

Stakeholders' Conference

Hammamet, Tunisia 19 to 20 May 2022

Conference Proceedings



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Introduction



The Stakeholders' Conference was held in Hammamet, Tunisia on 19 to 20 May 2022.

It was organised by CDE Petra Patrimonia (LB) in conjunction with local project partner, the Association d'Éducation Relative à l'Environnement (AERE – PP5), with additional support from all the RESMYLE project partners.

The purpose of the Stakeholders' Conference was to:

- Promote the RESMYLE Project with public and private policy actors in the field of employment, youth and the environment
- Forge links with local and national public policies to improve project capitalisation efforts
- Gather and learn from feedback from other experiences and enhance project outputs
- Generate visibility for the RESMYLE Project

The conference included more than 20 presentations from participants in addition to round table discussions and plenary contributions.

Copies of the various presentations made by the speakers are available for consultation on the AERE website (<https://aerehammamet.org>).

This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of CDE Petra Patrimonia and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structures.

Welcome address

Mr Salem Sahli – President of AERE

Mr Fethi Ben Mimoun - Tunisian National Authority for the ENI CBC MED Programme

Mme Awatef Miraoui – Tunisian employment and self-employment agency (ANETI)



Mr Salem Sahli opened the 2-day conference, welcoming participants from all the project partner countries. He emphasised that the work ahead focused on concrete, tangible actions and initiatives led by social inclusion and sustainable development actors building on the achievements of the Resmyle Project, including a platform of educational resources, assistance for micro projects, voluntary missions, international field-based workshops and support for youth entrepreneurial ventures.



Mr Fethi Ben Mimoun reminded those present of the national authority's role to support Tunisia's participation in the ENI CBC MED programme and ensure the programme is properly administered in Tunisia. RESMYLE is part of the 2nd cycle of cooperation in the Mediterranean involving 13 countries, soon to be expanded to 15 in the next cycle 2021-2027 entitled INTERREG Next, with a current budget for the Mediterranean basin of €244 million.



Mme Awatef Miraoui stressed that young people form a fragile group that requires significant resources to be properly supported. As a result, ANETI's engagement in Resmyle through AERE is culminating in the planned signature of a partnership agreement between the two structures.

Conference aims and objectives



Mr Matthieu Guary
European Projects
Manager CDE Petra Patrimonia

The purpose of this Stakeholders' Conference is to underpin the durability of outputs from the RESMYLE Project and spearhead the capitalisation process for other operators to adopt these outputs to expand their impact and sustain them in the long-term, **a key stage** in the project.

Engaging with public and private policy actors is **vital** as the RESMYLE project partners are primarily local development organisations with little say in national and regional policies, hence this meeting between the two sectors at the Stakeholders' Conference.

The two-day event fosters that connection by exchanging our experience and expertise to learn from each other and most importantly to trial initiatives in the RESMYLE Project that will enhance public policies and enrich, adapt and strengthen collective efforts via a range of tools once the project finishes. Three round-tables will promote practical experiences from RESMYLE and other projects: inspiring and engaging young people to have a say in the environment, environmental training programmes geared to NEETs and support initiatives for young people wanting to start a business venture in green growth.



The challenges of training and promising sectors for youth employment

Mme Marie-Florence Dabrin - Corse Mobilité Solidaire

2022 is the European Year of Youth yet the potential role young people can play in growth is hampered by academic failure, poverty, unemployment and social exclusion, not to mention the fall-out from the Covid pandemic with the widespread loss of vulnerable job categories and apprenticeships. The main challenge in the Southern Mediterranean will be to find employment for a rapidly rising number of young people and more specifically, women, challenging traditional patterns. Youth unemployment is twice as high compared to overall unemployment figures, reaching 13.3% in 2021 (OECD) yet regional differences are far more alarming (42% of 15-24 year olds in Tunisia are unemployed, 20% in France and 17.6% in Lebanon, for example). Moreover, in 2020, 17.6% of young people aged 15-29 in Europe were NEETs. Nationally, the reasons are complex, combining economic, educational, social factors such as discouragement after studies in Italy, invalidity in Sweden and social exclusion in France ("les invisibles").

What do NEETs actually need? Their commitment to any employability scheme depends first and foremost on access to sustained financial support, for mobility, accommodation, a rapid regular income and long-term general support.

