

BUSINESSMED

Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises



20 YEARS PROMOTING
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

The Mediterranean 20 years ago

Trade between the two shores did not exceed 14%, while the Association Agreement was well underway in all the countries that would become Europe's partners.

There was an acknowledgement that something was amiss but no consensus on the solution. The precariousness of South-South trade masked an acute trade deficit in most countries, causing intractable unemployment. The problem was widely discussed at the time, but the Organization was quite young, the situation still recent, and the solution not yet obvious. This proved to be the central problem of the time, a significant one.

BUSINESSMED was a space for dialogue for the main employers' organizations. It is impossible to say how many dreams were made, how many projects were conceived, how many agreements were reached. What is certain is that the organization has a dynamic that escapes the observer and cements the employers, the ones who generate employment around the Mediterranean.

The UMCE has responded to a need expressed by Mediterranean associations headed by Confindustria.

It was a matter of linking the North and the South, as it has always been for the "mare nostrum" in its glory days. Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Berbers, Normans, Sicilians, Genoese, Catalans, Libyans, Egyptians, all these people managed space, transport and exchanges, and dominated the world.

I like to think that BusinessMed emerged because the Mediterranean needed it! Today, as BusinessMed has come of age, as evidenced by the dedication of its members, it must take advantage of its experience and contemplate its future. The cooperation of business leaders in the different Med countries makes the difference. We know that the public sector cannot be expected to provide more than a favorable climate; it is all well and good if it can be relied upon to provide the necessary conditions, but it is the private sector that must provide everything else:

- Employment opportunities depend on the balance of trade.*
- The balance of trade requires a sufficient export to maintain the commercial opening.*

- *Exporting requires productivity at least in line with the nation's standard of living. BusinessMed has been committed to this target for years.*
- *It is necessary to follow closely the Mediterranean trade and to supervise the growth of the South-South exchanges, they are the path to development.*
- *Finally, it is necessary to realize that the ultimate goal is to contribute to the approximation of standards of living, notably at the level of the most disadvantaged, so as to put an end to destitution and the exodus in the Mediterranean.*

If this was entirely the responsibility of the government, centralized states would have triumphed in the world. But they themselves have to resort to the private sector. Let the free world succeed in its bet. The cooperation of entrepreneurs and organizations that weld their action is not trivial.

With the experience of common work, we expect the private sector to fulfill its role; nowadays it is tremendous and highly variable: which are the dynamic sectors and which are the ones that are floundering? We may have become accustomed to our fate, but the pandemic does not seem to be over. How will work be organized after the containment experience? There are service companies that are no longer affected by covid and have adopted mandatory face-to-face work two days a week, the rest being at the employee's discretion. How to save threatened investments? and so many transnational questions where "good practices" are a miracle.

BusinessMed, like any human organization, has progressed through its mistakes; this was a high cost but today it is a "value" that must be safeguarded, and above all exploited in the service of the Mediterranean, the entrepreneur, and the Med society.

Roger E. KHAYAT

Economist, former BusinessMed advisor



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02



Creation of UMCE

The Presidents of the main multisectorial business organisations from the twelve Mediterranean countries which participate in the Barcelona Process, meeting in Constitutive Assembly, decided to create the “Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises” (UMCE).

They approved the Statutes of the organisation and elected Mr Hassan Chami, President of CGEM (Morocco), as President. They also decided that the registered office of UMCE will be in Tunisia. President Chami declared : “UMCE is proof of the commitment of all the business associations of the Southern Mediterranean region actively to strengthen their cooperation and to coordinate their actions in favour of faster economic and social development throughout the region”.

Mr François Perigot, Honorary President of UNICE and its Special Representative for the Mediterranean said: “I am delighted with this outcome. Once again, business people are showing the way by taking bold and constructive decisions...I am convinced that this strengthened cooperation will favour the economic integration of the Southern Mediterranean region.”

An aerial photograph of an olive grove, showing rows of olive trees on a green field. The image is overlaid with a white square frame and a diagonal line from the top-left to the bottom-right. The year '2003' is written in a white, elegant serif font, with '20' in the upper-left quadrant and '03' in the lower-right quadrant, separated by the diagonal line.

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03



Joint declaration UNICE /UMCE at the Naples conference

On the framework of the VI Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference, which took place in Naples on 2 and 3 December, UNICE and UMCE reaffirmed together their commitment to the Barcelona Process. The Euro-Mediterranean business community called for an economic focus on strengthening the private sector and promoting investment in the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC). The Naples conference was an opportunity to take stock of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, its progress and its challenges. Specifically, UNICE and UMCE recommended to:

- Accelerate the process of trade liberalization for goods and services, north-south and south-south, strongly reaffirming the objective of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area.*
- Develop a Euro-Mediterranean trade facilitation action plan.*
- Define and implement an action plan on transport, which would enhance infrastructure capacity and ensure interconnection with the EU.*
- Consider revising the MEDA program to redirect part of this instrument to the private sector and investment promotion.*
- Explore the institution of instruments for the recognition of qualifications that would facilitate labor mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean area.*

Hassan CHAMI

First UMCE president
(2002 – 2004)

“South-South integration was a key component of all the region success. Most importantly, because it is liable to create scale economies to compensate for the small size of local markets, and it was also liable to promote investments in South Mediterranean. Clusters were in the South of the Mediterranean, essential to benefit of North Mediterranean countries' support. Forming clusters needed a certain convergence in ideas and policies in the South of the Mediterranean.

The private sector was called to play a promoter role to make the wish of a Union gathering South Mediterranean countries a tangible reality. Since its creation, UMCE has been endeavoring for the rapprochement of the Mediterranean actors to create a favorable environment for investments in the Mediterranean region. UMCE was determined, through its various initiatives, to succeed in this approach. Many initiatives were undertaken to assist Southern countries in their modernisation process by means of projects relating to their upgrading, training, innovation, R&D, etc. However, it was more important to encourage the emergence of true partnerships within South Mediterranean area regarding all sectors of activity. Our ambition was to continue working hard for the promotion of co-operation and exchange between the states surrounding the Mediterranean Basin, by involving the private sector in this regional development dynamic. North Mediterranean States and the European Union had to be more active to increase foreign direct investments in the Southern region ”



*Extract from BUSINESSMED annual report for 2005

Luisa SANTOS

*Deputy Director General
BUSINESSEUROPE*

“We have been cooperating with BUSINESSMED for a number of years. We have some common members and we share the goal of strengthening the relationship between the EU and Mediterranean countries from a political, economic and social point of view. The organisation is the voice of the business community in Mediterranean countries, trying to find a good balance between different interests and provide concrete solutions that could help companies in the region. This is not an easy task but BUSINESSMED does it well, as it Promotes an environment that facilitates investment, innovation, supports skills development and training and promotes closer integration of Mediterranean companies in global value chains. These are important conditions to develop business ecosystems and reinforce the competitiveness of companies in the region. We are confident that BUSINESSMED will strengthen its position as the voice of business in the Mediterranean region despite the challenging times we are all living ”





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04



UNIMED 2 project

During the thirty-six months of implementation of the UNIMED Business Network project, the budget has not been fully used, leaving a certain amount of money left over. The UMCE member federations, all of which participated in the project, have all expressed the wish that the joint activities should continue, stressing that the UMCE should play a decisive role in this second phase of the UNIMED project.

