About the UNIMED General Assembly

The UNIMED General Assembly represents an important yearly event where our rectors, presidents and their representatives meet to exchange views and to determine policy for UNIMED, setting the stage for a full and rich year of initiatives, activities and conferences that shape the academic calendar around the Mediterranean. At the same time, it is an opportunity to meet and to host our network with representatives of international organisations, government officials, students, influential contributors to the cultural and political spheres and representatives of NGOs. The Assembly is a two-day event, we welcome around 150 people from our member universities and institutional partnerships.

**Venue:** Queen Rania Teacher Academy’s Theatre, University of Jordan, Amman
Under the patronage of

The Member of the European Commission
Ms Mariya Gabriel, responsible for
Innovation, Research,
Culture, Education and Youth

This event has received the Medal of the President of the Italian Republic
TUESDAY
21 JUNE 2022

PRE-ASSEMBLY EVENT

09:15 am – 01:30 am
UNIMED Start Cup Competition 2021/2022
at University of Jordan, Conference Hall at Prince Al-
Hussein Bin Abdullah II School of International Studies
(ground floor)

Participating universities:
• Al Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan
• An-Najah National University, Palestine
• ALBA - Académie Libanaise des Beaux Arts
• Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Lebanon
• Lebanese University, Lebanon
• University of Saint Joseph, Lebanon
• University of Sousse, Tunisia

In partnership with

05:00 pm – 07:30 pm
UNIMED Board of Directors meeting
at Princess Sumaya University for Technology
(only for the Board’s members)

08:00 pm
Dinner at Princess Sumaya University for Technology,
Presidency Building,
kindly offered by the President of Princess Sumaya
University for Technology
(for all the participants in the UNIMED General Assembly)
09:30 am – 10:00 am  Registration of participants

10:00 am – 11:00 am  Openings

Hadeel Yaseen  
*Director of International Affairs Unit of the University of Jordan*

Nathir Obeidat  
*President of the University of Jordan*

Francisco Matte Bon  
*UNIMED President and Rector of the International University of Rome*

Mariya Gabriel (video message)  
*European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth*

Wajih Owais  
*Minister of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research in Jordan*

11:00 am - 11:15 am  Keynote speech

Hmaid Ben Aziza  
*UNIMED Secretary General and former Rector of the University of Tunis*

11:15 am - 11:30 am  UNIMED activities and future plans

Marcello Scalisi  
*UNIMED Director*

11:30 am - 11:45am  Coffee break and networking

*EN/FR translation provided only for plenary sessions*
11:45 am – 12:30 pm  Institutional Greetings

Itaf Ben Abdallah
Senior Advisor of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Amr Ezzat Salama
Secretary General of Association of Arab Universities (AArU)

Osama Obeidat
CEO of Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA)

Juan Rayón
President of Erasmus Student Network (ESN)

Min Jeong Kim
Head of UNESCO Office in Amman & UNESCO Representative to Jordan

12:30 pm – 01:00 pm  Focus on: The New Agenda for the Mediterranean

Maria Hadjitheodosiou
Ambassador of Delegation of the European Union to Jordan

01:00 pm – 01:30 pm  Parallel Sessions

Session A
Peace and Security
The Role of the university cooperation in crisis situation

Session B
Media and skills gap

01:30 pm – 03:00 pm  Light lunch and networking

03:00 pm – 04:00 pm  The Euro-Mediterranean academic cooperation

Horizon Europe
Heba Gaber
Research and Innovation Regional Officer - Delegation of the European Union to Egypt

EN/FR translation provided only for plenary sessions
ERASMUS+: The Capacity Building programme  
Ammar Maaitah
Higher Education Reform Expert Team Member

PRIMA – Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
Omar Amawi
Deputy Director of the PRIMA Foundation

MedECC - Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change
Joël Guiot (online)
Technopole de l’Environnement Arbois Méditerranée

03:00 pm – 05:00 pm  PELIARQ side event

04:00 pm – 05:00 pm  Parallel sessions

**Session C**
Erasmus+: The International Credit Mobility opportunities

**Session D**
Mediterranean Digital and Open Education: from emergency to strategic alliances

08:00 pm  
*Gala dinner at the Movenpick hotel kindly offered by Al-Ahliyya Amman University*

*EN/FR translation provided only for plenary sessions*
### UNIMED Assembly (only for members):
Election of the President, the Secretary General and the Board of Directors members