This personal and professional support must be responsive and innovative, not fixed and this does not imply that innovation in employability schemes is technology-based. Given that 85% of occupations by 2030 do not yet exist, professional training must be flexible and adapt.

Eliminate 'boredom' in training initiatives by not solely focusing on IT (serious games, quizzes, etc) but role-play situations and operational objectives.



Socio-emotional and technological skills are gaining ground, with digital technology, among others, set to transform 30-50% of jobs by 2030, which will require lifelong learning in digital technology to keep pace with progress.

Across Europe, STEM and healthcare sectors are expected to grow significantly at the expense of office support and production jobs. Green jobs connect with both technical skills and CSR agendas, currently focusing on energy and water distribution, waste processing and environmental protection. The sectors currently recruiting the most employees are energy performance of buildings, transport, renewable energy, organic farming, the environment and the circular economy. In the digital economy, the priority is artificial intelligence, data, the cloud, networks and all the operational maintenance, support that underpins it. These occupations require a large capacity for adaptation.

Presentation of the RESMYLE Project

Matthieu Guary, CDE Petra Patrimonia

The goal of RESMYLE is not just to aid the employability of young people in the Mediterranean towards sustainable development occupations but also to stimulate their commitment and sense of initiative for the environment. This constitutes the project's first goal: to make young people environmental actors and eco-citizens in their own right. Secondly, the challenge both North and South of the Mediterranean is to help young people under 25 with and without academic qualifications to find jobs and prevent them being excluded. Thirdly, the Mediterranean is experiencing mounting environmental challenges linked to rapid urban development, climate

crisis and biodiversity loss, dwindling water resources, etc. that constitute both risks to humanity and responses to be found through future action.

RESMYLE's logic is to identify what can be done to help young NEETs to find and develop personal and professional vocations that address these sustainable development challenges in the Mediterranean. While there are countless needs to meet and a multitude of potential professions/occupations to create, there is often a gap between policy and the reality of growth in green jobs. Yet, many local initiatives exist that are not perceptible to national institutions which form a vast, valuable and untapped test-bed to address environmental issues, including for example, recycling food waste, composting schemes, non-motorised mobility for community needs, etc. These often do not have the profile they perhaps merit .



RESMYLE

Consequently, RESMYLE seeks to identify the problems, needs and employment potential in the local community with local stakeholders. There are tens, hundreds and thousands of local initiatives that can individually represent one job or part of one but altogether constitute a significant labour market. Many of these activities are non-commercial stemming from the social (or third) economy, provided by systems of non-monetary exchange, sales and grants. Together, these activities can become secure, long-term sources for a certain number of jobs, i.e. jobs that left solely to market forces (private sector) will remain insecure. Hence the challenge of making these local initiatives more robust, secure through grants and public sector aid, sharing services, community currencies, etc.

In conclusion, RESMYLE seeks to address 3 challenges:

- make young people want to take action for the environment (eco-citizenship) which is the focus of project work package 3 to provide support to local actions to inform and engage young NEETs:
 - i) an online platform of educational tools for social partners, youth workers to inform and engage young people in environmental and sustainable development issues,
 - ii) a programme of financial support to 13 selected local experimental initiatives that engage disadvantaged and marginalised young people in constructive community projects that support environmental causes.
- to provide non-formal, hands-on training for NEET capacity building that supplements their conventional educational attainment by dealing

with a challenge and finding solutions. This is addressed through project work package 4:

i) international field-based workshops that enable young NEETs to invest their ideas and energy in a community project that reinforces their professional and personal capacities (soft skills) as actors of their own initiative with qualified supervision,

ii) a training platform for youth/social workers to be familiar with the RESMYLE

- To support NEETs develop their own environmental business ideas and initiatives (profit or non-profit) that meet a need. This is addressed through project work package 5:

a network of 6 RESMYLE eco-incubators to help young NEETs create their own jobs but also to work together to deliver joint projects with expert guidance on running a business, business plans, provision of soft skills and technical skills. The latter two elements require a wider network of mentors for personalised support which again is one of the reasons for this conference.

Currently, the RESMYLE Project is over mid-way through the proposed actions with approximately €700,000 committed from a total budget of almost €2 million (90% grant). The project has 4-months to run but a request for an extension until August 2023 will be submitted to meet all the project goals.

Given their sectoral diversity of the 8 RESMYLE project partners are experienced and equipped to address these challenges but they are essentially local development operators that do not make public policy which is why this conference has been arranged to connect with public institutions and test the relevance of the RESMYLE approach and its actions.

