

**UNIMED WEEK**

**IN BRUSSELS**

**ONLINE**

from 15<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

**POST-EVENT  
REPORT**

# UNIMED WEEK 2020: FIGURES



527 PARTICIPANTS



87 SPEAKERS



33 COUNTRIES



14 WEBINARS



2 WEEKS

The UNIMED WEEK IN BRUSSELS is a forum for discussion and networking, an occasion for our associates to meet European and international institutions and learn more about their current and future programs.

This fifth edition, exceptionally held online, has been the occasion for our members to discuss with the European Commission about the evolution for the upcoming period 2021-2027 and the policies aiming to foster the cooperation and improve the integration at all levels in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Working sessions have been organised with representatives of the European Commission's DGs as well as with relevant international actors, offering an opportunity for evaluation and reevaluation of regional policies.

The UNIMED activities and projects are increasingly recognised by the European Commission as well as by other international institutions. This initiative is therefore an opportunity to look at the past, to go on through the course and to further strengthen our network.

Over the years, a number of key challenges have been identified in the academic and scientific cooperation within the Mediterranean region, such as:

- strengthening mobility opportunities;
- working on supporting refugees, including students, adults, academic staff and researchers;
- reinforcing networking opportunities for universities with enterprises and socio-economic realities;
- rethinking new policy instruments at EU level;
- increasing social responsibility in the university system to face the new challenges of the region.

## Participants

Rectors and Presidents, International Relations Delegates, Professors, Representatives of International Relations Offices and Representatives of European Institutions and International Organisations.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

TUESDAY 16 JUNE	11 am-12.30pm	Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Integrate Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange in your courses: examples and opportunities	<a href="#">More info</a>
WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE	11am-12.30pm	Meetin with the Europena Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC). The International dimension of Erasmus+ programme	<a href="#">More info</a>
THURSDAY 18 JUNE	11am-1pm	Autonomy, quality assurance and social responsibility: key challenges for a good governance framework of higher education in Tunisia	<a href="#">More info</a>
	2.30pm-3.30pm	External webinar organised by FAO. Launch of the FAO elearning Academy: Strengthening capacity to face challenges	<a href="#">More Info</a>

FRIDAY 19 JUNE	11am-1pm	Session by the UNIMED SubNetwork on Mobility and Intercultural dialogue. Mobility with Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and DIRE-MED project: Join forces for a stronger Erasmus programme for youth	<a href="#">More Info</a>
	2pm-3.30pm	External webinar organised by OECD. The Geography of Higher Education – How the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the role of HEIs vis-à-vis their ecosystems and networks	<a href="#">More Info</a>
MONDAY 22 JUNE	11am-1pm	Meeting with European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD): The International dimension of future Horizon Europe programme	<a href="#">More Info</a>
	3pm-5.30pm	The changing nature of crisis in the MENA region: which role for Research and Academic cooperation in a post COVID-19 scenario	<a href="#">More Info</a>
TUESDAY 23 JUNE	11am-12.30pm	Session by the UNIMED SubNetwork on eLearning and Open Education. Moving from emergency to sustainable eLearning innovation in the Mediterranean	<a href="#">More Info</a>
	3pm-5pm	Intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, promotion of coexistence in the Mediterranean: a discussion between the Anna Lindh Foundation, the Fundacion Tres Culturas and UNIMED	<a href="#">More Info</a>
WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE	10am-1pm	Libya Restart: a journey analysis. Paving the way for cooperation and innovation in North Africa - Public Conference	<a href="#">More Info</a>
	3pm-5pm	Skills development and employment in the South East Mediterranean: The impact of Covid-19 and scenarios for the future by ETF	<a href="#">More Info</a>
THURSDAY 25 JUNE	11am-1pm	Meeting with European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) - EU-Africa cooperation framework in higher education	<a href="#">More Info</a>
	3pm-5pm	Session by the UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability in partnership with the Union for the Mediterranean The role of universities in the Nexus Innovation - Employability	<a href="#">More Info</a>

## Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Integrate Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange in your courses: examples and opportunities

16 June 2020, at 11am – 12:30pm CET

The Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange initiative of the European Commission has reached over 20,000 participants since its start in 2018, and established more than 250 partnerships with universities and youth organisations across 44 countries. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing need for online opportunities, the project is now attracting an increased interest from stakeholders, since Virtual Exchange represents both a way to sustain intercultural collaboration in times of social distancing and an innovative online learning method.

