

A blue circle containing the word "unimed" in white lowercase letters.

unimed

A blue banner with white text, tilted upwards to the right.

**UNIMED WEEK  
IN BRUSSELS**

An orange banner with white text, tilted upwards to the right.

**16-18 APRIL 2024**

A white banner with blue text, tilted upwards to the right.

**Programme**

The logo for UNIMED, consisting of the word "unimed" in white lowercase letters inside a blue circle. The background of the entire page features a light blue, semi-transparent image of several European Union flags waving in front of a modern building with a grid of windows.

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**UNIMED WEEK  
IN BRUSSELS**

**16-18 APRIL 2024**

UNIMED – Mediterranean Universities Union – is a network of Higher Education and Research Institutions, active in promoting academic cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region and in Sub-Saharan Africa, in the Middle East and in Western Balkans.

# UNIMED WEEK in Brussels

Education, research and innovation have an enormous transformational potential in our societies. Education and innovation systems, as the essential pillars for sustainable, inclusive and equitable societies, have a crucial role in promoting equal opportunities, equal access and build employability. Since the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference in 1995, the EU has stepped up its efforts to achieve our shared objectives of a common area of peace and stability, shared prosperity and social, cultural and human partnership. The international cooperation instruments made available by the EU have largely contributed to creating bridges among peoples and societies, reinforcing scientific dialogue, cultural cooperation, trust, and mutual understanding. EU instruments play a crucial role in building stable and effective relations among European and Southern Mediterranean countries, and education is central to the efforts of the European Union. Academic communities, students, faculty members, administrators, have benefited from a wide range of programmes promoting cooperation, mobility, research, capacity building. The activities undertaken by the Euro-Mediterranean academic community show the value of encouraging and supporting this work, while also seeking

more synergies in the light of the current multifaceted dynamics and challenges. UNIMED is strongly committed to playing a major role in the region, integrating and synergising key initiatives in research, education, and innovation, as well as in supporting the political dialogue. Over the past 30 years, UNIMED has been engaged in small and large-scale initiatives to promote Euro-Mediterranean academic cooperation, contributing to scientific, cultural, social and economic collaboration.

The eighth edition of the UNIMED WEEK IN BRUSSELS seeks to propose a political reflection by the Euro-Mediterranean academic community on the relationships between European Institutions and the Mediterranean region, offering an opportunity for evaluation and reevaluation of regional policies.

Concurrently, this event allows to improve the knowledge and use of EU-supported programmes in this field, facilitating the identification of further support needs.

The UNIMED WEEK IN BRUSSELS is an opportunity to reinforce our common platform for dialogue, raise questions, develop our skills and ability to deal with issues of common concern, and identify steps for future cooperation in a constructive and positive atmosphere.

*Some sessions of this edition have been organised in collaboration with*



# 16th April (9.30am – 1.30pm)

Venue: Le Louise Hotel Brussels, Av. de la Toison d'Or 40

## Meeting with DG RTD - Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Opportunities for Higher Education in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The DG EAC is the European Commission department responsible for policy on education, culture, youth, languages and sport. DG EAC also supports these issues through a variety of opportunities in the framework of the Erasmus+ and the Horizon Europe programmes.

- 9.30am** Welcome coffee and Registration of participants
- 10.00am** Opening of the UNIMED WEEK in Brussels  
**Kherieh Rassas**  
*UNIMED President and Vice President of An-Najah National University, Palestine*
- 10.15am** The Erasmus+ programme in the Southern Mediterranean countries (ICM, CBHE, CBVET, VE)  
**German Bernal Rios**  
*Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Unit C3 "International Cooperation", European Commission*
- 11.15am** The Jean-Monnet Actions  
**Olga Martín González**  
*European Education and Culture Executive Agency, European Commission*
- 11.45am** The Marie-Skłodowska Curie Actions in Horizon Europe  
**Thierry Devars**  
*Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Unit C2 "Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions", European Commission*
- 12.15pm** Proposals for the future of international cooperation in the Erasmus+ programme 2028-2034  
**Marcello Scalisi**  
*UNIMED Director*
- 1.30pm** End of the session, light lunch and networking

