



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

Panel 1

Innovative Models for Sustainable Universities – Building Beyond the Curriculum

Throughout history, universities have played a foundational role in the transformation of human societies, economies, and cultures. They are the engine of delivering action-oriented training programmes and diploma courses for students aimed at developing strong student entrepreneurial skills and technological capacities, and thus, act as a technological proponent to keep pace with transformative and innovative models, responding to societal challenges.

This panel aims at discussing the development of innovative models or/and the transformation of existing models for sustainable universities - the universities of the future. The idea is to investigate how universities build people and not just create curricula, and how the developed skills can respond to the job market.

Sustainable universities depend on interaction and cooperation with industry, society and the political will and reforms. Each element recognises the mutual benefit of such cooperation. Nonetheless, many universities are still not capable of adapting to the dynamic changes that are happening in their ecosystem. This is the change that should drive universities to reconsider their traditional roles, programmes and policies and steer them towards innovative, sustainable structures that contribute to the inevitable transformation of our societies and economies.

The need to adopt modern programmes and tools will be highlighted, and ways to anticipate and plan for future challenges will be explored. The focus will be on what challenges universities are facing, which drivers of change are in place, what opportunities do these changes offer, and what is at stake if universities do not address these challenges. In other words, the risk is that universities as such are not sustainable, and they have to adapt and transform to new models.

Potential questions:

1. Which innovative university models exist today to build the university of the future? Mentioning and describing good practices of such models by the panellists will be requested.
2. How can universities introduce and adapt to the changes in their ecosystem?
3. How could universities overcome the challenges they face and how can they be sustainable?
4. What is the role of industry in building the university of the future?
5. When it comes to bridging the gap between education and workforce demands, how should educational institutions prepare students for the evolving job market? Are there any specific skills that come to mind?