



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

UfM ENERGY & CLIMATE ACTION YOUTH DELEGATE PROGRAMME

INTEGRATING YOUTH VOICES INTO
REGIONAL CLIMATE AND ENERGY POLICY

**INHERIT.
INNOVATE.
INSPIRE.**



INTRODUCTION

Young people are at the forefront of change, both globally and within the Euro-Mediterranean region, where they represent a significant share of the population. The Euro-Mediterranean region has one of the youngest populations in the world, with one in every three people being younger than 25 years old, and with this number reaching almost half of the population for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries.

This demographic is not only numerically significant—it is also the most educated and connected generation to date, bringing with it a wealth of creativity, innovation, and commitment to social and environmental progress. Youth should therefore be given prominence in policymaking across Euro-Mediterranean countries, not only as objects of these policies but as partners in the discussions and full actors in the promotion of inclusive and sustainable development in the region. In this sense, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has placed young people at the heart of its action, focusing on empowering and engaging them as agents for positive change.

YOUTH AS AGENTS OF CHANGE IN CLIMATE ACTION

The Mediterranean region remains highly vulnerable to climate change, with temperatures rising approximately 20% faster than the global average. This accelerated warming exacerbates issues such as water scarcity, extreme weather events, and energy insecurity, which disproportionately affect young people and future generations. In this context, addressing climate challenges in the region requires bold, collaborative approaches that integrate youth leadership, cross-sectoral engagement, and capacity building in sustainable and green sectors.

Over recent years, a surge in youth-led climate activism has demonstrated the determination of young people to act as transformative agents of change. From local initiatives to international negotiations, an empowered youth generation has been driving meaningful change locally, nationally and internationally. Their active engagement highlights the need for institutional mechanisms that can channel their energy into structured policy spaces.

In line with this momentum, the Union for the Mediterranean was actively present at the United Nations Climate

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Change Conference, where the Mediterranean Youth Gatherings at the Mediterranean Pavilion marked a significant milestone in regional climate engagement, serving as a launchpad for embedding youth participation in regional climate governance, bringing together young leaders, experts, and policymakers from across the Euro-Mediterranean region.

This initiative is in direct alignment with the UfM Youth Strategy 2030, which recognizes young people as essential partners in addressing climate action and energy challenges. This strategy underscores the need for youth involvement in participatory decision-making, climate resilience efforts, and the transition toward renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions.

As the strategy highlights, young people must actively engage in climate governance, not merely as stakeholders but as co-creators of policy and innovation. This principle was echoed at COP29, where the shared statement, “We are not only inheritors of this Mediterranean but also its architects for a sustainable future,” encapsulated the spirit of intergenerational solidarity.

To respond to this evolving landscape and build on its strategic priorities, the Energy & Climate Action (ECA) Division The UfM launches the UfM Energy & Climate Action Youth Delegate Programme. This initiative recognizes the impact of climate challenges on the youth and their innovative capacity to drive transformative solutions. It seeks to advance the UfM Youth Strategy’s commitment to empower young people in climate action through structured engagement in policymaking, leadership training, and strategic exposure to climate diplomacy.

The goal of the UfM Energy & Climate Action Youth Delegate Programme is to equip young leaders from the region with the knowledge, tools, and platforms needed to shape regional climate and energy agendas. By fostering leadership, expanding networks, and opportunities needed to actively participate in climate governance, leading impactful initiatives, and foster regional collaboration for innovative and sustainable climate solutions

OBJECTIVES

The UfM Energy & Climate Action Youth Delegate Programme aims to build a structured, inclusive, and future-oriented network for youth participation in regional climate and energy policy processes, while enhancing the capacity of young leaders to contribute meaningfully to a sustainable Mediterranean.

To achieve this overarching goal, the programme will pursue four strategic objectives:

1. PROMOTE YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

Young people should not be spectators in climate discussions but rather active contributors by engaging in UfM strategic processes—such as the quarterly Youth Focal Points Network consultations, the Climate Action & Energy Ministerial Roadmap drafting sessions, and the intergovernmental policy-making dialogues that inform UfM declarations, delegates will contribute with fresh perspectives, practical ideas, and solutions that reflect the needs of future generations.

2. BUILDING CLIMATE LEADERS

Developing effective youth leadership requires more than inspiration; it requires deliberate investment in capacity, confidence, and connection. The programme will offer tailored training sessions, leadership coaching, and mentorship opportunities designed to deepen understanding of regional climate and energy challenges, negotiation processes, and green innovation trends. Participation in high-level regional and international forums, including COP events, UfM meetings, and partner platforms, will strengthen the delegates' exposure and competencies.



