

Preface by the Union for the Mediterranean

Following the launch of the first edition of the Progress Report on *Regional Integration in the UfM Region* last year, I am pleased to present the report: *Navigating beyond COVID-19 – Recovery in the MENA Region*. This report, developed by the OECD with the support of the German Development Cooperation, focuses on the COVID-19 post-pandemic recovery in the Middle-East and North Africa (MENA), which is one of the regions most adversely affected by the social and economic impacts of this health crisis.

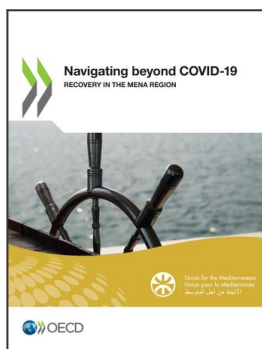
In the current context of major global disruptions, including food insecurity and a dual energy and climate crisis, we cannot possibly talk about a meaningful recovery for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean without a proper understanding of the existing deficits and the lost opportunities associated with the current socio-economic and environmental realities in the region. This is exactly what this publication provides.

The report, which draws on the expertise and the evidence-based approach of the OECD, does not only take stock of key emerging trends and tendencies in the region in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also presents sound policy considerations for a post-pandemic recovery in the different priority areas of the UfM, ranging from economic development and social affairs to water, energy and climate action.

More than just a mapping exercise of the region, the report offers valuable reflections for tangible action that can yield concrete benefits for the region. This exemplifies the UfM Secretariat's objective to use its convening power and structured methodology to build consensus on regional sectoral agendas, based on sound data, with a view to delivering value within and beyond its ecosystem. The UfM Secretariat's response to the COVID-19 crisis comes in different ways, ranging from UfM grant schemes and thematic conferences to studies and the creation of knowledge. In this spirit, I hope that this report will also support and guide your future actions in the MENA Region.



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Navigating beyond COVID-19
Recovery in the MENA Region

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