On the basis of these considerations, the Secretary General of UNICE, in agreement with the President of UMCE, submitted to the European Commission a request for an amendment to the Grant Contract in order to extend the operational duration of the project and to change the beneficiary of the grant. UNICE was to be replaced by UMCE.

The UNIMED 2 project was set up as an extension of the UNIMED Business Network project; the project was managed by UMCE and lasted for a period of six months from 1 February to 31 July 2004.

The objectives of the project, in accordance with the strategic plan of the UMCE approved by its General Assembly were to have a better economic integration, the reinforcement of the associative ecosystem and the improvement of the competitiveness of Mediterranean SMEs.



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Creation of the Thematic Committees

The Thematic Committees were elaborated during the 3rd Management Committee held in Tunis on August 31st 2005. Their functioning and composition were presented during UMCE General Assembly. As a beginning and according to the topics suggested by the members, there was three thematic committees: A Committee for Technology, Innovation, Education, Research & Development, a Committee for Business and Investment Environment Development and finally a committee of Macro-Economic Follow-up and Forecasts. The topics of these Thematic Committees had a Euro Mediterranean reach.

The preliminary results were presented sixth month after the creation of the committees and three month after, the committee members gathered to approve the draft of the selected topics. A seminar to present the results as well as a press conference were held one year after the launch and with the presence of all UMCE members. The final reports were published following the seminar and journalists were invited to ensure the necessary coverage and dissemination of the event and the reports in order to ensure national actions to the topic selected.

Ömer SABANCI

Former president of UMCE (2005-2007)

“I took over the presidency of BUSINESSMED in 2005, at the 10th anniversary of Barcelona Process. The overall objective of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership launched in Barcelona was to tie the stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean area to the growing stability and prosperity of the European Union. In this context, the economic partnership pillar of the Barcelona Declaration aimed at creating Euro-Mediterranean Economic Area by the target date of 2010. However, at its 10th anniversary the whole process was lagging behind the target... there was a need to reduce the fragmentation of the southern and eastern Mediterranean markets through increased horizontal exchange of goods, capital and human resources. Moreover, a more focused approach was needed to achieve structural reforms to increase predictability and consistency necessary for a healthy business environment. During my presidency, we targeted to strengthen the links between BUSINESSEUROPE and BUSINESSMED as TUSIAD has also been a BUSINESSEUROPE member. Positioning BUSINESSMED as the interlocutor of the EU institutions in the Mediterranean region and reinforcing BUSINESSMED in administrative, institutional and financial aspects with the active involvement of all the members were also among our major objectives. The engagement of the BUSINESSMED members in the program, activities and thematic committees was significant. Together with the members, we represented BUSINESSMED in many meetings in Europe and in the region and presented our road map for a stable, peaceful and prosperous Mediterranean. The main challenge was the insufficiency of financial resources be it fees or sponsorships. BUSINESSMED is an international organization that has proven its maturity after 20 years of success. The Mediterranean region is vibrant with its north and south, and there are many problems and opportunities for business world.



The role of institutions such as the BUSINESSMED is very crucial in tackling crisis and seizing opportunities. We need to find common and cross-border solutions to the problems ahead of us, and we need to do this very fast. In the last 20 years, BUSINESSMED has achieved significant success in creating necessary synergy between the Mediterranean business world, increasing cooperation in the field of trade and investment, a leverage for better dialogue and socio-economic integration in the region ☺☺

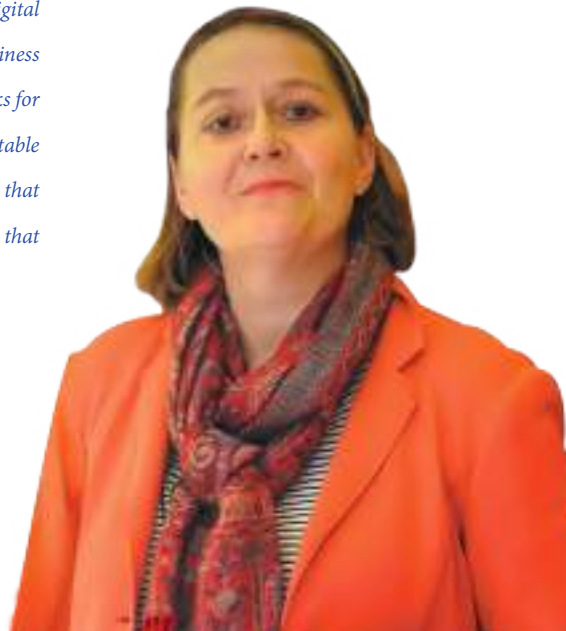
Ingrid SCHWAIGER

Deputy Head of Unit, Head of economic section
DG NEAR, European Commission

“ I think that BUSINESSMED as a key organization has evolved a lot. We have been working together quite a long time, specifically in the context of the project Ebsomed and it was the very first time that a federation from the south took the lead in the project as an implementing partner. This is rather unusual, we were very happy about it and we really saw BUSINESSMED evolving professionally to turn into a very appreciated and reliable partner for the EU Corporation.

I think that BUSINESSMED has a key importance role in the region. First, the euro-med region is one of the least economically integrated area of the world, so regional cooperation is extremely important as business very often is at the full front of this development. BUSINESSMED brings twenty two Business federation from the region , and that is very important in two direction , one as dialogue partner for policy makers and donors such as the EU, and second, to reach out to the final beneficiaries which are SMEs, so it is a multiplier effect toward the business contingency in the region.

For BUSINESSMED, The vision for the future is to be at the forefront of the new trends and the new challenges like the green and the digital transitions that are the new key tendency that will influence business everywhere. In addition it is also what we call an economy that works for people to ensure that business plays a role in society for a more equitable and inclusive way of job creation and employment of young people so that they play a positive role in society, and for that I think that BUSINESSMED in on the right path ”



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Oslo, Norway, featuring a large body of water in the foreground with a ferry boat. The city is densely packed with buildings, and mountains are visible in the background under a blue sky with scattered clouds. A large white graphic is overlaid on the center of the image, consisting of two overlapping squares. The year '2006' is written in a white, elegant serif font, with the '20' positioned above the '06'.

2006



UMCE First Competitiveness Day

The Mediterranean Economic Forum : Crossing Mare Nostrum » was held in Palermo on 20 and 21 February 2006 and was an ambitious initiative co-organised by UMCE, the Italian Confindustria, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Italian Ministry of Productive activities, the Italian Institute for External Commerce (IEC) AND THE Italian Institute for Industrial Promotion (IIP)

The Forum aimed to reinforce economic integration in the region as well as the interest of Italian enterprises towards the Mediterranean ones. This event gathered the main actors from the Mediterranean business world wishing to find Italian partners in different fields.

