



This Programme is funded by the
European Union



Operational Recommendations

Citizens' initiative & institutional cooperation toward a Free, Fair, United Mediterranean

Citizens should take the initiative on the following:

- Launch a **citizens-led constitutional process** advocating for a 'free, fair and united Mediterranean' and accompany and monitor the related process. That should go hand in hand with a **large campaign** for citizens across the region to join the movement for Mediterranean citizenship (committing to the principles and obligations detailed in the North South statement).
- This could go along with the establishment of a *steering committee* bringing together the European and Mediterranean countries, with sub-committees for each country, which include both individuals and organizations, holding the same vision of a unified, fair and free Mediterranean, to coordinate initiatives. The steering committee would meet at the regional level at least once a year, aiming at:
 - a) **encouraging and connecting new practices** of engaged citizenship,
 - b) **setting up grassroots common consultative bodies** to prepare the ground for a new institutional framework for the Mediterranean region,
 - c) carrying out other tasks to support the implementation of the below recommendations.
- Such a meeting space, where civil society actors can discuss common issues and challenges, would improve cooperation, especially at the south-south level.
- It should as well involve (new) actors closely related to the common political and economic challenges of the region.
- Launching awareness-raising campaigns on **the collective identity** of the Mediterranean, as well as on **citizenship-related best practices** on local, national, or cross-border level would help shaping the foundations for a review of the notion of citizenship aimed at recreating a common space to be imagined, lived, practised, and organized side-by-side by the citizens of the region.

Institutions should support on the following:

- Mediterranean institutions should play an active role in **supporting CSOs' and citizens' mobilisation** on the challenge of the Mediterranean as our common destiny.
- **Spaces of dialogue between CSOs and policy makers** should be fostered: for decision-makers, it is important to exchange perspectives; for civil society actors, it is important to re-think how they can work better with political institutions and engage them with identified issues.
- Institutions should as well provide financial and logistical support to CSOs' actions/projects aimed at **reinforcing the social and economic cohesion** in the region.

Visibility:

- Greater visibility should be given to **existing transborder networks** (e.g. Unimed, EuroMed Rights): it is important to put in light the existing networks in order to amplify their impact.
- **Sea and Olive Tree** should be adopted as symbols connecting people to the region's history and values, and therefore be used in campaigns and initiatives.



This Programme is funded by the
European Union



Education, culture, and research

- Build the capacities of citizens and raise their awareness about existing policies in the Mediterranean space through **info-events on Mediterranean affairs**, so that they are better informed and encouraged to join civil society organizations or social movements.
- Fund the creation of **hubs of cultural exchange, creation, storytelling, and history research** to promote the Mediterranean common destiny and counter the narrative of division. This initiative would aim at: Cultivating citizens' knowledge of the shared Mediterranean history, and the many linkages among the peoples in the region; and at combating stereotypes and filling the knowledge gap.
- Create "**Med Houses**" in each country to facilitate and guide people from other countries to discover the ties of that country with the Med region, and to strengthen the visitors' feeling of being at home.
- Create **common educational programmes starting from the primary school** based on common values, shared history, collective citizenship, and displaying the cultural diversity (arts, languages) as well as the biodiversity of the region.
- **Promote existing online databases and publications** covering the Mediterranean.
- Enable cooperation and invest in the fields of education, technological and scientific research for the purpose of producing **Mediterranean ownership on knowledge**, by reconsidering Bologna scheme and standardising the diplomas delivered by the Universities in the Med regions, without further recognition procedures and national measures; by streamlining the procedures for mobility, translation, and joint research and exploration; and by creating **joint dedicated university institutions** - following the example of European University alliances.

Mobility of people and individuals

- Advocating for **creating a visa-free space** encompassing the whole of the Mediterranean area.
- Set up the conditions for **legal pathways and entry points for migration** between the two shores and within the Southern neighbourhood. This is the only solution to avoid that the Mediterranean Sea becomes a graveyard. Such measures would cover as well fundamental needs such as food & sheltering, info on CSO's provided support, translation, or access to health services, access to legal and rights & obligations information.
- This could be possible by establishing a '**Mediterranean commission**' to ensure the fulfilment of human mobility with and between countries. This could be in charge of several files, including:
 - reforming the visa system toward the creation of a visa-free space.
 - ensuring the mobility of displaced, refugees, disabled, asylum seekers and other segments of the community who are less privileged and who suffer the consequences of border closures.
 - ensuring smooth visa processes and other needed travel documents when required.
 - granting students mobility opportunities for exposure and cultural exchange.



This Programme is funded by the
European Union



Protecting the civic space and the freedom of speech

- **Embolden legal expertise of civil society** through a specific support mechanism, so as to reinforce access to justice and legal protection, to provide legal advice, to strengthen civil society' skills in legal proceedings, and to improve data and privacy protection related to their work. The '*steering committee*' (see chapter 'Citizens' initiative) could support this work.
- Ensure that women, and youth (18+) take part in civil activities and have their voices heard through a **Mediterranean programme for women in public life**:
 - providing women with the tools and opportunities for easier access to political parties, elections, and other public life activities.
 - educating men on the importance of having women involved in public life.
- Urge the countries of the Euro-Med space to **sign a declaration** ensuring safe and open public spaces for the freedom of speech without any possible security concerns.

Social Justice and well-being as centre of cooperation and development

- Set up **joint regional programmes to reduce unemployment and poverty**, manage crises and emergency responses, addressing all forms of social and economic exclusion.
- Establishing a **Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank**.
- Promoting **pilot initiatives of public participation in policymaking** in the socio-economic area, especially for youth and women, based on the understanding that solutions can only be collective.

Climate justice, environment, and health

- Support the protection of biodiversity in the Mediterranean region through a network of **cross-border Mediterranean nature reserves**.
- Create a **Mediterranean Renewable Energy Agency**.
- Impose a **ban on toxic waste shipping** in the Mediterranean Sea, which has often as an end destination the Southern shore.
- Map educational institutions, to enable the different organizations and state-acting institutions to exchange content and **develop environmental education curricula**, addressing items such as natural resources protection and sustainable consumption. The '*steering committee*' (see chapter 'Citizens' initiative) could support this work.
- Enable **cooperation in the health field**, to combat diseases and epidemics, encourage scientific research, and standardize health care for those living in the region; this should be done by stimulating exploration and scientific discoveries through increasing the allocated **resources for scientific research from the total Gross Mediterranean Product**.

Mediterranean Youth

- Create a **Mediterranean Volunteers Agency** to encourage youth mobility around projects of common social interest.



This Programme is funded by the
European Union



- Support youth mobility, including **academic mobility**, and ensure that fair selection processes apply when scholarships are assigned (Erasmus +), and that mobility is strengthened in all its dimensions (North/South and South/South).

Resources

- Create a **Mediterranean Fund for citizens' led initiatives** in fields related to the common challenges of the region, including f.i. climate justice, educational awareness, or human mobility.
- Identify consultative groups in the Mediterranean countries providing research on resources and quality of life (e.g. water, energy, food, trade, waste infrastructure, biodiversity, sustainable practises, SDGs dashboard, recreational facilities). This research would offer holistic SWOT analyses, from which participating countries would be able to set targets to develop a **regional masterplan addressing possible channels for resource mobilization**. The '*steering committee*' (see chapter 'Citizens' initiative) could support this work.