# TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Introduction .................................................. 3

2. ASCAME 2023 Events Plan .................................. 4

3. ASCAME 2023 Institutional Meetings Plan ............ 7

4. ASCAME 2023 International Cooperation Projects Plan 8

5. ASCAME 2023 International Relations Action Plan .. 28

6. ASCAME 2023 Communications Action Plan .......... 30
1. Introduction

ASCAME 2023 Action Plan builds on the accomplishments of 2022 to continue ASCAME’s work for the well-being of the united Mediterranean basin. This plan is fully adapted to the post COVID-19 situation, with the aim of reviving the different economies comprising 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.

ASCAME’s 2023 Action Plan furthers several activities aimed at enhancing the region’s recovery and its promotion in these difficult times.

Furthermore, as on previous occasions, the 2023 Action Plan includes the usual and also innovative events of the Association, numerous activities of the international cooperation projects of the ASCAME network, communications activities and institutional and international goals aimed for 2023. 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.

Nowadays, more than 40 years after its creation, this strategic vision has been strongly reinforced. Through ASCAME, the private sector is positioned in the regional political agenda to catalyze solutions that answer accordingly to the changing socioeconomic scenarios in the region.

ASCAME is a key actor in the Mediterranean region which, through its innovative vision of regional economic integration, offers solutions to key issues through the private sector.
2. ASCAME 2023 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)

MEDIBAT - Mediterranean Building Exhibition
- March 8th - 11th 2023 – Sfax, Tunisia
- Organisers: ASCAME and the Chamber of Commerce of Sfax, Tunisia

Mediterranean Libya Business Meeting
- April 2023 – Tripoli, Libya
- Organisers: ASCAME and the Chamber of Commerce of Tripoli

International Entrepreneurship Summit
- May 2023 – Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- Organisers: ASCAME and other partners

13th World Chambers Congress 2023
The world’s largest economic forum for chambers and businesses
- 21st -23th June 2023 – Geneva, Switzerland
- Organisers: ASCAME, the International Chamber of Commerce, World Chambers Federation and the Geneva Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services and other partners

Mediterranean Logistics and Transports Summit (MedaLogistics Summit)
- 1st June to 3rd June, 2023 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, CZFB, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and other partners
  - 19th Mediterranean Transports & Logistics Forum
  - 14th Mediterranean Ports and Shipping Summit
  - 2nd Africa Logistics Meeting
3rd Mediterranean Real Estate Forum: The Next Resetting
- June 2023 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Consorci de la Zona Franca de Barcelona, FIABCI

Med Cat Days 2023 - Gencat
- June 2023 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, Department of External Relations of the Government of Catalonia, ORU FOGAR.

4th Barcelona New Economic Week (BNEW)
- October 6th -9th 2023 – Barcelona, Spain
- Organisers: ASCAME, CZFB, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and other partners

Mediterranean Cosmetics Forum (MedCosmetics) - Morocco
- 13th -14th October 2023 – Rabat, Morocco
- Organisers: Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of the Rabat region with the collaboration of ASCAME

17th Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders (MedaWeek Barcelona 2023)

MedaWeek Barcelona is nowadays the iconic conference dedicated to promoting the Mediterranean region worldwide. This event endorses the key economic sectors and the cultural values of this region through a wide variety of forums. MedaWeek Barcelona serves as the main meeting point for voicing the interests of the private sector in the socio-economic development of the Mediterranean countries.
- November 2023 – 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

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 partner
3. ASCAME 2023 Institutional Meetings Plan

ASCAME Executive Committee held in Alexandria, Egypt - 13th October 2022

 наглядная информация

- **Bureau** | April 2023
- **Executive Committee** | November 2023
- **General Assembly** | November 2023
4. ASCAME 2023 International Cooperation Projects Plan

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 organizations 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.

Furthermore, ASCAME members are involved in the EMFAF programme, which runs from 2021 to 2027 and supports the EU common fisheries policy (CFP), the EU maritime policy and the EU agenda for international ocean governance. It provides support for developing innovative projects, ensuring that aquatic and maritime resources are used sustainably. As a global ocean actor and a major producer of seafood, the EU has a responsibility to protect and sustainably use the oceans and their resources. It is also in the EU’s socio-economic interest to guarantee the availability of food supplies, the competitiveness of the maritime
economy and the livelihood of coastal communities.

The fund helps achieve sustainable fisheries and conserve marine biological resources. This leads to food security through the supply of seafood products, growth of a sustainable blue economy, healthy, safe and sustainably managed seas and oceans.

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 cross-border marketing alliances to international source markets. More information about the project [here](#).

**FAM Trips Mediterranean Adventure Treasures**

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)

FAM Trips Mediterranean Adventure Treasures: Catalonia (Spain), Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan and Puglia (Italy). February to April 2023

Final Conference March 2023 Jordan

**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).

- **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)

**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 travelers 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 honey bee 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 purposes 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 tourists 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 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)
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 COVIS-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 re-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 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 network 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, whose 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
TIME IS NOW

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 the 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
The 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**
February, Online (date to be confirmed)

**Events to promote cross-border Open Innovation in the Mediterranean**
From May to September, online (date to be confirmed)

**Open Innovation Focus Group Meetings** (to be confirmed)

---

**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 logistic 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**
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 providing 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 also aims 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 Matchmaking 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** MedaLogistics, 31 May to 2 June, Barcelona

- **Road Show in Southern Mediterranean: Green Transition**
  40th Anniversary of ASCAME and 100th Anniversary of Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Egypt (date to be confirmed)

- **EBSOMED Academy: Mediterranean Women Entrepreneurs at MedaWeek**
  November, hybrid, Barcelona (date to be confirmed)

**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](#).

REBOOT MED is a project aiming to encourage public-private partnership co-defining Blue Economy Action Plans for the Recovery of the tourism sector, and to incubate, accelerate and test new eco/blue economy tourism packages in 10 pilot areas in 6 WestMed countries.

