reducing that persistent innovation gap. To do that, the project proposes an innovative approach based on the development of two types of initiatives: cross-border initiatives identified and promoted by the project partners and cross-border project ideas/proposals arising directly from MSMEs. Together, these actions will put innovation at the core of the sector. Eventually, TEX-MED ALLIANCES will help textile and clothing MSMEs expand internationally inside/outside the Mediterranean area, fostering job creation and technological upgrading. More information about the project here.

Business events and internationalization/innovations fairs (to be confirmed)

Forum on circular economy to share best practices in the textile/clothing industry (to be confirmed)

InnovAgroWoMed - Social Innovation in the Agri-food sector for Women’s Empowerment in the Mediterranean sea basin

On both sides of the Mediterranean Sea, there is a common trend in terms of low women empowerment and participation in the labour force. InnovAgroWoMed project aims at boosting women labor participation and entrepreneurship, by leveraging on the potential of the agri-food sector - an industry closely linked to the cultural identity of the Mediterranean region - and showing a significant level of untapped potential in terms of innovation and growth. While countries such as Spain and Italy feature comparatively high levels of growth in the agri-food sector, albeit, with very low levels of women participation, the MENA agricultural business is still fragmented, and with low women employment. This project will focus on two European regions (Valencia, Spain and Sicily, Italy) and two MENA areas (Béja and Médenine in Tunisia, and Palestine), identified as suitable for the implementation and scaling up of a sustainable value model in the agri-food sector: Rural Social Innovation (RSI). RSI redefines the boundaries between organizations and the community, addressing broader societal challenges by seeking economic, social and environmental sustainability, balancing tradition and innovation and explicitly seeking community development at the local level. More information about the project here.

Women training in marketable skills in the agri-food sector (to be confirmed)

Coaching and mentoring programmes (to be confirmed)
RESMYLE - Rethinking employment and social integration of young Mediterranean people through sustainable development

The RESMYLE project is based on two findings: firstly, the difficulties of professional integration of young people in the Mediterranean, in particular for NEETS, are increasing. Secondly, the challenges of environmental protection in the Mediterranean create many new needs in the Mediterranean territories that are largely unfulfilled at the present time, particularly in the lack of skills in some fields: waste sorting, eco-mobility, risk prevention, etc. To respond to this double challenge, RESMYLE mobilizes 9 Mediterranean operators (cooperatives, associations, universities) in 5 countries (France, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia) around 3 complementary areas of intervention: the inclusion of sustainable development topics in the support actions carried out by the organizations (associations, social centers working on integration of NEETS in the Mediterranean); the testing of a set of hands-on field trainings for young people focusing on sustainable development and based on mobility, intercultural exchanges and real environmental issues; the creation of a Mediterranean network of eco-incubators of youth-led activities based on a common method and shared tutoring/trainings. More information about the project here.

Workshop on the conservation of the traditional heritage of Hammamet
- 20 January, Tunisia

Training workshops through the establishment of the "Mediterranean Practical School for Sustainable Development" (to be confirmed)

RESTART MED! - REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism Across Regions in The MEDiterranean

RESTART MED! is aimed at revitalizing the tourism economy after the COVID-19 pandemic, by building on and learning from previous experiences and practices, using this moment to boost sustainability together with the economic recovery of this key industry. The project will support tourism providers to work alongside public and civil society stakeholders for a better and resilient recovery, by creating more sustainable policies and products. A positive change is expected through a reset of basic tourism principles where the diversified, sustainable offer and common branding will attract tourists. This will be achieved thanks to the exploitation and dissemination of best practices and results of at least 8 sustainable tourism projects, and the via the reinforcement and extension of stakeholder networks of at least 5 capitalizable projects with a common brand and platform. Finally, the project will raise awareness among public authorities and policy-makers, promoting sustainable tourism good practices among them, and supporting mainstreaming into policies. More information about the project here.

Subgrants for visibility of tourism products (to be confirmed)

Trainings on sustainability and promotion for enterprises and local community entities (to be confirmed)

ReSt@rts - Reinforcing Med Microfinance Network System for Start-ups

Access to finance is still a major barrier to business development in the Mediterranean. This is especially true when it comes to young entrepreneurs that must fight much more than average to get proper funding. ReSt@rts intends to break down this business obstacle by supporting the so-called “non-bankable” young people. The project will extend the microfinance system developed in previous projects to new geographical areas and sectors and will ensure that the main results of these projects are consolidated into new policies at regional level. Both aimed at entrepreneurs and
microfinance providers, a marketplace platform will be developed to gather the supply and demand in a friendly and easily accessible business environment. In this platform, crowdfunding will be playing a key role, as the ReSt@rts partners understand that the use of alternative financing is essential whenever the traditional ways of funding fail. Thanks to ReSt@rts, many Mediterranean young would-be entrepreneurs will get a new chance to fund their business ideas. Eventually, concerned entrepreneurs will have access to a wide Mediterranean cross-border networks of investors. More information about the project here.