### Showcase of UNIMED projects

### Coffee break and networking

### UNIMED Future Strategies: open debate and contributions

### Parallel sessions

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#### Session E
Employability and entrepreneurship

#### Session F
Intercultural dialogue and students’ organisations

#### Session G
Good governance, quality assurance and responsibility in higher education in the MENA region: towards a better university performance

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<td>04:00 pm – 04:45 pm</td>
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**Luciano Pezzotti**  
*Ambassador of Italy in Jordan*

**Lebanon: between aspiration for changes and the ancient regime**  
*Edited by UNIMED and the University of Cagliari*  
*Sponsored by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*EN/FR translation provided only for plenary sessions*
The Syrian Higher Education System: which role for peacebuilding  
*Sponsored by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

The Internationalisation of Higher Education in the Mediterranean  
*Report by UNIMED - Edited by the Union for the Mediterranean*

**04:45 pm – 05:00 pm**  
Closing remarks by the new UNIMED elected President and the Secretary General and adoption of the UNIMED Manifesto of Amman

**08:00 pm**  
*Dinner at Tawaheen al-Hawa Restaurant*  
*kindly offered by the Jordan Tourism Development Commission*

*EN/FR translation provided only for plenary sessions*
DETAILED PROGRAMME

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AMMAN, 22-23 JUNE 2022
SESSION A
PEACE AND SECURITY:
THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY COOPERATION IN
CRISIS SITUATION

Date: 22 June 2022, 01:00 pm - 01:30 pm

Rationale
International, regional and local crises are strongly affecting the MENA region by putting pressure on local societies and highlighting tensions. The pandemic has further weakened the economic and social structures of many countries in the Mediterranean region and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine is a further factor of instability.

It is necessary to observe and analyse the changing nature of these crises in order to design fluid actions able to adapt to constantly and rapidly changing scenarios. What answers can academic cooperation in the Mediterranean give to the questions of peace and security? What initiatives must the scientific and academic community undertake at local and regional level to help give an answer?

A UNIMED SubNetwork on Peace and Security will be inaugurated soon in order to launch initiatives, events, and projects aimed at strengthening academic cooperation on these issues, but also to offer answers to the requests for peace and security made by our students and the younger generations.

This session is animated by two speakers from two important organizations working in the region from very different perspectives. However, both are strongly committed to demand for greater engagement from universities. The purpose is to put around the same table people with different perspectives, who are, together, able to deeply understand the changing nature of this crisis situation and to act accordingly.

Universities, in this view, play a crucial role by acting as social, political and institutional actors for the benefit of the whole society. How to upscale already
ongoing initiatives? How to adapt Euro Mediterranean academic cooperation to these changing realities? What medium and long-term scenarios do we face and must we face together?

Speakers

Kathleen Valentini
Political Officer at Middle East and North Africa Section of NATO Headquarters

Annalaura Sacco
Senior Protection Coordinator at UNHCR MENA Regional Bureau

Moderator: Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED Director
Rationale

Since their appearance, first the press, then the traditional radio and television outlets and, in the last decades, the social networks and the media platforms have been playing a fundamental role in delivering information, covering public and private stories and offering entertainment to citizens all over the world.

However, the capacity of the media to shape the opinions, perceptions and behaviours of the publics – media being often referred to as the fourth power – implies also big challenges, mainly related to propaganda and disinformation, with the proliferation of fake news, hate speeches and threats to the democratic values, and underlines the need to find a balance between freedom of expression and fight against manipulation of information.

In such a context, Higher Education Institutions are key actors with three main responsibilities:

1. Journalism and Communication studies: offering a high-quality academic programme in journalism and communication, so as to train the future media professionals and storytellers;
2. Media Literacy: providing the students – not only in the communication sector – with the best skills and tools to identify biased contents and fake news, relying on accurate and reliable sources;
3. Research: participating in international projects aiming at identifying the challenges, analysing the trends and coming out with possible solutions and recommendations for the future.

PAgES – Post-Crisis Journalism in Post-Crisis Libya: a Bottom-up Approach to the Development of a Cross-Media Journalism Master Program is an Erasmus+ CBHE project aiming at contributing to the modernization of the HE in Libya through a bottom-up approach for the design and pilot of a Master Course in Cross-Media
Journalism which targets young people studying communication and young professionals who wish to specialise in the strategic field of digital journalism.