The webinar “Integrate Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange in your courses: examples and opportunities” presented to university professors and International Relation Officers the upcoming opportunities of Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange. During the webinar, our experts from the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange team, Amany Ben Lakhdar (Soliya) , Fabio Nascimbeni (UNIMED), Juliet Mühlbauer (Sharing Perspectives Foundation) and Lorenza Bacino (UNICollaboration), explained how to integrate the opportunities offered by the initiatives in the educational offer of universities. Relevant testimonials, in particular Alia Gilbrecht from An-Najah National University (Palestine) and Naouel Abdellatif from the University Setif 2 (Algeria), provided examples of successful Virtual Exchange implementation in universities. Participants expressed high interest in the opportunities and follow-up will take place under the coordination of the EVE team in UNIMED.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

## Meeting with European Commission’s Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC): The International dimension of Erasmus+ programme

17 June 2020, at 11am – 12.30pm CET

The webinar with the Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) was an occasion for a joint reflection on the results of the current programme and on the future of the Euro-Mediterranean academic cooperation for the new Erasmus programme for the period 2021-2027.

On this occasion, Germán Bernal Ríos, gave an overview on all the opportunities and the challenges of the new programme with a focus on the Southern Mediterranean countries.

Among the changes of the new programme, he mentioned the possibility to apply as a Region and not only as a Country, and that more resources are foreseen to be devoted to visas and insurances for incoming mobilities. Among the priorities, he underlined the major inclusion of disadvantaged categories of people and a focus on digital and green issues.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“The new Erasmus 2021 - 2027 program is very ambitious: among the priorities, creating a greener, digital, stronger, democratic Europe with an economy that works for people.”*

Germán Bernal Ríos, European Commission’s Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Unit C3 “International Cooperation”

## **Autonomy, quality assurance and social responsibility: key challenges for a good governance among the universities in Tunisia**

18 June 2020, at 11am – 1pm CET

Starting from the results and the actions of the [SAGESSE project](#) (structural project in the framework of the Capacity Building projects of the Erasmus+ programme), coordinated by UNIMED, this webinar shared perspectives and contributions on the challenges facing the Higher Education system in Tunisia towards a more decentralized, open, participative and accountable system of university governance.

On this occasion, different actors from Universities and Institutions attended the session to share good practices and build up synergies among the project SAGESSE and other initiatives at national level, such as the project PAQ-DGSU launched by the Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research as part of the Modernization of Higher Education Programme in support of Employability (PromESsE-Tn), funded by the World Bank.

In particular, Najla Romdhane from the Tunisian Higher Education Ministry, Laurent Le Danois, from the Delegation of the European Union to Tunisia, Mokhtar Mahouachi, President of the University of Jendouba (Tunisia), Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED Director, Hmaid Ben Aziza, UNIMED Secretary General and Silvia Marchionne, UNIMED Project Manager and coordinator of the SAGESSE Project took the floor to highlight the importance and the need of coordinating efforts in setting up a new Higher Education system in line with the process of the recent reform in Tunisia. This is why SAGESSE is framed in this national context in order to provide operational support to Tunisian universities, thanks to international best practices and knowledge sharing.

There is still a long way to go to reach the goal, however, this objective can be achieved thanks to projects such as SAGESSE that support Universities in modernizing the governance system and improving their international competitiveness and attractiveness.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“SAGESSE n’est pas un projet comme Les autres, c’est un esprit, une réflexion et une vision globale du système universitaire tunisien.”*

Hmaid Ben Aziza, UNIMED Secretary General

*“Il faut construire un système d’enseignement supérieur plus résilient qui parvienne à faire face à la crise économique ou sanitaire telle que nous la vivons. Il faut donc accompagner ces nouvelles générations avec de solutions pédagogiques innovantes en développant des compétences numériques et informatiques.”*

Najla Romdhane, Chargée de projets, Ministère de l’enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique en Tunisie

*“SAGESSE est un projet très actuel qui mène toutes les universités tunisiennes dans la transformation vers une gouvernance plus démocratique et horizontale. La pandémie doit être utilisée pour accélérer ce processus de réforme.”*