Training delivered to microfinance providers (to be confirmed)

Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) for aspiring Mediterranean entrepreneurs (to be confirmed)

SOLE - High Energy efficiency for the public stock buildings in Mediterranean

The building sector is the largest energy consumer in the Mediterranean area. Most buildings are energy inefficient as lack of interventions over time have led to increase annual energy consumption and CO2 emissions. To tackle these common challenges, SOLE supports cost-effective and innovative energy rehabilitations of public buildings. Through knowledge sharing on energy rehabilitation, the partners will define local plans adapted to each of the participating territories where pilot actions will be implemented. Besides these pilots, in order to reduce building energy consumption, SOLE will also intervene at two levels. First, by encouraging behavioural change in people, inspired by an Interreg experience (REBUS project). Secondly, by impacting on local policies through lobbying and advocacy to integrate the pilots’ results in relevant policy frameworks. More information about the project here.

Public event on energy efficiency in public buildings
- March, Amman, Jordan (date to be confirmed)

INVESTMED - InNoVatE Sustainable Start-ups for the MEDiterranean

On the one hand, Mediterranean MSMEs face important challenges in terms of competitiveness, sustainability, internationalization and capacity to innovate which call for new solutions to ensure their growth and continued existence. On the other hand, greening the economy and enhancing natural assets can provide both economic and environmental benefits in the Mediterranean region. On this basis, the INVESTMED project aims at addressing both economic and environmental challenges, supporting new, sustainable business opportunities for young people and women in three countries: Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia. INVESTMED is set to positively impact both MSMEs, which staff will be trained and coached to become more competitive, and public authorities, whose capacities to facilitate access and protect Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) to MSMEs will be reinforced. More information about the project here.

Seminar: How can your business integrate circular economy principles?
- 25th January, at 10:00 CET, Online

Trainings on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) management (to be confirmed)
CRE@CTIVE - Innovation for bringing creativity to activate Traditional Sectors in MED area

Textile, footwear and leather are Mediterranean traditional sectors, with an annual estimated global turnover of more than €280 billion and 2.7 million employees working mainly in MSMEs which account for 90% of the industry. During the last decades, these sectors have been affected by the economic slowdown and a very strong competition from Asia. These Mediterranean traditional sectors are under threat if they do not quickly renew their business models. Unable to compete in price or volume, the main challenges for them are product and process innovation, the establishment of new business models and the creation of business sustainable alliances to strengthen the value chains. CRE@CTIVE will address these challenges. In particular, the project is aimed at boosting creativity as a key aspect for increasing economic opportunities of the MSMEs by creating links between the traditional sectors and the creative industries (crafts, design, culture, etc.). As a result, creative innovation will upgrade the products and will improve their positioning, making them more competitive in the global markets. More information about the project here.

CRE@CTIVE event to present its call for subgrants
- 13th of January at 18.00 CET, Palermo, Italy, and Online

Cooperation exchange seminars for civil servants, public authorities and economic stakeholders (to be confirmed)

NEX-LABS – NEXUS-DRIVEN OPEN LABS FOR COMPETITIVE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

NEX-LABS targeted territories, characterized by water scarcity and both an irregular rainfall and population distribution, reflect agriculture as largest user of water (70-90%) while future global warming projections (=2°C) are expected to cause a decrease in summer precipitation (-10/-30%), threatening water availability (-2/-15%) and agricultural productivity (-12/-40%). The latent conflict between energy efficiency (=60%) and water production is also increasing energy footprint/m3 of water used to produce food. The predicted shortfalls in Water/Energy/Food (WEF) require a NEXUS approach. In this context, the NEX-LABS project aims to support the implementation of clean technologies for sustainable and resilient growth of agri-food sector production based on a more efficient use of energy (renewable/solar solutions) and water (wastewater treatment, water harvesting or reuse solutions) in Mediterranean Partner Countries region thanks to the contribution of ICT such as blockchain technology, Internet or the Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning and Big Data. More information about the project here.

