

Fact-Sheet

Towards a Union for the Mediterranean Strategy on Developing New Vocational Pathways in Higher Education

BACKGROUND

UfM launched a technical assistance to investigate possible linkages between higher education and vocational pathways, paving the way for the adoption of a strategy on its potential added value in the field through the drafting of a proposed action plan. The technical assistance includes the drafting and promotion of an operational strategy proposal assessing the state of the art, best practices, gaps, existing policy tools, available opportunities, niches for action and recommendations on higher education vocational pathways in the Mediterranean.

Desired Outcomes

01

Initiate a regional dialogue to discuss the urgency to reset regional strategy towards youth and women employment and skills development in line with the New Agenda for the Mediterranean as communicated by the European Union in 2021 to renew partnership with the Southern Neighborhood

02

Outline what can be a proposed framework of a regional strategy to recommend shaping the post-covid reset policy actions regarding youth employment, skills development, and possible synergies between higher education and vocational training to develop post-secondary vocational pathways equivalent to EQF level 4-6 and EGF level 6-7

03

Outline a set of recommendations and policy actions to fuel the regional dialogue on the urgency of developing innovative vocational curricula targeting green, blue and digital transitions in the Mediterranean countries economies.

04

Develop a proposal for a pilot project targeting skills for the green transition.



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
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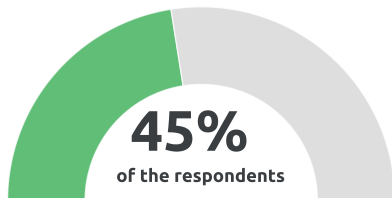
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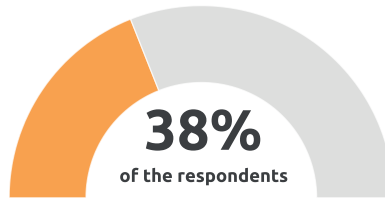


ONLINE SURVEY ANALYSIS

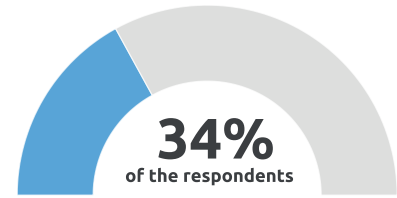
As part of the requirement of the technical assistance, an online survey was designed and disseminated amongst UfM and Businessmed Network in the region to gather stakeholders' opinions, perceptions and views on issues related to the development of a strategy to strengthen linkages between higher education and vocational pathways. Respondents from the six pilot countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia) who mainly belong to three areas (Higher Education and Vocational Education sectors, businesses, development projects' experts, and public institutions' leaders) provided their opinion on several issues raised in an online questionnaire. The following represents sample questions and results obtained from the survey:



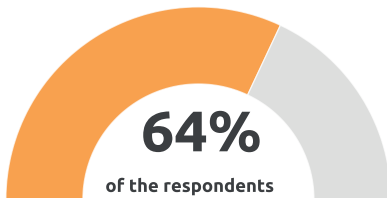
Declared unsatisfied with the post-secondary vocational pathways offered in their countries



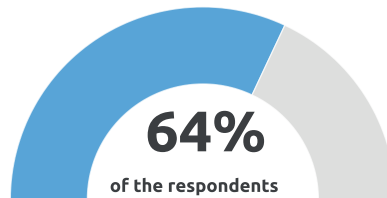
Respondents reported that they are dissatisfied with the skills acquired by graduates from post-secondary vocational pathways in their countries



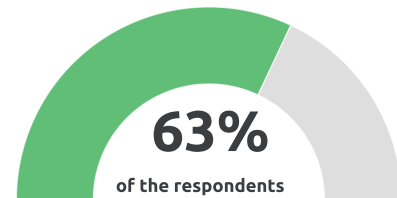
Assert that there is no flexible and transparent collaboration between vocational and tertiary education



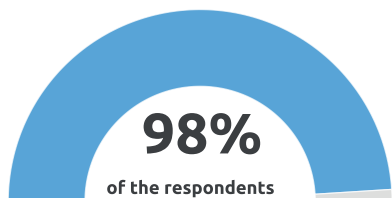
Claimed that Higher education pathways have a more positive image than vocational education pathways



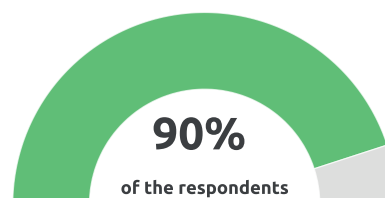
Claimed that one of the fields that could foster cooperation between higher education and vocational education is to integrate soft skills in both VE and HE curricula