Round table 1

Issues and experiences in mobilising Mediterranean young people to face environmental challenges

Speakers: Céline Lelièvre - OPUS (FR), Tahar Mathlouthi – Ministry of Education, EdenMED Project (TN), Yossr Sbais – ISSTE (TN), Vincenzo Vassallo – Autism Aid (IT), Ahmad Alomari – Umm Qais (JOR), Mortada Mouhana – Union of Tyre municipalities (LEBN), Manuela Zuzolo and Fabio Della Ratta – L'Agora (IT)

Moderator: Jean-Baptiste Lanaspèze – CME (FR)

With reference to a message shared during the opening plenary session, “the desire to take action”, this, not the round table addresses the subject of eco-citizenship.

OPUS (FR) has created a number of educational tools to inform and encourage young people to protect and enhance the environment, including one for blind and sight-impaired people to discover the animal biodiversity of the Vaucluse Department with tactile clues to identify a range of animals. The educational tool rejects conven-

tional classroom and computer-based learning approaches, to focus on senses and outdoor learning via games and challenges which are far more effective for young people with disabilities such as those suffering from sight impairment, autism and learning difficulties. It is also suitable for adults if first accompanied by a guided walk before the game or challenge.

EdenMED (TN) is a cross-border project between the coastal region of Northern Tunisia and the south of Sicily on environmental education for a sustainable Mediterranean involving exchanges between school children aged 6-16, teachers and school inspectors. The aim is to instil environmental awareness by building on existing environmental learning content and activities by favouring a lifelong learning approach that empowers young people to act and make a difference (learn and act) over theory-based learning and well-worn messages and warnings. The first step is to understand how pupils perceive the environment, then identify all environmental education providers and assemble examples of good practice. The project will then produce a guide to deliver this paradigm change in national education curricula that makes the environment meaningful to pupils and encourage them to take action to protect it both in and out of school.

ISSTE (TN), the Tunisian Institute of Environmental Science and Technology seeks to integrate sustainable development in social inclusion programme to raise awareness among NEETs in partnership



with social and youth stakeholders. ISSTE has the task of creating an online platform of learning tools designed for social partners and youth workers to inform and engage young people in environmental and sustainable development issues.

The website (www.act4urplanet.eu) features information about the RESMYLE project, learning tools for educators and youth workers arranged under 4 subject areas (sustainability and well-being, climate change, economy and nature), the key facts about sustainable development challenges and an directory of the project partners. The learning tools (lesson plans programmes) cover a wide range of topics such as composting, shopping and eating responsibly, melting of the ice caps, environmental connections and relationships and saving/recycling water. The site contains a questionnaire for suggestions, additions and continuous improvement of these resources.

AUTISM AID (IT), will run an upcoming international RESMYLE workshop (TERRA) near Napoli. Volunteering is vital on many levels but must not be abused when funding options exist to pay people, otherwise this undermines the act itself. Volunteering can benefit from a cultural framework for co-production, co-learning and shared understanding applied to the bigger picture in society, reciprocal learning based on social justice and critical consciousness and dialogue.

Many young people have little faith in the future, often manifested through depressive behaviour, whereby they feel they have nothing to contribute. Top-down approaches to youth engagement often fail as they do not use the right social media tools (e.g. Facebook instead of TikTok) or even repress certain voluntary forms of youth

activism. Non-formal education is key to proper youth engagement on their level where exchange can happen in a freer framework than formal education which many young people have disengaged with.

The forthcoming workshop seeks to adopt these youth empowering principles, through collective creation particularly through the unifying power of art and culture. The workshop will also provide for critical analysis with the emphasis on the process, or life-learning experience, rather than a tangible end result.

Ahmad Alomari - eco-guide (JOR), highlights the importance of nature guiding to encourage people, particularly children, to reflect on their behaviour and attitudes to the environment. Field work is critical to such learning, to discover

the environment through history, geography and biodiversity and respect nature that sustains responsible visitor numbers and the unspoilt natural attractions they come to see. Such an example includes the Crown Daisy which children traditionally

pick to make garlands to sell to visitors. The flower is endangered but sensitive awareness-raising at all levels, from the children, to parents to visitors is required to curb this practice and protect nature. Hands-on experiences are critical to learning through experimentation, particularly for those with disabilities (blind or sight-impaired). Practical activities (making pottery, making fire arrows, etc.) excite children and facilitate learning.

