

**Webinar | 25th November | From 10 to 13h**

# **The Future of Sustainable Mediterranean Diet**

**Challenges, opportunities and actions**



The PRIMA programme is an Art. 185 Initiative supported and founded under Horizon 2020, the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation



Union for the Mediterranean  
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الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



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*"Increase the Adherence to Healthy Mediterranean Diet"*

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## The Future of Sustainable Mediterranean Diet: Challenges, Opportunities and Actions

### WHY MED DIET?

Many **Chronic** and **non-communicable diseases** (such as cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases) have been emerged as a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Several of our today behavioural changes make us more likely to develop NCD.

For **Health** aspects, the high prevalence of **Overweight** and **Obesity** among **European** preschool children is noticed. Nearly one in eight children aged 7-8 is obese on average in EU (WHO Europe, 2018). Out of top five EU countries show the highest obesity rates in 7-8 year olds, four are PRIMA participating states (Italy, Greece, Malta and Spain). For **Southern-Eastern** part of the Mediterranean, Egypt and Turkey are among the top 10 countries with highest obese children all over the world. For adults, **Eastern** Mediterranean shows the prevalence of overweight and obesity ranges from 75% to 85% in women and around 70% in men (WHO EMRO). Escalating levels of overweight and obesity among children is of particular concern given recent evidence linking childhood and adolescent obesity to increased risk of obesity and morbidity in adulthood.

From **environmental** viewpoint, the MD resulted to produce a lower environmental impact than the current food consumption. Shifting to MD, such as an increased consumption of vegetables and minimizing the animal consumption, would reduce the environmental footprint and thus the use of natural resources. Compared to Western Pattern, increasing the adherence to the MD pattern (for instance in Spain) will reduce greenhouse gas emissions (72%), land use (58%), energy consumption (52%), to a lower extent water consumption (33%)<sup>1</sup>.

The Mediterranean Diet (MD) is based on the eating patterns in the Mediterranean region and focuses on fruits, vegetables, fish, whole grains and healthy fats. Mediterranean Diet is now recognized as one of the healthiest dietary patterns. UNESCO defines it as *"a social practice based on all the expertise, knowledge, traditions ranging from the landscape to the table and covering the Mediterranean Basin, cultures, harvesting, fishing, conservation, processing, preparation, cooking and in particular the way we consume"*.

### Webinar at a Glance

In 2015, the United Nations approved the roadmap and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to 2030, in which SDG17 '*Partnerships to Achieve the Goals*' is a cross-cutting objective through which to achieve the attainment of the 169 targets set in that Agenda. A champion of it, PRIMA Foundation was inaugurated in 2017,

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<sup>1</sup> Sáez-Almendros, S., Obrador, B., Bach-Faig, A. et al. Environmental footprints of Mediterranean versus Western dietary patterns: beyond the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet. Environ Health 12, 118 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1476-069X-12-118>

through the generation of an alliance between 19 European and Mediterranean States.

Back to back with the UfM “**Day of the Mediterranean**”, **PRIMA** (The Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) will celebrate the day via organizing its first webinar on “**The Future of Sustainable Mediterranean Diet: Challenges and Opportunities**”. The event provides an opportunity to present the importance of the MD at different perspectives (health, environment, socio-economic and cultural).

With welcome and inspirational talks from the organizers (PRIMA, UfM and EU), keynote presenters will focus on identifying the key enablers, drivers as well as obstacles against shifting toward MD, try to answer two basic questions of the day: **How and Why toward MD?**. Each speaker will cover a single shore of the Mediterranean. The second session will be for PRIMA Actions for increasing the adherence to MD via its projects. The last part will be dedicated to shed the light on various countries’ achievements toward Sustainable Mediterranean Diet. The event outcome will feed into PRIMA future calls and topics preparatory process.

**Date/time:** Thursday, November 25, 2021, 10:00 Central Europe Time

**Geographical focus:** No borders

**Language of Dialogue Event:** English, with interpretation in Arabic and French available

**Format:** Online (ZOOM webinar, web-stream on PRIMA YouTube Channel and Facebook page)

**Registration Link:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_mnx-Rxf-Q6iKpyDZtKlfdw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mnx-Rxf-Q6iKpyDZtKlfdw)

#### AGENDA

**10:00 - 10:10** Welcoming/ Inspirational Speech: Angelo Riccaboni, Chair BoT, PRIMA

**10:10 - 10:20** Welcoming/ Inspirational Speech: Isidro González, Deputy Secretary General, UfM

**10:20- 10:30** Welcoming/ Inspirational Speech: Karen Fabbri, Deputy Head of Bioeconomy, Food Systems Unit, European Commission

**10:30 - 11:00** Keynote Speeches about Sustainable Mediterranean Diet

Ayoub Al-Jawaldeh (Regional Advisor Nutrition for the Eastern Mediterranean, EMRO (WHO)

José Valls Bedeau, Policy Officer, Food Systems and Food Safety division (FAO)

**11:00- 11: 30 Session One:** PRIMA Actions towards a Sustainable Mediterranean Diet:

**Speakers:** Octavi Quintana, Executive Director, PRIMA

Mohamed Wageih, Agrofood Project Officer PRIMA

**11:30 – 11:50 Interactive Session (Slido)**

Moderator: Omar Amawi, Deputy Director, PRIMA

**11:50 – 12:00 Break**

**12:00 - 1:00 Roundtable: Sustainable Med Diet: Case studies**

Moderator: Antonella Autino, Programme Coordinator, PRIMA

Case Studies - Speakers:



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Lebanon: Nahla Hwalla, American University of Beirut

Spain: Luis Serra Majem, Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Italy: Sandro Dernini, IFMeD/CIHEAM-Bari

Maghreb Countries: Rekia Belahsen, Chouaib Doukkali University

Portugal: Anna Maria Gomes, Catholic University of Portugal

**Announcing PRIMA 2021 Section One results: Mohamed El Shinawi, Co-chair BoT, PRIMA**

**Closing Remarks**



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