UMCE's first Competitiveness Day was launched during the forum and the focus was on the importance of the Euro-Mediterranean free trade area, as the way to establishing a stable, peaceful and prosperous Mediterranean. In this era of globalisation, the main challenge was competitiveness, particularly with other economic regions. Ömer Sabancı, president of UMCE and president of the Turkish Employers' Confederation (TUSIAD) at that time , announced the organisation of similar Competitiveness Day events in Spain, France, Portugal and Greece in the next period.



2007



Launch of the Business Country Desk project

The Business Country Desk was a project launched by The Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises in February 2007 in Valencia, establishing within each member Confederation a special Desk to assist the Mediterranean enterprise in the international market. The first country desk was established in Cairo at the initiative of the Federation of Egyptian Industries and declared at the presidential council held in Rome on the 25th of May 2007. By the 15 of September of the same year the network was achieved with 17 Business Country Desks ready to operate.

The Business Country Desk (BCD) were designed to assist companies through Regional Markets by offering qualified and strong introduction to professional counterparts, collecting data available near the different Confederations or their member associations. The BCD network was only open to the members of each National Employers Confederation member of UMCE-BUSINESSMED.

Jean Jacques SARRAF

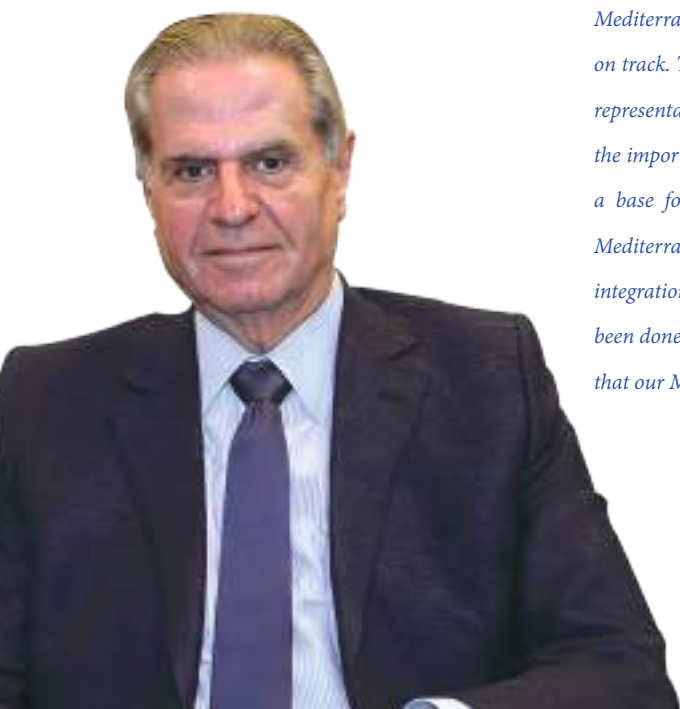
Former BUSINESSMED president

(2007 -2009) & (2014-2017)

“Since the day of establishment of UMCE in 2002 until 2017 , I was the representative of the Lebanese member confederations in the Union. In 2007 when I assumed the position of president, it was decided to amend the name of the Union to become BUSINESSMED, similar to its partner BusinessEurope. In that year cooperation between Europe and the Med region was more important then ever and that was at that moment that the substancial support from the European commission begun. Our strategic roadmap, incorporation with European organizations and unions, was to promote investment to establish economic and social climate in favor of the development of the investment flow to increase SMEs competitiveness among members' countries and to promote north south and south south investment, establishing former link between European and Mediterranean professional confederations. BUSINESSMED mission at that time was to travel through the region, giving this dialogue to the authorities and to the economic communities: we want to channel public policies to work for fundamental objectives directly linked to openness.

The majority of the countries were affected by the Arab spring and the Euro crises, but thanks to the solidarity of the members of BUSINESSMED, the Mediterranean has succeed to become a well established reality in Europe and the Arab world. In BUSINESSMED we do believe that the private sector has a crucial role to play in the making of the future and it is with the joint effort and commitment of all the members that we further contribute to the development of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

BUSINESSMED has always been for me a big project for the Mediterranean, that we had the courage and the good will to put on track. Today our strong Union consolidate its role as the main representative of the Mediterranean private sector, we believe on the importance of BUSINESSMED for the future of our region as a base for fostering economic and social development of the Mediterranean business community, reinforcing economic integration in the region. It would be pretentious to say, a lot has been done, I see in the contrary that a lot remaining to be done so that our Mediterranean can develop as it should ”



Marie ELENA DE FELIPE

President AFAEMME

“I would like to congratulate BUSINESSMED on its twentieth anniversary.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to work together for many years now.

I would also like to highlight the important evolution and progress made by Businessmed during this period, carrying out some of the most relevant projects in the Mediterranean basin. I also welcome the approach taken by Businessmed in promoting women as entrepreneurs, professionals, and managers, through various projects to promote and raise awareness in this area.

We are happy to be part of the Businessmed family and we take this opportunity to renew our thanks to the staff of the organization for the excellent work done ”





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08



Creation of the MedAlliance network

The Med-Alliance is a public-private alliance created in 2008 by the main Euro-Mediterranean networks of organizations representing and supporting the private sector in the Euromed area: BUSINESSMED, which gathers the confederation of employers of the med region, ASCAME, which brings together the chambers of commerce and industry of the Mediterranean countries, ANIMA Investment Network, which federates national and territorial economic development agencies and Eurochambres, which represents the chambers of commerce of the European Union.

The Med-Alliance acts as a consortium for the management of certain regional flagship projects of the Neighbourhood Policy and aimed at promoting investment and business partnerships in the Euromed region. Its members also regularly join forces to set up sectoral or thematic initiatives, in particular in the framework of cross-border cooperation programs. Thus, with more than 400 direct member organizations and several dozen projects underway or completed under the EU fundings, the Med-Alliance was and still one of the main partner operators of the European Commission for the implementation of economic cooperation actions between the EU and its southern neighborhood.



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09



The MEDINVEST Forum 2009

Businessmed co-organised in Beirut, with the support of BUSINESSEUROPE and the Invest InMed Project, the MEDINVEST 2009 Forum. The Forum gathered presidents from BUSINESSMED and BUSINESSEUROPE, as well as a number of personalities from the Gulf States.

Focused on investment, technology and the reinforcement of the Euro Mediterranean relations, the forum aimed at boosting Euro-Mediterranean co-operation and partnership to face the impacts of the international financial crisis as well as increasing Gulf investments in the Mediterranean and attracting Gulf investors to Europe through the Mediterranean.

A ceremony took place for granting El Iktissad Wal Aamal Awards to several European and Arab personalities. A business space was organized during the day of February 21st for entrepreneurs, owners of SMEs with over 80 BtoB meetings adapted to their needs in order to meet and build relations with future clients, suppliers, partners, financiers.

Galal ELZORBA

Former BUSINESSMED president
(2009-2011)

“I took over the presidency of BUSINESSMED on 2009, and with the support of our members and partners, BUSINESSMED has become more visible, more heard, and was even at that moment a true reference point for the vibrant private sector on both shores of our Mediterranean. A voice that we brought to the highest level in Athens, Barcelona, Cairo, Marseille, Paris, Prague, Rome, Tunis, and naturally Brussels, advocating free trade, free enterprise, and true economic integration. We created the tools to make our voice heard and credible. From mass surveys, to position papers, to high level meetings, to roundtables and conferences . That voice was increased by the services to our members as we spared no effort to be the platform for them to grow and globalize. A lot was done from the organisation itself as well as within the framework of the MedAlliance Consortium, chaired by BUSINESSMED in 2009. Our growth was not in activities only, our membership base was also growing as we had two new members that year, AIP (Portugal) and Expolink (Egypt), and we were confident to see more confederations joining our success in the near future. To ensure sustainability, we had capacity building training for our secretariat, providing technical support from the presidency, availing international training to our staff, and refurbishing our ICT backbone with new softwares and equipment.

We also were able to increase our incomes having in mind only one objective: supporting the best way we can our members in our strive for a better Mediterranean for all of us.

Our main concern was the SMEs of the private sector, not only because these companies were and still the real creator of prosperity and growth, but also because SMEs can develop partnerships for a sustainable and healthy integration in the region. Our work has been delayed by various external obstacles including financial crisis. We were convinced that more relevant and concrete actions will accelerate the pace of economic integration ”



Jihen BOUTIBA

GENERAL DIRECTOR
BUSINESSMED

“If one day someone had told me that I could fall in love with an intangible entity, I would not have believed it. BUSINESSMED was born from a dream, a projection, an ambition and a family. The organization is now celebrating 20 years and for me it is stronger than ever. It has survived revolutions, generational transitions, and weaknesses around its ecosystem, but it has blossomed again, risen from its ashes like the phoenix that has left its mark on the visual identity of the EBSOMED, a project born of another dream so desired within the organization and which has been realized since then. BUSINESSMED has established a network of partners so rich and so confident that no external force can shake it again. It has known to be on everyone's lips as exemplary and efficient thanks to its family that serves it every day.

On its 20th anniversary, the organization has taken on exceptional challenges and projects, but none of this would have been possible without the members of employers' organizations, its rock-solid team, the regional partners who have strengthened and believed in it, the European Commission who created and supported it, and the international community with which it cooperates every day.

I personally believed in the reincarnation of this organization as a regional force to be reckoned with, with hard work and the support of a team that has sacrificed and given itself for years despite all the obstacles and all the barriers, the successes have been there as we can see now.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of our organization, we are gathering all our projects, members and partners to make them see our organization with our heart, with our feeling of belonging, with our own eyes, to show them that Yes, we are making an impact in the regional sphere through our actions on the ground, through the young people, women and entrepreneurs that we are directly touching. We want to show everyone how BUSINESSMED is a regional gathering force, a source of inspiration and an environment where a multitude of actions as different as impacting are developed.

So yes, now I believe it is possible to fall in love with an intangible entity... because I'm in love with BUSINESSMED ”



An aerial photograph of a swimming pool with a white border and a diagonal line, overlaid with the text '2010'. The pool is surrounded by a rocky area and a blue sky. The text '2010' is written in a large, white, serif font, with '20' on the top line and '10' on the bottom line. The background is a blue-tinted aerial view of a swimming pool with a white border and a diagonal line. The pool is surrounded by a rocky area and a blue sky. The text '2010' is written in a large, white, serif font, with '20' on the top line and '10' on the bottom line.

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10



Euro-Mediterranean Industry Forum

Businessmed organized with FEI, CEEBA , the "Euro-Mediterranean Industry Forum - Reshaping the Mediterranean Post Crises Industry and the EC Invest in Med Conference" which took place in Cairo on April 21st and 22nd 2010. The forum gathered economic operators from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea and aimed at discussing the achievements of EC Invest-in-Med for the period, future plans to promote mutual investment and economic development in the Mediterranean region and the possible positioning for Mediterranean industries in post crisis perspective. The event included Conferences, Round tables and BtoB meetings.

Mr Galal Zorba , BUSINESSMED President at that time, opened the session by welcoming the participants and Invest in Med partner networks in Cairo.He highlighted the efforts done to promote the Euomed area by implementing over 350 operations bridging rims, BtoB, trainings, workshops, technical assistance missions, and studies. He expressed his optimism regarding the future of the Invest-In-Med project and added: "Now it is our role to enhance the use of the Med Alliance network, its proven implementation and mobilization capacity by a better inter-cooperation within our self initiatives, and by mobilizing support for Invest in-Med 2, which is a must for the growth of our region."



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Meda City Forum

The Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (Businessmed) participated in the Meda City Forum, which took place in Beirut in 2011. This Forum was organized by the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, and with the support of ASCAME and the Municipality of Beirut. The event gathered businessmen, experts, representatives of international organization and chambers of commerce from the two shores of the Mediterranean. The meeting was also attended by ambassadors, diplomats and representatives of ministers. The forum demonstrated that the commitment to create a platform for meeting, discussion, reflection and business in order to analyse the challenges and opportunities of the Mediterranean cities is necessary for the region. The topics were various and tackled new challenges, strategic visions and Economic growth.

Therefore, in parallel to this event, a BtoB session was organized where businessmen and managers met potential partners from all over the Meda region, discussed existing ways of cooperation and explored future possible ones through individual meeting.

Wided BOUCHAMAOU

Former BUSINESSMED president

(2011 - 2014)

“The beginning of 2011 was marked by a revolution of young people claiming their rights, and questioning model, that has been imposed on them. This youth, who was looking for jobs and for justice, called for our solidarity and our determination to offer it a better future in fact, it has requested jobs, freedom, democracy, and dignity. Within the framework of globalisation, these young people have shown that they had the same expectations from the South to the North of the Mediterranean, which would serve as an example to the world.

Together, Northern and Southern members had to revive an open dialogue between the countries of the region, elaborate a cooperation plan and a long-term common future strategy. This cooperation plan had to essentially involve the strengthening of a sustainable democracy, the promotion of regional and economic integration, the governance improvement and mainly job creation in order to reduce unemployment, which was the first fact triggering the Arab Spring.

For us at that moment, the EU had to assist Southern countries during this fragile period by acting in a spirit of mutual trust, by sharing experiences and expertise in terms of technology transfer and innovation. EU Northern developed countries had an important role to play. They had to provide substantial support policies to promote co-development thanks to their expertise and know-how. Finally, we were aware that positive changes in the socio-political southern countries will guarantee the success of our actions and the evolution of our organization ”



*Extract from BUSINESSMED annual report for 2011

Nasser KAMEL

UfM Secretary General

“*The Barcelona process who led to the creation of the UfM has also marked the birth of BUSINESSMED, we are both platforms of multilateral cooperation and multi-stakeholder dialogue on that sense we both share the same origin and ambitions. This region needs strong organizations that represent both, the social partners in order to collaborate upstream with government in national and regional legal framework in all social dialogue components but also the private sector in order to act downstream on creating and maintaining employment. In this sense, if BUSINESSMED did not exist we would have needed to invent it, because that role that it plays is not only crucial but also indispensable. We are very pleased by the progress achieved by BUSINESSMED over the years, and the extent to which it has been instrumental in promoting a just and inclusive social and economic integration in the region. For many years now we have been collaborating with BUSINESSMED as it is a major regional Euro-Mediterranean representative of the private sector especially in promoting social dialogue in the region. I assure that we will continue to work with BUSINESSMED on an even broader spectrum of areas of common interest as the complementarities and synergies are obvious. There are so many hanging fruits that together, we can reap for the good of our region ”*



A photograph of a vast field of golden-brown grain, likely wheat or barley, stretching towards a distant horizon under a clear blue sky. A white square frame is overlaid on the center of the image, with a diagonal line running from the top-left to the bottom-right corner. The year '2012' is written in a large, white, serif font, with '20' positioned above the diagonal line and '12' below it.