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3. ENABLE HANDS-ON LEARNING AND CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITIES

This programme is action-oriented. Delegates will actively contribute to UfM's events, research, and policy initiatives, ensuring their knowledge and skills are applied in real-world scenarios. From brainstorming to engaging with stakeholders, they will gain firsthand experience in shaping regional climate strategies.

4. FOSTER REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND CROSS-BORDER INNOVATION

The Mediterranean's climate challenges require shared solutions and regional solidarity. The programme will connect youth from across the UfM Member states. Delegates will form a peer network that facilitates South-North-South co-operation, policy innovation, and long-term partnerships. Through this network, delegates will co-produce at least one regional output that align with UfM's climate and energy priorities.



PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

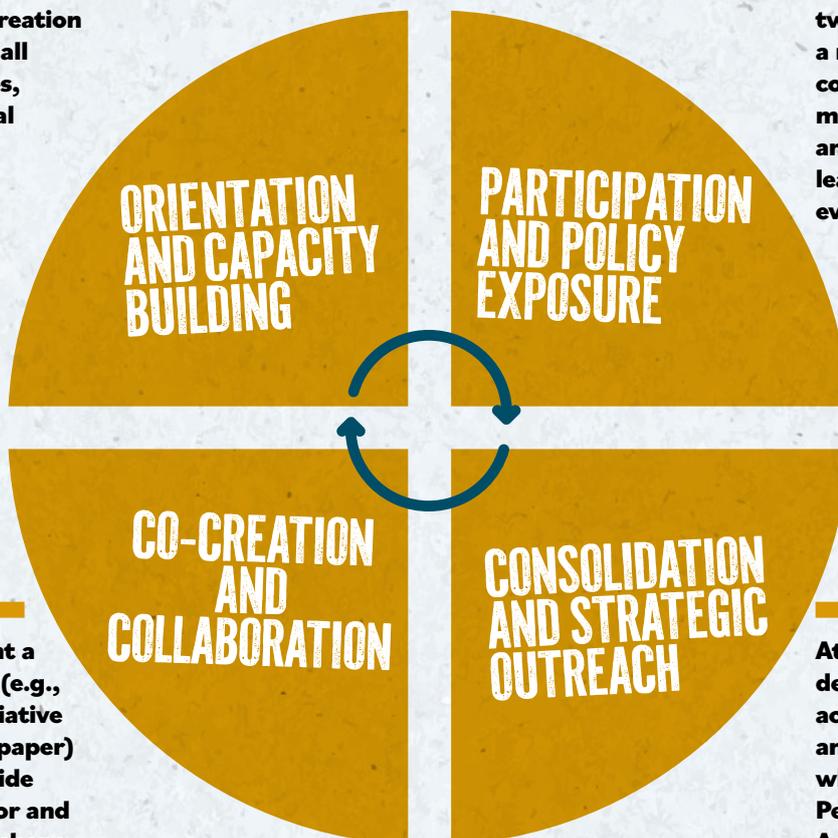
The UfM ECA Youth Delegate Programme is designed as a one-year journey that transitions participants from foundational capacity-building to practical contribution and leadership in regional climate governance.

The one-year duration* provides a realistic yet impactful timeframe to achieve targeted outcomes, allows for cyclical policy engagement, and ensures alignment with UfM operational cycles, including regional forums, policy dialogues, and multilateral events.

It allows delegates sufficient time to acquire knowledge, co-design initiatives, participate in UfM-led processes, and reflect on lessons learned, without overstressing the voluntary, non-contractual nature of their involvement.

The programme unfolds in four interlinked phases, each with defined roles, milestones, and modalities of engagement:

Delegates will join a virtual onboarding and co-creation workshop, complete all core training modules, and submit a personal engagement plan.



Each delegate will attend two ECA-led events on a rotational basis—fully covered by UfM—submit a mid-term reflection report, and take an active role in at least one policy dialogue or event briefing.

Delegates will present a collaborative output (e.g., a draft roadmap, initiative concept, or position paper) after working alongside their ECA staff mentor and external partners to shape pilot projects.

At the end of the cycle, delegates will submit a final activity report, co-brand and potentially publish a white paper titled “Youth Perspectives for Climate Action and a Just Energy Transition,” and participate in the Virtual Youth Delegation Forum.