Union of Tyre municipalities (LEBN), fosters youth engagement in connection with civic or community initiatives such as a volunteer firefighter training scheme. This also extends to support for youth councils and scout groups to engage with



public health issues, first aid and awareness-raising campaigns. In terms of engaging young people with the environment and sustainable development, it supports youth committee involvement in policy actions such as a strategic sustainable development plan for the Caza of Tyre, youth municipal shadow councils in local to ensure the community has a voice and can participate in local development proposals. Finally, the Union of Tyre Municipalities also supports environmental improvement initiatives such as beach cleaning campaigns, as well as providing training and awareness-raising to young volunteers.

L'Agora (IT) has produced a video for a project entitled "MEET NEET" funded by RESMYLE under Work Package 3 - local experimental initiatives that engage disadvantaged and marginalised young people in constructive community projects that support environmental causes. The video shows how a group of marginalised young people took part in an artistic project focused on street art at a public school to express key messages and concerns from a young person's perspective about the future of the environment in a creative and constructive way.

Subsequent exchanges and reactions from the conference attendees highlighted the following points:

- The need in Tunisia for the Ministry of Education to step up training for teachers and trainers to properly support public education efforts to boost environmental education in schools (see EdenMED Project above) and to work more closely with local environmental associations such as AERE, in Hammamet, to add value to environmental education through practical activities such as nature excursions, art, and sports activities to engage young people to think about and act for the environment.
- It is very important to have tangible outcomes from inclusion and employability projects. A local project, "Le Chemin vers une réussite durable", in Hammamet, Tunisia worked with 10 young NEETs

to offer them opportunities of a career in the • environment and sustainable development. The project involves one-to-one support for 8 of the 10 young people who are now receiving training, including one who is developing a business idea. A second action involved a school class in a role-play game about an actual plan to build an industrial estate in an agricultural area to appreciate the various stakeholder perspectives.

- Do young people the same age in different Mediterranean countries really have the same dream? Do they have the same opportunities and means? Financial aid and exchanges for young people is welcome but can be truly reciprocal by valuing the work of associations in peripheral communities across the Mediterranean that strive to give hope to young people through creative pursuits for the environment such as the project "Eco in Art".

- Based on the experience of ANETI, the Tunisian employment and self-employment agency, it is extremely difficult to engage young people in the informal sector to shift to formal activities. Experience in Italy, through RESMYLE, points to the roles of local networks that work closely with young people to reach them, or Missions Locales in France. Other experiences such as volunteer workcamps in Provence, France work with youth homes and centres to provide non-formal learning through restoring heritage buildings under the supervision of experienced social/youth workers and technical experts.



Round table 2

**The new professionals of green and blue growth:
The challenges of theoretical and practical
training for young people**

Speakers: Medhi Ismail – AERE (TN),
Raffaella Bruzzone – Chamber of Commerce of Genoa (IT), Tayssir Bouchiba – UTAP – Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (TN), Ayman Dandach – Nokta Fasle Association (LEBN), Alain Assouline – Webforce 3 (FR)

Moderator: Yasser Ben Amore – ISSTE (TN)

AERE (TN) has organised and delivered two international field-based workshops for the RESMYLE Project, a guide to built heritage in Hammamet and a self-guided walk for visitors to the international cultural centre of Hammamet. Based on experience so far, the keys to success of this hands-on learning experience are:

- Workshop topics must address the lack of knowledge and appreciation, in this case of built heritage, evident by its state of abandon. This factor motivates the young participants
- Experienced, qualified staff to supervise activities. Workshop facilitators first completed the RESMYLE online training for trainers. A range of technical advisors (architects, historians, teachers, academics, artists and illustrators) is essential as is past experience of the management team to oversee all organisational aspects
- Clear and concise call for applicants stating the workshop context and objectives
- Shortlisted applicant profiles must carefully match the activity topic to form a multi-disciplinary team of 'consultants' each bringing different

skills and experience

The workshop programme should be structured to include a short introductory phase (site visits, meetings, information gathering, etc.), leisure time, ideally an excursion at the mid-way point to allow time away from work tasks, a preparation/reporting phase to produce the final product, in this case a built heritage guide and a final presentation of the work accomplished in the presence of all workshop contributors and the local community.