**EUMEPLAT – European Media Platforms: assessing positive and negative externalities for European Culture** is an Horizon 2020 project aiming at analysing the role of media platforms in fostering or dismantling European identity. Drawing on the assumption that the European dimension has rarely been dominant in media history and focusing on the “platformization” process and its positive and negative externalities, the main research question is whether or not new platforms are making European culture more European or not.

**Al-Fanar Media** is an independent nonprofit news organisation. Its focus is education, research, and culture in the Arab region. All of the stories, commentary and resources are published in both Arabic and English. In a region where the contributions and potential of education have often been neglected, AFM provides information and perspective about successes and challenges, models of excellence and cautionary tales. Its goal is to provide insights and information to catalyse action; bringing like-minded individuals and groups together; and holding government leaders accountable for harmful policies.

**Speakers**

**Andrea Miconi**  
*Coordinator of PAGeS and EUMEPLAT project, IULM University*

**Salah Khalil**  
*Founding Trustee of Al-Fanar Media*

**Moderator:** Wail Benjelloun, *UNIMED Honorary President*
Date: 22 June 2022, 03:00 pm - 05:00 pm

Rationale

The event enables the PELIARQ project to achieve the aim of strengthening links between the Europe and the Levant (defined as Jordan, Lebanon and Syria for this project) as it will afford European stakeholders an opportunity to connect with Levantine stakeholders and discuss, together, internationalisation opportunities as well as recognition of qualification, portability of credits and agreements. The main target groups for the event are senior management and international relations office staff from higher education institutions in European countries, locally in Jordan, and from neighbouring countries Lebanon and Syria. Senior management and international relations office staff from other South-Med countries are also welcome, as are other relevant stakeholders with an interest in the project and the topics it addresses, to discuss internationalisation activities and opportunities.

The event is the occasion to present the outcomes of the PELIARQ projects to the main universities in Europe and share a space for discussion and networking with universities in the Levant. The two main results of the project are a Guidance toolkit for internationalisation opportunities in the Levant and Guidance on Levantine qualifications, qualification frameworks and credit systems.
About PELIARQ
PELIARQ “Promoting European-Levantine Internationalisation and Automatic Recognition of Qualifications” promotes opportunities for internationalisation of European universities in the Levant; and promotes improved recognition of qualifications and transparency around the education systems in Europe. The project is funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union during the period September 2020 - August 2022, and it is implemented by: UK ENIC, Ecctis Ltd (coordinator), UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union (Italy), Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Programme

Welcome
Marcello Scalisi
UNIMED Director

Why internationalisation in the Levant?
Amr Salama
Secretary General, Association of Arab Universities (AArU)

The PELIARQ project
Rebeca Cruz
UK ENIC, Ecctis Limited
Martina Zipoli
UNIMED Project Manager

Panel discussion: visions on the future of cooperation between Europe, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria
Ahmad Al Salaymeh
Professor and Director of Energy Center, University of Jordan
Bassam Badran
Rector of the Lebanese University
Marco Borracetti
Delegate for International agreements and networks, University of Bologna

Closing debate
Participating universities briefly sketch their commitment and strategy for promoting European-Levantine Internationalisation

Moderator: Henry Huggett, UK ENIC, Ecctis Limited
Rationale

Since 2015, Erasmus+ has offered mobility opportunities beyond Europe through the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (ICM) Programme, expanding the intra-European exchange programme in existence since the implementation of Erasmus in 1987.

Supported by the European Commission, the Erasmus+ ICM Programme promotes the implementation of mobility projects outside the EU, in line with the strategy for the internationalisation of higher education institutions.

With reference to the Mediterranean region, the Erasmus+ ICM plays a key role because the exchanges can increase cultural understanding between the two shores of the Mediterranean and contribute to a climate of tolerance and security.

Thanks to this Programme, in the 2015-2020 period, 36,500 students and universities staff from the Southern shore of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia) spent an exchange period in HEIs located in Europe, while 21,200 European students and staff had the chance to carry out a mobility in a South Med country.

For the 2021-2027 period, approximately 180 million EUR have been allocated for the Erasmus+ ICM programme, which will be focused on students (65% of the budget) and students with fewer opportunities (50% of the funds for students) to promote inclusion.

Moreover, some important novelties have been introduced in the new programming period, namely:

• blended mobilities: short physical mobility of 5 to 30 days combined with a virtual component, including the possibility to participate in Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) organised by groups of HEIs from the programme countries;
• opening up to recent graduates (up to one year after graduation) of mobility for traineeships;
• more flexible format for doctoral candidates and recent ‘post-docs’ (short-term or long-term physical study or traineeship period abroad).