NEX-LABS and PHEMAC Water, Energy, Food NEXUS Virtual Innovation Week, Paving the way towards Entrepreneurship
- From 17 January to 20 January, Online

Summer school with the participation of 50 entrepreneurs (to be confirmed)

iHERITAGE - ICT Mediterranean platform for UNESCO cultural heritage

The Mediterranean UNESCO cultural heritage needs new techniques to improve its level of interpretation, taking advantage of new technologies and commercialising the latest research results. In this regard, iHERITAGE will provide new solutions through an innovation-driven growth process to promote cross-border technological transfer, Living Labs, industry-academia collaboration and the creation of spin-offs and new products, using the latest ICT technologies: Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and Mixed Reality (MR). The project will address socio-economic challenges at cross-border level through the active involvement of young people, women and NEETs who will take part in the Living Labs, training courses, and the creation of spin-offs, thus contributing to increase employment opportunities and foster
innovation. The project will support collaborations among universities, SMEs, start-ups and spin-offs devoted to the creation of AR/VR/MR products. Eventually, iHERITAGE will improve access to UNESCO cultural heritage, on site and off site and will contribute to the establishment of the Regional Centre for Safeguarding and Valorisation of Mediterranean (CRESPIEM) Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) (CRESPIEM), to be recognized under Category 2 of UNESCO. More information about the project [here](#).

**Talks and workshops sessions**

- Weekly, online, in Amman, Jordan (dates to be confirmed)

**Launching the Egyptian Living Labs**

- 31st January, in Alexandria, Egypt

**Italian Living Labs**

- 2nd Module on Technologies and Processes for virtual archaeology (1st semester, date and place to be confirmed)
- 3rd Module on Tourism and Cultural heritage (1st semester, date and place to be confirmed)
- 4th Module on Marketing and fundraising strategies (Date and place to be confirmed)

**Living Lab “The interpretation of World Heritage in Andalusia in 21st century. Advanced technological solutions in Today’s world”**

- From February to April Granada, Spain, Hybrid event/online (dates to be confirmed)

**Launch of the Spanish Living Labs**

- Barcelona, Spain online (1st semester, dates to be confirmed)

**Submission of the proposal for the creation of CRESPIEM (Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

- March (date and place to be confirmed)

**Holographic Exhibition about gardens in the World Heritage in Andalusia and its relation with the World Heritage in the Mediterranean**

- From September to October, Region of Andalusia, Spain (dates to be confirmed)
INTECMED - Incubators for innovation and technological transfer in the Mediterranean

Although participating regions of the INTECMED project are heterogeneous in terms of innovation, they do share a common challenge: overcome the obstacle of different actors working with innovation at local level to coordinate their actions and to find synergies. For this reason, INTECMED aims to develop an integrated innovation ecosystem at local level to support technological transfer and commercialization of research results. The project will use a methodology of building resilience into risk management (BRIM) to develop a shared vision of how to build start-ups overcoming inexperience and gap between academic knowledge and business development. This methodology will be implemented by creating regional alliances, facility points, mentorship programmes, innovation exhibitions where investors and innovators could exchange their ideas and business opportunities. Through mentorship, skills development in business planning, the commercialisation of research results of at least 48 entrepreneurs and researchers will be increased and at least 4 new spin-offs will be launched with the creation of not less than 12 new jobs. More information about the project here.

InfoDays and Matchmaking Events for Investors and Entrepreneurs
- From January to February, Greece, Spain, Tunisia and Egypt (dates to be confirmed)

2nd INTECMED Meeting
- March, online (date to be confirmed)

Mentorship program for innovators: how to commercialize research results in the Mediterranean
- March to April, Greece, Spain, Tunisia and Egypt (dates to be confirmed)

Networking events for entrepreneurs and investors working on innovation and Key Enabling Technologies (KET)
- April to August, Greece, Spain, Tunisia and Egypt (dates to be confirmed)

3rd INTECMED Meeting
- September, Tunisia (date to be confirmed)

Mediterranean Technology and Innovation transfer meeting-point at MedaWeek
- November, hybrid, Barcelona (date to be confirmed)

EMPHASIS - Euro-Mediterranean Network Facilitating Market Uptake of Innovations from SMEs

This project aims at integrating experiences to deploy an open innovation system that supports SMEs to exploit sustainability business opportunities through external cross-border partnerships at EUROMED.

The EMPHASIS project will address a design & setup of an Open Innovation Network, offering integrated innovation support services, validating OI Opportunities & fostering cross border partnerships that will enhance uptake of external knowledge that can turn sustainability priorities into tangible business opportunities for growth. Therefore, EMPHASIS project will increase capacities of SMEs to innovate and their readiness to engage with Innovation Partners by building cross-border partnerships (OI projects) with external entities and turning external knowledge into new products, services and business opportunities. More information about the project here.

