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PRESS RELEASE

New Mediterranean Project MEDSHIFTGREEN Launches, Empowering Youth to Tackle Region's Environmental Challenges with Hands-On Green Education

Thessaloniki, Greece-December, 15, 2025

The EU-funded Interreg NEXT MED project MEDSHIFTGREEN officially launched today at the University of Macedonia, bringing together partners from across the Mediterranean to address shared environmental challenges through hands-on, practice-oriented green education.

Titled "Cultivating Green Innovators: A Dynamic Approach to Smart, Sustainable, and Socially Inclusive Education for Mediterranean Youth," this ambitious three-year initiative (running until October 7, 2028) unites four Mediterranean partners to tackle pressing regional environmental challenges. The consortium is led by the University of Macedonia (Greece) in partnership with the Lebanese Development Network (Lebanon), Kizanlikli Academy (Türkiye), and the Center for Social Innovation (Cyprus).

MEDSHIFTGREEN is designed to revolutionize how sustainability is taught and applied. By embedding Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) and green technologies directly into higher education and vocational training, the project aims to bridge the critical gap between theoretical knowledge and practical, market-ready skills.

"The Mediterranean region faces unique and shared environmental pressures, from water scarcity to coastal erosion," said [Dr. Jason Papathanasiou, Professor at the Department of Business Administration, University of Macedonia], the project's Lead Coordinator. "MEDSHIFTGREEN starts from the belief that our youth are not just the future, they are essential partners in building solutions today. By equipping them with hands-on experience and fostering cross-border cooperation, we are investing in a generation of 'green innovators' who will drive ecological and economic resilience."

The project's core activities will establish a network of Interactive Green Labs and Green Skills Bootcamps across the four partner countries. These hubs will serve as living classrooms where students, educators, and community stakeholders co-create tangible solutions to local environmental issues, such as designing water-saving systems or developing circular economy models.

The kick-off meeting in Thessaloniki marks the start of a 36-month journey of co-creation, capacity building, and policy dialogue. Key milestones for the coming months include a comprehensive regional skills gap analysis, the co-design of specialized NBS curricula, and the planning of the first pilot Green Labs.



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About Interreg NEXT MED:

The Interreg NEXT MED Programme is the European Union's framework for fostering cooperation across the Mediterranean Basin. It funds projects that promote a smarter, greener, and more socially inclusive region, directly supporting the EU's priorities for sustainable growth and resilience.

Project Budget

The total budget of MEDSHIFTGREEN amounts to **€999,147.00**, of which **€889.240,83**, an **89%**, is funded by the **European Union under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme**.

Project Website & Media:

For more information, updates, and media resources, please visit the official project page on the Interreg NEXT MED website <https://www.interregnextmed.eu/project-page/medshiftgreen/> or contact the project coordinator.

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Note to Editors: The official MEDSHIFTGREEN logo, acknowledging the support of the European Union and the Interreg NEXT MED Programme, must be used on all publications related to this release.

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