



LAUNCHING THE FRIENDS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN MACRO-REGION

Monday 24 April 2023 (17.30-20.00)
in Brussels (Rond-point Schuman, 14-8th Floor)

More information soon in your mailboxes
and on our [website!](#)

INITIATIVE

BECOMING A FRIEND OF THE MEDITERRANEAN MACRO-REGION

The Mediterranean is unique. It is a binding sea between diverse territories experiencing similar challenges in terms of climate change impacts, biodiversity loss, desertification or food security issues, not to mention the socio-economic dimensions regarding opportunities for populations, the capacity to experiment, promote and harness innovation, brain drain mitigation, migration phenomena or gender-related and equality issues. There also exist a strong sense of belonging across all shores of the basin and an increasing will to work together regardless of circumstances.

The *Friends of the Mediterranean Macro-Region initiative* aims at forming a community of institutions and key actors who believe that, albeit its complexity, time has come to strengthen cooperation in the Mediterranean, exploring its richness and potential more coherently, with increased complementarity and solidarity.

Supporting the creation of a macro-regional strategy at the scale of the Mediterranean comes indeed in support of more cohesion in the basin, based on the principles of a gradual and voluntary approach, shared multi-level governance and variable geometry responding to the needs and territorial specificities. As a complement to the frameworks, initiatives and programs already in place in the area, an over-arching macro-regional strategy would allow an increased coherence and integration between these actions already in place, while allowing complementarity, more rationality in the use of resources and an efficient joint work towards finding common ground for economic, social and environmental cohesion and solutions to shared challenges.

The *Friends of the Mediterranean Macro-Region* is an open initiative. Any institution, entity or private person is free to join this community by signing this short declaration and pledging to fulfill its principles.

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Recalling the shared principles of the reflections on the macro-regional strategy for the Mediterranean:¹

- **A gradual approach:** Aware of the difficulties that certain unstable geo-political and diplomatic situations in the Mediterranean may pose, it would be appropriate to adopt a gradual approach in the construction of a Mediterranean macro-regional strategy;
- **A voluntary approach:** A macro-regional strategy open to the whole of the Mediterranean basin must be built step by step, on the basis of the willingness to cooperate of the Mediterranean Countries, Regions, municipalities and communities;
- **A shared multi-level governance:** The success of a macro-regional strategy in the Mediterranean, but also its added value compared to existing initiatives, will be linked to the implementation of a solid multi-level governance approach. This would mean associating the European, national, regional and local levels over its three shores, as well as territorial stakeholders from the quintuple helix, in the decision-making and implementation.
- **A climate priority:** As a global hotspot, this macro-regional strategy should firstly focus on one of the most pressing and shared issues in the Mediterranean: the impact of climate change and the necessary and urgent ecological transition.

By becoming a *Friend of the Mediterranean Macro-Region*, the signatory commits to:

- **Promote** the idea of a global macro-regional strategy in the framework of relevant spaces, events and *fora*² as per the above-mentioned principles and any time appropriate and relevant;
- **Spread** and contribute to gaining more support in favor of the above listed-principles and the idea of a Mediterranean macro-region through their own circles and networks;
- **Raise awareness** towards EU institutions (notably the EU Council and the European Commission) to provoke a decision on the matter;
- **Participate** to the follow-up committee meetings³ of the *Friends of the Mediterranean Macro-Region* coordinated by the MedCoopAlliance to keep up with the initiative and keep in check its coherence and advancement, whether in Brussels or in the framework of its promoters;
- **Contribute** to debates and the elaboration of statements of the *Friends of the Mediterranean macro-region* to inspire preliminary lines of actions over the coming months⁴;
- **Share**, spread, and repost digital and press contents related to the Mediterranean macro-region and its principles shared by the signatories, for example inspired from the partners of the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance or any of the signatories' channels.

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¹ notably on the basis of the [European Committee of the Regions report](#) on the matter.

² E.g. EU Week of Regions and Cities, EU Week on macro-regions, EU Committee of the Regions, EU Parliament and Intergroups, events under the Presidency of the European Council, relevant territorial events, etc.

³ Once or twice a year, and upon *ad hoc* relevance, under the coordination of the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance partners or upon necessity from any of the signatories.

⁴ Firstly, due end of 2023 as a tentative date.

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