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12



« Blue of the Mediterranean» award to Catherine Ashton

Wided Bouchamaoui, then president of UTICA and BUSINESSMED awarded the “Blue of the Mediterranean” Prize to Catherine Ashton, Vice-President of the European Commission. This prize is awarded annually by BUSINESSMED to a personality from both shores of the Mediterranean for its contribution to the promotion of the Mediterranean region and the rapprochement of the two shores for the creation of a better Euro-Mediterranean area.

On this occasion, Ms. Bouchamaoui had emphasized the need to strengthen collaboration between the European Commission and BUSINESSMED, to achieve regional objectives, namely networking and capacity building between social partners to promote effective social dialogue between North-South but also between Southern organisation.

Ms. Bouchamaoui stressed that BUSINESSMED must maintain the leadership function in the Euro-Med region and be the engine of rapprochement between the two shores of the Mediterranean, calling on the European Commission to be more responsive to representatives of the private sector including the southern shore.

Saida NEGHZA

Former BUSINESSMED president
(2017-2020)

“ I had the honor to be the president of BUSINESSMED from 2017 to 2020, and it was a wonderful experience. BUSINESSMED is a regional organization, unique because of the diversity of member countries both on the cultural and economic aspects. My presidency was marked by a general economic recession coupled with political upheavals in several countries in the region including Algeria. We also had the pandemic of COVID19 which unfortunately generated a lot of human losses as well as serious economic problems, the closure of hundreds of companies and the suppression of thousands of jobs. We did not have the opportunity to meet as much as we would have liked, but we managed to discuss, exchange and work from distance and we have overcome this difficult period.

For the future, I hope to see for BUSINESSMED a bigger impact at the level of the governments for the creation of a dynamic economic zone and a greater ease of circulation of products between the different countries with less customs barriers. I also wish in the future that BUSINESSMED could work in a more important way with BusinessAfrica of which I am the current president, as sub-Saharan Africa represents an important market for the economic development of all the Arab countries of the Med region.

Finally, I would like to thank the president of BUSINESSMED as well as the entire secretariat who spares no effort to promote the economic development of the region ”



Alaa EZZ

Secretary General, Confederation of Egyptian
European Business Associations, CEEBA

“ I have had the pleasure of being part of BUSINESSMED over the past two decades, twice as its presidency team, as well as chairing several steering committees, where I witnessed its evolution from an idea of few visionary business leaders in the southern rim of our Mediterranean, to become a leading business support organization, not only in the Euro-Mediterranean region but globally, recognized by the European Union institutions, UfM, United Nations specialized organizations, and naturally regional and national employers federations across the Globe. Today, BUSINESSMED is the voice of millions of employers throughout our Mediterranean, professionally advocating their concerns, and providing a host of highly needed novel services in their strive to grow and globalize, both from own resources and through implementing tens of EU funded grant projects. Thanks to its able team, supported by its visionary board, BUSINESSMED shall continue to grow in a sustainable manner, cementing its present position as the voice of employers in the Mediterranean region. I expect more to come as services and donor funded projects, and a more global role beyond our region especially in the present global economic crises ”



An aerial photograph of a coral reef with clear turquoise water. Several white boats are visible on the water. A white rectangular frame is overlaid on the image, containing the year '2014' in a large, white, serif font. The frame is divided by a diagonal line from the top-left to the bottom-right corner. The text '20' is positioned above the diagonal line, and '14' is positioned below it.

20
14



Extension to the countries of the Euromed space

BUSINESSMED, represented by its members and its President Mr. Jacques Jean SARRAF, took advantage of its general assembly of 2014 to make several changes on the statutes of the organization and internal procedures. Indeed, following the request of the members and the will of BUSINESSMED to cover a wider field of actions, it was decided to open the possibility of becoming a member to all the countries of the Euromed space. The northern countries, which until that time, had the status of observer member, not having the right to vote nor the possibility to benefit from the services of the organization can starting from that date and if they wish, apply to become full members. This decision was very important for the future of the organization to succeed in expanding the scope of action on several countries in the Euromed area and increase the number of opportunities in the years to come.

An aerial photograph of a wind farm. The turbines are white and are scattered across a green field. In the foreground, there is a large body of water, possibly a lake or a reservoir. The sky is a clear, light blue. A white square frame is overlaid on the image, with the numbers '20' on the top line and '15' on the bottom line, both in a white, serif font. The frame is slightly offset from the center of the image.

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Signature of the agreement with the UfM

The agreement signed by the UfM Secretariat and Businessmed aimed to support the development of the Mediterranean business community and to advance collaboration mechanisms designed to achieve a better understanding of the private sector in the region and the challenges facing micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which represent 90% of the existing companies in these countries. Both institutions agreed to cooperate on specific activities to help develop an investment-friendly environment and thus foster private sector initiatives that can contribute to stable, sustainable and enduring economic growth.

The Secretary General of the UfM at that time, Fathallah Sijilmassi, and the President of BUSINESSMED for that period, Jacques Jean Sarraf, signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the UfM headquarters in Barcelona in 2015.

The agreement was in line within both organisations strategies to promote inclusive growth and increased integration in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Barbara BELTRAME GIACOMELLO

President of BUSINESSMED

“BUSINESSMED plays an important role in coordinating efforts between Confederations of Employers to analyze and respond to trends and challenges faced by companies, SMEs and entrepreneurs of the region. For example, we have been at the forefront of defining challenges and opportunities that the Pandemic brought ahead for Mediterranean Businesses. We were among the first to quickly adapt our work to digital and hybrid format, as well as providing key services to help BSOs to navigate this transition. We have been going through several unexpected changes in the past few years, from the Pandemic to the current Energy crisis. These events are shaping our priorities, as well as our current and future actions. BUSINESSMED and the Mediterranean region have a key role to play, in defining the future of the business ecosystem. As an organization we take pride in seizing opportunities that come in this time of change.

Also, women representativeness within high level position is an important and positive change that we are currently witnessing across the world. Nevertheless, as we know within the Mediterranean region, there is still a lot to do, women are still underrepresented within high level position within companies, even though studies have shown that companies, where women are present within the board tend to be more successful and reduce risks.

