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Increasing Youth Involvement in Multistakeholder Dialogue: Youth-Responsive implementation of the UfM Youth Agenda

UfM YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SERIES 2024:
OUTCOME DOCUMENT



#UfM4Youth



The UfM Secretariat
is co-funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION



Contents



- Background.....4**
- Context and scope
of the document.....5**
- Methodology.....7**
- Key challenges in
youth engagement
in multistakeholder dialogue.....10**
- Pathways for a
meaningful youth engagement
in the implementation
of the UfM Youth Agenda12**
- Final Recommendations16**
- Glossary20**



Background

This publication was developed by Mr. Graziano Tullio, External Youth Engagement Expert for the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). Mr. Tullio contributed to both the content of this document and the organization and moderation of the meetings held as part of the UfM Youth Engagement Series 2024.

Over recent years, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has made efforts to promote initiatives aimed at actively engaging young people as drivers of a just and sustainable transition. The UfM is committed to harnessing the transformative potential of young people in shaping the future of the region through an inclusive and holistic approach to youth empowerment and engagement.

At the heart of the UfM work on youth lies the “UfM Youth Strategy 2030”, which emphasises the pivotal role of youth in driving social, economic, and environmental progress. Adopted in 2021, the “UfM Youth Strategy 2030” marked a significant commitment by all UfM Member States to empower Euro-Mediterranean youth and foster an inclusive and sustainable future in the region.

To operationalise the “Youth Strategy 2030”, in November 2023, the UfM introduced the **UfM Youth Agenda: Call for Action**,” comprising recommendations and proposals for action calling on Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders to enhance youth engagement in addressing global challenges. These recommendations were formulated through consultations via quarterly dialogue meetings involving policymakers, youth-focused Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and youth leaders.

The “UfM Youth Agenda: Call for Action” serves as a guide for governments, international and regional organisations, and youth-led and focused organisations to strengthen the role of young people in tackling major global challenges.

To implement the “UfM Youth Agenda”, the UfM places strong emphasis on capacity building, and multi-stakeholder dialogue. On the one hand, the UfM implements initiatives like the third edition of the **Mediterranean Youth Academy in 2023**, and the 2024 UfM Med Youth Lab. On the other hand, the UfM promotes multi-stakeholder dialogue initiatives involving the UfM National Focal Points on Youth, international organisations, and civil society.

In its approach to youth engagement and empowerment, the outcome document is aligned with the principles outlined in the **Pact for the Future**, particularly actions 36 and 37, which call for strengthening the roles of Youth and Future Generations in decision-making processes at national and international level. This outcome document reinforces that commitment by aligning its approach with these PFF actions, further emphasising the role of young people in addressing global challenges and fostering sustainable development.

Context and scope of the document

In 2024, the UfM organised the so-called Youth Engagement series, a series of three online meetings of the UfM Youth Focal Points Network, aligned with the three thematic priorities identified by the UfM Youth Agenda: (i) Climate Action and Environment; (ii) Education and Employment; and (iii) Social Inclusion and Participation. The online meetings explored how young people from the Mediterranean region could be actively and meaningfully involved in multi-stakeholder dialogue and policy-making processes related to these thematic priorities.

The meetings convened UfM National Focal Points on Youth as well as representatives of youth-led and youth-focused CSOs, international organisations, and academia. The objectives of the series of meetings were:

1. Facilitate dialogue among Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders, building support for the calls to action and recommendations outlined in the UfM Youth Agenda.
2. Identify current challenges and needs related to youth engagement in multi-stakeholder dialogue and transform these insights into actionable approaches for ensuring youth participation in decision-making.
3. Gather insights to shape an outcome

document that will help the UfM and its stakeholders effectively implement the UfM Youth Agenda, using a transversal approach to ensure meaningful and impactful youth engagement in decision-making processes.

Following the 2024 meetings, a key concern emerged: the need to ensure meaningful youth engagement across all thematic priorities and calls to action. To address this, **promoting multi-stakeholder intergenerational dialogue and tailored capacity building initiatives** were identified as essential for fostering inclusive youth participation throughout the UfM Youth Agenda. The dialogue and consultations process developed in 2024 through the Youth engagement series led to the development of the present outcome document, with two primary objectives:

- To outline clear pathways for embedding youth engagement into multistakeholder, dialogue processes ensuring the proposed actions are aligned with the current challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region.
- To establish cross-cutting, inclusive, and sustainable participation models that ensure shared responsibility and active involvement of both youth and stakeholders with the vision



of applying these models to the implementation of the UfM Youth Agenda.

