# Interconnected Challenges and Shared Futures in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

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The *International Journal of Euro-Mediterranean Studies'* current issue emphasises a potent fact that characterises the area today: the interdependence of the environmental, security, economic, and educational systems. Because of its extreme weather, wide demographic diversity, and growing geopolitical complexity, the Euro-Mediterranean region needs cross-disciplinary analytical methods. Contributions that accomplish that are gathered in this issue.

A timely reminder that the effects of climate change are increasingly felt locally is provided by the first article by Dahmani et al., which looks at flood hazards and risk management in Dar Belamri, Morocco. Their hydrological and hydraulic modelling shows how incorporating reliable topographic and environmental data is essential to the sustainable planning of urban development. The study speaks to increase concerns in the Mediterranean region, where destructive and frequent extreme weather events have become more and more usual.

Expanding upon this environmental viewpoint, Čaleta's contribution places the resilience of critical infrastructure within the unique geopolitical and climatic context of the Mediterranean. Resilience can no longer be addressed within national actions in a region characterized by energy interdependence, intensive maritime traffic, and increasingly digitalised infrastructures. The paper makes a strong case for cross-border collaboration and multilevel governance as necessary components for dealing with hybrid threats.

By examining differentiated integration within the PESCO framework, Molnár expands the discussion from a strategic and political

perspective. The article illustrates how regional clusters within the EU manage defence cooperation differently by contrasting the MED7/MED9 and Visegrad Four formats. The findings encourage us to see security integration not as a uniform process but as a mosaic of political will,
[146] regional priorities, and evolving strategic cultures.

The economic dimension of regional dynamics is explored by Dosti and Maze, who analyse the relationship between informality and foreign direct investment in both EU and candidate countries. Their results demonstrate significant negative effects of informality on FDI in non-EU Western Balkan states and hold direct relevance for policymakers engaged in EU enlargement and regional economic development.

Mileva's study on organisational effectiveness in Macedonian SMES offers a more micro-level socioeconomic perspective. Through an analysis of stress, job satisfaction, turnover, and leadership dynamics, the study offers new insights into how human factors which are frequently disregarded but are becoming more and more important to competitiveness and shape business performance in emerging markets.

Finally, the issue concludes with Kume et al.'s exploration of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). Their Albanian-Lithuanian case study shows how virtual, intercultural collaboration can expand internationalization in higher education, particularly in regions where mobility barriers persist. In a Euro-Mediterranean context known for inequalities in access to international learning, COIL represents a promising, sustainable future.

Taken together, the articles in this issue illustrate the richness and complexity of the Euro-Mediterranean region. They underline the need for collaborative research, evidence-based policymaking, and innovative educational approaches to address shared challenges. As the region continues to evolve, so must our analytical frameworks, and this issue contributes a small part to that endeavour.