



CIHEAM

International Center for Advanced  
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION

*Sharing Knowledge, Feeding the Future*

MESA 4

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# I. INTRODUCTION



**Inclusive development**  
*"by investing in new  
generations and fragile  
territories"*

- Youth employment and life-long learning
- Development of rural and coastal regions
- Gender equality and participation of vulnerable groups
- Emergence of smart rural territories and of inclusive agriculture and fishery models

Environmental degradation (soils, terrestrial and marine biodiversity, etc.), climate change, food and nutritional insecurities (strong dependence on food imports, gradual abandonment of Mediterranean diets etc.), unbalanced development of territories (less access to essential services, development of human capital in rural and coastal marginalised areas ...) are challenges that lead us to question the sustainability and inclusiveness of Mediterranean food systems.

If green, climate-resilient agriculture, the blue economy and sustainable fishing, short circuits, relocation or even food sovereignty are put forward as possible solutions, they cannot be so without the inclusion of young people. Indeed, these transitions towards more sustainable models cannot achieve their objectives without initiatives targeting young people in Mediterranean countries especially youth in rural and fishing communities. Young people represent a large part of the Mediterranean population, their energy and potential are a source of hope. Their integration and empowerment are an urgent priority, especially since the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis are likely to exacerbate the existing challenges.

Involving young people in finding solutions to climate change and environmental challenges, allowing them to be stakeholders of sustainable and responsible agriculture and fisheries, engaging young people in local development initiatives to strengthen the resilience of territories and communities are among the commitments of the CIHEAM.

**The inclusion of youth and the strengthening of their role in food systems is addressed through 4 key dimensions:**

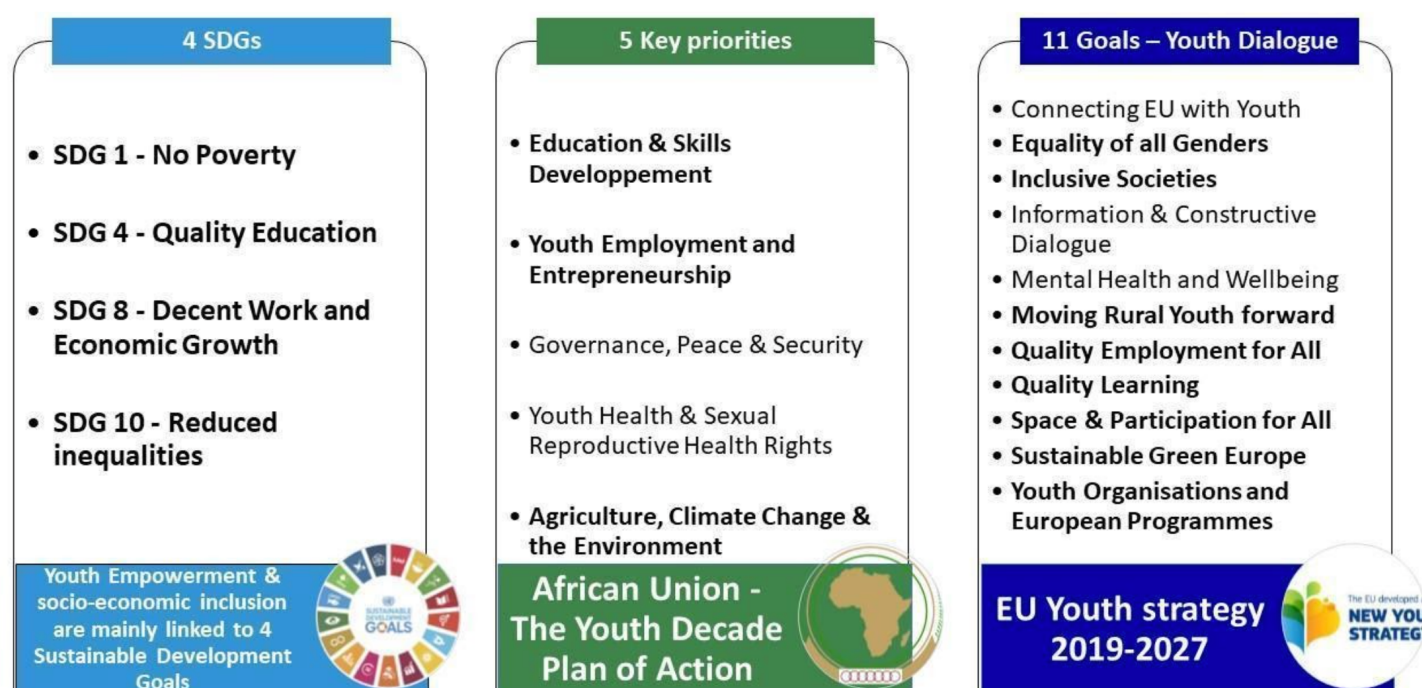
- Mobility of people and knowledge for sustainable development and solutions to food, socio economic and environmental challenges;
- Jobs of tomorrow - Training, capacity building in the green economy and agriculture, the blue economy and fisheries thanks to new technologies and technical and social innovations;
- The resilience of local communities – Cooperation projects developed according to a multi stakeholder approach and deeply rooted in the territories;
- Inclusive generation – Building of a common vision of the challenges of the region among youth and enhancing of intercultural and intergenerational dialogue.

These ambitions and commitments of the CIHEAM are in line with international, regional and national agendas. The CIHEAM Action Plan for the MEDiterranean (CAPMED) is in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (1) as well as with the priorities of the African Union (2) and the European Union (3).



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## These common goals and priorities are addressed during international conferences



## 2021 - 12th Ministerial Meeting organised by the CIHEAM Youth and Women as Mediterranean Priorities

The CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting is aimed at establishing sustainable dialogue between Mediterranean countries on agricultural, food and rural issues and fostering a common approach. These biennial ministerial meetings provide space for discussion and their strategic dimension is enhanced by the participation of major international organisations active in the region. The 12th Ministerial Meeting will focus on strengthening and empowering youth and women in rural, coastal and agricultural areas as a lever for sustainable development.

# THE MOBILITY OF PERSONS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR A POSITIVE MEDITERRANEAN

Investing in new generations and involving them in decision-making processes to meet the multiple challenges in the region has become crucial. The agro-food sector and rural territories provide solutions to meet the multiple challenges faced by the Mediterranean region. Since its establishment in 1962, the CIHEAM has been devoted to meeting these objectives through post-graduate training, applied research and the development of cooperation projects and the animation of research networks in the Mediterranean.

The sharing of knowledge and expertise among Mediterranean youth is the major mission of the CIHEAM. Since its inception in 1962, more than 40,000 students and young researchers have been welcomed at the 4 Agronomic Institutes of the CIHEAM (Bari, Chania, Montpellier and Zaragoza). The CIHEAM is a major actor of student mobility and Mediterranean intercultural dialogue. Each year, nearly 1,500 students coming from the Middle East, Africa and Europe are trained (Masters and short-term specialized training courses) at the CIHEAM Institutes. During their stay, they discover the common roots of Mediterranean cultures and the virtues of intercultural dialogue and diversity. Together with science diplomacy, “cultural diplomacy” is a strong symbol of the identity of the CIHEAM.



Involving young people in finding solutions to climate change and environmental challenges, allowing them to be stakeholders of sustainable and responsible agriculture and fisheries; Engaging young people in local development initiatives to strengthen the resilience of territories and communities are among the commitments of the CIHEAM.

The COVID-19 health crisis and its socio-economic consequences have recalled the need to strengthen the resilience, adaptation and inclusiveness of Mediterranean agro-food systems. These characteristics also apply to the younger generations. Young graduates or non-graduates must find their place in a constantly changing job market and in activity sectors faced with new environmental, societal and economic concerns.

**To this end, at the CIHEAM, the inclusion of youth and the strengthening of their role in food systems is addressed through 4 key dimensions :**



### **Mobility of people and knowledge**

for sustainable development and solutions to food, socio-economic and environmental challenges



### **Jobs of tomorrow**

Training, capacity building in the green economy and agriculture, the blue economy and fisheries thanks to new technologies and technical and social innovations



### **The resilience of local communities**

Cooperation projects developed according to a multi-stakeholder approach and deeply rooted in the territories



### **Inclusive generation**

Building of a common vision of the challenges of the region among youth and enhancing of intercultural and intergenerational dialogue

## TO LEVERAGE HARD AND SOFT SKILLS AT THE SAME TIME FOR A BETTER EMPLOYABILITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Through its comprehensive Vocational Education and Training - school-based and work-based learning, the CIHEAM provides its students with the necessary hard skills to achieve their professional goals. The Institutes also provide an enabling environment for the development and enhancement of soft skills.

### AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR A SMOOTH SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

#### TECHNICAL AND JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS

The CIHEAM provides training for the jobs of tomorrow offering:

- Innovative scientific and technological bases for the various specialities

Training courses that take account of the challenges posed by crises (climatic and economic)

- Access to Lab innovations ...

#### PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to training, the CIHEAM offers extra-curricular opportunities, which push students outside their comfort zones (public speaking, group debates...).

The skills are therefore multiple and allow students / graduates to develop them and use them effectively in the framework of their professional responsibility and in society.

#### = ALLOWING (THE IMPROVEMENT OF) THE YOUTH'S EMPLOYABILITY

- **Multicultural environment** – The diversity of profiles of CIHEAM students allows them to easily fit into a diverse team
- **Work-based learning** - Le CIHEAM gives professional internship possibilities within private companies as well as other opportunities on the ground such as the [Field Research Initiatives](#). These opportunities play a crucial role in the transition to the world of work
- **E-learning** - The CIHEAM also highlights the significance of lifelong learning, reminding its students the importance of cultivating knowledge throughout their careers in order to maintain their employability.
- **Work / learning environment** - Adequate and equipped places to develop innovations (incubators, co-working hubs, accelerators) both for self-employment and for business cooperation
- **Networking**





## II. TRAINING FOR THE JOBS OF TOMORROW

The training provided at the CIHEAM allows students to better access a large variety of jobs in sectors related to the agricultural, rural and coastal fields. Each Institute offers various Masters, vocational training courses, summer and e-learning programmes and while facilitating and encouraging contacts between students and local stakeholders with the purpose of assisting students in their school-to-work transition. The training courses are designed to enable future stakeholders of the agricultural and rural sector to better respond to environmental and socio-economic challenges through innovative approaches.



## TRAINING TO MEET ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

They are designed to guide students towards professional and academic careers that contribute to the promotion of sustainable development to address issues such as water/land scarcity, population growth, climate change and correlated environmental and socio-economic repercussions.

### • STUDENTS TRAINED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SYSTEMS

The Master on Sustainable Management of Food Quality is intended to respond to the increasing need to better understand and anticipate international challenges of food quality management. The Master Innovative Approaches for Integrated Pest Management of the Mediterranean Fruit Crops is focused on the ecological and epidemiological features of pests and pathogens, and how to apply innovative and smart tools for diagnosis, monitoring and management. The Sustainable Agriculture Master programme provides students with a sound theoretical background in this field and allows them to familiarise with integrated crop management and organic farming applications, capabilities and limitations. It is intended to train professionals in farming consultancy, teaching, research institutions, government and international agencies, companies, aid programmes and local authorities.

The understanding of the importance of sustainable production and advocacy for ecologically sound solutions is one of the main objectives of the Mediterranean Organic Agriculture Master. The Sustainable Water and Land Management in Agriculture Master focuses on the application of technologies that combine agronomic, engineering, environmental and socio-economic aspects of land and water management. The training course on "Design of innovative agricultural systems in a context of climatic and market uncertainties in the Mediterranean" is aimed at young researchers and postgraduate students from the southern shore of the Mediterranean thus working on their empowerment and socio-economic inclusion.

### • STUDENTS TRAINED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF COASTAL ZONES, ENSURE SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

The fishery sector plays a very important role in the food security and economies of Mediterranean countries. The current and future situation of increased vulnerability of marine resources due to pollution, increased consumption demands across the world, human pressure, climate change, change in ecosystems, overfishing etc. is of great concern

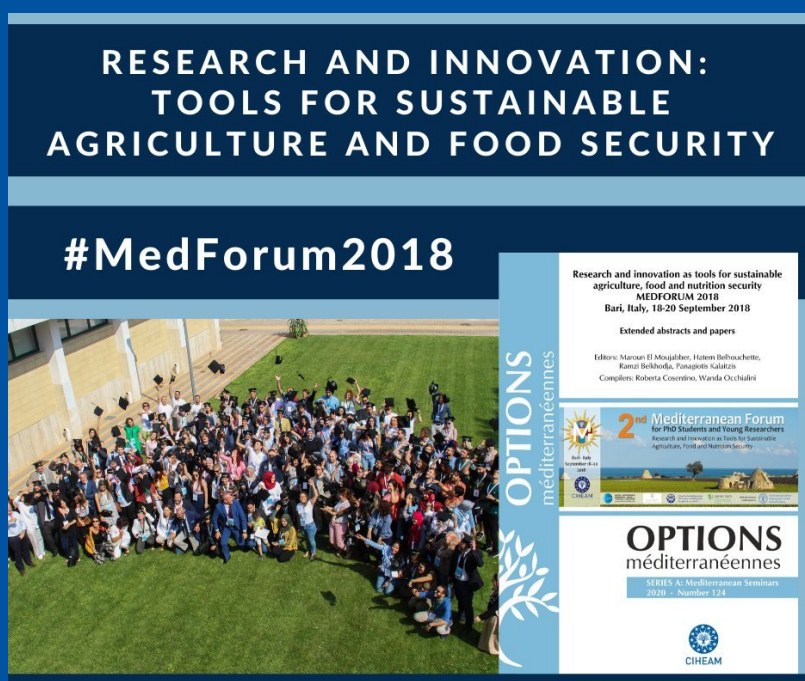
# FOCUS

## CONTRIBUTING TO THE SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATION AND GOOD PRACTICES NECESSARY FOR THE PROFESSIONAL PROJECTS OF YOUNG MEDITERRANEAN PEOPLE

### MEDITERRANEAN FORUMS FOR PHD STUDENTS AND YOUNG RESEARCHERS

Since 2016, through the organisation of these Forums, the CIHEAM intends to set the basis for a Mediterranean initiative aimed at supporting and guiding Master students graduating from its Institutes that wish to further their studies through a PhD. This initiative is also open to young researchers that already completed their PhD within associated national HEI and research intuitions.

- **MEDFORUM 2016:** Food security and rural development.
- **MEDFORUM 2018:** Research and innovation as tools for sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition security.
- **MEDFORUM 2021:** Arid land and agro-food systems.





## TRAINING TO MEET SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND TO SUPPORT THE RESILIENCE OF COMMUNITIES

- **STUDENTS TRAINED IN POLITICAL ISSUES AND GOVERNANCE**

The Sustainable Water Management and governance in Natural and Agricultural Environments Master programme offers key skills and competencies in the fields of water management and governance. The Agricultural Management and Territories Master programme trains students in agricultural production systems management, taking account of the specific characteristics of territories adopting both a technical and an economic approach.



## TRAINING BASED ON INNOVATION

- **STUDENTS TRAINED IN INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

The Open Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Agri-Food Sector Master programme (CIHEAM Bari in collaboration with the University of Bari) adopts the work-based learning (WBL) strategy. It includes 2 projects - Lean start-up and open innovation including design thinking as an approach. The programme emphasizes the close collaboration with the entrepreneurial system through conferences, projects and an internship.

- **NEW PROFESSIONAL PROFILES TRAINED AND SUPPORTED TO STRENGTHEN THE INNOVATION CHAIN**

The CIHEAM has set up new training courses through the development of the innovation culture. It includes participative learning, inspirational events, learning by practicing, team working and prototype development. The wide-ranging and continuously evolving provision of training opportunities satisfies the needs of professional development of young people and development of the labour market.



- **Innovation broker (October 2020)** - strengthen collaboration between research organizations and companies, interpret corporate innovation needs and build bridges with researchers
- **Innovation coach (November - December 2020)** - qualified professional figures support teams of aspiring startups
- **TTO manager (November 2020)** - to encourage the enhancement of technology transfer from research organizations to businesses
- **Cooperation between research and businesses (November - December 2020)**- aimed at future researchers to improve collaboration skills with businesses starting from the development of research based on the needs of companies

### • **STUDENTS TRAINED IN SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION**

The increasing concern on food issues and the use of natural products in the Mediterranean has led to the design of the Food Quality and Chemistry of Natural Products Master programme. It promotes expertise in quality control and various natural product applications as well as in high technology laboratory instrumentation.

The Master on Horticultural Genetics and Biotechnology provides students with experiences in the mechanisms, capabilities, uses and limitations of plant biotechnology. The Olive growing and olive oil technology Master programme enables students to acquire an up-to-date knowledge of the scientific bases, the traditional methods and innovative technologies for the optimization of production.



## • STUDENTS READY TO EMBRACE DIGITALIZATION

In 2019, the CIHEAM Zaragoza has developed training activities related to new and digital technologies including: Big data applications in the food supply chain, Precision livestock farming, Social innovation in rural areas, Innovative tools and methods for ensuring seafood authenticity, Technological innovation for intensive greenhouse production, Statistical tools for genomic and phenomic data analysis, Use of sensors in precision agriculture and Greenhouse gas assessment and mitigation in agriculture.

# PROMOTING MEDITERRANEAN TALENTS

## THE CIHEAM'S BEST THESIS PRIZE

This Prize was established in 1994 to promote the research work undertaken by the CIHEAM students in the framework of their Master of Science and to support the development of their scientific career. It is awarded every year by the Governing Board of the Organisation upon recommendation of its Advisory Board.

## OBJECTIVES AND IMPACTS

- Promote innovative solutions proposed by young people
- Enhance the student network
- Allow young Mediterranean people to be agents of change

## PRIZE

The awarded prize amounts to 5,000 euros allowing the winner to develop / pursue his professional and/or academic project/

## EXAMPLES OF AWARDED THESES

Originality, scientific quality, applicability and contribution to cooperation in the Mediterranean

- **2019** - "DNA--based markers combined with High Resolution Melting analysis for olive oil authentication and adulteration"
- **2018** - "Assessing agricultural trade integration among EU and Mediterranean countries signed under the Agadir agreement" and "Isolation and molecular characterisation of *Xylella fastidiosa* from different host plant species in the Apulia region (Italy)"



### III. FIELD PROJECTS

#### **EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION IN THE SERVICE OF YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY**

In the framework of the ERASMUS initiative, the CIHEAM Montpellier coordinates or participates in several projects promoting a better adaptation of young people to the new challenges of the agricultural world and the CIHEAM Bari is partnering with the TTO4food initiative :

- **IPAUP** – in cooperation with the ENA of Meknès (Morocco) - it aims to strengthen educational innovation to promote the attractiveness of agricultural training and to better prepare interns, future or current professionals of the agricultural sector to the societal and environmental responsibilities of this sector.

- **EDAMUS** Master in Sustainable Management of Food Quality aims to respond to the growing need to better understand and anticipate the complex issues of food quality management in the European Union and internationally.
- **TT04food** - is devoted to capacity building in the field of Higher Education, and the enhancement of knowledge transfer in the food sector as well as strengthening technological transfer offices in Albanian Universities. The TTOs will favour both the creation of spin-offs and the development of youth entrepreneurship of students who have finished university studies, as part of the enhancement of research results.

The vocational training provided by the Institute also responds to youth employment and employability needs. The training course in the "Design of innovative agricultural systems in a context of climatic and market uncertainties in the Mediterranean" is aimed at young researchers and postgraduate students from the southern shore of the Mediterranean thus helping them to develop knowledge and skills, with high demand in the local labour market.

## **ATTRACTIVENESS AND INCREASED CONNECTIONS BETWEEN RURAL, AGRICULTURAL AND COASTAL AREAS**

The CIHEAM works on the challenges related to the jobs attractiveness in rural, agricultural and coastal areas. The CIHEAM Montpellier supports the **DEVLOK** project which addresses local development of the Kerkennah archipelago by supporting start-ups of young entrepreneurs in accordance with the priorities identified by the population.

The project **“Stabilization and socio-economic development of Tunisia's coastal regions”**, managed by the CIHEAM Bari, is designed to support the sustainable development of coastal communities, and set up a planning system for participatory and integrated development of coastal areas that will serve as a framework for future initiatives. The objective is to improve and diversify the production and incomes of fishing operators and coastal communities, to reduce poverty by improving access to support services and management, but also through concrete financial instruments that target young people and women.



## REDUCING THE GAP BETWEEN YOUNG GRADUATES AND FIELD OPERATORS

The CIHEAM opened a call for contribution for its **“Field Research Initiative” (FRI)** project with 4 main objectives:

- To strengthen interactions between young scientists, rural communities and local organisations, promote knowledge exchanges,
- To empower youth with practical skills,
- To share good practices and innovative tools for sustainable agriculture and rural poverty reduction,
- To foster networks and employment opportunities for young researchers and PhD students across the Mediterranean region, also through South-South Cooperation.

Simultaneously, in the framework of ERASMUS, the CIHEAM Montpellier contributes to 2 projects that promote better adaptation of young people to the new challenges of the agricultural world:

- **RUR'UP** – provide help to 7 higher education institutions in Europe to equip their graduates with qualifications and skills adapted to the specific needs of the labour market and the society of the peripheral rural regions of the EU.
- **SmartAL** – implementation of an innovative Master's degree on territorial development in Albania responding to the needs of the labour market in order to strengthen the employability of young people

In this regard, the CIHEAM Bari has set up an intensive training course on **“Innovation and entrepreneurship of young people in the Mediterranean agro-food sector”** thus preparing young people to increase the entrepreneurial culture and encourage the creation of innovative businesses.

The CIHEAM Chania has participated in 7 Work Based Learning European Programs, offering training in the CIHEAM Chania premises and in local agro-food companies for two months-placement for 126 young students from European Education Institutions. The projects allow to significantly reduce skills imbalances between the labour market expectations and the skills developed during theoretical training but also to promote the inclusion of young people.

With the aim of training young farmers, the Institute also launched the project **Farmers: Circles of Circular Economy, FarmCircle**. The project is aimed at raising awareness among young farmers to new trends and business opportunities in the bioeconomy in order to produce more added value per agricultural unit. This project encourages the setting up of new activities in line with the main agricultural activity, the creation of highly skilled jobs, social and economic opportunities for rural areas by matching the potential of farms with the appropriate technology and product in order to ensure sustainability.

CIHEAM Zaragoza through its Mediterranean Agribusiness School (MABS) set up in 2017 a **Summer Program** on Spain's food culture, the Mediterranean diet and the agrifood systems. The programme is intended to professionally train young undergraduates and professionals and therefore offers a direct overview of the entire value chain and the possibility of interacting closely with professionals in the Spanish food industry. Students complete an internship in an agro-industrial company by applying the knowledge acquired during the course.

## **MOBILITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN CAPITAL**

Mobility to promote better adaptation of young people to the new challenges of the agricultural world within the framework of theoretical training is also among the priorities of the CIHEAM. In the framework of the Erasmus+ Program, the CIHEAM Montpellier participates in two agreements and provides mobility possibilities for Albanian students to come to follow a degree course at the Institute (IAMM) and to Lebanese students to prepare for a dual degree between the IAMM and the Faculty of Agronomy of the Lebanese University.

The CIHEAM Bari worked on **the Strengthening knowledge management for greater development effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe**. A Research Project in collaboration with ICARDA and funded by IFAD which aims at facilitating and supporting the growth of knowledge management and capacity development operations within the Near East and North Africa (NENA) and Central Eastern Europe and Central Asia (CEN) regions.

# PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS BACKGROUNDS

## For researchers

The CIHEAM Montpellier provides educational support and doctoral grants to students from the southern shore of the Mediterranean who wish to access a doctorate through the animation of a doctoral platform. The doctoral platform of CIHEAM Montpellier is often the first stage where doctoral students become part of an international research network.

## For young graduates or non-graduates

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## INCUBATION AND INNOVATION

The mobilisation of new technologies and innovation to create jobs in the fields of activity of the **SIMRA** project, led by the CIHEAM Zaragoza. The project has compiled a database of social innovations in marginalized rural areas showcasing examples of social innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural development in rural areas across Europe and non-European Mediterranean regions.

In partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture of Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Tunisia - the CIHEAM Bari contributes to the **Water MEDYIN project** "Youth and innovation for a sustainable management of water and marine resources" in the Mediterranean. The project aims to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals in the Mediterranean region by promoting youth entrepreneurial initiatives, as well as youth inclusion and socio-economic opportunities in water resources management, in both marine and coastal areas. It also aims to enhance the contribution of youth-led (<35 yo) innovative companies to the sustainable management of water and coastal/marine resources in Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine.

To support innovation, the CIHEAM Chania worked on a **R&D Industry project, University support for research and development work in industry**. The aim of the project is to promote innovation and entrepreneurship through the collaboration of enterprises with Educational Institutions.

The CIHEAM Chania worked also on **DTRAIN, Design Thinking for Entrepreneurship in Agri-food Sector project**. The project revitalizes the production in the agro-food sector and the fortification of local product brand name, by promoting the acquisition of high-quality skills and the improvement of occupation qualifications for managing staff and entrepreneurs working in the sector.

- **Innovation centres**

Since October 2020 the “Mediterranean Innovation Hub” has been providing an international public-private centre of excellence for innovation and the setting up of new businesses. It combines training, internationalization and open innovation. It involves young people, start-ups and innovative businesses.. A centre promoted by CIHEAM Bari in collaboration with the University of Bari, **Almacube - University of Bologna, Confindustria, Legacoop and confcooperative**

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## Incubators

In order to encourage and support innovation led by young people, the CIHEAM Bari has contributed to several projects :

- **FoodSHIFT2030** - a new European project on the sustainable transformation of our food system. The initiative is aimed at establishing food-accelerator-lab across Europe to incubate local food system innovative initiatives. Through coaching, knowledge exchange and co-design, innovations are shared to bring about a shift in the food system.
- **CREATIVE CAMPS** - the creation of specialized incubators in Italy and Greece



## BUILDING THE MEDITERRANEAN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

The Mediterranean Innovation Partnership (MIP) Network for Youth Entrepreneurship and Technology transfer in the Agrifood sector. The strategy of the Network consists in its consolidation and enlargement to new members, public and private (in particular ISO and enterprises cluster) to favour further knowledge sharing and simultaneously increase job opportunities for young entrepreneurs through.

### Objectives

- Capacity Building
- Sharing Knowledge
- Cooperation

### 5 activities

Creation of The Mediterranean Innovation Ecosystem

Capacity Building

Reinforce the dialogue between innovation chain actors at local and international level

Tools for sharing and transfer knowledge

Cooperation actions

## Strengthening of incubators and networks

The CIHEAM Chania contributes to **TOURNET**, a European project, which aims at creating a Network that supports existing SMEs and new entrepreneurs from all the sectors of the economy, especially agro-food entities that could promote sustainable tourism development. The project seeks, through the collaboration among the SMEs and the exchange & transfer of knowledge, to generate entrepreneurship opportunities for young people, create stable and quality jobs, decrease unemployment rate, increase the income and standards of living mainly in rural areas.

The CIHEAM Bari supports **MEDAB** - a Mediterranean incubator for the creation of business and change in the agro-food sector. Its aim is to contribute to the transfer of knowledge and skills on entrepreneurial culture for young innovators in the agro- food sector. Since 2015, it provided support to about 120 young innovators in the development of about 40 business projects.

The CIHEAM Bari encourages also the strengthening of incubators and their networks -Cross-over HUBS - developing cross-innovation between agro-food and creative enterprises

- Food4Health - sustainable and innovative agro-food and fisheries value chain for SMEs cross border market program priority (Italy, Albania and Montenegro), which includes the construction of a HUB with agrifood processing plants to encourage the development of local micro-entrepreneurship
- SUSTLIVES - SUSTaining and improving local crop patrimony in Burkina Faso and Niger for better LIVES and ecosystems. Direct management by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). The project is a Climate-relevant Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture funded under the 2019 (and 2020) Global Public Goods and Challenges Program, which involves the upgrading of incubators in Burkina Faso and Niger.
- ILONET – fostering capacities and networking of industrial liaison offices, exploitation of results and business support, in Italy and Greece
- INNONET - Innovative Networks for the Agrifood sector in Italy and Greece
- **FILA project** - in cooperation with Albania and Montenegro, to create places to promote innovation in agrifood companies by strengthening cooperation with research organizations and the entrepreneurial culture of young people.

# PARTNERSHIPS TO CONTRIBUTE TO INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The CIHEAM has developed diverse partnerships with public decision-makers from the Ministries of Agriculture of member countries and the Mediterranean region and with local communities to meet challenges, seize opportunities and develop innovative projects. Inter-university partnerships also strengthen mobility across the Mediterranean and at international level. This is necessary to achieve a better understanding of the various dynamics across the region and beyond. Among these initiatives:

## STRUCTURES



## POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The CIHEAM, together with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IMFA), the Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) with the technical collaboration of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Agreenium (the French consortium for research and education in agriculture, food, animal health, and the environment) organised the 2nd Mediterranean Forum for PhD Students and Young Researchers in Bari, Italy. The event aimed to strengthen the dialogue and sharing of knowledge and experiences among PhD students, young researchers and project leaders from the Mediterranean region, with a view to orientating research and collaborative efforts towards the specific development needs of the Mediterranean countries, including the empowerment of women and youth, enhancing employment opportunities for youth and improving rural livelihoods.

## CAPACITY BUILDING AND YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY



The CIHEAM participated in the 4th UfM Ministerial conference on Employment and Labour and contributed to the discussion and shared good practices during the side-event “The Employment of Mediterranean University Graduates: Bridging the Employability Gap Between Advanced Skills and Markets”.

## CREATION OF OPPORTUNITIES



With the support of ICARDA, the CIHEAM Montpellier launched a call for applications for doctoral students and young researches for the next Mediterranean Forum 2021. The forum is organised in the framework of the 7th Symposium on Farming Systems Design (FSD) to be held between the 21 and the 24 March 2021 in Tunisia. This symposium aims to discuss discoveries and initiatives for agro-food systems in drylands. With additional growing uncertainties around the world, as evidenced by the recent spread of COVID-19, the issue of food security and self-sufficiency is increasingly urgent and the design of innovative farming systems is becoming essential.



## ENHANCING HUMAN CAPITAL

In 2016, the CIHEAM and the FAO published a joint edition of the Mediterra report: Zero Waste in the Mediterranean, highlighting issues related to the waste of traditional knowledge and the potential of young people who must be supported, particularly with regard to study conditions, the lack of vocational training and the difficult conditions of graduates in rural areas.

### CIHEAM and FAO field Research Initiative

The FAO-CIHEAM Field Research Initiative is a competitive grants initiative designed as a PhD student/young researcher placement in a rural community-based local organisation (PO, SME, cooperative...) to apply, scale-out and disseminate research findings which can contribute to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, increasing the sustainability and resilience of agriculture, improving livelihoods and reducing rural poverty and supporting achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Reinforcing the Innovation-Employability Nexus in the Mediterranean – A Handbook for Academia, Industry and Policymakers

Through the data analysis of qualitative and quantitative input from 35 organisations around the Mediterranean including the CIHEAM and the mapping of 146 programmes, the handbook presents initiatives and best practices; and a literature review of 1,350 publications. The steering committee chose to focus on a total of eleven themes ranging from Skills (Chapter 3), Teaching & Learning (Chapter 4), Collaborative Doctorates (Chapter 5), International Mobility (Chapter 6) and Internships (Chapter 7) to Career Services (Chapter 8), Knowledge Exchange (Chapter 9), Partnerships for Innovation (Chapter 10) and Digital Innovation (Chapter 11) to Capacity Development inside Higher Education Institutions (Chapter 12) and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (Chapter 13).

The CIHEAM was involved in the Digital UfM Research and Innovation Steering Committee meetings and intervened in preparatory seminars:

- How to promote employability and digitalisation?
- How to promote entrepreneurship and start-up creation in Research and Innovation?

### Innovation in the Mediterranean agrifood sector: actors, policies and future prospects in a developing ecosystem - MIP REPORT 2020 - CIHEAM Bari

The MIP report is a collection of information and data used to describe the scenario on youth innovation and entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector in MENA countries; one of the main aspects of the analyses is the direct information collection by MIP countries focal points. The report is based on desk analysis and direct interviews with number 295 Innovation support organizations. The main findings of this research refer to their specialization, partnership, governance, target and year of establishment, the innovation-oriented policies, youth entrepreneurship, and the access to funding. The most relevant outcome is an increase of 45% in the number of Innovation Support Organizations (ISOs) registered in 2018 compared to 2017, increasing respectively from 200 to 295. The results were shared during the network meetings and are the basis for the MIP action plan.





*Established in 1962, the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) is a Mediterranean intergovernmental organisation composed of 13 Member States (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). It operates through its 4 Institutes based in Bari (Italy), Chania (Greece), Montpellier (France) and Zaragoza (Spain) and the Headquarters based in Paris.*

*As a key player in multilateral cooperation in the fields of sustainable agriculture and fisheries, food systems, coastal and rural development, its missions revolve around four main objectives :*



*Protection of the planet by combating all forms of waste: waste of natural resources, food waste and waste of knowledge and know-how;*



*Food and nutrition security by boosting sustainable agriculture and food systems;*



*Inclusive development by investing in new generations and fragile territories;*



*Prevention of crises by managing tensions and working for the resilience of communities.*

*The CIHEAM strives to achieve these objectives through education and capacity building, networked research, cooperation and technical assistance and political dialogue. Cooperation is essential for CIHEAM, which collaborates with more than 50 countries, several regional and intergovernmental organisations, and more than 600 universities and research centres.*

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