Laurent Le Danois, Délégation de l’Union européenne en Tunisie

## Session by the UNIMED SubNetwork on Mobility and Intercultural dialogue.

### Mobility with Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and DIRE-MED project:

### Join forces for a stronger Erasmus programme for youth

19 June 2020, at 11am – 1pm CET

The webinar was opened by a presentation by Kostis Giannidis, President of the Erasmus Student Network and Marie-Céline Falisse, ESN Liaison Officer. They highlighted the strong commitment of the organisation to build student's organisations in South-Med countries in collaboration with universities. Thanks to the valuable contributions by Mustapha Ouardouz, University Abdelmalek Essaâdi (Morocco) and Youssef Ben Othman, University of Tunis El Manar (Tunisia), the South-South University Cooperation was largely discussed, especially in reference to the [DIRE-MED project](#). This Erasmus + Capacity Building project aims to strengthen the capacities of the International Relations Offices of Higher Education institutions in Maghreb countries. The DIRE-MED project introduced the novelty of South-South exchange for students, academic and administrative staff, allowed students to do an internship in companies with the scientific supervision of university partners in the Mediterranean region and contributed to spread intercultural exchange and dialogue, values of tolerance, peace and diversity.

However, figures show that South-South mobility still needs to be strengthened and encouraged in order to contribute to the challenging goal of building a Mediterranean generation.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“If we want to build a Mediterranean generation, we have to start from our youth, to promote experiences abroad and encourage young people to experience another culture.”*

Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED Director

*“The Erasmus Student Network is eager to collaborate with Southern Mediterranean universities willing to build student's organisations in South-med countries. Within the fruitful collaboration with UNIMED, ESN is already working to provide interested universities with tools and skills to build their own network.”*

Kostis Giannidis, President of ESN

*“In addition to the development of South-South mobilities, a great asset of the DIRE-MED project is the promotion of intercultural exchange and dialogue, values of tolerance, peace, diversity of language, religion, culture. It teaches there is always something that we can share as humans.”*

Youssef Ben Othman, University of Tunis El Manar

## Meeting with European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD): The International dimension of future Horizon Europe programme

22 June 2020, 11am - 1pm CET

The webinar focused on the possibilities opened by the next research and innovation framework programme of the European Commission, [Horizon Europe](#), and to the actions promoted by the [BlueMed](#) initiative for the Mediterranean Sea.

The Horizon Europe programme has been presented by Maria Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation. She presented the strategic planning of the new framework, highlighting the four main pillars for Horizon Europe: a green Europe as one of the flagships of the new programme, the Digital Agenda, a focus on Global health, and new opportunities to strengthen cooperation on Innovation. She also mentioned that "there are good news in the future: increased budget for Horizon Europe, the programme will be officially launched soon and for the South-Mediterranean countries we are exploring the possibility of association, as it was for Tunisia in H2020 and in PRIMA for a high number of Med countries". The Horizon Europe strategic planning process is still ongoing, 2021 might be the time for the official launch of the first Strategic Plan. Closing her speech, Ms. Russo also added that COVID-19 had many negative effects, but on the other side it truly raised the importance of international cooperation in R&I.

The second session of the webinar was dedicated to the BlueMed initiative, with a presentation by Sieglinde Gruber, Head of Unit, Marine Resources, Directorate-General For Research & Innovation of the European

Commission. She focused the attention of the audience of the recently launched [Pilot action on a Healthy plastic-free Mediterranean Sea](#). Mediterranean Sea is strongly impacted by marine litter of different size found along the coastlines, floating both on the surface and on the water column down to the seafloor. Currently, Mediterranean is one of the seas more affected by plastic pollution at world scale, with record levels of microplastics. She pointed out: "What needs to be done to have a plastic free Mediterranean Sea by 2025? A lot of interesting initiatives are ongoing, but people do not know. We need to establish a process of learning from each other, of exchange of good practices. There are now national hubs, to start with". The UNIMED [SubNetwork on BlueMed](#) has been also engaged as a means to support the initiative.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*"COVID-19 had many negative effects, it goes without saying, but on the other side it truly raised the importance of international cooperation in R&I."*

Maria Cristina Russo, Director  
for International Cooperation,  
Directorate-General for Research and  
Innovation, European Commission



## The changing nature of crisis in the MENA region: which role for Research and Academic cooperation in a post COVID-19 scenario

22 June 2020, 3pm - 5.30pm CET

The webinar was focused on several aspects related to the core features of migrations and Academic cooperation in a post COVID-19 scenario. Thanks to intervention of different panelists, the webinar gave the opportunity to discover and understand the issues related to the migration process.

