

# FEMISE

## CALL for PAPERS 2024

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2024

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### THE EUROMED PARTNERSHIP AS A CATALYST FOR SDGs: ADVANCING VALUE CHAINS, CLIMATE ACTION, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

FEMISE<sup>1</sup> is pleased to announce a “Call for Papers” ahead of its 2024 Annual Conference under the theme: **The Euromed Partnership as a Catalyst for SDGs: Advancing Value Chains, Climate Action, Digital Transformation and Youth Empowerment.**

Researchers working on relevant socioeconomic issues in the Euro-Mediterranean are invited to submit their concept notes in the framework of this Conference before **the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2024.**

Selected authors will have their travel and accommodation expenses covered to present their work during the conference (10, 11 and 12 December, 2024 in Cairo, Egypt) and will receive a remuneration of Euros 800 upon delivery of the expected outputs.

The conference represents a unique opportunity to receive feedback on their work from experts, engage in fruitful discussions, and network with peers and practitioners.

This Call for Papers is launched in collaboration with the European Institute of the Mediterranean ([IEMed](#)), and the Economic Research Forum ([ERF](#)), co-organisers of the annual conference with the financial contribution from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation ([AECID](#)).

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<sup>1</sup> FEMISE is a network of 100 members' institutes from the Euromed region with the main objective to reinforce dialogue between stake- holders and conduct research on priority Euro-Med issues.

## CONTEXT

**The Euromed region holds great potential for sustainable development due to its abundant natural resources, prominent role in global trade, and vibrant young population. However, the region faces significant challenges, reflected in its slow progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

At the latest SDG summit, world leaders admitted that the “achievement of the SDGs is in peril”, but renewed their commitments to overcome challenges at national, regional and global levels. The South and Eastern Mediterranean Countries (SEMCs) are no exception. Despite steady improvements over the past two decades, their average SDGs score in 2024 stands at 65% with significant variations among countries, ranging from 72.53% (Tunisia- ranking 60<sup>th</sup>) to 63.89% (Lebanon ranking 110<sup>th</sup>)<sup>2</sup>, indicating a lot of room for improvement<sup>3</sup>. Overall, decent work, economic growth and innovation (SDG 8 and 9), gender equality and social inclusion (SDG 1, 5 and 10), climate action (SDG 13,14 and 15) are among the most challenging goals for the SEMCs.

While localisation of the SDGs will bring implementation closer to communities and territories<sup>4</sup>, regional cooperation is essential to overcome stagnation through collaboration and partnerships in various aspects. By leveraging the Euromed partnership, countries in the region can create synergies that not only accelerate progress towards the SDGs but also enhance regional stability and prosperity.

### 1- THEME OF THE CALL FOR PAPERS

In this context, FEMISE is calling for researchers to submit their concept notes towards its 2024 Annual Conference under the theme “*The Euromed Partnership as a Catalyst for SDGs: Advancing Value Chains, Climate Action, Digital Transformation, and Youth Empowerment*”, addressing one or more of the following four topics.

**Topic 1: Accelerating Sustainable Value Chain in the Euromed Region through Digital Transformation**

**Topic 2: Accelerating Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability in the Euromed region**

**Topic 3: Fostering Social and Territorial Sustainable Development in the Euromed Region**

**Topic 4: Empowering Mediterranean Youth: The Catalyst for an Integrated Euromed Region Achieving SDGs**

More details about each of these topics and what issues could be addressed can be found below. These are for guidance and researchers can address other issues within these topics.

This Call for Papers is open to **all researchers working on socioeconomic issues** with a focus on **the Euro-Mediterranean region (Euromed)**<sup>5</sup>. Freshly graduate PhDs and young researchers are particularly encouraged to apply.

<sup>2</sup> Sustainable Development report, 2024. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2024.pdf> and <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>

<sup>3</sup> On the EU side, the lowest performer scores 78.71% (Greece ranking 29<sup>th</sup>) and the highest is 83.45% (Germany ranking 4<sup>th</sup>).

<sup>4</sup> “Localizing [the SDGs] is not the parachuting of global goals into local contexts. It means implementing global agendas in cities and territories to achieve local and global goals. It is a process of harnessing local opportunities, priorities and ideas” (<https://www.learning.uclg.org/localizing-sdgs>), UNDP, POLICY BRIEF: SDG LOCALIZATION IN THE ARAB STATES, 2022- <https://www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/sdg-localization-arab-states>

<sup>5</sup> Euromed region includes: The 27 countries of the EU and the 8 South Mediterranean countries (SMCs): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia

Successful papers should bring a real value added to the current state of the art, be evidence-based and be offering operational and realistic policy recommendations<sup>6</sup>.