The integrated approach proposed by this outcome document will serve as the foundation for a structured multi-stakeholder dialogue mechanism that the UfM is committed to put in place starting from 2025. The vision is to meaningfully include youth voices transversally in the definition, implementation, and follow-up of relevant initiatives to implement the UfM Youth Agenda.

Achieving this vision will require the collaborative efforts of UfM Member States, the UfM Secretariat, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), to whom chapter three of this document address specific recommendations.

In this context, the UfM Secretariat will actively seek to strengthen synergies with regional stakeholders and committed partners, particularly the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF), which is also developing a methodology for youth engagement.

Methodology

The methodology of this outcome document is built on a participatory and evidence-based approach, synthesising inputs from the 2024 UfM Youth Focal Points Network meetings, stakeholder consultations, and recommendations outlined in the UfM Youth Agenda. The document aims to propose actionable pathways for enhancing youth participation in multistakeholder dialogue at national and regional levels, with the overall goal of aligning youth engagement with the thematic priorities of the UfM.

This document adopts a multi-phase approach that includes the following elements:

- 1. Consultative process:** The foundation of this document is the series of three thematic meetings of the UfM Youth Focal Points Network in 2024. These meetings gathered input from a diverse range of actors, including UfM National Focal Points on Youth, youth-led and youth-focused Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), international organisations, and academia. The consultations were designed to address specific challenges related to youth engagement in climate action, education, employment, and social inclusion. Through these discussions, the document identifies key barriers and opportunities for meaningful youth involvement.
- 2. Data collection and analysis:** Insights from the thematic meetings were complemented by data from previous consultations and initiatives under the UfM Youth Agenda. The methodology also includes the analysis of case studies, existing frameworks, and policy documents relevant to youth engagement across the Euro-Mediterranean region. These sources provided the evidence base to inform the development of the document's recommendations.
- 3. Framework for youth engagement:** The document applies a cross-cutting approach to youth engagement, which is embedded across all UfM initiatives. It focuses on identifying both structural and operational barriers to youth participation in decision-making and provides concrete mechanisms for addressing these issues. The integrated framework proposed ensures that youth perspectives are





systematically incorporated into policy processes, with a particular emphasis on co-leadership and co-ownership models.

- 4. Action-oriented proposals:** Building on the consultative and analytical phases, the document proposes targeted recommendations for the UfM Secretariat, UfM Member States, and CSOs. These recommendations are designed to create enabling conditions for youth participation, including the establishment of multistakeholder dialogue frameworks and capacity-building programmes. The methodology emphasises actionable steps for translating the recommendations into effective practice.

- 5. Monitoring and evaluation:** The document also highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress and impact of youth engagement. These systems are intended to ensure that youth contributions lead to tangible outcomes and are incorporated into national and regional decision-making processes.

This comprehensive approach ensures that the outcome document reflects the priorities and needs of young people across the Euro-Mediterranean region and provides a solid foundation for the effective implementation of the **UfM Youth Agenda**.





Key challenges in youth engagement in multistakeholder dialogue

The identification of pathways and mechanisms to enhance youth involvement in multistakeholder dialogue initiatives requires a clear understanding of the challenges depicting the current landscape. The UfM Youth Focal Point Network meetings, held in 2024, brought to light the needs, concerns, and obstacles encountered by young professionals in engaging in meaningful, inclusive and multi-stakeholders' decision-making process. Seven key points emerged as systemic barriers faced by young people, which highlight the importance of bridging gaps through structured approaches.