# 16th April (2.30pm – 4.30pm)

Venue: Le Louise Hotel Brussels, Av. de la Toison d'Or 40

## The role of Higher Education in crisis contexts

- 2.30pm** Overview of the UNIMED experience  
**Marcello Scalisi**  
*UNIMED Director*
- 3.00pm** The cooperation with Iraq and Yemen  
**Leopold Gritschneider**  
*Directorate-General for International Partnership, Unit C.1, Middle East, Central Asia, European Commission*
- 3.30pm** Open debate
- 4.00pm** Farewell cakes and pastries
- 4.30pm** End of the session

# 17th April (9.00am – 1.00pm)

Venue: Town Hall Europe, Square de Meeûs 5-6, Brussels

## • Regional Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

- 9.00am** Registration of participants
- 09.30am** Conversation with the European External Action Service (EEAS) on evolving EU-MENA relations  
**Birgit Loeser**  
*Head of Division MENA.1 Regional Affairs of the EEAS, European Union*  
*UfM EU SOM Co-Chair*
- 10.00am** The TESI Initiative to support Gaza's university students  
**Kherieh Rassas**  
*UNIMED President and Vice President of An-Najah National University, Palestine*
- 10.30am** Students' voices for the Higher Education system in the Region:  
The Mediterranean Student Summit  
**Rita Dias**  
*President of Erasmus Student Network*  
**Anne-Laurence Pastorini**  
*Project Manager at UNIMED*
- 10.45am** The Union for the Mediterranean and the Academic cooperation
- The UfM priorities on Higher Education  
**Itaf Ben Abdallah**  
*Senior Advisor at UfM*
  - Presentation of the study "Green Innovation and Employability in the Med through the Triple Helix"  
**Giuseppe Provenzano**  
*Advisor for Research and Innovation at UfM*
- 11.15am** Coffee break

## • Pivotal initiatives from UNIMED partners

- 11.45am** The EC pilot initiative for scholars and researchers at risk: the SAFE project  
**Stefanie Kottowski**  
*Project Manager at DAAD - Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*
- 12.15pm** Disinformation and Misinformation on Migration: the EUMEPLAT project  
**Andrea Miconi**  
*Professor at IULM - International University of Language and Communication, Italy*
- 12:45pm** Q&A session
- 1.00pm** Light lunch and networking

# 17th April (2.30pm – 5.00pm)

Venue: Town Hall Europe, Square de Meeûs 5-6, Brussels

Session organised by Africa-Europe Foundation and UNIMED

## Fostering educational partnerships to address Research and Innovation in the Africa-Europe relations

The recently adopted AU-EU Innovation Agenda marks a crucial step towards enhancing innovation exchange over the next decade. Initiatives like Regional Centres of Excellence in Sub-Saharan Africa, as part of the Global Gateway Investment Package, and Research Excellence Clusters further aim to strengthen collaboration in education, research, and innovation. While progress is underway, there is a need to boost innovation capacities on both continents in a world facing technological, cultural and economic change.

Strengthening investment in Education and Research through Africa-Europe collaboration promises positive outcomes for young people. Capacity-building initiatives and mobility programs across Africa and Europe can equip them with crucial skills for the job market in emerging fields like digital technology and green transition, while also promoting cross-cultural learning and embracing global citizenship. Ultimately, these efforts yield mutual benefits for both continents.

The [Africa-Europe Foundation \(AEF\)](#) and UNIMED will join forces to galvanize efforts toward fostering collaboration between Africa and Europe to invest in the youth's dividend and foster collaboration between Europe, North and Sub-Saharan Africa.