The conference started with the intervention of Luca Lixi, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (European Commission) on migration research as part of the Horizon 2020 framework program of the EU Commission and on the transition that is taking place to the new framework program, Horizon Europe, that will cover the next seven years starting from 2021. He underlined how in Horizon 2020 there have been important investments in migration research, notably in the last two year (2018-2020), and he confirmed that all the researches, the results and the understanding coming from the project are remaining at the center of the Horizon Europe, in which an important role for migration research is foreseen.

Irina Isomova from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) focused her presentation on refugee education in time of COVID-19 and on the main challenges that need to be addressed in this new context, in particular in countries like Syria, Libya, Iraq and Yemen. After having done an overview of the state of the education in the MENA region, Ms. Isomova explained the strategic objectives and approaches of the UNHCR refugee education plan 2030 of the UNHCR.

Moreover, the webinar was the occasion to mention the active role of the universities in the context. Naouel Abdellatif Mami, from the University of Setif 2 (Algeria), brought the example of the practical case of the Ci-RES project that proposes the development of normative and institutional mechanisms for the integration of refugees in the Algerian higher education system. This project is a pilot experiment proposing the reorganization of the organic and functional structure of the project's higher education institutions in order to address the current problems of effective integration of refugees within Higher Education.

On the same side, Anas al-Sobeh, from Yarmouk University (Jordan), delivered a presentation about the situation of the displaced persons and refugees in Jordan and Carlo Giovanni Cereti, from La Sapienza University of Rome (Italy) brought the experience of the institution with regard to refugees and migrants' youth.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“Refugee Education 2030 sets out a vision for the inclusion of refugee children and youth in national educational systems that prepares them for participation in cohesive societies.”*

Irina Isomova, UNHCR, Jordan

## Session by the UNIMED SubNetwork on eLearning and Open Education. Moving from emergency to sustainable eLearning innovation in the Mediterranean

23 June 2020, 11am - 12.30pm CET

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, universities quickly moved education online, rushing into it incredibly quickly. The transition towards online learning has been indeed accelerated by the current pandemic, and it is destined to definitively change the world of education and the labour market as well. That makes it urgent to discuss how to move from emergency to sustainable innovation.

Following UNIMED Honorary President's - Wail Benjelloun - opening, Mahdi Kleibo from Bethlehem University (Palestine), Kinaz Aytouni from Arab International University (Syria), Naoual Chaouni Benabdellah from University Mohammed V of Rabat (Morocco) and Vesa Korhonen from University of Tampere (Finland) offered an open discussion to share experiences, stories and ideas to advance shaping this transition in the Mediterranean region from personal, institutional, national and cross-institutional perspectives. The discussion brought about relevant issues, such as equity of access to distance learning and information, sustainability and employability.

During the webinar, participants agreed that eLearning challenges do not concern just education, but rather prepares students for the changing conditions in the workplace in the future. The post-crisis world will be more digital and virtual accessibility is a tool to improve employability. The importance of education, for the future labor market challenges, shows the need to strengthen the interaction between HEIs, companies, local, national, and regional authorities.

Moreover, the webinar was the occasion to mention the online space created by UNIMED to share stories about what people are doing in response to this massive shifting online. The idea is that these stories can serve as inspiration for colleagues and peers, and might inform policy development in the long run. The Online Resilience collection of stories is available at <https://onlineresilience.uni-med.net/>

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*HEIs need to take into consideration modernization, virtual accessibility, and best practices of internationalization as a tool to improve employability in the region. This means we further need to discuss together on how to move from emergency to sustainable innovation in online learning, and to continue advocating an open and permanent dialogue on employability.*

Mahdi Kleibo, Bethlehem University, Palestine

*"Technology was there but people were afraid to use it. Faculties and staff now had to act quickly to develop skills to use it, students had to become fluid with the use of technology. What is relevant nowadays is the issue of equity, of access to distance learning, since campuses are closed and the only technology available is what you have at home."*

Wail Benjelloun, UNIMED Honorary President

**Intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, promotion of coexistence in the Mediterranean: a discussion between the Anna Lindh Foundation, the Fundacion Tres Culturas and UNIMED**

23 June 2020, 3pm - 5pm CET

Promoting mutual understanding, cooperation and intercultural dialogue are crucial to ensure the fruitful and sustainable development of our region. The current pandemic we are living in and the recent racist acts of violence unfortunately testify that promoting dialogue to fight against prejudices is urgent. In this sense, the Anna Lindh Foundation and UNIMED recently launched a call “#Covid-19: Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue and Cooperation must continue” aimed at gathering voices of all stakeholders (universities, government, international organizations...) to invest more in the promotion of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

This webinar was organized in collaboration with the Anna Lindh Foundation and Fundación Tres Culturas which, each one at its own level, work in favour of intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding.