1. Inadequate frameworks for youth involvement in decision-making

Youth encounter significant challenges in connecting with policymakers and accessing decision-making platforms. Traditional consultative methods often fall short, being unengaging and inadequate in addressing the multi-faceted needs of young people. Additionally, existing decision-making frameworks frequently lack the flexibility to adapt to the dynamic and diverse contexts of youth experiences, further alienating them from the multistakeholder dialogue and policy-making processes. This disconnection hampers their ability to participate meaningfully in these dialogue processes and results in policies and programmes that do not reflect their realities or aspirations. To overcome these barriers, there is a pressing need for tailored, youth-friendly platforms that incorporate innovative approaches such as digital engagement tools, participatory

budgeting initiatives, and collaborative workshops designed to facilitate dialogue between youth and decision-makers.

2. Weak monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanism

Effective monitoring and evaluation systems are crucial to ensure that youth engagement in multistakeholder dialogues lead to tangible and actionable outcomes. However, there is a lack of robust mechanisms to track the influence of youth contributions within decision-making processes. Current legal frameworks inadequately support meaningful youth participation, highlighting the need for more comprehensive provisions that ensure youth inputs are formally considered and integrated into decision-making.

3. Tokenism in youth engagement

Youth involvement in multistakeholder dialogue processes is often limited to symbolic gestures, where young people are present in discussions but lack real influence over decisions. This form of tokenism offers no meaningful opportunities for youth to shape outcomes. Such practices hinder the potential for genuine collaboration and diminish the effectiveness of youth contributions. A shift is needed towards co-ownership and co-leadership models, where youth and decision-makers collaborate as equals throughout the decision-making cycle—from planning and implementation to monitoring and follow-up. This approach would ensure balanced representation, encouraging

both youth and institutions to uphold transparency and integrity throughout the decision-making process.

4. Insufficient representation of diverse youth voices

Youth from vulnerable or marginalised backgrounds are frequently excluded from multistakeholder dialogues. This exclusion limits the diversity of perspectives and fails to address the needs of those most affected by social, economic, and political challenges. To enhance the inclusiveness and effectiveness of youth programmes, there is a pressing need to develop new mechanisms that actively involve young people who traditionally have less access to dialogue opportunities. By addressing this lack of representation, multistakeholder dialogues can become more inclusive, resulting in more comprehensive and impactful outcomes.

5. Lack of legitimisation of youth workers and Youth CSOs

Despite their significant contributions to the development of young people and the promotion of a fairer, more inclusive society, youth workers and youth civil society organisations (CSOs) often operate in environments where their roles and expertise are undervalued. This lack of recognition leads to insufficient support and resources, particularly in accessing funding and institutional backing, which hinders their ability to engage effectively in multistakeholder dialogue and influence decisions that affect youth.

To address these issues, it is essential to raise public awareness about the value and impact of youth work, fostering greater appreciation for the role of youth workers and youth CSOs

and legitimising their contributions in dialogue and policy initiatives, ensuring that their insights and experiences are integrated into decision-making processes.

6. Mistrust and generational gap

Mutual mistrust and generational gaps often result in dialogue and policy processes that overlook valuable youth input due to prevailing stereotypes and prejudices, leading to social conflicts and missed opportunities for collaboration. This disconnection not only stifles youth voices, but also perpetuates a cycle of misunderstanding between generations. Bridging the gap through structured intergenerational dialogues is essential for promoting mutual understanding and collaboration among young people, decision-makers, and other stakeholders. Intergenerational dialogue can create pathways for youth participation by offering platforms for sharing diverse perspectives, fostering mentorship, and enabling the co-creation of solutions that address both immediate and long-term societal challenges.

7. Fragmentation of youth initiatives

The fragmentation of youth initiatives and the lack of collaboration among youth organisations represent significant barriers to young people's capacity to influence decision-making. This lack of coordination results in duplicated efforts, wasted resources, and a diminished collective impact. There is a need for more coordinated efforts to unify the voices of young people across the Euro-Mediterranean region. Building partnerships with youth-led organizations and promoting peer learning can enhance mutual engagement and the effectiveness of youth initiatives.



Pathways for a meaningful youth engagement in the implementation of the UfM Youth Agenda

This section builds on the previously identified challenges by outline pathways for meaningful and inclusive youth engagement in decision-making processes. The key proposals here presented are designed to be applied broadly, including in the decision-making processes related to the implementation of the UfM Youth Agenda.