### 2.30pm Round table and debate

#### Speakers

**Fadila Boughanemi**

*Deputy Head of Research and Innovation, European Commission*

**Dr. Cheikh Saad Bouh Kamara**

*President of the University of Nouakchott Al Aasriya, Mauritania*

**Roberto Zanino**

*Rector's Delegate for International University Networks at Politecnico di Torino, Italy*

**Amelia Francis**

*Head of Programme SDG Challenge at Soapbox, South Africa (online)*

#### Contributors

**Adrian Veale**

*Policy Officer Africa & Capacity Building for Higher Education DG for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission*

**Jimmy Hendry Nzally**

*Youth Activist Diaspora, Postdoctoral Researcher at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)*

**Peter Kwasi Kodjie**

*Secretary-General at the All-Africa Students Union*

#### Moderator

**Youssef Travaly** – AEF Senior Advisor on Digital

### 4.30pm End of the session

### 5.00pm Cocktail

# 18th April (8.45am – 11.00am)

Venue: Comet Meetings, Place Stéphanie 20, Brussels

Session organised by European Commission DG R&I in collaboration with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and UNIMED

## Soft Launch of the UfM-Portal for R&I Cooperation in the Mediterranean Region

The portal will serve as a learning and collaborative platform for Mediterranean cooperation, aiming at bolstering the UfM Regional Policy Dialogue on Research and Innovation (R&I) and facilitating the implementation of R&I roadmaps on health, renewable energies, and climate change.

The portal will offer a centralized source of information encompassing research results, best practices, policy papers, and other relevant publications. Additionally, it provides a portfolio of opportunities for R&I collaboration, ranging from funding opportunities to initiatives supporting collaborative Mediterranean ecosystems of R&I, such as networks and cluster organizations.

- 8.45am** Registration and welcome coffee
- 9.00am** Welcome and introduction  
**Maria Cristina Russo**  
*Director for International Cooperation and Global Approach, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission*  
**Nasser Kamel**  
*Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean (video)*  
**Itaf Ben Abdallah**  
*Senior Advisor, Union for the Mediterranean*
- 09.15am** Presentation of the “Euro-Mediterranean Hub for R&I”
- Introduction  
**Nienke Buisman**  
*European Commission*  
**Giuseppe Provenzano**  
*Union for the Mediterranean*
  - Showcasing the Hub: Intrasoft
- 10.00am** Q&A session  
*Moderators*  
**Heba Gaber**  
*European Commission*  
**Alessandro Calabro**  
*European Commission*
- 10:15am** Closing  
**Nienke Buisman**  
*European Commission*
- 11:00am** End of the session

If you want to suggest a name for the Portal, you can participate in the Poll [here](#)



# 18th April (11.00am – 5.00pm)

Venue: Comet Meetings, Place Stéphanie 20, Brussels

**Session organised by European Commission DG R&I in collaboration with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and UNIMED**

## **Horizon Europe NCPs Regional Meeting**

The event will particularly focus on the follow up of the UfM R&I Ministerial Declaration adopted in June 2022 and the implementation of the R&I roadmaps on the three priorities of health, climate change and renewable energies. It aims to present Horizon Europe and explain its different elements, with a specific focus on the Horizon Europe Work Programme and opportunities for cooperation under the Mediterranean Initiative.

- 11.30am**    **Opening**  
**Marcello Scalisi**  
*UNIMED*  
**Nienke Buisman**  
*European Commission*  
**Giuseppe Provenzano**  
*Union for the Mediterranean*
- 11.45am**    **Presentation of Horizon Europe – International Dimension**  
**Heba Gaber**  
*European Commission*  
**Alessandro Calabro**  
*European Commission*  
**Sohail Luka\***  
*European Commission*
- 12.30pm**    **Funding and Tender Portal**  
**Ahmed Maalel\***  
*Euraxess*
- 1.30pm**    **Networking Lunch**
- 2.30pm**    **Sharing experiences and insights**  
**Morocco**  
**Algeria**  
**France\***  
**Spain\***  
**Germany\***
- 3.30pm**    **Thematic Networking coffee corners**
- 4.30pm**    **Wrap up**  
**Marcello Scalisi**  
*UNIMED*  
**Itaf Ben Abdallah**  
*Union for the Mediterranean*
- 5.00pm**    **End of the session**

*\*To be confirmed*



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## **Credits**

UNIMED – Mediterranean Universities Union  
is an association of universities, based in Rome

## **Headquarters**

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