



Sustainability and Employment in the Mediterranean: How Circular Economy Can Create Circular Jobs

Policy recommendations from CLUSTER project

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Employment Challenges

- High rates of youth **unemployment** and people not in education, employment or training (**NEETs**)
- Considerable **gender gaps** in employment and education
- **Mismatch** between skills and the evolving needs of the **labour market**
- Stagnant national economies that are unable to absorb the **increasing supply of highly skilled workforce**



Sustainability Challenges

- **Low circularity** rates in almost all Mediterranean countries
- **Lack of support** in the green transition of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Northern demand for agricultural labor and Southern labor surplus are frequently tackled with **ad hoc, partial, and precarious solutions.**
- **Shortage of attractive jobs** in the blue economy and increase in the 'brain drain' phenomenon



Recommendations

- **Green jobs** can enhance productivity, open new markets and investments, create new jobs and restructure many existing ones
- Agriculture is a multifunctional sector, producing local collective goods like ecological services. **Sustainable agriculture**, achieved through a blend of immediate actions and long-term structural and regional efforts, can improve living conditions in diverse dimensions.
- The **Blue Economy** in Mediterranean countries employs over a million people, with younger workers holding approximately 17% of the jobs, highlighting its job creation potential (EC BE Report, 2023).
- **Circular Economy** offers diverse employment opportunities, requiring technical expertise, specialist knowledge, and a range of soft, digital, social, and communication skills (Bachus, 2022).

