

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

University of Calabria

9-10 July 2025



unimed

From the “Barcelona process”  
to the “Pact for the Mediterranean”:

**Revitalizing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnerships  
in Higher Education**

*Hosted by*



*This event has received the Medal of the President of the Italian Republic*

*Under the patronage of:*



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



*Sponsored by:*



## ABOUT THE UNIMED GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The UNIMED General Assembly is an important annual event, bringing together around 150 representatives from our member universities and institutional partners over two days. It serves as a crucial platform for rectors, delegates, partners, and international stakeholders to discuss policies for higher education and strategies for enhancing the Euro-Mediterranean university landscape.

The 2025 UNIMED Assembly is particularly significant for fostering dialogue and collaboration due to several key factors:

- **30th Anniversary of the “Barcelona Process”:** This year marks three decades since the launch of the Barcelona Process in 1995, which established a new framework for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, leading to numerous achievements.
- **Renewed Focus by the European Commission:** The European Commission is reinforcing the importance of Euro-Mediterranean relations by appointing a Commissioner for the Mediterranean and initiating a consultation process to develop a new “Pact for the Mediterranean,” set to be adopted this autumn.
- **Addressing Regional Crises:** Given the multiple crises affecting the Mediterranean region, higher education institutions must strengthen their capacity to support at-risk scholars and refugees.
- **Strengthening Collaboration:** Universities need to enhance cooperation with regional authorities and foundations to improve collaboration between the academic community, local authorities, and civil society.
- **Adapting to AI:** The rise of AI requires university systems to rethink their educational processes and develop a robust, modern higher education framework.

This year's Assembly program reflects these priorities, all aimed at revitalizing Euro-Mediterranean Partnerships in Higher Education.

**VENUE:** Conference Center “Beniamino Andreatta”, University of Calabria, Italy

## TUESDAY 8 July 2025

### PRE-ASSEMBLY EVENT

**09:00 am - 5:00 pm      UNIMED Start Cup Competition 2025**

The “**Start Cup Competition - Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean**” is a contest of entrepreneurial ideas developed by university students enrolled in one of the universities around the Mediterranean. This competition aims to encourage participating teams from universities on both shores of the Mediterranean to present innovative ideas in the field of entrepreneurship.

The initiative was launched in 2018 in the framework of the ERASMUS+ Capacity Building project RESUME and is part of a series of initiatives organised by the **UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability**, whose objective is to promote cooperation between members on the theme of entrepreneurship and employability and to strengthen economic and social cohesion by promoting, on the one hand, cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation, and on the other hand, sustainable local development.

#### **Participating universities:**

- Mediterranean University of Albania, Albania
- University of Saida, Algeria
- Al-Mustaqbal University, Iraq
- Erbil Polytechnic University, Iraq
- University of Duhok, Iraq
- University of Calabria, Italy
- Saint Joseph University, Lebanon
- Holy Spirit University Of Kaslik, Lebanon
- Antonine University, Lebanon
- Misurata University, Libya
- Ibn Tofail University, Morocco
- Mohammed V University, Morocco
- Middle East College, Oman
- Palestine Technical University Khadoorie, Palestine
- An-Najah National University, Palestine

- Palestine Polytechnic University, Palestine
- University of Évora, Portugal
- University of Barcelona, Spain
- Sousse University, Tunisia
- University of La Manouba, Tunisia
- Jendouba University, Tunisia
- University of Aden, Yemen

The Start Cup is an activity of the



**Employability** 

This edition of the Competition is organised by



**VENUE:** Sala Seminari Technest, Piazza Vermicelli, Ground Floor

**04:00 pm - 07:00 pm**      **UNIMED Board of Directors meeting (only for the Board members)**

**VENUE:** Council Room, Rectorate Building - Block 25B, Third floor

## WEDNESDAY 9 July 2025

08:30 am - 09:00 am	Registration of participants
09:00 am - 10:00 am	<b>Openings</b>  <b>Nicola Leone</b> <i>Rector of University of Calabria</i>  <b>Kherieh Rassas</b> <i>UNIMED President and Vice President of An-Najah National University</i>  <b>Hmaid Ben Aziza</b> <i>UNIMED Secretary General and former Rector of the University of Tunis</i>  <b>Roberto Occhiuto</b> <i>President of Calabria Region and President of the Intermediterranean Commission (CIM)</i>
10:00 am - 10:30 am	<b>For a new Mediterranean University Initiative</b> <b>Romano Prodi</b> <i>Former Italian Prime Minister and former President of the European Commission</i>  <b>The Pact for the Mediterranean: video message from the Commissioner</b> <b>Dubravka Šuica</b> <i>Commissioner for the Mediterranean, European Commission</i>
10:30 am - 11:00 am	<i>Family Picture, Coffee break and networking</i> <i>*Short laboratory, technology centers and other campus tours available for interested participants</i>
11:00 am - 11:15 am	<b>Keynote speech</b> <b>The Mediterranean: Knowledge as a bridge, Innovation as a force for unity</b>  <b>Francesco Profumo</b> <i>President of Isybank and Rector of Open Institute of Technology (OPIT)</i>

- 11:15 am - 11:45 am**      **Signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNIMED**  
**AbdulHakim Elwaer**  
*Assistant Director-General of the RNE Regional Office, FAO*  
**Kherieh Rassas**  
*UNIMED President and Vice President of An-Najah National University*
- 11:45 am - 12:00 pm**      **UNIMED activities and future plans**  
**Marcello Scalisi**  
*UNIMED Director*
- 12:00 pm - 01:15 pm**      **Panel discussion on the “Pact for the Mediterranean”**  
**Michele Amedeo**  
*Senior Adviser on University cooperation  
Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf, European Commission (DG MENA)*  
**Rim Filali Meknassi**  
*Head of Euro-Mediterranean Policies  
European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)*  
**Massimo Gaudina**  
*Special Advisor at European Training Foundation (ETF)*  
**Lavinia Monti**  
*Head of Office II - Internationalisation of Higher Education  
Italian Ministry of University and Research*  
**Georgiana Plesu (online)**  
*Policy Officer, International Cooperation Unit Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission (DG EAC)*  
**Giuseppe Provenzano**  
*Advisor for Research and Innovation at the Union for the Mediterranean*
- 01:15 pm - 01:30 pm**      **Announcement of the Start Cup Competition results**
- 01:30 pm - 03:00 pm**      *Light lunch and networking*

- 03:00 pm - 04:00 pm**      **Panel discussion: Artificial Intelligence for Education**
- Roberto Trinchero**  
*Professor of Experimental Pedagogy at University of Torino*
- Alessio Fabiano**  
*Associate Professor of Education and Special Pedagogy at University of Basilicata*
- Cristina Stefanelli**  
*Senior Project Manager at UNIMED*
- Sirine Bouguettaya**  
*Student of the PhD in ICT at University of Calabria*
- Naouel Abdellatif Mami**  
*Vice Rector in charge of External Relations and Cooperation at Sétif 2 University*
- Moderated by**  
**Giancarlo Fortino**  
*Professor of Computer Engineering at University of Calabria*
- 04:00 pm - 05:00 pm**      **University networks and Euro-Mediterranean cooperation**
- Kherieh Rassas**  
*UNIMED President and Vice President of An-Najah National University*
- Amanda Crowfoot**  
*Secretary General of European University Association (EUA)*
- Amr Ezzat Salama**  
*Secretary General of the Association of Arab Universities (AArU)*
- 05:00 pm - 06:00 pm**      **Panel discussion: Academic freedom and support to scholars at risks and refugees**
- Frank Geary**  
*Director of SAR - Scholars at Risk Europe*
- Stefanie Kottowski**  
*Project Manager SAFE - Supporting at-risk researcher with fellowships in Europe at German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)*



**Manal Stulgaitis (online)**

*Education Officer, Division of Resilience and Solutions  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*

**Alessandro Calabrò**

*Policy Officer Med and Middle East  
Directorate-General Research and Innovation, European  
Commission (DG RTD)*

**06:00 pm**

**Social event and Gala dinner**

## THURSDAY 10 July 2025

09:00 am - 10:00 am	UNIMED Assembly - only for members
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Showcase of UNIMED projects and activities
11:00 am - 11:30 am	<i>Coffee break and networking</i> <i>*Short laboratory, technology centers and other campus tours available for interested participants</i>
11:30 am - 12.30 pm	<p>Plenary session</p> <p>The Union for the Mediterranean platform on Research and Innovation in the Euro-Mediterranean region</p> <p><b>Alessandro Calabrò</b> <i>Policy Officer Med and Middle East</i> <i>Directorate-General Research and Innovation, European Commission (DG RTD)</i></p> <p><b>Giuseppe Provenzano</b> <i>Advisor for Research and Innovation at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)</i></p>
12.30 pm - 01.30 pm	<p>Parallel Sessions</p> <p>Session 1: The role of Artificial Intelligence to tackle the climate change challenges and to promote the young entrepreneurship culture</p> <p><b>Aleardo Furlani</b> <i>Programme Manager at Tech4you</i></p> <p><b>Tommaso Moramarco</b> <i>Research Director at Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR)</i></p> <p><b>Luca Brizzi</b> <i>President of ADPM Drones</i></p> <p><b>Massimiliano Granieri</b> <i>Chairman of Mito Technology Venture</i></p> <p><b>Vittorio Biondi</b> <i>General Manager of Ecosistema di Innovazione MUSA</i></p> <p><b>Marina Silverii</b> <i>Executive Director of ART-ER and Vice-President at ECO-SISTER</i></p>

## **Session 2: The Mediterranean Students recommendations and implementations by the UNIMED members**

**Kherieh Rassas**

*UNIMED President and Vice President of An-Najah National University*

**Alicia Betts Avila**

*Strategic International Projects at University of Girona*

**Raul Ramos Lobo**

*Vice-rector for internationalisation policy at University of Barcelona*

**Moderated by**

**Anne-Laurence Pastorini**

*Senior Project Manager at UNIMED*

**01:30 pm - 02:30 pm**     *Light lunch and networking*

**02:30 pm - 03:30 pm**     **Parallel Sessions**

## **Session 3: UfM and UNIMED initiative for Climate Action**

**Josep Vila Subirós**

*Director Campus of Natural & Cultural Heritage at University of Girona; Co-coordinator of the UNIMED SubNetwork on Climate and Environmental Change*

**Adil Salhi (online)**

*Professor at Abdelmalek Essaâdi University; Co-coordinator of the UNIMED SubNetwork on Climate and Environmental Change*

**Alaa Abdelbary**

*Advisor for Research and Innovation at AASTMT - Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport*

**Giuseppe Provenzano**

*Advisor for Research and Innovation at UfM - Union for the Mediterranean*

**Moderated by**

**Nathalie Clauter**

*Senior Project Manager at UNIMED*

**Session 4: New and disruptive technologies in medicine**

**Franca Melfi**

*Professor of Thoracic Surgery at University of Calabria*

**Mohammed Benlahsen**

*Professor of Physics at Université de Picardie Jules Verne*

**Ciro Indolfi**

*Professor of Cardiology at University of Calabria*

**Reida Okaly**

*Director of the Center for Research and Studies at Libyan International Medical University and former Minister of Health in Libya*

**Moderated by**

**Marcello Maggiolini**

*Professor of General Pathology at University of Calabria*

**03:30 pm - 04:30 pm**

**Parallel Sessions**

**Session 5: The role of networks for stakeholders' engagement and knowledge sharing: the experience of European Training Foundation (ETF) and UNIMED**

**Ermina Martini**

*Partnership and mobilisation officer at European Training Foundation (ETF)*

**Lynda Achkouty**

*Instructor at Antonine University and Coordinator of UNIMED SubNetwork on Employability*

**Moderated by**

**Silvia Marchionne**

*Senior Project Manager at UNIMED*

**Session 6: From the European University alliances to the Euro-Mediterranean University alliances: the way forward**

**04:30 pm - 05:00 pm**

**Closing remarks**