As a businesswoman this topic is something close at heart, it makes me extremely proud to be the president of an organization that has paved the way in terms of women participation, an organization where gender equality is not only mainstreamed and represented within the activities we organized, but also where it is concretely applied internally within our board and within our team. Diversity of background, provenance and gender is what makes us stronger and fosters unity among us 💡



Vincent ERNOUX

Coordinator of the ENI CBC MED

Programme for the Western Mediterranean

“ I have known BUSINESSMED since 8 years now. I have followed the evolution of the organisation and what impresses me at BUSINESSMED is the level of competence of the secretariat, very prepared to carry out the tasks that the organization is given itself at the level of internationalization and promotion of Mediterranean companies.

The ENI CBC projects are very difficult to manage because they are very ambitious and I believe that winning a project like ours as a leader applicant, really reflects the evolution in quality of BUSINESSMED towards its very ambitious objectives.

We are in the Mediterranean, a region where the economy is based around SMEs, which by themselves have few opportunities to cooperate or access to funds, and therefore an institution like BUSINESSMED is there to support them and allow them to benefit from European cooperation, expertise and funds, underlines that the impact of the organization is no longer to be demonstrated.

At ENI-CBC, we can only be delighted with the collaboration with BUSINESSMED. Since the very beginning of the program, the organization has been persistent, it has developed it has persevere and now we see the fruits of this perseverance because with BUSINESSMED we have a level of experience that is equal to the level of organizations from the north, if not higher in many cases.

My recommendation for the secretariat would be to continue to adapt to the changes and new challenges of the Mediterranean which the organization has already begun to do so, do not stop and continue everything you are doing for the Mediterranean SMEs who are, I am sure very grateful”





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The social dialogue era: SOLiD Project

The major political changes that occurred in 2011 had impact on the South Mediterranean neighborhood, and showed the limits of the economic and social policies followed so far and made more obvious the urgent need of institutional reforms.

It is within this framework that the pilot project for the promotion of social dialogue in the Southern Mediterranean neighborhood has been launched on 2016 in 3 countries (Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan).

The first phase of the SOLiD project integrated civil society as a full partner in the project along with, and at the same level, as employers and workers' organisations. BUSINESSMED was the voice of the employers within this project, confirming the new orientation of the organisation toward social dialogue promotion.

The project ultimate goal was to promote a dynamic, inclusive and reinforced social dialogue via the development of the capacity of Trade Unions and their homologues of Employers' Associations and civil society organizations and the promotion of a civic and multipartite dialogue between the social partners.



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New agreement for social responsibility: Charter of Naples

Following its strategy for a more inclusive business ecosystem, BUSINESSMED adopted the Naples Charter within the “Memorandum of Understanding for Social Responsibility in the Mediterranean” signed with the Association Spazio alla Responsabilità. By the ratification of this charter, BUSINESSMED recognized the Social Responsibility as a sustainable development model for its organization and for the Mediterranean countries and recognized the values and the principles guiding of the Naples Charter, shared goals and operating procedures.

The organisation Recognized also Spazio alla Responsabilità as Permanent Forum of Social Responsibility in the Mediterranean and an important aggregation representative of collective interest able to effectively promote the culture of social responsibility in the reference area.

BUSINESSMED committed to devote its human and organizational resources for the functioning of the working groups that will form, guaranteeing the technical and professional quality and continuity to offer its full cooperation to the pursuit of these goals and activities; and ensured, within and outside of its facilities, adequate information concerning the activities of the Forum in order to strengthen its role in the reference scenario.

Roger E. KHAYAT

Economist, former BUSINESSMED advisor

“ *The work that the organization does today is very pleasant because it focuses on the upgrading of the Mediterranean ecosystem. When we say "upgrading", we mean organization, innovation, best practices, reflection, dialogue, productivity, corporate social responsibility. All this has a clear double orientation: the total productivity of factors and a social net at the height of the standard of living of the nation, and I hope one day, of the region.*

Twenty years ago the Mediterranean entrepreneur who had benefited in advanced countries, the organization of associations wanted to rightly extend the limits of the experience to the Mediterranean. BUSINESSMED as a human, economic and societal organization is in the direction of history. This alone explains its success...

But this is the visible success. There is another one more deep and more invisible, constituted by the ramification of business and investment vectors woven between the entrepreneurs of the North and the South, source of progress and development. I will recommend a research on the transnational links that have been built over the last 20 years in the Mediterranean area and what contribution can be attributed to our organization.

This beautiful achievement that is the "Country Business Desk" awaits guidance to give its full measure in the synergy that must develop in the Mediterranean area and close the gap that exists between North and South and weighs down the common progress...

One day, 20 years ago, I was having dinner in the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, next to the famous Mediterranean economist Jean-Louis Reiff and I pointed out to him how much the folk dances of young Turks resembled our national dance. He told me not to be surprised. All around the Mediterranean there is the same folklore, but also the same cuisine and the same habits; that comes from the mists of time and only asks to be exploited for the progress of the region. BUSINESSMED is one of the major artisans of this progress ☺☺



Soukaina BOURAOU

Executive Director CAWTAR

“Cawtar is part of the EBSOMED consortium, a project Led by BUSINESSMED and we were proud that for the first time, an organization from the south, took the lead on a project funded par EuropeAid. The added value of Cawtar was to ensure that women and youth are represented in all activities and what is important for us beyond the activities themselves is that we hade synergies with partners such us BUSINESSMED and with other European Union programmes.

One of the advantage of being part of a big Consortium such as the EBSOMED one, is that it allows us to get in touch with well-established organizations from both northern and southern countries, especially the ones dealing with women and youth issues, but it also allows us to involve organizations from Arab countries from the Mashreq within the framework of programs supported by the European Union.

Synergizing is a methodology of Cawtar's work,we are an NGO based in Tunis and we implement activities on the 22 Arab countries where we do not have a physical representation so we relay a lot on our network and on partners such as BUSINESSMED.

On the EBSOMED project, we have complementary lines of action to those tackled by BUSINESSMED and the other partners. The main priority is for sure the strengthening of the Business Support Organisations and the Institutions working on entrepreneurship and capacity building of women and young entrepreneurs, and for that reason “access to finance” was the main focus for many of our actions.

I want to finish by adding that we really enjoyed working with BUSINESSMED on our common project and we look forward to continue our collaboration for the years to come ”

*Extract from EBSOMED interview 2019





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First project as leader: EBSOMED Project

Alongside lobbying actions with international donors, the organization endeavored to the search for new sources of finance , fully confident that the time has come to get a project as a lead applicant. These efforts rewarded in 2018 with the grant of a European Commission regional fund showing the trust placed in the organization, in its capacity of leading the EBSOMED project. a supporting project for the support of SMES and to networks in Euro-Mediterranean partner countries: an initiative inscribed in the framework of a broader strategy for cooperation and promotion of inclusive development of the private sector, of competitiveness and job creation.

The project marked a new milestone in the organization history and in the south Mediterranean, basin in general, as for the first time a grant of this importance was reworded to and organization from the south as lead applicant.

The organization measured the golden opportunity offered by the instruments provided by EBSOMED towards the openness to internationalization, exchanges of good practices and training.