1st EMPHASIS Meeting
YEP MED - YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PORTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Ports connected to international trade, environment and sustainability, digitization, port logistics and transport networks are currently one of the main focuses of job creation in the Blue Economy sector. Additionally, the ports ecosystem has a high concentration of companies that are usually bigger than in other sectors, allowing for a greater jobs absorption capacity. This potential could be better exploited through dedicated dual technical and vocational education and training (TVET) with job-oriented placement schemes addressing NEETs in the Mediterranean region. Facing this challenge, YEP MED proposes to enrich the TVET by developing three main areas with skills shortages: foreign trade, environment and sustainability, digitization and port logistics operations. The project will develop port-logistics TVET resources adapted to the sector needs, launch learning programmes with job placement programmes and set up partnerships between key stakeholders in the 7 involved countries. YEP MED will adapt 9 training curricula to the actual needs of the productive sectors, introducing personalized monitoring to students and creating training courses that address environmental issues. More information about the project here.

1st training in Port Community Logistics
- From 17 to 21 January, Barcelona, Spain

Training on administrative processes in international trade for Italian NEETs
- From 24 to 3 February, Online

Training in Port Community Logistics
- From 31 January to 4 February, Beirut, Lebanon.

2nd training in Port Community Logistics
- From 7 to 11 February, Barcelona, Spain.

3rd training in Port Community Logistics
- From 14 to 18 February, Barcelona, Spain.

Training in International Trade and International Operations
- From 21 February to 7 March, Online.

INTERNISA - Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market

The territories involved in the ENI CBC Med Programme suffer from high unemployment rate and low participation of women in the labour market. At the same time, job growth is hindered by the low penetration of digital innovation in
Mediterranean territories which hampers the capacity of small enterprises to find access to know-how or venture capital for innovation. With the aim of provide training in digital skills to women and know-how about digitalization approaches to businesspeople, INTERNISA will combine training in the digital sector with professional development in the agri-food, textile, tourism and financial sectors. To reach its objective, the project will develop online and offline services addressed to women and employers providing training curricula and personal consulting. Project activities will culminate with interventions related to match-making of labour demand and supply through an online platform and job fairs to foster contacts among job seekers and employers. More information about the project here.

**Women trainings in digital skills and innovations** (to be confirmed)

**TECHLOG - Technological Transfer for Logistics Innovation in Mediterranean area**

The project introduces programs to support, assist and transfer of research-industry cooperation technologies in (trans) port communities. TECHLOG aims also to achieve in the Med area common safety levels of (trans) port operations while enhancing their efficiency. Therefore, TECHLOG wants to strengthen ties between academia and the (trans)port industry (namely the transport inside port areas) in the Mediterranean region. Concretely, TECHLOG will encourage joint Technology Transfer Initiatives (TTI) to achieve common quality standards for transport and port specialized staff. A Mediterranean Open Lab will be created to promote and share those initiatives within the (trans)port communities. These TTI will be tested through pilot actions, in real port operators, and will involve trained staff. For the sake of efficiency and consistency, the project will focus on advanced simulation technologies which are, beyond the shadow of a doubt, among the key success factors for both port workers and port operators. More information about the project here.

**Training course for innovation trainers developed** (to be confirmed)

**EBSOMED - Enhancing business support organisations and business networks in the Southern Neighbourhood**

*EuropeAid Project*

The ultimate goal of this project is to promote the Mediterranean Business Ecosystem by boosting investment and job creation in the region with a view to economic growth. This is being done until now through the strengthening of the capacity building of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in the Southern Neighbourhood Countries. More specifically, EBSOMED stimulates trade and investment flows by supporting the internationalization of Euro-Mediterranean SMEs and gives a new dimension to regional integration through the establishment of a sustainable hub and the development of win-win business partnerships in the Euro-Mediterranean region. More information about the project here.

**Release of Strategic Paper: Road Map to the decarbonisation of the Mediterranean Region**

- February (date and place to be confirmed)

**Business Match Making Forum**

- February, France (date to be confirmed)

**MedaFinance: banking and non-banking instruments** (to be confirmed)

**Road Show in Northern Mediterranean: Logistics after COVID-19**

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BLUE GROWTH COMMUNITY - Capitalization & communication project for Blue Economy innovation in the Mediterranean

Interreg Med Programme

Blue Growth Community’s main objective is to build a real community of projects dealing with Blue Growth, allowing the reinforcement of the cross-cutting and integrated dynamics between projects and transnational key stakeholders and support Mediterranean clusters in their transnational activities processes. Furthermore, enhancing the dissemination and transferability of projects results, ensuring a wider and deeper impact towards external multilevel stakeholders, contributing to the sustainable socio-economic development of the Mediterranean area through innovative investments in the Blue economy. More information about the project here.