1. Leverage existing initiatives and platforms

Identify and strengthen current multistakeholder dialogue initiatives and platforms where youth involvement can be institutionalised, ensuring greater integration of youth contributions.

These initiatives must be empowered, and the platforms further legitimised to provide direct input into UfM policy frameworks ensuring youth perspectives are integrated into regional policies, fostering greater engagement and legitimacy.

2. Establish structured dialogue frameworks

Develop continuous and sustainable dialogue initiatives on relevant thematic areas adopting youth engagement as a cross-cutting approach.

These initiatives should act as youth-friendly and inclusive fora that foster genuine engagement. These fora should include both youths, CSOs, and senior decision-makers, bridging gaps between them by offering structured discussions on cross-sectorial challenges like climate change, education, and social inclusion.

3. Set clear goals and objectives

Define clear goals for youth participants to ensure their contributions are understood and valued, fostering realistic expectations about their role and impact. The definition of clear objectives for youth engagement in multistakeholder dialogue and policy processes also enables to put in place proper monitoring and follow-up mechanisms.

This includes setting metrics to assess the impact of youth contributions and establishing feedback mechanisms. Youth representatives should be fully aware of their role and potential influence; this will foster realistic and sustained engagement.

4. Implement transparent selection mechanisms

Develop transparent and inclusive processes to appoint youth representatives, ensuring gender balance, geographic diversity, and prioritizing youth with limited access to decision-making arenas.

Mechanisms should be put in place to guarantee inclusive participation of young people in terms of gender and different backgrounds, including those representing marginalized groups. This includes implementing open calls for youth representatives, using a transparent selection process, and relying on youth-led and youth-friendly platforms to recruit young leaders.

5. Promote peer-to-peer and intergenerational learning

Facilitate knowledge exchange between young people and decision-makers to bridge trust gaps and foster mutual understanding. Initiatives such as peer-to-peer learning, cross-generational mentorships, and collaborative workshops will allow young people to share insights while learning from experienced leaders.

This approach fosters co-ownership of dialogue and policy outcomes and enables the creation of long-term solutions to regional challenges. It can mirror existing UfM initiatives like the Med4Jobs project, providing youth with opportunities to engage in hands-on policy development and mentorship to build long-term capacity.

6. Develop capacity-building programmes

Establish capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing youth capabilities to engage meaningfully in decision-making processes, while also preparing decision-makers to interact with youth on equal footing. These programmes should focus on civic participation, policy analysis, and advocacy, ensuring that youth are equipped to contribute effectively to governance settings.

At the same time, institutional actors should receive training on integrating youth perspectives into dialogue initiatives, fostering mutual respect and productive collaboration. By building capacities on both sides, the UfM can ensure youth engagement goes beyond tokenism, creating a more inclusive decision-making environment.



7. Foster strategic partnerships and networking

Create structured opportunities for partnerships and networking that connect youth with diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, civil society, and international organizations on a regular basis, such as through regional fora or thematic working groups. These platforms should focus on building cross-sectorial collaborations and promoting the development of youth networks that link grassroots youth organizations with national and regional decision-makers. Within this context regional youth networks and national youth councils operating

also at international levels, should be supported recognizing their capacity to represent larger communities.

The analysis of the challenges and the exploration of potential pathways converge into two critical axes that shall be at the base of the implementation of the UfM Youth Agenda to enhance youth engagement in decision making across the UfM architecture and beyond.

Axis 1: Intergenerational Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

Intergenerational dialogue provides a platform for young people to directly engage with policymakers and institutions. This exchange fosters mutual understanding, breaks down stereotypes, and allows youth to express their ideas while learning about the complexities of decision-making. It offers decision-makers fresh perspectives on pressing issues. These dialogues must be sustainable in the long-term in order to promote shared responsibility and structured cooperation on global challenges like, with openness to feedback ensuring effective collaboration.

Axis 2: Capacity Building for Inclusive Youth Engagement

Effective youth engagement requires building capacities that foster collaboration across generations. Both young people and decision-makers need skills to navigate complex dialogue processes and work towards common solutions. For youth, this includes leadership, civic participation, and technical expertise, enabling them to engage meaningfully in decision-making processes. Decision-makers must also develop skills to integrate youth perspectives and collaborate across generations. By creating an inclusive, respectful environment, capacity building enhances mutual understanding and safeguards against discrimination, allowing young people to express themselves freely and confidently.