In terms of evaluating the experience, the key is assessing how the workshop experience will be useful for the participants' future career choices. Participant feedback indicated that field-based workshops improved hard and soft skills and encouraged some to identify and further training opportunities. Most importantly, it provides young people with valuable practical experience which is commonly a top priority for employers. From a continuous improvement perspective, participants asked for more leisure time, the addition of a human development trainer to bolster soft skills training, greater international diversity among participants and role play/games.

Furthermore, learning experience from the first



workshop enabled innovations to be made to the second one, such as a mid-point review of work and participant feedback to plan the second half of the workshop more effectively. Overall, the most important part of the experience

is concrete outputs that provide personal satisfaction, together with the acquisition of hard and soft skills (e.g. creating QR codes or team working and conflict resolution).

The Genoa Chamber of Commerce (IT) administered the Interreg Cross-border cooperation project, In.vi.tra Jeunes (2019-2021) between 4 French-Italian partner regions to support capacity building of young university graduates to start their own business ventures in the social enterprise sector. The project also involved mobility (13 student exchanges with social enterprises) to give young people comprehensive practical experience in the working environment. This involved designing new models of personal support during the placements and to properly match the host organisation projects

them accordingly as 70% of these are not suited to a profitable start-up venture. The CCG strives to include a European scope to its activities, notably in entrepreneurship but also in professional capacity building and territorial development (tourism, culture, food and drink sectors).

UTAP (TN) is a partner in the ENI CBC MED HELIOS Project which promotes social inclusion and employment of young NEETs up to age 30 and women of all ages, in the blue and green economies. the priority is to match labour market supply and demand by providing beneficiaries with saleable skills in the labour market. These skills are identified using electronic tools (profiling emerging sources of jobs in the green and blue sectors and NEETs) so that subsequent training provides



(growth, investment, etc.) with the profiles of the students selected. The young people learned how to work in a team and on subjects they might have studied (e.g. smartgrids). The benefits of the project for the CCG were to foster business start-up ventures, advise potential entrepreneurs and organise a personal support plan, provide capacity building and match labour market supply and demand. Key national chamber of commerce mechanisms to achieve this aim include the "Excelsior" scheme of regular surveys with SMEs to ensure professional training evolves to match emerging needs (e.g. twin - digital and green -transition, risk managers), the study-work initiative to teach entrepreneurial skills in schools prior to workplace experiences. Finally, young people's business ideas are assessed to advise



and NEETs) so that subsequent training provides NEETs with exactly those skills. In Tunisia, the survey focused on sea fish farming and semi-processed (canned) foods which overwhelmingly (77%) needed better financial management, as well as technical business management and workforce improvements (35% and 29% respectively). The corresponding development of training curricula in the green and blue economies, soft skills and entrepreneurship for NEETs covers low, medium to high educational attainment. The former receive face-to-face training to address literacy and computer skill issues, while the latter two study online training modules (80 hours for each), each with external expert input. Both learning programmes and supervised based on pre- and post-training assessments and tailored

personal support (a mentor in the case of those studying the face-to-face programme). The programmes are monitored on a daily basis for trainee feedback (thoughts, impressions problems, etc.) on the learning method, content and style, as well as assessments with the trainers. Nokta Fasle Association (TN) focuses on the alternative economy and efforts to promote greater sustainability in the context of the economic crisis, climate change and a lack of services. In relation to job opportunities in the economic crisis, young people are turning to the installation of solar and PV panels. There is also potential in waste processing and recycling through allocations to the private sector and decentralisation policies to fuel this development. Eco-tourism services and products can drive the growth of local, high-value jobs that protect the environment and work with local cooperatives, while employment in agriculture strengthens food security, in particular. The return on investment in employment for young people in the sustainable economy not only contributes to a more self-sustaining Lebanon but also provides greater job opportunities, diversified sources of income, while curbing social exclusion and mitigates the impacts of climate change.