Launching of the Blue Economy working group

- End of February, online (date to be confirmed)

Capitalisation event on Tourism: Recreational boating & yachting (To be confirmed)

Capitalisation event on Circular economy (To be confirmed)

Online training course: “Fostering and managing blue growth potential in the Mediterranean” (by the Blue Growth in collaboration with other communities, in the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Academy)

- May-June 2022, online (dates to be confirmed)

Transferring and training events

- 2nd part of the 1st training event on MRE (March, date to be confirmed)
- Event on Blue economy (date and place to be confirmed)
- Event on Aquaculture (date and place to be confirmed)

Webinar on Communities results and experiences in the MED area (to be confirmed)
**3rd Annual Assembly** (to be confirmed)

**Closing event of the project**
- Montenegro (date to be confirmed)

**BleuTourMed**

*Interreg Med Project*

BleuTourMed is a horizontal project within the framework of the InterregMed programme that has the aim of building a thematic community of projects focused on Sustainable Tourism supporting and helping them to synthesise and integrate data, methods and outputs that will help to enable a better communication and capitalisation of their results at a Mediterranean level.

As an associated partner, ASCAME supports the BleuTourMed project, which aims to study, test and capitalise innovative instruments and actions towards the enhancement of tourism sustainability in the Mediterranean, and also attends project events in representation of the Mediterranean private sector. More information about the project [here](#).

**Med4Jobs programme: A Mediterranean initiative for jobs**

The ‘Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs’ (Med4Jobs) is a programme developed by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat, as a cross-sector initiative driven by the need for integrated regional action in the area of job creation.

ASCAME is part of the Med4Jobs Advisory Board, as well as other international organisations such as ILO, UNIDO, OECD, ETF, GIZ and UNCTAD, providing their expertise for a successful implementation of this programme, working in employability and job creation with SMEs in the region. Therefore, working together to promote and replicate a number of visible private sector job creation projects in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region, such as Incorpora, Young Women as Job Creators, the Mediterranean Entrepreneurs Network, HOMERE (High Opportunity for Mediterranean Executive Recruitment), MedNC (New Chance Mediterranean Network), among others.

Med4Jobs identify the best practices in terms of job-creating projects and replicate them in the region to cover both the supply and demand side of the labour market by targeting employability, job intermediation and business enabling infrastructure. More information [here](#).
5. ASCAME 2022 International Relations Action Plan

In 2020, the ‘Recovery Plan and a new Economic Development Model for the Mediterranean’ was presented so that the main regional and international actors working in the Mediterranean to join forces and find synergies in the recovery process.

ASCAw will continue to seek to develop its international relations by creating efficient partnerships with relevant international and regional organizations to foster economic development, sustainability, entrepreneurship, among others in the Mediterranean.

Furthermore, in 2022, ASCAME will celebrate its 40th anniversary together with the 100 anniversary of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce in which the organisation will focus on two strategic topics. On the one hand, a gathering among the Chambers of Commerce of the Mediterranean is planned in order to jointly contribute to combating climate change in line with COP27 in Alexandria. On the other hand, the Chamber 4.0 strategy will be presented in order to promote the digitalisation of the chambers of commerce in the region.

During 2022, in addition to its regular international meetings, ASCAME will hold various meetings with relevant stakeholders in order to analyse efficient ways to collaborate and look for opportunities for the Mediterranean Private sector to implement strategic plans in different fields.

Some of the actors with whom the Association plans to meet are the following:

- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- United Regions / Forum of Regional Governments (ORU FOGAR)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- European Commission
- Luxemburg Space Agency
Time to act: stronger together

- European Space Agency (ESA)
- European Extern Action Service (EEAS)
- European Economic and Social Committee
- European Investment Bank (EIB)
- World Tourism Organization (WTO)
- Barcelona City Council
- World Federation of Consuls
- European Institute of the Mediterranean
- MEDCruise
- Union for the Mediterranean
- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- Islamic Development Bank (ISDB Group)
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) - World Bank Group
- International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI)
- International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IHRA)
- Mediterranean governments
- Kereitsu Forum Spain
- Etc.