Final Recommendations

This section includes a set of recommendations and enabling actions addressing three different stakeholders:

- The UfM Secretariat
- UfM Member States
- Civil Society Organizations.

These recommendations shall be followed to create the enabling conditions for the pathways earlier described and increase youth engagement in decision-making processes, including the ones leading to more impactful and youth-responsive initiatives aligned with the UfM Youth Agenda.

a) FOR THE UfM SECRETARIAT

1) Youth mainstreaming approach

Strengthen the organisation’s youth mainstreaming approach by integrating youth perspectives throughout the programme cycle of relevant UfM initiatives—preparation, formulation, execution, and evaluation. This vision ensures a “youth lens” is applied during context analysis, and achievements are assessed from a youth perspective. Organisational indicators should be established to measure how programmes engage youth, the resources dedicated to youth participation, and the outcomes resulting from these efforts.

This mainstreaming approach shall be cross-cutting to all the UfM initiatives related to the thematic priorities of the UfM Agenda, namely, climate action and environment, education and employment, and social inclusion and participation. It must also remain an agile approach to contribute effectively not only to youth-targeted initiatives but to the overall effectiveness of the Secretariat’s work. By

ensuring flexibility and responsiveness, the UfM can better adapt to evolving challenges and opportunities, thereby enhancing the impact of its initiatives. This approach must be considered also for adopting UfM Ministerial Declarations and related Roadmaps for implementation.

Enabling actions:

- *Establish regular consultations with youth constituencies and stakeholders, ensuring that youth perspectives are incorporated at every stage of programme design and implementation. This will allow for the ongoing refinement of initiatives in response to youth input.*
- *Foster close collaboration between departments within the UfM Secretariat to ensure that youth mainstreaming is applied consistently across all areas of work, from climate action to social inclusion. This cross-departmental coordination will ensure that the youth mainstreaming approach is embedded across all thematic areas, not just youth-specific projects.*
- *Training staff in youth engagement strategies, ensuring they can effectively apply a youth lens to their work and manage pilot projects that can act as testing grounds for new approaches providing a model for scaling successful practices.*

2) UfM frameworks for structured youth dialogue

Establish frameworks for structured dialogue between youth and UfM decision-makers. Ensure feedback loops are in place so that youth input is incorporated meaningfully into the UfM initiatives, at

least the ones directly targeting young people, fostering a sense of co-ownership over the outcomes of these initiatives.

Enabling actions:

- *Implement training programmes for UfM staff to enhance youth engagement capabilities. These should include digital engagement strategies, civic education, and methodologies for co-creating initiatives with youth. Such training will equip staff with the necessary tools to engage youth effectively across different thematic topics and policy areas.*
- *Develop more structured consultations with youth constituencies based on a co-leadership model, aligned with international and national frameworks. The governing body of such a space must be built on an equitable tripartite dialogue, bringing together: a) young people and youth actors from South Mediterranean countries, b) national government agencies of South Mediterranean countries, and c) representatives of the UfM*
- *Promote youth participation within South-South cooperation initiatives by creating capacity-building and dialogue opportunities for young people to collaborate on regional challenges specific to the Mediterranean. This should be part of an inter-institutional dialogue, enabling youth to contribute to solutions for shared regional issues.*

3) Intergenerational dialogues

Implement intergenerational dialogue initiatives within the UfM frameworks as well as in collaboration with other institutions to ensure diverse youth voices are consistently heard. These

dialogues should empower civil servants, policymakers, and institutional representatives to engage meaningfully with youth, providing a formal mechanism for the exchange of knowledge and perspectives across generations. The institutionalisation of intergenerational dialogues serves two key functions: ensuring that decision-making processes benefit from the lived experiences of different age groups and promoting a more inclusive policy environment that integrates youth contributions systematically.

