

Food security: Challenges and perspectives in the Mediterranean region Wednesday 29 June 2022 | 10:00 – 13:00 (CEST)

Background

Climate change affects the Mediterranean region significantly more than the world average, further endangering the sustainable provision of food security. In this context, the unfolding crisis in Ukraine and the ongoing fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic have roiled commodity markets and threatened food security, striving to enhance sustainable development and resource efficiency in the specific hard-hit Mediterranean. Addressing this situation effectively necessitates urgent, deeper, and more substantial transformation to a sustainable future.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is already having major consequences for the global economy. Gas prices are soaring in Europe, markets are volatile, and many supply chains have been disrupted. While it has a more immediate impact on European markets, its effects will soon be felt particularly in North African and Middle Eastern countries, which will have to deal with consequences that will be more catastrophic because of their greater dependence on imports from Russia and Ukraine.

Cereals and wheat in particular are strategic products for agricultural development, food security and agricultural trade in the Mediterranean region. The agricultural economy constitutes one of the main sectors in the region which also requires the necessary water resources for its correct exploitation. Most Mediterranean states have become net importers of cereals. In average, two third of the domestic consumption of cereals is covered through purchases on international cereal markets. Among the countries most dependent on Russian and Ukrainian wheat and other cereal production is Egypt, the world's largest importer of wheat.

In the Mediterranean, food insecurity is increasingly prevalent with a high risk of worsening in the next twenty years. The food production deficit in this region is very worrisome, in the medium and long term and must be taken seriously by political leaders both in Europe and in the Mediterranean. Agricultural and food insecurity (often exacerbated by climate change reasons) can cause social unrest, political turmoil and force individuals and populations to migrate.

Strategies to restore amendatory level of food security exist and can be deployed as part of sustainable development policies. Increasing and diversifying local food production could contribute to reduce the dependency of some imported agricultural products as cereals.



The first workshop organised by Casa Mediterráneo, PRIMA and CIHEAM focuses on food security in the Mediterranean region in the context of crisis, particularly the Russia-Ukraine war. The discussion will target the role of research and innovation to contribute to improve food security in the Mediterranean region.

AGENDA

9:30-10:00	Welcoming Coffee
10:00-10:15	<p>Introductory session</p> <p>Andrés Perelló Director General <i>Casa Mediterráneo</i></p> <p>Octavi Quintana Director <i>PRIMA Foundation</i></p>
10:15-11:30	<p>Keynote remarks. Food for Thought: The impact of the war in Ukraine on food security in the Mediterranean</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Laura Cristóbal, directora de EFEAgro</p> <p>Pauline Weil. BRUEGEL - BELGIUM</p> <p>Raúl Compés. CIHEAM ZARAGOZA- Spain</p>
11:30-12:15	<p>Feedbacks from projects</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Octavi Quinta, director, PRIMA Foundation</p> <p><i>Project CEREALMED – PRIMA funded project</i> Agata Gadaleta University of Bari - ITALY</p> <p><i>Project GOINNOWATER, Improvement of water and energy use in the modernized irrigation of fruit trees. Funded by Spanish PNDR and EIP-Agri.</i> Herminia Puerto Molina Universidad Miguel Hernández – SPAIN</p>
13.00	<p>Closing remarks Octavi Quintana/ Andrés Perelló</p>

Interpretation English-Spanish