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Adoption of the SOLiD Charter in Cascais

As a follow up action dedicated to the promotion of SOLiD results, BUSINESSMED organized a side event for the official adoption of the SOLiD Charter in the margin of the 4th UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour, that took place on April 2nd 2019, in Cascais – Portugal. The promotional event gathered the project’s consortium, governmental representatives, EU partners as well as the participants to the Ministerial Meeting organized by the UfM. SOLiD Side event devoted to the official adoption of the charter for the promotion of social dialogue was an occasion to present the main results of the project to a broader audience and to gain the recognition of the key economic and social actors from both shores of the Mediterranean.

The EU-South social partners (BusinessEurope – BUSINESSMED – ETUC – ATUC) sized this opportunity in order to outline their joint declaration stating that “The social partners of the UfM from the northern shore welcome the progress achieved in this area and note the conclusions of the project as well as the Charter of Social Dialogue in the Southern Mediterranean”.

Renate HORNUNG-DRAUS

*Managing Director Economic and International Affairs
Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA)
IOE Vice-President for ILO*

“ *The German employers have actively accompanied BUSINESMED since its creation in 2002, the organization is unique in bringing together employers' business organizations from north, ouest as well as south and east of the Mediterranean. After a very successful launch, it has experienced difficult times after the political instabilities in the last decade. It is good to see that BUSINESMED has successfully maintained its business continuity in these challenging times, because today, economic ties among countries around the Mediterranean have acquired a greate and strategic importance. The work of BUSINESMED is an important contribution for business cooperation and commercial exchanges to thrive and develop in this region, it facilitate investment and trade especially for small and medium size companies, both for networking opportunities and through the provision of information on the regulatory environment in the participating countries. It promotes social dialogue among employers and social workers in the region. It is a very important contribution to the development of the business ecosystem in the med region.*

So I would like congratulate all organizations' staff for the successful work done for all these years and for its commitment to the cause of BUSINESMED. I wish you a happy anniversary and look further to more successful cooperation the decades to come ”



Mohammed ELRAZZAZ

*Economic Development and Employment Division,
UfM secretariat*

“ I joined the UfM secretariat in 2013 and this is when I started to know about BUSINESSMED and other partner organizations, but I had the opportunity and the honor to work closely with BUSINESSMED secretariat and I can state that during the past years there was an enhancement of the quality and the diversity of what the organization in carrying , we can clearly see the foot print that the organization have not only on the south med region but in the hole area.

BUSINESSMED has an active role in the region and Im convinced that such organization works to enrich the business ecosystem in the region. We did see actual outputs and results from the organization work that have tangible impact on the region and we want in the near future to enhance the collaboration between the Ufm and BUSINESSMED to develop an inclusive development pattern in both shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

We did collaborate on the «Social dialogue forum» and the «UfM Ministerial conference on labor», where businessmed have mobilized many members of its network to give important contribution and inputs. During these two last year we clearly noticed a big step forward in the quality and the diversity of the activities carried by BUSINESSMED what only enhance our vision of the important of the work that the organization is doing in the region.

I want to congratulate on my name and on the name of the Ufm secreterait, BUSINESSMED for all the effort that the organization is doing in the region , thanks you for being there and thanks you for the footprint that you a leaving 🙏



An aerial photograph of a rugged coastline with layered rock formations and a small lighthouse on a cliff. The image is overlaid with a white square frame that has a diagonal line from the top-left to the bottom-right. The text '2020' is written in a white, elegant serif font, with the '20' on the top-left side of the diagonal and the '20' on the bottom-right side.

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Joining the ENI-CBC family: INVESTMED Project

After its first project as leader in 2018 with EuropeAid, the organisation was trusted by the ENI-CBC programme and granted another project as lead applicant. The INVESTMED project was conceived to impact MSMEs, start-ups and MSMEs where staff were trained and coached to become more sustainable, competitive and financially supported via an open competition. Specific business incubation services were established for sustainable start-ups while relevant public authorities benefited from capacity building and exchange of best practices to facilitate access and protect the intellectual property right for MSMEs

Taking about the project, the president of BUSINESSMED declared: "It is our duty to support youth by facilitating access to new markets with an ultimate goal of generating new economic opportunities and jobs where no one is left behind....INVESTMED will be our opportunity to revisit the nexus of entrepreneurship and sustainability to build an interactive framework for the entrepreneurial journey for the youth of the Mediterranean."

An aerial photograph of a boat's wake in deep blue water. The wake is a white, frothy trail that curves from the top right towards the bottom right. A white rectangular frame is superimposed over the center of the image, with a diagonal line running from the bottom-left corner to the top-right corner. The text '2021' is written in a white, elegant serif font, split by the diagonal line. The '20' is in the upper-left quadrant, and the '21' is in the lower-right quadrant.

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Med Business Days 2021: Post-Covid era & Economic Recovery

After almost two years of global pandemic, resilience and economic recovery were the objectives of BUSINESSMED' future activities and the organisation launched on December 2021 a new edition of the iconic Med Business Days. The event took place on the sidelines of CONNEXT 2021 in Milan and had main theme: The role of economic operators in the economic recovery in the Mediterranean.

The Forum, brought together Euro-Mediterranean economic operators, business support organizations and SMEs, and focused on their respective roles in stimulating economic recovery in the Mediterranean region. The event took the form of panels of expert around four topical themes namely renewable energy, smart cities, digital transformation, and skills mismatch in the labour market. The different sessions highlighted the expertise and attractiveness of the region in terms of investments and sustainable partnerships. The second day was devoted to the organization of B2B meetings, offering startups, companies and investors the opportunity to exchange and develop partnerships to facilitate access to foreign markets.

Itaf BEN ABDALLAH

*Senior Advisor on Higher Education
& Research - UfM secretariat*

“*We actively have collaborated with BUSINESSMED in our effort to bridge the gap between academia and the private sector... In this context, BUSINESSMED helped us drafting a strategy on the role of the UfM Secretariat in the field of Vocational Education and Training, particularly in connection with Higher Education. This meant conducting an extensive desk research, identifying, and consulting the main relevant stakeholders...*

The added value of BUSINESSMED is its knowledge of the needs of the private sector in a context in which there is a skills mismatch between curricula and the needs of the industry. Its role is crucial to establish a dialogue between higher education institutions, vocational training centres, and companies. The organisation is an important stakeholder that always provides important inputs to the Regional Dialogue meetings the UfM promotes.

An important element of BUSINESSMED's work is enabling the exchange of experiences between companies and entrepreneurs from different countries in the region, which often face the same challenges. The meetings, seminars, and trainings it promotes are precious. The UfM Secretariat wants to support BUSINESSMED in its role of developing the Mediterranean business community, and increasing the partnerships with the local stakeholders, such as education and research centres. BUSINESSMED has a role in those mechanisms designed at achieving a better understanding of the private sector in the region and of the challenges SMEs face.