Webforce 3 (FR), based in Marseille, was established in 2014. Now with a wider European network of training providers, Webforce 3 provides training to young people, in particular NEETs from all backgrounds, in digital technology occupations. The digital sector has many similarities with the ecological transition and sustainable economy inasmuch as it can be an effective tool to drive this process. Webforce 3 promotes training that equips young people with skills to cope with a changing labour market and professions. Estimates in France identify a shortfall of 230,000 workers in the digital sector by 2025 (1.7 million in Europe) but this shortfall is moreover a global problem with various countries taking workers from other countries, or even from provincial towns to capital

cities exacerbating the problem of a 'brain drain'. 2 out of 3 young people in disadvantaged districts in France are unemployed yet the digital sector typically recruits graduates. So, Webforce 3 provides an alternative to formal education for those with low educational attainment and career prospects. It began by focusing on web developer training in 3-months in stark contrast to formal training schemes of up to 5-years. Currently almost 8,000 young people have received training with 90% success rate (60% find a job, 15% continue training and 15% become self-employed). With less of an emphasis on innovation for innovation's sake, the method involves active learning with trainers who work in digital technology, giving trainees real projects to work on. Complex concepts are addressed through practical exercises, individual and group projects, with a simple daily set of questions to check if the learner has grasped the content. If not, they receive a link to a revision platform with a film of the lesson and its content. The trainer is also notified to cover specific points again and thereby avoid drop-outs. The learning concept discounts trainees' past educational attainment but relies on their full commitment to the course for 3-months after which the prospect of a job is highly likely. The motivation is personal which differs from their experience in formal education inasmuch as the offer provides rapid, personalised and focused training.

Subsequent exchanges and reactions from the conference attendees highlighted the following points:

- Sustainability is a very popular concept worldwide now but in many cases has only been embraced only after a period of unrestricted access and consumption. The real emphasis should be on a switch of mindset to responsible behaviour to make sustainability truly sustainable.
- Local associations must be involved when searching for young NEETs to become trainees as they are recognised conduits for information on training opportunities. Often, introductory works-



hops, such as digital technology applied to leisure and sports, are a useful way to engage young NEETs and identify their areas of interest.

- Equally, alternative approaches involve meeting young people in public spaces they frequent and engaging with them to invite requests from them, such as an excursion during which the change of environment provides a better opportunity to connect with them and their challenges. Activities are designed to build self-confidence and social inclusion for their subsequent career development guidance and training.
- Work-study modules after initial intensive short courses are vital to sustain personal support to young people as they progress further in their learning and social inclusion.
- It is vital that state institutions working, for example, in waste processing, take account of local initiatives in the circular economy and properly include them in public policy to end

the 'informal' status of such local action and provide them with suitable recognition and support.

- While the focus of youth employability and inclusion initiatives should be on the process rather than the result, securing funding, notably from the public sector, is key while preventing and over-reliance of the state on voluntary sector initiatives which ideally should be part of planning the solution to a problem, not the solution themselves.

Round table 3

The new jobs of green and blue growth:

**How to support the creation of activities
by young people?**

Speakers: Karim Rejeb – Consultant (TN),
Muriel Barnard Reymond – Le Carburateur
(FR), Yasmein Okour – Jordan University of
Science and Technology (JOR), Maria Nives
Riggio and Piero de Martino – FILSE Liguria
(IT), Abdennaceur Ben Ahmed – Handicap
International (TN), Aida Zouari – Tunisian
employment and self-employment agency
(ANETI),

Moderator: Salem Sahli – AERE (TN)

A review of experience gained from employability support for young NEETs in Tunisia presented by consultant, Karim Rejeb, revealed that young

people distrust the state (perceived nepotism, favouritism) and wanted financial assistance rather than further training. Feeling abandoned by the state, they, in turn, feel little obligation to pay taxes.

Conversely, when young people are accompanied, such as graduate NEETs, they often come with a fixed idea and resist professional guidance, while early school-leavers in their mid-twenties are already fatigued by poorly paid, tiring jobs. Both profiles (graduates and school dropouts) require specific support to counter a disaffection with the state and a lack of self-confidence, especially for long-term unemployed. Coupled with this is a lack of entrepreneurial mindset which the Tunisian state education system does not foster. Those that do seek to start a business do so as a last resort after prolonged unemployment compounded by an underlying sense of frustration. If support schemes do not lead to financial assistance (grants), many drop out.

The key challenge for NEET councillors and advisors is to give young people a sense of hope



and trust, to value support and think big through personal development and changing mindsets. Support and accompaniment should not be too long and leave time for part-time jobs to secure an income, with the emphasis on guidance and mentoring after young people have started their own business ventures. Generally, graduate NEETs are more receptive to support than early school-leavers and tend to capitalise more on this support although a sense of resistance needs to be overcome to fully benefit from professional guidance, particularly when switching from the informal to formal economy.