**Geographic Coverage:** Research submitted should be focusing on the EUROMED<sup>7</sup> region. Research can cover the whole Euromed region or a selected number of countries from the region particularly the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SMCs).

### **Topic 1: Accelerating Sustainable Value Chain in the Euromed region through Digital Transformation**

Enhancing Euromed value chains can foster economic integration, build resilience, and promote fair trade practices, contributing to job creation, environmental actions (Green Deal), and regional progress, *but challenges still exist*<sup>8</sup>. Digital transformation can advance sustainable development<sup>9</sup> and facilitate regional value chain integration by enhancing innovation, product quality, competitiveness, new technologies, and access to data and information. This will have a positive spill-over effect on the economic, social and environmental aspects across the region.

#### **Suggested topics that can be addressed:**

- What are the key challenges facing the Euromed value chain integration? What strategies and policies are needed to foster collaborative partnerships in the region and to develop sustainable value chains that contribute to inclusive and green economic growth?
- How can the EU and the SMCs align their policies and regulations to facilitate their integration and value chains? What are the promising sectors for value chain?
- What are the channels by which the regional integration and value chain foster social inclusion, job creation and green transition in the Euromed region?
- What is the current state of digital transformation among SEMCs, and its impact on competitiveness, sustainable value chains and regional integration? What roles can the government and private sector play?
- How can the digital technology facilitate regional integration and VC in the Euromed region?
- How can the SMEs better embrace the digital transformation? What are key challenges and what policy recommendations?
- How can the innovation ecosystem be optimised for Euromed regional integration and supply chains? What role for private sector and entrepreneurs? How to finance the upgrade of infrastructure and services?
- Is the digital divide affecting the Euromed integration, sustainable development and SDGs in the Euromed? What about digital inclusion and its impact on job creation among women and youth?
- What policy frameworks and public-private partnerships are needed to incentivize the adoption of digital solutions for sustainable value chain management in the Euromed region?

<sup>6</sup> Please refer to the list of FEMISE Conference Papers published to avoid repetition: [https://www.femise.org/en/category/publications-en/conference\\_papers/](https://www.femise.org/en/category/publications-en/conference_papers/)

<sup>7</sup> Euromed region includes: The 27 countries of the EU and the 8 South Mediterranean countries (SMCs): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia

<sup>8</sup> Please refer to the FEMISE annual conference 2023 plenary session 2 for more details: <https://www.femise.org/en/articles-en/femise-annual-conference2023-plenary-session-2-report/>

<sup>9</sup>SDG article on : "Harnessing Digital Transformation to rescue SDGs", July 2023, <https://sdg-action.org/harnessing-digital-to-rescue-the-sdgs/>

## **Topic 2: Accelerating Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability in the Euromed region**

As the region faces numerous climate challenges<sup>10</sup>, there is a need to expediate the Euromed green transition, enhance innovation in renewable energy, water and agriculture to promote sustainable growth, job creation and attainment of SDGs. Shifting towards sustainable practices in sectors like agriculture, energy, and manufacturing is crucial for environmental protection and economic resilience in the Euromed region. This requires regional collaboration on climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, promoting renewable energy sources, advancing relevant technologies, and implementing sustainable resource management practices.

### **Suggested topics that can be addressed:**

- How can the EU Green Deal be levered to accelerate the green transition in the SMCs? What kind of international support is needed? What implication on the social and economic aspects?
- What financial mechanisms are need to support sustainable development initiatives in the Med region? What role of international organisations? Private sector?
- What are the challenges facing SMEs and Start-ups in accessing “green financing”? What policies can be recommended?
- How to foster a sustainable innovation ecosystem for renewable energy, clean technology, and smart agriculture?
- What’s the status in advancing the blue economy in SMCs? What are the challenges and how to foster cooperation?
- How can the green transition create new economic opportunities and green jobs? How to integrate climate change education?
- How to foster the circular economy in SMCs and transition from linear to circular models? What incentives and implication on entrepreneurship and technology?
- What roles of the digital transformation and innovation play in driving climate action and achieving SDGs?
- How can digital technologies and data-driven approaches enhance monitoring, reporting, and verification of climate actions and sustainable development progress in the Euromed region?
- How can the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism catalyze energy transition and reduce the carbon footprint of the SMECs? What are the potentials economic and social impact for the SMCs? What role of international cooperation?
- What business models, financing mechanisms, and policy instruments can catalyze investments in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure across the Euromed region?
- How can sustainable urban planning, and climate-smart agriculture practices be scaled up to enhance climate change adaptation and mitigation in the Euromed region?
- How can a just transition to green jobs be gendered, recognizing that climate change adversities are not gender neutral? How can gender-responsive policies and programs be designed to support women-led green businesses?

