

**A SECTOR WHICH REPRESENTS 410,781 ENTERPRISES, 6,222,892 JOBS AND WITH WHICH 134,120,663 INDIVIDUALS ARE ASSOCIATED ACROSS ALGERIA, FRANCE, ITALY, MOROCCO, PORTUGAL, SPAIN AND TUNISIA**

The corporate fabric of the Social Economy in the member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean is present across all economic sectors, with companies of all sizes, operating according to the following core principles:

- The primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital
- Voluntary and open membership.
- Democratic organisation.
- The combination of the interests of members/users and/or the general interest.
- The defence and application of the principle of solidarity and responsibility.
- Autonomous management and independence from public authorities.
- The essential surplus is used to carry out sustainable development objectives, services of interest to members or of general interest.

COOPERATIVES, MUTUAL SOCIETIES, ASSOCIATIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS involved in economic activity, are examples of this alternative way of doing business.

**THE ADDED VALUE OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

The organisations and enterprises involved in the Social Economy are born of, and grow out of, the principles of solidarity and individual commitment to a process of active citizenship, contributing to the development of the Mediterranean Basin. This contribution is laid out in several official documents, clearly setting out Social Economy's capacity:

**To generate quality employment**

- The Conclusions of the 7th Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers' Conference highlighted the need to promote the role of SMEs and other forms of entrepreneurial management, especially the Social Economy, in the interests of increasing levels of employment. Luxembourg, 2005.
- The 2009 Euro-Mediterranean Summit for Economic and Social Councils made was explicit, in its final declaration, on the need to develop entrepreneurship by supporting small and medium sized enterprises and promoting cooperatives and other forms of social economy, in order to create jobs, especially for people who are vulnerable and in danger of social exclusion. It is particularly important to develop all forms of social economy during periods of economic crisis.

**To encourage sustainable growth and social cohesion**

- In the Opinion of the 2008 European Economic and Social Committee on "Freedom of association in the Euromed partner countries", it says that the social economy in its varying forms (cooperatives, mutual societies, development associations etc) occupies a very prominent place in the societies of the Mediterranean Member States, and its role is decisive for economic growth and employment, especially in SMEs and micro-enterprises, as well as fulfilling an important role as social service providers.

**To combat poverty, creating life opportunities especially for the most vulnerable individuals**

- In the European Economic and Social Council's 2008 Document on the social dimension of relations between the European Union and Mediterranean member states, it is clearly stated that among the instruments used to combat factors of poverty, it should be mentioned, among others, social aid programmes, systems of social protection and pensions, programmes which encourage an active labour market and also those whose objective the organisations of the social economy.

**To reinforce participatory democracy and improved governance**

- In 2002 the Committee of the Regions of the EU highlighted the need to encourage associations in the interests of developing a robust social economy and civil society, and that to drive cooperation and exchange with EU countries is even more pressing in those countries on the south shores of the Mediterranean that are involved in the "Process of Barcelona".

**To promote pluralism within economic markets**

- In their 2007 report on competition and social cohesion factors in the creation of a Mediterranean Euro zone, the Economic and Social Councils of Spain, Algeria, Italy, Tunisia, Malta, Greece and Turkey made it quite clear that in order to palliate investment shortfalls, and to increase economic and social development opportunities in areas that hold little attraction for foreign investors, it may prove of interest to encourage all kinds of collective business initiatives within the context of the social economy.

# MEMBERS of the ESMED NETWORK

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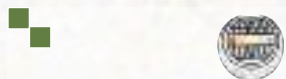


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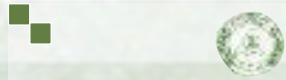


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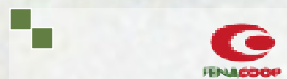
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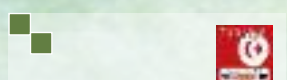


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**Euro-Mediterranean Network of Social Economy (ESMED-Network)**

# The Social Economy IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Financed by:





# THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN NETWORK of SOCIAL ECONOMY (ESMED)

The Euro-Mediterranean Network of Social Economy (ESMED Network) came into being in Madrid in October 2000, the fruit of a joint initiative by the major representative Social Economy organisations of **Spain, France, Greece, Italy and Portugal** during the “Social Economy in Mediterranean Europe” Conference. These organisations decided to establish a mechanism of coordination that would enable them to promote and maximise the Social Economy sector within the Mediterranean region.

From its outset the ESMED Network’s approach has been to strengthen cooperation between the Social Economy of the North and South Mediterranean, with criteria involving solidarity and corporate

MEMBERS	
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	2 organisations
No. ENTERPRISES	410,781
No. JOBS	6,222,892
No. ASSOCIATED PEOPLE	134,120,663
TURN-OVER (€m)	558,920 million euros

## OBJECTIVES

- 1. To promote collaboration and cooperation** between the existing representative Social Economy organisations in the participating countries of the Union for the Mediterranean.
- To establish a common Social Economy strategy for contribution to, and intervention in, the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership from the perspective of the Social Economy.

● To put forward and carry out trans-national projects of cooperation which are designed to facilitate the development of enterprises and organisations involved in the Social Economy by the participating countries in the Union for the Mediterranean.
- 2. To increase knowledge of, and institutional recognition for, the Social Economy** as a social and economic agent within the Euro-Mediterranean sphere, through the undertaking of the following initiatives:
- To establish channels for dialogue and cooperation with public institutions at State and European level, as well as with other civil society actors, in the interests of ensuring that Social Economy proposals be taken into consideration in the laying down of Euro-Mediterranean policies.
- 3. To facilitate the diffusion and exchange of feedback and information between Network members.**

## CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- The ESMED network operates within the context of the Union for the Mediterranean, which sets out a framework of political, economic and social cooperation between the 27 countries of the European Union, and 16 Mediterranean countries, and defines its aims as:
- 1. To increase participation in, and commitment to, the Social Economy on the part of Euro-Mediterranean programmes and projects, especially the Union for the Mediterranean Business Development Initiatives, in order that they undertake measures aimed at:**

  - Reinforcing the management capabilities of Social Economy enterprises and their productive processes through entrepreneurial training programmes.
  - Increasing Social Economy enterprises
- and organisations’ access to financial resources, through the creation of a financial mechanism which would permit the development of the local economic fabric, also through microfinance.

  - Improving support and advisory services available to Social Economy enterprises.
  - Consolidating the coordination of those Public Departments responsible for the promotion of Social Economy enterprises in the interests of generating policies that drive this alternative business model.
- 2. To create a global framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation to which civil society contributes.**

For the ESMED Network, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership should be based on a mutual understanding of cultures and
- The ESMED Network will work to consolidate an environment which encourages the participation and consultation of those organisations that represent the Social Economy, and which enables them to contribute their proposals at the Union for the Mediterranean's decisive forums.
- ## THE NETWORK'S ECONOMIC SCALE
- ### No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS
- 410,781

Other SE legal entities	25,462
Cooperatives	138,248
Mutual Societies	8,595
Placement Agencies	4,258
Foundations	5,856
Associations	228,362
- ### No. OF JOBS IN SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS
- 6,222,892

Other SE legal entities	2,137,639
Cooperatives	1,912,337
Mutual Societies	132,670
Placement Agencies	110,086
Foundations	144,760
Associations	1,785,400
- ### No. OF INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOCIAL ECONOMY
- 134,120,663

Other SE legal entities	4,224,336
Cooperatives	43,276,961
Mutual Societies	64,747,267
Foundations	46,144
Associations	21,825,955
- Turnover: 558,920 million euros
- ## ECONOMIC SCALE BY MEMBER COUNTRY
- No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS  
**45,093**
- No. OF JOBS  
**2,379,994**
- No. OF ASSOCIATED PEOPLE  
**12,150,549**
- No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS  
**8,815**
- No. OF JOBS  
**101,000**
- No. OF ASSOCIATED PEOPLE  
**2,880,056**
- No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS  
**47,365**
- No. OF JOBS  
**22,502**
- No. OF ASSOCIATED PEOPLE  
**365,255**
- France
- No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS  
**196,868**
- No. OF JOBS  
**2,392,787**
- No. OF ASSOCIATED PEOPLE  
**103,000,000**
- Italy
- Spain
- Portugal
- Morocco
- Tunisia
- Algeria
- No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS  
**4,581**
- No. OF ASSOCIATED PEOPLE  
**897,923**
- No. OF SOCIAL ECONOMY ORGANISATIONS  
**2,369**
- No. OF JOBS  
**24,528**
- No. OF ASSOCIATED PEOPLE  
**1,423,781**