The celebration of the 20th anniversary of BUSINESSMED, this year, is marked by a climate of uncertainty. Our world is facing major challenges: generalized economic slowdown, health, and environmental crises. There is an entirely unforeseen looming food crisis and high inflation scenarios. We all know such a climate is not favourable to investment and business in general. In this global context, it is crucial to support companies and entrepreneurs giving them accurate information and promoting stability through exchanges and cooperation. BUSINESSMED is able to bring about a shared vision of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, ensuring a mutually beneficial exchange between the northern and southern shores”



Anwar ZIBAOUI

General Coordinator of ASCAME

“ I want to congratulate BUSINESSMED at the occasion of its 20th anniversary and I wish long life to the organization and an important role in the Mediterranean ecosystem especially among private sector organizations as for us at ASCAME, we consider that BUSINESSMED is our little sister. We need to enhance the power of private sector in the Mediterranean, we need more growth and job creation for the development of the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean and this is one of the missions of BUSINESSMED and ASCAME in my opinion.

The partnership between our two organizations started since the creation of BUSINESSMED and our partnership is not only between us but it extended to partnerships between our members that are working on EU funded projects and common events.

Today, as organizations representing the private sector, we need to support essentially the SMEs as they are representing the back bone of the Mediterranean business ecosystem with an approximate number of 90% of the total companies in the Mediterranean. For this reason, I m calling BUSINESSMED and its members to participate with us in all the programs that we are running and that are targeting the SMEs. We have to work on developing partnerships between SMEs from south and north shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Big companies have the financial resources and the needed networks for these collaboration and our job as BUSINESSMED and ASCAME is to offer the SMEs the same opportunities to do so 💧



An aerial photograph of a city, likely in the Mediterranean region, featuring a prominent church tower with a red roof. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient and a white frame. The year '2022' is written in a large, white, serif font, split by a diagonal line that runs from the top-right to the bottom-left corner of the frame.

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The Business country desk goes digital

The Business Country Desk digital platform marks the beginning of a cycle of actions aimed at putting entrepreneurship and investment at the heart of BUSINESSMED's development strategy. Over the last few years, BUSINESSMED has actively worked on the development of a tool that promote talents, assist in the internationalization of companies, encourage business networking and advocate for on improvement of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa, the business country desk in their physical format were established in 2007 and for years, they helped the developing of business in the region. In this digital era, BUSINESSMED digitized that process, offering the Euro-Mediterranean business ecosystem the online version of the BDC, an accessible and intuitive platform, providing companies, entrepreneurs and investors with human and technical support for the realization of high added value partnerships. The ultimate goal of the BCD platform is to be a reference digital counter and to position and anchor the excellence of the Mediterranean economy.

Patrick ITSCHERT

Special advisor, European Trade Union Confederation

“I joined the ESEC in 2011 and at the time we wanted to strengthen the links between the two shores of the Mediterranean basin especially with the Arab Spring. The first time I was brought to work with BUSINESSMED was in 2016 on the third ministerial conference of the Union for the Mediterranean. Among social partners, we must learn to understand each other, to talk to each other to trust each other. It is on the occasion of the ministerial conference of 2022, that we clearly saw the evolution of BUSINESSMED. We have learned over time to collaborate and do great things together, the best example for that is our joint statement published in the margin of the ministerial conference. Having 4 social partners from both shores of the Mediterranean basin who are able to develop a common vision and a common message with respect to policies, that itself was pretty remarkable and very important. The other good practice we have with BUSINESSMED is the SOLID project. We have exchanged a lot, especially through this project and it has taught us that we are interdependent but we also have a lot to learn from each other, and therefore to be able to work together, exchange and support each other and for that having strong and independent partners is fundamental. I remain firmly convinced that strong social partners are important not only for democracy and social justice but also for business. Finally, I would like to wish BUSINESSMED a happy anniversary, I would like to say how much I appreciate the work with the organization, and I have only one wish is to continue on this path and to develop even more” ☺



Emmanuel NOUTARY

General Delegate, ANIMA Investment Network

“ I have known BUSINESSMED for almost 15 years now and we have worked together during this period on many common initiatives. I have watched BUSINESSMED grow and gain maturity, strength and weight as today it is an organization with many members, collaborators and a strong secretariat and I can see the professionalization, development, and legitimacy of BUSINESSMED throughout these years.

The specificity of BUSINESSMED is that it federates the confederations of employers in the Mediterranean and this is very important because there is no other regional organization like BUSINESSMED that operate in the Mediterranean, that can speak on behalf of and carry the voice of the private sector to the national and international institutions.

BUSINESSMED has already taken the role for several years to animate the social dialogue at the Mediterranean level between trade unions, employees and employers' confederation and identify good practices to export and adapt them in other countries. This role is essential and I think no other organization can play ...

Congratulations to BUSINESSMED for the path taken and long life for the future 🙏🙏



Léo VINCENT

Honorary president of RMEI,
HOMERe manager

“It is a great honor and a great pleasure to congratulate BUSINESSMED on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, I was lucky enough to be put in contact with the organization around 2014 thanks to UfM and at the time, we had just launched the program HOMERe which aimed to improve the employability of Mediterranean youth.

I was immediately surprised and won over by the enthusiasm and dynamism that BUSINESSMED has put in the development of this program, the contribution of the organization has been very important by the connection of the employers' confederations of the Mediterranean countries, each time we organized an event we found a very attentive listening from the teams of the organization and a force of proposals through the suggestion of speakers or experts of quality for our events. BUSINESSMED's contribution cannot be described in a few words .

The organization has not hesitated to get involved in the governance of the program and made very concrete proposals. I think that the contribution of BUSINESSMED is crucial for this ambition to promote the rapprochement between the economic and academic worlds; the organization is an essential actor to promote a bright future of our Mediterranean region by its youth who is immersed in a multicultural world. I sincerely congratulate all the team of BUSINESSMED on its 20th anniversary and I am convinced that a bright future is still open to the organization for many years to come ”



Thomas VOLK

Director, KAS Poldimed

“First I’m very glad of the partnership we have with BUSINESSMED which is a highly esteemed and professional organisation in the euro-Mediterranean area; KAS Poldimed and BUSINESSMED partnered over some activities since few years now and this partnership became more important since in 2021 with the organisation of workshops on post-covid economic recovery in the southern Mediterranean region. We are bringing together experts from the region to discuss how the cooperation can be intensified and how the region can become even stronger in post-pandemic time

BUSINESSMED and KAS Poldimed share at least two common goals, first one is to create a platform for dialogue between stakeholders in the euro-med basin and secondly to emphasize and foster the regional economic integration. The southern Mediterranean region is one of the least integrated regions in the world with below 5% of intra-regional trade, so both of our organisations want to contribute to reduce the gap and make the region more economically thriving and flourishing.

I would like to wish a happy anniversary to BUSINESSMED, congratulations for the first 20 extremely successful years and I am looking forward to in the coming at least two decades of strong involvement of the organisation in the region. I would also like to thank the great staff of BUSINESSMED as during our common events we have been able to appreciate the high professionalism and the dynamism of the team.

I’m pretty sure that with that kind of business spirit, the coming decades will bring even greater success to BUSINESSMED 🍷🍷



BUSINESSMED
Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises

20 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY
2002 - 2022

