



# EmpowerNEET

## PRESS RELEASE

EmpowerNEET Launched to Strengthen Youth Inclusion and Social Entrepreneurship Across the Mediterranean

The EmpowerNEET project has officially started, marking a major step forward in advancing youth employability, social inclusion, and sustainable economic opportunities across the Mediterranean region. Young people who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEETs) will gain access to practical skills, entrepreneurial pathways, and real-world work experiences through this ambitious EU-funded initiative.

Co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme, with an EU contribution of 89%, EmpowerNEET has a total budget of €2.3 million and a duration of 30 months. The project addresses persistent youth unemployment and social exclusion by piloting inclusive, place-based pathways for NEET youth, with a strong emphasis on social and solidarity economy (SSE), green skills, and social entrepreneurship.

### From Vision to Measurable Results

EmpowerNEET is designed to deliver **tangible, high-impact outcomes** across participating Mediterranean countries. Over the project’s lifetime, it will achieve:

- 4 modular training programmes developed on social entrepreneurship, green skills, and employability
- 300 NEET youth trained, with tailored and inclusive learning pathways
- 6 Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) platforms enhanced to better support youth engagement and enterprise creation
- 85 NEETs placed in job-shadowing and exchange schemes, strengthening employability and cross-regional learning
- 60 start-up support packages delivered, providing mentoring, business development, and incubation services
- 6 sustainable financing strategies **and** 6 local government roadmaps co-developed to ensure long-term impact
- 1 comprehensive policy paper produced to inform regional and EU-level youth inclusion and employment policies

These results position EmpowerNEET as a practice-oriented and policy-relevant initiative, bridging grassroots action with institutional reform.

### LEAD PARTNER PROJECT PARTNERS



BUSINESS CONSULTANCY & TRAINING SERVICES





## EmpowerNEET

### Kickoff Meeting and Project Implementation

The official Kickoff Meeting, held in Barcelona on 21–22 January 2026, brought together all project partners from Palestine, Spain, Greece, Lebanon, Tunisia, and France. The meeting marked the operational launch of the project and ensured alignment on implementation, coordination, and impact delivery.

Key outcomes of the meeting included:

- Consolidation of project management, communication, and financial procedures in line with Interreg NEXT MED requirements.
- Definition of a clear six-month action plan, focusing on capacity-building and youth entrepreneurship pilots.
- Agreement on integrated pilot actions combining training, mentoring, job-shadowing, and incubation support for NEET youth.
- Strengthened Mediterranean cooperation and knowledge exchange, reinforcing peer learning among partners and territories.

### Expected Impact

By directly responding to skills mismatches, limited access to support services, and fragmented entrepreneurial ecosystems, EmpowerNEET aims to generate lasting social and economic impact by:

- Empowering NEET youth with market-relevant, green, and social entrepreneurship skills.
- Supporting the creation and consolidation of youth-led social and green enterprises.
- Strengthening inclusive and sustainable local economies across Mediterranean regions.
- Contributing evidence-based insights to policy dialogue and regional strategies on youth employment and social inclusion.

### EmpowerNEET Partnership

The project is implemented by a multidisciplinary Mediterranean consortium combining academic excellence, institutional capacity, and grassroots expertise:



## EmpowerNEET

- **An-Najah National University (Palestine)** – Lead Partner; overall coordination and strategic oversight
- **Fons Català de Cooperació al Desenvolupament (Spain)** – Institutional coordination, dissemination, and sustainability
- **KMOP (Greece)** – Capacity-building, training methodologies, and transfer of good practices
- **Business Consultancy & Training Services – BCTS (Lebanon)** – Entrepreneurship support and business development
- **TCSE Network (Tunisia)** – Social economy expertise, youth-led initiatives, and regional knowledge exchange
- **CDE Petra Patrimonia (France)** – Place-based youth entrepreneurship and cooperative approaches

Together, the partnership ensures that EmpowerNEET delivers inclusive, scalable, and sustainable solutions, fully aligned with Interreg NEXT MED objectives and regional development priorities.

### More Information

For further information about the project, its activities, and results, please visit:

<https://www.interregnextmed.eu/project-page/empowerneet/about/>

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### Disclaimer:

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