<sup>10</sup> Please refer to the FEMISE annual conference 2023 plenary session 3 for more details: <https://www.femise.org/en/articles-en/femise-annual-conference-2023-plenary-session-3-report/>

### **Topic 3: Fostering Social and Territorial Equalities and Sustainable Development in the Euromed Region**

Social and territorial disparities are major challenges in SMECs, reflected in pronounced inequalities in terms of opportunities and access to resources based on gender, territory and socioeconomic status. Supporting social and territorial development is a key to strengthening the Euromed partnership and advancing SDGs in the region. Investing in education, training, healthcare and social protection can expand employment opportunities, reduce unemployment, enhance female labour participation, and decrease inequalities. Addressing migration and refugees' challenges is also becoming a priority.

#### **Suggested topics that can be addressed:**

- What are the socio-economic factors hindering the conversion of improved education and healthcare outcomes into sustained economic growth in SEMCs? What about the quality and access to these services?
- What are the main obstacles to gender equality, low female participation, and exclusion in SEMCs? What strategies can overcome them? How effective are existing policies and programs in addressing gender-based disparities in education, employment, and political participation in SEMCs?
- Is social protection adequate in the region? What policies are needed to ensure social cohesion?
- What are the main drivers for territorial disparities in SEMCs? What strategies can promote sustainable territorial development? What role for local governance?
- How can human mobility achieve mutual benefit for the Euromed region? What is the impact on refugees and host countries? How can migration policies be designed to maximize the benefits of human mobility while minimizing negative impacts on refugees and host communities?
- How to further promote social entrepreneurship to create more job opportunities and drive innovation in the region? What supportive ecosystems can be created for social enterprises in SMCs, including access to finance, mentorship, and market opportunities?
- What role for the Euromed Partnership to reducing social and territorial inequalities in the region?

### **Topic 4: Empowering Mediterranean Youth: The Catalyst for an Integrated Euromed Region Achieving SDGs**

Empowering young people as leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, and change-makers is essential for a sustainable future. Despite being a large proportion of the population, Mediterranean youth face many challenges. By fostering youth entrepreneurship and equipping them with skills, knowledge, and resources, they can become active participants and leaders in achieving the SDGs.

#### **Suggested topics that can be addressed:**

- How can education and vocational training be aligned to respond to the needs in the SMCs, including green transition, digital technology and entrepreneurship to enable Med youth to contribute to the SDGs?
- What obstacles hinder the skills-to-jobs matching for youth? How to effectively reduce youth unemployment? What are the potentials for digital technology and green jobs for the youth? What models are needed to better understand the demands of the labour markets?
- What innovative strategies can anticipate and address emerging skill needs and help outline a clear skills response plan?

- Is migration (legal and illegal) becoming a way out for young people to find better opportunities? What policies can be implemented to address the root causes of migration?
- How to enhance the region's innovation strategy to make it relevant and practical for youth? How to enhance youth creativity and bridge the gap between research and markets?
- What role do digital transformation and technologies, AI, and big data play in fostering youth engagement in innovative and creative entrepreneurship?
- Are young Mediterraneans fairly represented in decision-making processes at local, national, regional, and global levels?

## 2- SUBMISSION PROCESS

Interested researchers are invited to submit **by 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2024**, the following 2 documents:

### 1. A detailed **concept note** for the research paper (max. 7 pages) including:

ONE cover page with:

- a- The summary of the paper stating:
  - The title of the paper and the topic under which is it presented
  - the objective of the paper
  - the knowledge gap and the value added of the paper
  - methodology/approach
  - (expected) results and policy implications.
- b- Presentation of the author(s) and the topic of the research as follows:
  - Name of the author(s)
  - Their Affiliation(s)
  - Contact details (including email), Address, city and country

The remaining 6 pages of the concept note should include the following 3 sections:

- a. Statement of research stating the problem addressed, brief review of the literature, the knowledge gaps the paper will fulfil and a preliminary outline.
- b. Research methodology stating the research question, the hypothesis to be tested, the methodology (e.g case studies, empirical evidence, etc.) and the rationale for using the selected methodology.
- c. Expected results and policy implications (must be included): how will the outputs and results of the research translate into policy recommendations (highly advised that recommendations are based on the analysis, are specific and operational)

### 2. **The CVs of the author(s) including list of publications (if any)**

The Concept notes could be submitted in English or French. Research concept note could be submitted by one single researchers or a team of reserachers.