After the welcome of Hmaid Ben Aziza, UNIMED Secretary General, and the welcome speech by Nabil Al Sharif, the Anna Lindh Foundation Executive Director, who underlined the importance of the intercultural dialogue especially in this particular moment of crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Eleonora Insalaco, Head of Operations and Intercultural Research of the ALF took the floor and made a presentation of the Intercultural Trends and Social Change in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

After this intervention, Ricard Zapata, Full Professor in the Department of Political and

Social Sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF-Barcelona), focused his presentation on the centrality of the cities in the intercultural relations and in the Mediterranean Migration Governance.

At the end, a presentation on Moroccan immigration in Andalusia and the importance of intercultural dialogue has been made by Germinal Gil, Head of the Department Dialogue among Mediterranean Cultures, Civilizations and Religions of the Fundacion Tres Culturas.

This webinar was the occasion to learn more on intercultural trends and social changes, to talk about intercultural cities and share ideas on how to favor tolerance and better understanding.

This webinar offered interesting ideas to the academic community on how to integrate further intercultural dialogue in their academic life to contribute to one of the most important UNIMED priorities: building a new Mediterranean Generation.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“In the rescaling Mediterranean migration governance, the intercultural cities’ relations play a crucial role. Public spaces are privileged spaces for cross-cultural encounters. By combining public space, municipalities have an excellent tool to bridge social, cultural and ethnic gaps. They are encouraged to create public spaces that are open and attractive for all citizens including those coming from diverse cultural backgrounds and to facilitate interaction and common projects.”*

Ricard Zapata, Full Professor in the Department of Political and Social Sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF-Barcelona)

## Libya Restart: a journey analysis. Paving the way for cooperation and innovation in North Africa

24 June 2020, 10am - 1pm CET

*“The most important values for UNIMED are humanity and the promotion of the intercultural dialogue between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Living together means establishing relationships and links between identities and societies. In this context, Universities play a crucial role in promoting dialogue and shared values that are our orientations.”*

Hmaid Ben Aziza, UNIMED Secretary general

*“The scope of the Intercultural trends research is to be a reference tool for developing policies and actions for civil society, policy makers and media dealing with Euromed intercultural affairs and for analysing the trends related to intercultural relations in the Euromed region.”*

Eleonora Insalaco, Head of Operations and Intercultural Research, Anna Lindh Foundation

*“In an era where confrontation and exacerbated individualism cause conflicts, exclusion situations and marginalizations, the Three Cultures Foundation has committed to promote coexistence of all cultures and regions through mutual knowledge, dialog and exchange of ideas and experiences.”*

Germinal Gil, Head of the Dept. Dialogue among Mediterranean Cultures, Civilizations and Religions, Fundacio Tres Culturas

The Libya Restart Conference was organised by UNIMED with the support of the EU Delegation in Libya, and in collaboration with the Libyan Education Ministry and the Libyan National Erasmus Office Coordinator. The aim of the online event was to present the main findings and the recommendations developed by UNIMED in the framework of the analysis conducted on the Libyan Higher Education system, resulting in the publication of the [Libya Restart Report](#). The Conference has been conceived as an open space to discuss concrete partnerships, actions and initiatives to support Libya's future developments.

Participants in the event were first and foremost Libyan Universities, the Minister of Education of Libya and the National Centre for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutes, but also a wide range of international stakeholders, including European Ministries of Foreign Offices and Embassies, international organizations and other Mediterranean Universities. Contributions were also shared by high stake representatives, such as Alan Bugeja, the European Union Ambassador to Libya and Andrea Cozzolino, the President of the European Parliament Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries.

The Conference focused on several aspects related to the core features of the Libyan HE system: governance and autonomy, quality assurance, international cooperation, the role of universities in the society, employability and the relation with the private sector, research priorities and digitalization. The UNIMED research team has presented the Recommendations and welcomed the

feedback from the audience. As a closing note, the Coordinator of the National Erasmus Office, Ali Bakeer, highlighted the importance for Libya of moving now towards an operational plan for the country.

