

Barcelona Euro-Med Forum

BRIDGING SMEs  
BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN

The role of SMEs in the socioeconomic  
development of the Mediterranean region

4-5 July 2018, Palau Macaya, Barcelona

MEDConfederation promotes a Barcelona Euro-Med Forum organised by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation and the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), with the firm commitment to turn it into one of its core annual events. Hosted by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation at the iconic Palau Macaya, this initiative stems from the will of consolidating a long-term meeting point for economic, political and social stakeholders around the Mediterranean, and bringing them together with the members of the MED Confederation. Through establishing a fluent yearly dialogue, the Euro-Med Forum will strengthen the alliance forged through the Med Confederation in order to facilitate and develop cooperation and economic integration, social progress and cultural exchange between the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

This unique two days event at Palau Macaya will gather representatives of companies, civil society networks, associations and foundations to discuss shared socioeconomic challenges in the Mediterranean under the scope of the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and the role they can play in achieving goals such as job creation, sustainable development and the inclusion of all sectors in the economy. The conference will also focus on the analysis of the current social entrepreneurship systems, business enabling infrastructures and access to financial instruments for SMEs around the Mediterranean basin.

## PROGRAMME

4<sup>th</sup> July 2018

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**17.00**      **Accreditations****17.30**      **Welcome address**

**Jaloul Ayed**, President of MED Confederation and Former Minister of Finance of Tunisia

**Jaume Lanaspa**, Member of the Board of trustees of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation, Spain

**Senén Florensa**, President of the Executive Committee of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

**Eric Diamantis**, Vice-chairman, IPEMED

**18.00**      **Opening session**

**Miguel García-Herraiz**, Deputy Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean

**Isidre Sala**, Director General of Multilateral and European Affairs, Department of Foreign Action, Institutional Relations and Transparency, Government of Catalonia

**18.30-19.30**      **Main session chaired by Josep González**, President of PIMEC, the Catalan SME's employer organisation

- **Economic challenges of financing SMEs in the Northern Mediterranean** by **Chris De Noose**, Secretary General of MED Confederation. Managing Director of the World Savings and Retail Banking Institute and the European Savings and Retail Banking Group (WSBI-ESBG)

- **Economic challenges of financing SMEs in the Southern Mediterranean** by **Boutheina Ben Yaghlane**, General Manager, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC)

- **How business accelerators are boosting economic development and bridging the two shores of the Mediterranean** by **Mondher Khanfir**, Entrepreneur, Policy Advisor & Author

5<sup>th</sup> July 2018

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08.30      **Accreditations**

09.00      **Keynote speech**

*The role of SMEs in tackling unemployment* by **Michel Gonnet**, Finance Expert, IPEMED

09.30      **First session**

***How can we create ecosystems for new forms of entrepreneurship?***

The capability of entrepreneurship to generate and sustain value depends largely on its socioeconomic environment and on a legal framework that stimulates and protects innovation, accountability and meaningful investment. Also the creation of infrastructures (such as incubators, accelerators, technology centers, work centers, and coworking spaces...) to promote the creation and growth of start-ups and early-stage companies. This panel will debate about the role of the public and private sectors as well as financial institutions in the support and promotion of new forms of entrepreneurship.

**Chair: Anwar Zibaoui**, Coordinator, Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME)

**Speakers**

**Mohammed El Razzaz**, Business Development and Employment, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean

**Jihen Boutiba**, General Secretary, The Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED)

**Emmanuel Noutary**, General Delegate, ANIMA Investment Network

**Isabelle Bébéar**, Head of International and University, Banque Publique d'Investissement (BPI)

**First comment**

**Iolanda Piedra**, President of Women And Enterprise, Coordinator of Blue Economy, PIMEC

**Open debate**

11.00      **Coffee Break**

11.30      **Second session**

### *How can we support the growth of SMEs?*

Access to finance remains limited in the Mediterranean region and constitutes a primary obstacle to the development of SMEs. Besides, some Southern Mediterranean countries have less access to bank loans for SMEs than other emerging markets. This session will be devoted to the analysis of the root causes of this problem and the appropriate solutions to it.

**Chair: Rafik Selim**, Regional Economist for the SEMED Region, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

**Mustapha Nabli**, Consultant and researcher, Institute for New Economic Thinking

**Yolla Saredine**, Principal Manager, Kafalat

**Rym Ayadi**, Founder and Scientific Director of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Economic Studies (EMNES)

**Amine Ben Ayed**, General Manager of Misfat

### First comment

**Rocío Flor**, Innovation Funding Manager, ACCIÓ

### Open debate

13.00 Break

14.00 Third session

### *Building bridges between the two shores of the Mediterranean: how can policy makers and other stakeholders support SMEs?*

In recent years, the expansion of financial assets in the Mediterranean has provided new mechanisms for investors and entrepreneurs to meet common goals. However, certain asymmetries of information prevent those formulas from appearing as a valuable alternative in certain Southern countries. The role of policy-making and other stakeholders in tackling this mismatch will be discussed in this session.

**Chair: María Helena de Felipe Lehtonen**, President, Euromed Committee, European Economic and Social Committee

**Christos Kyriatzis**, Deputy Head of Unit, DG for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs International Affairs, European Commission

**Amr Taha**, Deputy Executive Director, Industrial Modernisation Center

**Ali Berrada**, Director of Strategy and Communication, Maroc PME

**Wajdi Neffati**, Director of International Cooperation, Agency for the Promotion of Industry and Innovation

First comment

**Roger Albinyana**, Director of Mediterranean Regional Policies and Human Development, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

15.30

Closing Remarks