REBOOT MED is implemented through 3 result-oriented pillars:

1) Capacity building and awareness raising on the competitiveness and sustainability of the coastal and maritime tourism ecosystem are implemented through local clusters and a series of exchanges organised in collaboration with the WestMed Initiative;

2) Promoting asset-based development approach and leveraging on local assets to create sustainable growth and a healthier environment are implemented to support and stimulate tourism SMEs, coastal communities and potential pioneers (women, NEETs, startuppers) to play as actors of change in re-imagining and re-building coastal and maritime tourism. Their disruptive role will be supported by REBOOT MED through targeted go-to-market services and testing activities;

3) To close the loop, lessons learnt will be shared and capitalised at local and WestMed level.

The cross-cutting objective of REBOOT MED is to support the implementation of the WestMed common roadmap for the development of a sustainable blue economy in the sub-basin to generate growth, create jobs and provide a better living environment for Med populations and tourism ecosystems.

Management Board meetings
- Mauritania April 2023
- Morocco July 2023

Strategic Steering Board meetings
- Morocco July 2023

ECO-CRUIISING FU_TOUR: TO BOOST THE DIGITAL SKILLS OF TOURISM SMEs IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The EU co-funded ECO-CRUIISING FU_TOUR project aims to boost the management, innovative, blue, green and digital skills of tourism SMEs in the Western Mediterranean region. Our project focuses on public and private entities in charge of promoting coastal and maritime destinations in the EU and Western Europe. This will be achieved through a specialised capacity building programme and eco-smart packages, dedicated to the cruise sector. These packages will be designed primarily targeting Millennials and Generation Z, with the aim of offering innovative routes and solutions and combining eco-sustainability with digital experiences.

The tourism sector requires greater innovation and diversification to remain sustainable, competitive and profitable over time and to provide qualified employment. With specific reference to the coastal and maritime tourism sector, cruise tourism is one of the most promising vertical, mobilising million of visitors, but still lagging behind in the eco-sustainability approach. More information this project [here](#)

Mid-term meeting
- October 2023  Italy
Matchmaking events for knowledge transfer and boosting cooperation

- From 15th to 17th November in the MedaWeek 2023 Barcelona.

Promotion of the eco-smart cruise packages

- December 2023
5. ASCAME 2023 International Relations Action Plan

ASCAME 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. In the previous year, ASCAME has created relevant partners in line with the Action Plan and the needs of ASCAME members. Some of the partnerships were in the fields of digitalisation 4.0, sustainable and blue economy.

Furthermore, in November 2023, ASCAME will celebrate its General Assembly to elect the new President of ASCAME for the new term. On the one hand, a gathering among the Chambers of Commerce of the Mediterranean is planned to promote the social and economic development of the chambers of commerce in the region. On the other hand, arriving and offering concrete services to our members is key though our partners programs and actions.

For the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the Mediterranean, ASCAME, it is also important that its members represent and advocate for the international organisation in external projects, conferences and networks. Ensuring that ASCAME is connected to initiatives, policy development or key strategic activities that further the organizational goals. Furthermore, participating in or contributing to policy debates is also key, for the good development within the organization.

During 2023, 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 in 2023 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
* European Space Agency (ESA)
* European External Action Service (EEAS)
* European Economic and Social Committee
* European Investment Bank (EIB)
* World Tourism Organization (WTO)
* The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) / World Chambers Federation (WCF)
* 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
* Mediterranean governments
* Keiretsu Forum Spain
6. ASCAME 2023 Communications Action Plan

For the last year, ASCAME has moved towards digital communication. So far, this has translated into more attractive content for social media, videos about the most important events and a renewed newsletter with interesting content and opportunities for its members. Moreover, we have joined Instagram in full force.

In 2023 we will take ASCAME communications action plan many steps forward: we will start the process to turn our newsletter into short video capsules, as well as to produce content to document the economic life across the Mediterranean. Moreover, we will join video campaigns from our members and partners. For example, in 2023, we will be joining the Mediterranean Day (28th November) organized by the Union for the Mediterranean.

As part of its incoming initiatives, ASCAME is working on the New Mediterranean Creative Economy strategy, which aims to double the contribution of creative industries to the region’s GDP by 2028. The strategy intends to boost the number of incubators and technology hubs within Mediterranean’s creative spaces while creating a new method of measuring the creative economy’s impact through the “creative economy classification and measurement framework”. Through these initiatives, the strategy aims to double the number of creative companies and individual creators and, in turn, achieve the vision of making the Mediterranean “a global HUB for the creative economy”, unlocking a new set of possibilities in creative-related fields. This includes, of course, the audiovisual sector.