The full Libya Restart Report and additional valuable resources are available [here](#).

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

## **Skills development and employment in the South East Mediterranean: The impact of COVID-19 and scenarios for the future by ETF**

24 June 2020, 3pm - 5pm CET

This seminar started by the results of the mapping conducted by the European Training Foundation (ETF) on measures adopted by countries in response to the COVID-19 impacting on education and training systems and skills development in the South East Mediterranean. Taking stock of measures and trends observed, the ETF provided some results of the mapping, including highlights on the open questions on which participants may engage in an active debate. In particular, the ETF analysed the “skills of the future” by focusing on the job markets’ needs and changes and their impact on communities and partner countries in terms of innovation reactions to this current crisis. On this occasion, some concrete solutions were given in order to meet the next challenges of the new societies by the Head of ETF Operations Department, Anastasia Fetsi, and the ETF Director, Cesare Onestini.

A direct testimony was provided by the Vice President of the Forum of Entrepreneurs in Algeria, Nacera Haddad, who stressed on the urgent skills needed by the business sector to face immediate needs and recovery, while also taking opportunities for re-thinking business models in view of future scenarios. Indeed, communities -thanks to the partnership between the private and public sectors- should take advantage of the positive aspects of the current crisis to introduce reforms quickly, strengthen skills in the vocational training sector and accelerate the digitization process.

Finally, this webinar opened up to participants to engage in a collaborative exchange of reflections and future prospects with the

*“Libyan universities have gained more autonomy and this is something that deserves our attention and support. Universities play an important role in the construction of a society. This is the reason why we have to make an additional effort to exchange with Libyan universities on shared topics like mobility and cooperation. We need to support the growth of the Libyan university system notably in terms of research and mobility.”*

Andrea Cozzolino, European Parliament, President of the European Parliament Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries

*“We are committed together with Libyan higher education institutions to face the current challenges. Universities play a transformative role and we want Libyan universities to be the vehicle, create more openness and better citizens.”*

H.E. Alan Bugeja, Ambassador of the EU to Libya

awareness that many needs have arisen and that proactive measures should be taken by all the stakeholders in the field in order to have the right skills at the right time.

The webinar has been organised in the cooperation framework that UNIMED has established with the ETF - European Training Foundation aimed at strengthen their collaboration in [delivering quality education and training in the Mediterranean region](#) and in promoting policy dialogue and mutual exchanges between schools and academia and other stakeholders, to provide a contribution to the sustainable growth in the region via the reform of education, training, and labour market systems.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“More investments are needed in both the Vocational Training Quality and Training system in a changing world of work. We can “easily” announce this challenge with three “R” for the future: Rescue, Recover and Rebuild our society!”*

Anastasia Fetsi, ETF - Head of the Operations Department in the European Training Foundation

*“We should take advantage of the positive aspects of the current crisis to introduce reforms quickly, strengthen skills in the vocational training sector and accelerate the digitization process. Only a partnership between the private and public sectors can bring about a radical and significant change for the future!”*

Nacera Haddad, Vice-President of the Forum of Entrepreneurs in Algeria

## **Meeting with European Commission’s Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) - EU-Africa cooperation framework in higher education**

25 June 2020, 11am - 1pm CET

During this webinar Celine Peroni, from the Marie Curie Skłodowska-Curie Unit of the DG for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the EC, introduced the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). The actions support researchers at all stages of their careers, regardless of age and nationality, and researchers working across all disciplines are eligible for funding. The MSCA also supports cooperation between industry and academia and innovative training to enhance employability and career development. Along with individual fellowships the MSCA help develop training networks, promote staff exchanges and fund mobility programmes with an international flavour.

Afterwards, Fiorella Perotto, from the International Cooperation Unit of the DG for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the EC, presented the strategies and instruments for future cooperation with Africa in the framework of higher education. The European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on 9th March 2020 proposed the basis for a new strategy with Africa. The communication sets out proposals to intensify cooperation through partnerships in five key areas: green transition; digital transformation; sustainable growth and jobs; peace and governance; and migration and mobility. Based on this document, Europe will engage discussions with African partners towards a new joint strategy to be endorsed at the European Union – African

Union Summit in October 2020. European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, said: “Today’s Strategy with Africa is the roadmap to move forward and bring our partnership to the next level. Africa is the European Union’s natural partner and neighbour. Together we can build a more prosperous, more peaceful and more sustainable future for all.”