Enabling actions:

- *Both youth and decision-makers must be adequately prepared to engage in these dialogues. For young participants, this means developing competencies in areas such as policy analysis, advocacy, and effective communication. For civil servants and policymakers, this entails capacity building on how to interpret and integrate youth perspectives into governance structures. Facilitate cross-generational mentorship programmes as part of the intergenerational dialogues, pairing young leaders with experienced decision-makers. This will foster continuous knowledge exchange and provide youth with long-term support in navigating policy environments.*

b) FOR UfM MEMBER STATES

1) Youth representation in the UfM decision-making processes

Ensure that youth representation is embedded at all different levels of UfM decision-making. Youth perspectives should be included not only in consultations but also in the context analysis and evaluation of implemented



initiatives. This will ensure that youth concerns and aspirations are reflected in the full programme cycle, making their participation more than symbolic.

Enabling actions:

- *Establish national youth advisory boards to serve as formal bodies that directly involve young representatives in policy dialogues. These boards will act as institutionalised channels for youth input, ensuring that national policies, especially those that affect younger generations, are shaped by the voices of youth. Such boards will help bridge the gap between youth and national governments, ensuring policies are youth-responsive and aligned with the realities of the younger population.*
- *Local governments should initiate transparent discussions with representatives of youth CSOs, even with the ones not legally registered or operating in informal conditions. These dialogues should aim to forge legal frameworks that protect the existence and operation of such organisations, allowing them to contribute freely to civic life without fear of legal or institutional threats. This step will strengthen the civic space and encourage more youth-led initiatives to flourish under formal recognition.*

Enhancing the Capacities of UfM National Focal Points on Youth

Member states are encouraged to leverage the existing framework of UfM National Focal Points on Youth to serve as dynamic, youth-responsive counterparts for structured dialogue. The UfM National Focal Points on Youth should be recognised as key facilitators of youth engagement in national and regional

policies, ensuring the representation of youth interests within the UfM framework.

Enabling actions:

- *UfM Member States shall select, appoint, and support individuals with the necessary skills and qualifications, providing them with opportunities for continuous development through UfM-tailored capacity-building programmes on youth engagement.*

3) Facilitate cross-fertilisation of ideas and initiatives

Creating capacity-building and dialogue opportunities for young people and youth CSOs to collaborate on regional challenges specific to the Mediterranean. This should be part of an inter-institutional dialogue, enabling youth to contribute to solutions for shared regional issues.

Enabling actions:

- *Promote youth mobility programmes that enhance cross-border learning, cultural exchange, and professional development, especially for marginalised youth. Member States should simplify administrative procedures, such as visa requirements, to make participation in these programmes accessible. These initiatives will broaden young people's horizons, foster regional cooperation, and allow for the transfer of knowledge and skills across borders.*

c) FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)

1) Facilitating youth participation in dialogue

CSOs play a key role as intermediaries between youth and decision-makers. They

should facilitate youth participation in policymaking and dialogue initiatives by creating opportunities for young people to voice their perspectives.

Enabling actions:

- *CSOs should prioritise capacity building specifically aimed at youth, focusing on equipping them with the skills necessary for meaningful participation in decision-making processes. This includes political literacy, project management, critical thinking, and policy analysis, which will enable young people to contribute effectively to dialogues with policymakers. Furthermore, technical and financial support shall be granted to youth-led organisations for scaling their operations and expanding their influence in decision-making. Special attention should be given to rural and marginalised youth groups, ensuring that capacity-building efforts reach those often left out of decision-making processes. CSOs should focus on offering resources and mentorship to these youth-led initiatives, empowering them to advocate for themselves and their communities.*

2) Facilitating knowledge exchange and partnerships

CSOs should establish platforms and mechanisms for knowledge sharing and partnership creation. These platforms will enable organisations to exchange ideas, resources, and strategies, fostering a collaborative environment that enhances advocacy efforts. By facilitating these exchanges, CSOs can support the development of more effective youth participation initiatives, ensuring that diverse youth voices are heard and considered in policymaking.

Enabling actions:

- *CSOs need to enhance their own organisational capacity to better engage with policymakers and advocate for youth-related issues. This involves training staff and leadership in policy advocacy, effective project management, and digital tools to improve their ability to support youth-led initiatives and represent youth voices in policymaking spaces. By improving their internal capabilities, CSOs can serve as stronger intermediaries between youth and policymakers, amplifying youth perspectives and pushing for youth-centred policies at the national and regional levels.*

3) Unifying intra-regional youth visions

Within the intra-regional context, youth-led CSOs need to unify their visions and operational parameters, especially when it comes to recognising the existence and work of marginalised entities. CSOs should work towards developing harmonised procedures for lobbying and advocacy across the region. By aligning their strategies, these organisations can exert greater influence on policymaking and ensure that marginalised youth are included in decisions that affect their futures.