UNIMED has participated in the programme since its beginning in 2015 and it has supported and continues to support projects and initiatives aimed at establishing a long-lasting relationship of mutual understanding and intercultural awareness, promoting the mobility and exchange of people, working as a bridge and creating a framework of cooperation to facilitate the exchange of students and staff.

For instance, COMMO project, started in 2015, is a consortium that targets both the staff (administrative and academic) and students mobility from/to Southern Mediterranean and Western Balkan countries for training, teaching and studying purposes and which seeks to contribute to the internationalisation process through quality attractiveness, innovation excellence and access equity in higher education institutions in Italy and in Southern countries of Mediterranean basin and of Western Balkans and with the aim to create international partnerships and to the development of a Euro Mediterranean identity.

This workshop seeks to propose a reflection on how to promote institutional cooperation and to increase the capacities, attractiveness and international dimension of the organisations taking part in the programme, offering an opportunity for identification and evaluation of further needs. Currently, the international ties established under the ICM programme allow the partners to increase their visibility at local and global levels.

Speakers

Claudia Peritore
Head of INDIRE- Italian national agency of the Erasmus+ programme

Filippo Sartor
Head of the Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Western Balkans Unit, University of Bologna

Wafik Selmi
Deputy Director of Scientific Research and International Cooperation, University of Kairouan

Moderator: Anne-Laurence Pastorini, UNIMED Project Manager
Rationale

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant increase in the demand for online learning opportunities, and most universities moved to emergency remote solutions for teaching and learning, rushing into it incredibly quickly. The long-term effects of this crisis, and its massive impact on education, mobility, and international cooperation are undeniable.

We should take these times to inform a repositioning of information and communication technologies (ICT) in teaching and learning at system level, to challenge our assumptions on education in the digital age, and as a catalyst for change to explore sustainable and inclusive approaches to complement and reinforce traditional forms of teaching and learning.

Thanks to the increased use of ICT in higher education, Open Education and Open Educational Resources (OER) are gaining ground in the Mediterranean region. These developments can have a significant impact to increase access to high quality, contextually relevant content and educational materials. OER can play a role in transforming education making it more inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

This workshop will facilitate dialogue around the UNESCO OER Recommendation, the only existing normative instrument in the area of technologies and education, and will seek to raise awareness of OER as digital public goods. The session will also solicit input and feedback from the participants on how to scale from
emergency remote education to sustainable innovation in teaching and learning in the region, reinforcing deeper cooperation and alliances on Digital and Open Education across countries and disciplines.

Speakers

Paul Hector
*Advisor for Communication & Information, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States, Egypt*

Fawzi Baroud
*UNESCO Chair on Open Educational Resources at Notre Dame University - Louaize, Lebanon*

Sherine Yacoub
*Chief Executive Officer, Edraak, Jordan*

Discussion: Towards a regional initiative for digital and Open Education in the Mediterranean

Moderator: Cristina Stefanelli, UNIMED Project Manager
Rationale

This workshop addresses the topic of “Skills for green transition” in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Jointly organised by UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability and the European Training Foundation (ETF), the workshop is within the framework of a larger collaboration and cooperation that UNIMED has with the ETF on employability and entrepreneurship issues, in particular within the UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability.

Climate change, environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity caused by human activity are among the biggest global challenges of the 21st century. The green transition means rethinking the way we live and learn but also design, develop, produce, market and distribute goods and services across all sectors of the economy. Environmental awareness and the broad understanding of sustainability issues will become one of the requirements for all citizens and workers.

Greening our economies is a human capital issue. The green transition will not happen if people do not have the competences to contribute to a green economy (read: awareness, knowledge, attitudes and technical skills). This monumental task means transforming education, training and lifelong learning systems. This will include rethinking curricula and vocational and higher education will have to adapt to the emergence of climate-neutral technologies in a wide range of professions, including teacher training. The green transition accentuates the need
for education and training systems to transition towards lifelong learning systems where re-skilling and up-skilling become common practice throughout one’s career. New mindsets, new competences and new skills will be needed not only for people entering the labour market, but people of all ages and stages in life. And this regardless of their social and economic status, educational attainment, abilities or disabilities, or geographical location. The green transition is about both decoupling our economies from resource use, but also to address inequality and ensure no one is ‘left behind’ and all segments of society profit from the employment opportunities of the green economy.

The green transition is a whole-of-economy process and should be reflected in all national, regional, local and sectoral strategies. This requires close interaction between education and training systems and their environments (social partners and economic operators) to build ecosystems in which skills development goes hand in hand with economic, technological and social change.

The workshop will focus also on how entrepreneurship has a key role in advancing the green transition as it enhances employability of students and graduates, including through adequate and adapted career services within universities and schools.

The speakers will tackle these topics in an interactive modality opening a debate with the audience.

Keynote speaker

Romain Boitard
Human Capital Development Expert, focal point for green skills, European Training Foundation (ETF)

Speaker

The future of Jobs and Employability of Higher Education Graduates: Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education Institutes

Ashraf Bany Mohammed
Associate professor of Technology and Management, School of Business, University of Jordan & Expert in Higher Education Employability and Entrepreneurship of the UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability

Moderator: Silvia Marchionne, UNIMED Project Manager
SESSION F
INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND STUDENTS ORGANISATIONS

Date: 23 June 2022, 12:30 pm - 01:30 pm

Rationale
Students have a major role to play not only in today’s university life but also in societal life. They can act as facilitators among their peers and as ambassadors of their university and country when they go abroad. It’s part of university responsibility to give them the chance to become a citizen open to the world, aware of its diversity, curious, tolerant and welcoming. International mobility is one of the main instruments that universities can use to favour knowledge and mutual understanding. Doing this, universities should pay attention to the necessary balance between all mobility flows and measure the impact of their outgoing and incoming students on their strategy of internationalisation and university life. They should also help students or strengthen their capacities to act as networks, in order to create a sustainable impact in terms of intercultural dialogue inside the university. In this way, students who benefit from an international experience can act as a mediator and create the opportunities for students who won’t go abroad to experiment a part on internationalisation at home. Students represent an inexhaustible resource and chance for our Mediterranean societies and their preoccupations should become ours.

The aim of this workshop is to explore the relevance of student organisations inside the university putting together the Erasmus Student network, and two Mediterranean Universities, the university of Barcelona and University of Jordan, in view of the preparation of the first UNIMED Students event.

Keynote speaker
Juan Rayón González
President of ESN – Erasmus Student Network

Discussants
Bibiana Crespo
University of Barcelona

Hadeel Yaseen
University of Jordan

Moderator: Francisco Matte Bon, UNIMED President
Rationale

One of the key elements of the recent higher education reforms worldwide is university governance. The concept describes how universities and higher education institutions define their goals, implement them, manage their institutions and monitor their achievements. In particular, in the discourse around governance, concepts such as autonomy, accountability and responsibility rise. Autonomy concerns the relationship between the institution and the public authorities ruling the Higher Education sector. It measures how freely higher education institutions can take decisions within the regulations shaping each higher education system. Accountability refers to the capacity of each institution in being responsible and held responsible for decisions and actions. Along with autonomy and accountability, universities are demanded to take a stand in society and take responsibility for driving positive changes locally and globally. The path towards good governance is a long-lasting process, which requires a participative approach and the capacity of higher education institutions to adapt, learn, change and be responsive.

The recent political changes in the MENA region, and the developments of the Higher Education sectors in many countries, put the basis for universities in the region becoming more democratic, transparent and efficient in the long term. To facilitate the process towards good governance, UNIMED has undertaken numerous initiatives over the years in collaboration with its associated institutions, on university governance, institutional autonomy, responsibility, quality assurance. Projects and initiatives that highlight a liveliness both of the universities themselves as well as of the political context that assigns to higher education institutions a leading role in the advancement of the weak and fragile economies of the Middle East and North Africa region. Different systems of university governance and quality assurance are now the subject of reform: during
this session, three emblematic cases of projects coordinated by UNIMED in Algeria, Iraq and Tunisia are presented. Speakers are asked to share their impressions on obstacles as well as opportunities for their institutions along the reform process. The session will also be a space for reflection about a regional initiative on good governance, autonomy and quality assurance for the MENA region.

Speakers

**Naouel Abdellatif Mami**  
*Vice-Rector for External Relations of Mohamed Lamine Debaghine Sétif 2 University*

**Hmaid Ben Aziza**  
*UNIMED Secretary General*

**Aree Adel Abdulqader Alnaqar**  
*President of Duhok Polytechnic University*

**Moderator: Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED Director**