Le Carburateur (FR) is a part of a new generation of publicly-financed business start-up incubators funded by Greater Marseille Council in 2016 for young people in disadvantaged districts of the city. Le Carburateur serves an area in north Marseille comprising a third of the city's jobseekers and a quarter of its population. The area lacked local job creation services and also suitable premises for business start-ups. As such, Le Carburateur was created as a business hub providing 1,800 m² of space for guidance, business units, tools, networks and contacts in a collective venture that benefits all entrepreneurs through sharing experience and learning from each other (open source).

Le Carburateur does not specialise in any particular business sector but taps into good transport connections, a wider urban renewal programme, strategic public-private partnerships and tax exemption measures for young start-ups. It provides customised support to 1,500 young people (43% women and 30% under 30 years old) with business ideas (initial assessment of needs, stage of business idea, business plan, market research and funding, etc.) and flexible business premises for up to 3 years. Mentoring, breakfast workshops

and meetings with experts (accountants, coaches, etc.) are organised for beneficiaries on a daily basis. Young people must sign up to a support programme to benefit from business tools, premises and networking opportunities. In return, Le Carburateur closely monitors their progress (turnover, employees, etc.). The hub currently generates 130 jobs per year (management and workers). Supported businesses generate an average turnover of €38,000 and must employ local people if they generate new jobs.

Finally, Le Carburateur offers a number of specialised initiatives to boost sales and trade experience among young people, as well as outreach business pitch activities in secondary schools and a business start-up scheme with high school pupils.

JUST (JOR) has created an eco-business incubator, the "Green Construction Innovation Lab", for the RESMYLE Project in September 2021, as an extension of an existing incubator. Focusing on a gap in the market, growing climate-related challenges and a lack of impetus from national stakeholders, the incubator promotes environmentally-friendly construction innovation, energy and water-saving ideas, clean air, green roofs and spaces and sustainable outdoor furniture. A Hackathon held in early 2022 resulted in support for 6 business ideas proposed by 11 NEETs who benefit from one-to-one training to advance their projects such as self-sustaining temporary shelters for refugees. The incubator has difficulty attracting non-graduate NEETs from rural areas dissuaded by what they perceive as advanced skills and knowledge they may need associated with the university and European funding that backs the incubator. Basic soft skills are required to overcome this hurdle.

Alzahra'a Alomari, a young beneficiary from the eco-incubator has created a business start-up called Lucent to produce translucent concrete tiles.

This included support to prototype manufacturing techniques, trials with new materials, contacting competitors and market research before the production of final products. Having experienced 3 different business incubators during her entrepreneurial journey, Alzahra'a experienced long, repetitive, theory-based training programmes and general advice but instead wanted one-to-one meetings, workshops and soft skills training (personal development and communication skills), which was missing from conventional support. Knowledge sharing is also key for entrepreneurs to fast-track the development of a business idea.

FILSE Liguria (public financial agency of the Liguria Region - IT) is the operating arm of the regional council to support economic and social development. FILSE is a public company with public shareholders (regional council, large municipalities, chamber of commerce, etc.). It is also a holding company providing financial services, infrastructure and buildings, local development, research and social enterprise. FILSE manages funding for SMEs and start-ups and social enterprise, in particular, which connect closely with young people. It supports business start-ups through 3 regional incubators including one in Genoa. The incubators provide the same package of integrated services from training from mindset to market, allowing young people to learn, test out ideas. The idea is "not to fear failure", to grow from this experience, while advising young people when a business idea is not viable for a stable job with growth potential. FILSE also organises promotional activities such as pitches (Smart Cup Liguria), networking between companies for co-creation and co-design, mobility for young people to learn business skills abroad (Erasmus for young entrepreneurs), personal and financial support for NEETs worth up to €25,000

through the EU Youth Guarantee programme. It also has a venture capital company to scale up business ideas accessible to small-scale business ventures.

Handicap International (TN) has trialled a local support initiative for disadvantaged young people to boost employment and eco-entrepreneurial ventures in a southern provincial town and surrounding rural area. This involved identifying green value chains (agri-tourism, oasis agriculture, recycling, farming services, artisanat, etc.) to focus support for green sustainable business ventures that in turn aid inclusion, prosperity and economic development. Local stakeholders were also identified at all levels, including local economic incubators to be included in the above value chains.