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Throughout this cycle, the programme will be monitored against both qualitative and quantitative indicators, including active participation metrics—such as the number of delegate-led sessions where delegates serve as autonomous speakers, moderators or facilitators and the proportion of speaking time they contribute to policy discussions—knowledge gains assessed through pre- and post-training evaluations on core climate and energy competencies, stakeholder feedback gathered via surveys of UfM focal points and partner organisations on the degree to which youth inputs shaped meeting agendas and policy drafts, and the quality and impact of outputs measured by peer-reviewed scores for policy briefs, workshop reports and micro-project deliverables if possible. This combination of indicators ensures we track genuine influence, learning progress, and maintain accountability and transparency.

1. SELECTION & ONBOARDING: BUILDING A DIVERSE COHORT

The selection process will prioritize gender balance, expertise, and regional representation while adhering to a transparent timeline. Applications will open on **5 May 2025**, with a 3-week window for submissions from young applicants (aged 20–30), who can be students, researchers, or professionals across UfM member states. Applicants will submit a **statement of purpose, a CV, and a brief proposal** for an innovative idea/initiative (e.g., small-scale project aligned with UfM ECA priorities, e.g., renewable energy, climate resilience).

A selection committee comprising UfM staff, regional partners, and youth advisors will review applications in end of **May 2025**, shortlisting candidates based on four criteria:

- **Creativity** (innovative ideas for projects or outreach),
- **Regional balance** (ensuring representation from North Africa, Southern Europe, and the Levant), and
- **Technical merit** (academic/professional background in energy, climate, or sustainability),
- **Gender Balance** (ensuring equitable representation from men and women).

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Shortlisted candidates will participate in virtual interviews to assess their communication skills and commitment to collaborative action. Final selections will be announced by end of May 2025, followed by a virtual onboarding workshop. This workshop will introduce delegates to UfM's governance structure, the ECA Division's 2025 priorities, and ethical guidelines for participation. Crucially, delegates will sign a participation agreement, not a work contract that outlines expectations, intellectual property rights for their contributions, and their role as non-staff contributors.

2. ENGAGEMENT IN UfM ENERGY & CLIMATE EVENTS

A core concern for programme implementation is ensuring that delegates contribute meaningfully without assuming responsibilities that imply employment. To address this, delegate roles at UfM events will focus on learning, co-creation, and advocacy, framed as opportunities for professional development rather than contractual tasks.

Youth Delegate participation is foreseen at the UfM Energy & Climate Business Forum, during Green Week 2025 in Brussels, at the Mediterranean Pavilion at COP30, and through the development of a policy white paper on youth perspectives for a just energy transition, subject to confirmation.

To maximize impact, the programme integrates formal training with peer-to-peer learning. Delegates will participate in monthly virtual workshops, covering topics like climate diplomacy, project management, and storytelling for advocacy. These sessions will be led by UfM advisors, partner organisations (e.g., YOUNGO), and guest experts.

Additionally, all delegates will be paired with an ECA staff mentor for bi-monthly check-ins to refine their ideas and navigate institutional processes. A private online platform will enable delegates to share resources, collaborate across teams, and build a lasting professional network.



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3. CULMINATION

The programme will conclude with a virtual “Youth Climate Action & Energy Delegation Forum,” where participants present their engagement to UfM leadership, member-state representatives, and partner organisations. Outstanding initiatives may receive follow-on funding or integration into UfM’s work plan. Delegates will also receive a certificate of participation and join an alumni network to sustain engagement beyond the programme.

NO CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

To ensure institutional clarity and manage expectations, the programme explicitly defines the role of Youth Climate Action & Energy Delegates as non-contractual and non-remunerated, focusing on capacity building, engagement, and voluntary contribution within a structured framework.

Youth Climate Action & Energy Delegates are not UfM staff and will not be responsible for handling sensitive data, financial operations, or official institutional decision-making. Instead, they will contribute to UfM processes through thematic engagement, co-design of initiatives, strategic communication, and peer outreach.

In line with the UfM Youth Strategy 2030’s principle of working “with and not only for” youth, the programme promotes youth voices as active partners not passive participants. Delegates will be invited to contribute content such as event reflections, regional insights, and social media pieces, all of which will be co-reviewed in collaboration with UfM focal points. This ensures both institutional quality control and authentic youth expression.

Youth-led initiatives developed through the programme will be framed as: “Youth Climate Action & Energy Delegate Initiatives - in partnership with the UfM.” This dual branding approach safeguards institutional standards while highlighting youth ownership, leadership, and creativity.

Such visibility reinforces the UfM’s commitment to empowering youth as co-creators of regional solutions.



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