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

### **Session by the UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability in partnership with the Union for the Mediterranean The role of universities in the Nexus Innovation - Employability**

25 June 2020, 3pm - 5pm CET

This seminar entitled “The role of universities in the Nexus Innovation-Employability: The benefits of a multi-stakeholder regional dialogue to meet the challenge of employability of young people, a key factor for economic recovery in the post-COVID Mediterranean” has been organized by the UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability in partnership with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

The webinar has been a space for sharing experiences and dialogue, points of view among academic leaders, socio-economic actors, experts and more broadly regional stakeholders interested, as practitioners, who reflected on good practices, difficulties and prospects to better respond to the challenge of employability of young people, a key factor for economic recovery in the post-COVID Mediterranean.

In particular, the webinar organised in two round tables, has focused firstly on “Regional Cooperation with international stakeholders: the role of higher education and research institutions” and has been animated by

Aravella Zacharia, the representative of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus,, Yasmine Seghirate from the CIHEAM-France, Sélim Mekdessi, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business at the Lebanese University and Coordinator of the UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability, by Giuseppe Provenzano, Expert on Higher education and research at the Union for the Mediterranean, and by Raniero Chelli, Senior Project Manager at UNIMED.

All these speakers shared their thoughts and reflections on the importance of strengthening regional dialogue and cooperation among several stakeholders, from the university sector to industry, from local communities to the government with the aim to boost employability. The perspective is to work in favour of employability and not against unemployment. In addition, some UNIMED members intervened in the second round table such as Ashraf Bani, Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center, Associate Professor of Technology and Management – School of Business, University of Jordan, Mahmoud Hawamdeh, Continuing Education and Community Service Center, Al Quds Open University (Palestine), Manal El Abboubi, Professor at University Mohammed V (Morocco) and Research Affiliate at ECONOMIA, HEM Research Center (Morocco) and Noha Fathi, Responsible of the UfM-labelled project HOMERe for the Southern shore. These speakers have shared their experiences and good practices on how they have succeeded in filling the gap between academia and the labour market.

Among the good practices presented by the regional actors, there was the ECONOMIA HEM research center. Based in Morocco, the ECONOMIA HEM is a multidisciplinary center (social, economic and managerial) of applied research, aiming at building solid bridges, based on knowledge and research,

with the business world, and connecting national and international researchers. In particular, among its activities, it was presented the project “What works? Youth transitions from education to employment in the Middle East and North Africa” led by Tampere University in Finland and funded by the Academy of Finland and where the University of Muhammad V of Rabat is involved. This project explores the dynamics of transitions to adulthood from the perspective of young people in the region, then from Education to the Labour Markets in the late 2010s and the early 2020s. In addition, it was presented as good practice the UfM labeled project HOMERe, High Opportunity for Mediterranean Executives Recruitment, that aims at improving the skills and employability prospects of Mediterranean high-profile young graduates through the creation of an innovative internship programme among the Mediterranean countries by connecting the public and the private sectors.

You can watch the webinar again [here](#).

*“This pandemic makes us more aware of the importance of research and cooperation. Currently, there is a great space for collaboration and for best practices to emerge, especially in the Mediterranean region.”*

Giuseppe Provenzano Expert, Higher Education and Research Division, Union for the Mediterranean

*“This pandemy was a “wake up call”. Progress and development are very fragile in comparison to this crisis. Thanks to it, we are learning how to move from “global” to “glocal”.*

*Only with an interdisciplinary collaboration led by Universities, we can be quite confident to avoid future crises.”*

Aravella Zachariou, Chair of UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture

*“Young researchers are our “social capital”: we should support them through training and innovation to be key actors of the society of the future.”*

Yasmine Seghirate, Policy and Communications Manager, CIHEAM Headquarters, Paris, France

*“The system must be reformed for creating a better synergy between the University and the Company. The university represent both the “infrastructure” and a “structure” that could well support the business world through the creation of startups and the circulation of innovative ideas”*

Noha Fathi, Responsible of the UfM-labelled project HOMERe for the Southern shore



**Thank you  
to everyone who attended the UNIMED WEEK 2020  
online!**

The logo consists of a solid blue circle with the word "unimed" written in white, lowercase, sans-serif font across its center.

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