The resulting entrepreneurial support programme includes crosscutting capacity building followed by one-to-one support for business plans and technical training specific to different value chains (research, production techniques, labels, etc.). Crucially, this initiative was only made possible by creating an ecosystem and partnerships between stakeholders to provide the right environment to access support and information for sustainable business ventures.

ANETI, the Tunisian employment and self-employment agency, provides entrepreneurial support to young NEETs prior to and after creating their businesses. These include general information sessions, exploring the realities of starting your own business, organising your own business, creating your own company (business plan and pitching), practical work placements with a company before starting your own business. Once a business has been created, ANETI provides additional technical training, business management skills (accounting, marketing, etc.), grants for the first 3-years of the business venture. Two cross-

cutting programmes focus on helping entrepreneurs switch from the informal to the formal business sector (albeit with great difficulty to convince individuals) and on soft skills (very popular). The training programme is free of charge with grants available for some modules.

From 2019-2020, ANETI provided pre-business start-up training to 26 individuals and post business creation training to more than 9,000 beneficiaries (not including webinars) during the Covid pandemic. ANETI is aware of scepticism about the state from young people and is converting its services to digital platforms for greater accessibility.

Subsequent exchanges and reactions from the conference attendees highlighted the following points:

- Young people are generally sceptical of all institutions identified with the state, including ANETI but also banks, tax authorities, etc.
- ANETI is increasingly conscious of providing support for green business ventures but this is still at an early stage.
- There is an apparent diversity of business incubator services but what good practice is actually transferrable from North to South and vice versa? This depends strongly on context, culture and resources and services in the Northern Mediterranean cannot necessarily be replicated in the South.
- Employability initiatives largely depend on a small number of field officers but this can be supplemented by involving recently retired with extensive business experience who are keen to share their advice and knowledge with young entrepreneurs.
- A legacy to consider from the RESMYLE Project is for young entrepreneurs to form a cooperative consultancy firm covering the Mediterranean to



bid for European Union rural/local development funded contracts.

- It is extremely important for educational activities encouraging entrepreneurial mindsets from the earliest age, to be run in schools but also to continue in higher education (student clubs, etc.) so that entrepreneurial ventures are not seen by young people as a last resort but a realistic career opportunity.
- There is a pressing need to better engage NEETs and disadvantaged target groups as opposed to graduate NEETs. In some cases, support initiatives such as incubators use local associations, scouts or influencers, people who know the local.
- Incubators must be accessible, jargon-free and approachable for young NEETs to walk through the door. Equally, intermediaries are needed to build self-confidence and ensure an easy passage for non-graduate NEETs. This is often a missing link in the chain.

Conclusions



This stakeholders' conference has helped identify specific characteristics in the field of social inclusion and employability of young NEETs from a North-South and East-West perspective in the Mediterranean, requiring different approaches, not just one transferrable model of support. The key to any model, however, is enabling young people to have their say and make active contributions.

It is important for RESMYLE to have a network of expertise, for example, recently retired business persons (see above) that continues to expand and improve for the benefit of young NEETs, for example through exchanges of young people to attend mini-academies on subjects such as sustainable tourism, supervised by a mentor.

Partnerships are necessary for the capitalisation and sustainability of RESMYLE initiatives in the long-term. RESMYLE incubators will not survive in the long-term without being part of a larger ecosystem cooperating with institutional partners. However, the value of such partnerships is that RESMYLE eco-incubators provide their expertise in sustainable development business creation and coaching from a civil society perspective to complement more mainstream institutional programmes, not have these programmes duplicated by institutional

partners. Equally, the RESMYLE GROW UP! eco-incubator in Genoa will only prosper if it is complementary to the FILSE incubator networks to provide beneficiaries with a ladder of opportunity where they can progress to other incubators to grow their business ventures. The priority is creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem in which RESMYLE is one component among others, rather than funding multiple support programmes that alone have less chance of a long-term future.

This partnership building should be a priority for the final 12-months of RESMYLE project.

RESMYLE seeks to generate 300 new jobs for young people in the Mediterranean, however if we are to multiply this number to target 1,500 or 2,000 jobs, it must forge operational links with public partnerships, local businesses and support organisations.

The stakeholders' conference has nevertheless kickstarted this collaborative process which will continue for the remaining 12-months of the RESMYLE project.

A final acknowledgment goes to the AERE association for having successfully organised the stakeholders' conference at short notice as soon as the public health restrictions made it possible.

This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of CDE Petra Patrimonia and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structures.