The concept note (as detailed above) and the CVs should be sent no later than **the 22nd of September 2024** to the following email address **contact@femise.org**, with the subject line: **FEMISE Conference Call for Papers 2024**.

### 3- EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Following the submission of the detailed concept note and CVs (as detailed above) an evaluation and selection process will take place by the FEMISE Scientific experts, based on the following criteria:

- Relevance of the topic to the theme of the conference and addressing issues of priorities for the Euromed Region.
- Value added of the proposed topic to the existing knowledge.
- The quality of the methodology and its ability to address the issue efficiently.
- Inclusion and relevance of policy implications and recommendations that are operational and specific.

#### Rules and Other criteria:

- Final selection may be subject to marginal adjustments to take into account regional, subjects and gender balances.
- Previously published papers or those already accepted for publication will not be accepted. All submitted drafts will go through a plagiarism-checking process.
- No single author may submit more than two papers, whether independently or jointly with others.
- **Collaboration between researchers** (especially North and South) is strongly encouraged. Freshly graduate PhDs and young researchers are encouraged to apply.
- Submissions that are not consistent with the above guidelines will be excluded.

### 4- EXPECTED OUTPUTS FROM SELECTED PAPERS

Author(s) of the selected concept notes will be asked to:

- Submit the first draft of the research paper (15-20 pages) by [15<sup>th</sup> of November, 2024](#).
- Prepare a power point presentation with results of their paper and send it before the conference ([5<sup>th</sup> of December 2024](#)).
- Participate in the conference in Cairo ([10-12 December 2024-TBC](#)) present their work and receive recommendations and suggestions by discussants and participants. Authors will be asked to take them into consideration in their papers. (Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered for one person per paper).
- Authors of the presented papers will be expected to submit a revised and final version of their paper (maximum 30 pages) following the conference ([15<sup>th</sup> of February 2025](#)).
- The final version of the paper will be peer-reviewed and if successful, will be published in the new FEMISE-IEMed research papers series.
- Authors will be invited to produce a policy brief out of their paper and submit it to FEMISE (optional but highly encouraged). If satisfying, the PB will be published in the FEMISE-IEMed Policy Briefs series.



## 5- REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS FOR AUTHORS

- Authors of selected papers will be invited to present their work at the FEMISE annual conference on 10 to 12 December 2024, in Cairo, Egypt. The travel expenses and accommodation of only one author per paper will be covered. Kindly note that coverage of the travel expenses is restricted to the geographic area covered by FEMISE (the Euromed region<sup>11</sup>, Turkey and the United Kingdom).
- In addition, each selected paper will receive a remuneration of Euros 800, provided that all of the outputs above have been provided (section 4 of the guidelines).

## 6- SUMMARY AND TIMELINE FOR THE CALL FOR PAPERS

Date	Expected activity
22 September	Deadline for receiving submissions: detailed concept notes + CVs
23-30 September	Review and Selection process (1-2 weeks depending on the number of papers received)
1-7 October	Announcement of selected concept notes Travel arrangements for authors of selected papers (one author per paper) - Including visas (when applicable)
15 November	Submission of the first draft of selected papers (20-25 pages)
5 December	Deadline for submission of PowerPoint presentations
10-12 December	TO BE CONFIRMED Conference: Presentation at the FEMISE annual conference
15 February	Submission of the revised final version of papers
15 March	Completed peer review process and selection for publication
April 2025	Publication of selected papers and the Policy Brief (7-10 pages) based on the research paper

## 7- CONTACT DETAILS

For any inquiries related to this call, please contact Passainte Atef, Program Officer, FEMISE [contact@femise.org](mailto:contact@femise.org) or [p.atef@femise.org](mailto:p.atef@femise.org), with the subject line: **FEMISE Conference Call for Papers 2024**.

<sup>11</sup> Euromed region includes: 27 countries of the EU and the 8 South Mediterranean Partners (SMP): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia