

EUROMED CLUSTERS FORWARD

Implementing Consortium

Leader: ANIMA Investment Network (France)

Partners: Berytech (Lebanon), Qeiadat (Leaders International, Palestine), Economic Research Forum (Egypt)

Affiliates: ACCIO (Spain), CONECT (Tunisia), FEMISE (France), INSME (Italia), Italian Chamber of Commerce for France Marseille (France), Leaders International (Belgium), Malta Enterprise (Malta), Startup Maroc (Morocco), EBN innovation network (Belgium)

Geographic Area

Southern neighbourhood - Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia

Budget

€7,7 M (co-financed at 90% by DG NEAR, EU)

Duration

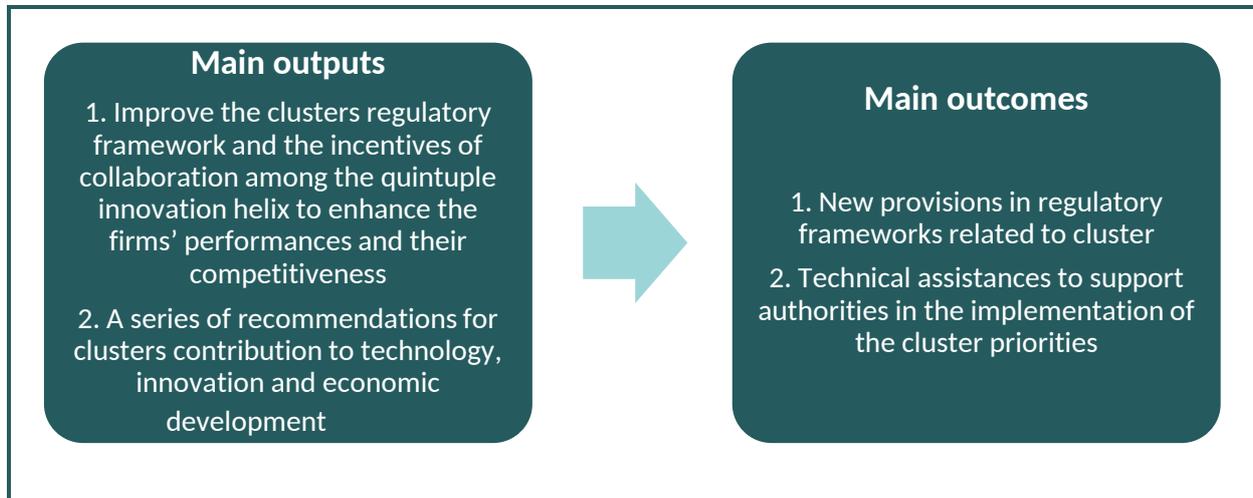
01/04/2022 to 01/10/2026

Scope of the project

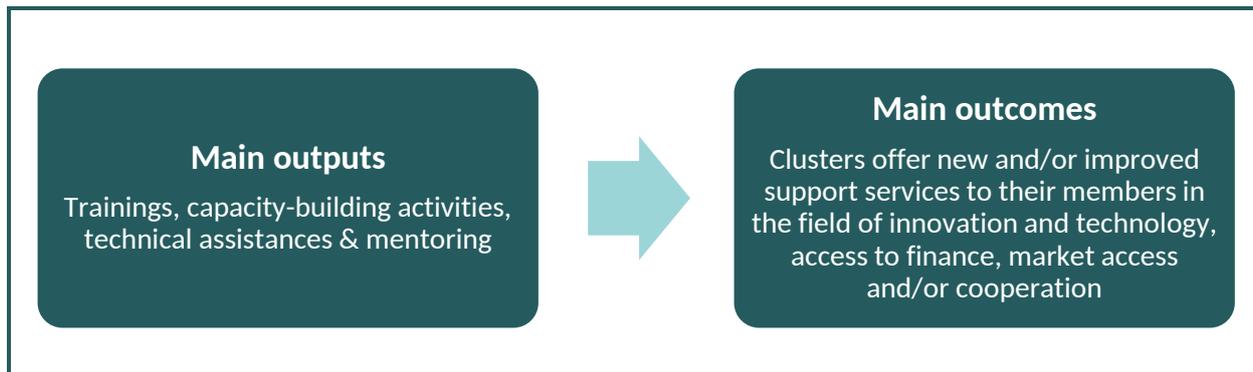
Clusters are defined as groups of firms, related economic actors and institutions located near each other and with sufficient scale to develop specialized expertise, services, resources, suppliers and skills.

The overall objective of Euromed Clusters Forward is to empower clusters to promote inclusive innovation and competitiveness in the South Neighbourhood region in order to enhance growth, economic diversification, sustainable development and employment.

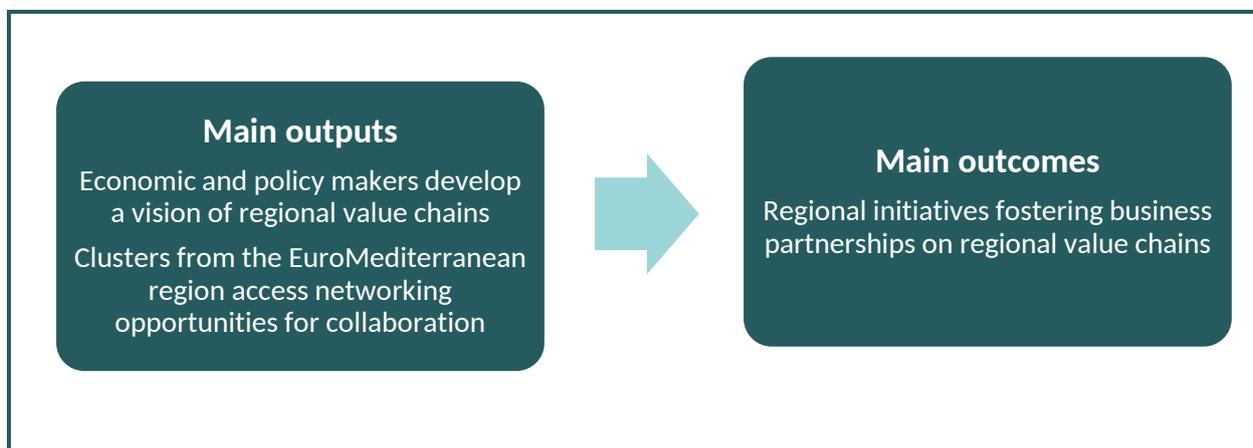
Specific objective 1 focuses on improving the regulatory framework of clusters and enhances clusters collaboration (with Europe and within the Southern Neighbourhood region).



Specific objective 2 targets the cluster level. It aims to improve the capacities of cluster organisations to develop forward-looking strategies and provide quality services to their members, increasing their business performance, innovation capacity and job creation.



Specific objective 3 aims at enhancing *Euromed* value chains by promoting forward-looking sectoral visions and supporting the creation of alliances of EU and Southern Mediterranean clusters in key regional value chains.



Examples of activities:

- Capacity building for cluster managers and members
- Peer-to-peer expertise between South and European Clusters
- Technical assistance on clusters policies
- Benchmarking visits in Europe & the South region
- 7 in-depth Technical Assistance for clusters across the South region
- Regional high-level working groups to share visions on clusters' role and opportunities
- Tech Days & matchmaking events

Context of the intervention

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the economy of both Europe and the Southern Neighbourhood region. This is why collaboration between the two shores of the Mediterranean can offer opportunities for greater alliances between these markets and can accompany the '*regionalisation*' of value chains, as well as a greener, more sustainable and inclusive development.

Studies show that relocation of companies closer to consumer markets (from Asia to the EU and Africa) could take place within five years. The Economic Research Forum (ERF) has highlighted the weaknesses that need to be overcome in the Southern Mediterranean region in order to promote these relocations: technological development, the leverage of non-tariff barriers related to export facilitation and more generally simpler administration for business and greater integration into global value chains.

These challenges require innovation at every level: flexible and adaptive policies as well as renewed industrial visions and strategies, facilitated by effective instruments capable of encouraging more interconnections between the silos that isolate the different actors, at national and regional levels.

Clusters are by definition hubs for collaboration between the stakeholders of the quintuple helix innovation. They not only promote innovation and competitiveness but also provide a "parallel structure" to circumvent in a limited geographical area some of the major institutional obligations on business efficiency in the Mediterranean countries.

However, Mediterranean clusters are facing a series of challenges, i) external: demanding requirements to access the EU markets; ii) technical: technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures; iii) institutional: regulatory and administrative obligations, uncertainties in national cluster policies, lack of appropriate incentives, etc. These challenges prevent clusters from playing their full role in strengthening innovation and upgrading Mediterranean economies.

Clusters can play a crucial role in addressing these challenges, since they are key players in improving the SME's competitiveness and in fostering territorial attractiveness, technological

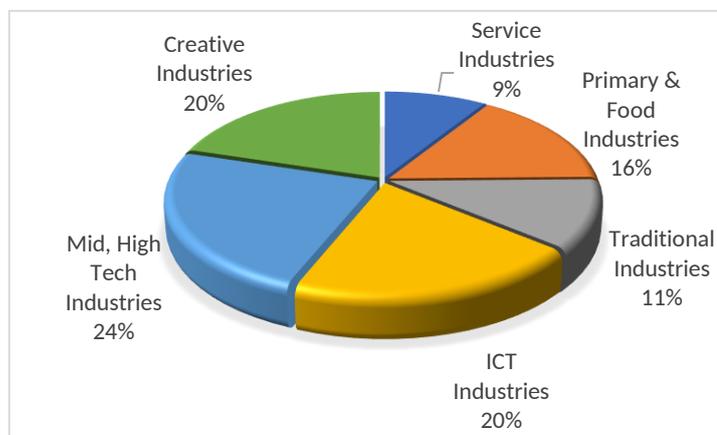
innovation and sectoral transformation.

Key insights of the Economic Research Forum (ERF) diagnostic

- Cluster-like organizations are well-rooted in South Neighbourhood countries' economy. Due to their proximity, rich cultural heritage, and skilled labor force.
- The legal status of clusters is unclear and uneven across the South Neighbourhood.
- There is a notable diversity in government industrial policies and initiatives targeting clusters in the region.

81 clusters identified in 7 countries:

- Algeria (8)
- Egypt (8)
- Jordan (4)
- Lebanon (3)
- Morocco (25)
- Palestine (6)
- Tunisia (27)



Please visit:

<https://clustercollaboration.eu/euromed-clusters-forward>

About ANIMA Investment Network

ANIMA Investment Network is a platform for economic cooperation between Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It deploys its engineering to create and implement initiatives to develop investment and business ecosystems favoring an attractive, sustainable and inclusive economy.

Organised as a network, ANIMA offers expertise in economic development and cooperation, investment promotion and impact management, territorial marketing, development of innovation and mobilisation of expatriate talent resources.

Contact ANIMA:

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