Enabling actions:

- *Promoting partnerships between local and regional youth networks to foster solidarity and collective action among youth, making their advocacy efforts more coherent and impactful. These networks can help ensure that youth perspectives are meaningfully incorporated into decision-making processes, particularly at the regional and international levels.*



Glossary

1. The UfM work: Political Framework, Regional Platforms, and Projects:

- The **political dimension** of the UfM focuses on meetings among ministerial and governmental representatives who establish priorities through consensus-driven agendas. These Ministerial Meetings tackle key strategic issues such as employment, women’s empowerment, water, and urban development, shaping a unified Mediterranean agenda.
- The **UfM policy framework** includes regional platforms that engage government representatives, experts, international organizations, local authorities, civil society, the private sector, and financial institutions. This collaboration fosters dialogue among national experts and stakeholders, clarifying ministerial mandates, understanding regional needs, sharing experiences, identifying best practices, and promoting cooperative projects.
- Additionally, the UfM Secretariat serves as a **project catalyst**, supporting promoters throughout the project lifecycle. It enhances regional dialogue to create synergies for partnerships and provides technical expertise, networking opportunities, and visibility to ensure project implementation.

2. UfM National Focal Points on Youth:

The UfM National Focal Points on Youth are appointed by the UfM Member States and serves as a crucial link between youth and decision-makers, facilitating dialogue on effective strategies for youth empowerment and engagement related to the Youth Agenda’s thematic priorities.

3. UfM Youth Focal Points Network: it includes the UfM National Focal Points on Youth as well as representatives of youth-led and youth-focused CSOs, international organisations, and academia. The UfM promotes dialogue among these stakeholders and consult them to shape key youth documents like the “UfM Youth Strategy 2023” and the “UfM Youth Agenda”.

4. Multistakeholder dialogue: A collaborative approach to discussions that involves various actors from different sectors, such as governments, civil society, youth organisations, academia, and the private sector. This type of dialogue seeks to integrate a wide range of perspectives to address complex regional or global challenges and ensure that solutions are co-created by all relevant stakeholders.

5. Decision-making processes: The formal and informal procedures through which policies, laws, or actions are developed

and enacted by institutions. In the context of the UfM, decision-making processes refer to how youth input is integrated into policy frameworks, ensuring that youth voices influence outcomes at national and regional levels.

6. Co-leadership models: A governance model where decision-making responsibility is shared equally between youth and institutional actors. Co-leadership ensures that both parties collaborate on an equal footing throughout the decision-making cycle, from planning to execution, thereby promoting genuine partnership and shared accountability.

7. Co-ownership models: A model of governance where both youth and institutional actors jointly own the process and outcomes. Co-ownership ensures that youth are not passive participants but are actively involved in shaping, implementing, and monitoring initiatives, thus fostering shared responsibility and commitment.

8. Youth CSOs: Youth Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are non-governmental, youth-led or youth-focused groups that advocate for and represent the interests of young people. Youth CSOs play a crucial role in promoting youth

participation in policy-making and civic engagement, and in addressing issues relevant to younger generations.

9. Youth Workers: Professionals or volunteers who work directly with young people to support their development and empower them to engage in social, educational, and civic processes. Youth workers facilitate youth engagement in various areas, from skills development to participation in governance, often acting as intermediaries between youth and decision-makers.

10. Cross-cutting approach: A strategy that integrates specific thematic priorities—such as youth engagement—across multiple sectors or initiatives. In the UfM context, a cross-cutting approach ensures that youth perspectives are embedded throughout all thematic areas of action, such as climate change, social inclusion, and education, rather than being treated as a standalone issue.

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ufmsecretariat.org



Palau de Pedralbes | Pere Duran Farell, 11
Barcelona, Spain - 08034
Phone: 00 34 93 521 4100 | Fax: 00 34 93 521 4102