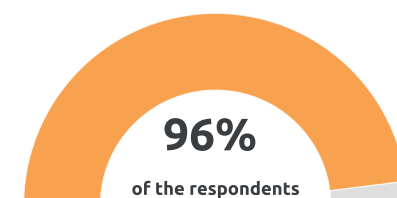
Strongly agree that to counter youth unemployment among Higher Education graduates, South Mediterranean countries should improve post-secondary pathways to attract youth



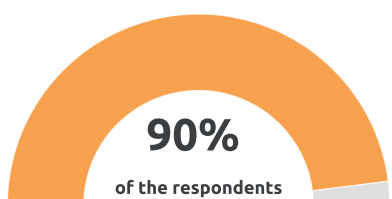
Agree and strongly agree that developing and restructuring vocational centers can significantly contribute to solving the increasing number of NEET population in the region



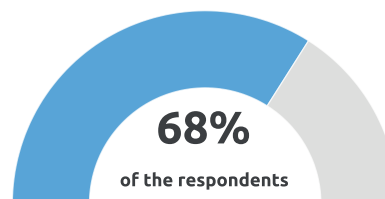
Agree and strongly agree that one possible form of collaboration between vocational education and higher education could be related to technical/pedagogical support in curriculum development/reform



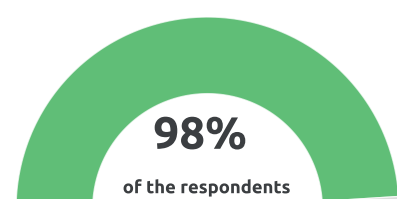
Agree and strongly agree that Higher Education can support Vocational Education reforms through Training of Trainers and Continuous professional development for Vocational Education instructors



Positively perceived that both Vocational Education and Higher Education take a common practical approach to prepare youth and women for the new workplace



Opt for separate entities to manage educational



Agree and strongly agree that Higher Education institutions must innovate by including more post-secondary vocational pathways to their Technical Institutions.

POLICY ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A set of recommendations for future actions can be generated from this study to further enhance the potential of HE institutions and their synergies with vocational pathways. They pertain in large part to how public stakeholders are incentivized, how academia is empowered, how industries are engaged in the reform projects, how synergies with donors and civil society partners are established to improve the socio-economic inclusion of youth and women, and how monitoring and evaluation, communication and outreach tools, and innovative forms of PPP can contribute to the regional dissemination of a sustainable intervention.

1

Empower public education sector at all levels (primary, secondary, tertiary, and vocational) by building the capacity of public education institutions, strengthening education governance, and allocating more financial, human, and material resources to modernize/rebuild education institutions' infrastructure compliant with the digital age requirements.

Policy Actions:

- Building the capacity of HE and VET Institutions
- Strengthening HE and VET governance
- Increasing public funding for HE and VET institutions

2

Promote Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training institutions' engagement with private sector by strengthening bilateral collaborations, consulting with key economic partners on skills needs, and participating in upskilling and reskilling existing and new workforce.

Policy Actions:

- Strengthening bilateral collaboration
- Consulting with private sector partners on current and future skills needs
- Participating in upskilling and reskilling existing and new workforce

3

Enhance Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training bilateral projects in a sustainable manner by strengthening synergies and partnerships between donors and CSOs, ensuring project ownership and local partners' engagement, and developing a robust sustainability and exit strategy.

Policy Actions:

- Strengthening synergies and partnership between donors and CSOs
- Ensuring project ownership and partner engagement
- Developing a robust sustainability and exit strategies

4

Improve youth and women employment by reducing skills mismatch, tackling gender inequality and skilling the NEET population through the acquisition of technical and entrepreneurship skills.

Policy Actions:

- Reducing skills mismatch
- Tackling gender inequality:
- Reducing NEET population and promoting social inclusion for vulnerable youth and women

5

Scale up successful pilot projects by developing robust monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms (MEAL), showcasing project impactful actions through communication and outreach mechanisms, and promoting triangular partnerships North-South and South-South.

Policy Actions:

- Developing a robust MEAL mechanism
- Encouraging frequent regional dialogue through communication and outreach mechanisms at the regional level
- Promoting triangular partnerships North-South and South-South

PILOT PROJECT PROPOSAL: PROMOTING GREEN SKILLS THROUGH POST SECONDARY VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS

The current report outlines the importance of establishing organic linkages between higher education institutions and post-secondary vocational pathways equivalent to EQF level 4-6. With reference to promoting regional dialogue, the partnership between HE and VET should highlight 5 priorities to be raised in the regional dialogue:

