

## EMPHASIS

# Euro-Mediterranean Network Facilitating Market Uptake of Innovations from SMEs

Number of Reference: C\_A.2.2\_0022

### A 4.2.2 - Identification and collection of SMEs' offers and Needs

<b>Work package</b>	WP4 – Identification and validation of OI Opportunities (offers/requests)
<b>Output</b>	O 4.2 – Collection of Open Innovation Opportunities (offers and Needs)
<b>Activity</b>	A.4.2.2 – Identification and collection of SMEs' offers and Needs
<b>Deliverable lead</b>	P2 - ASCAME (Association of Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry)
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<b>Abstract</b>	Collection of at least 80 Open Innovation opportunities (solutions and offers) in the platform to promote partnerships, open innovation, and faster uptake of research results. The activity will identify solutions and needs from SMEs and start-ups that have interest to set up collaborations at cross border level with emphasis to key sustainability areas. To achieve a balanced geographical spread, the programme will design a model that will allow to categorize different needs and solutions.

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## 1. Introduction

The present document is developed under the “**Activity 4.2.2 – Identification and collection of SMEs’ offers and Needs**” and describes all the steps of the Open Call launched by EMPHASIS project.

The present document aims to describe of the Open Call, such as its dissemination process by each member, the application process, and deadlines, present some relevant statistics from the applications received, as well as the evaluation methodology and selection process.

## 2. Description of the Open Call

The Open Call (A.4.1.1) of the project has been launched on 01/05/2022 with an open and transparent procedure to collect the solutions offered by SMEs, startups, and spin-offs, tackling the challenges identified under Activity 3.1.1.

It aimed to select 24 SMEs (4 SMEs per country) - according to pre-defined evaluation criteria - to receive free of charge open innovation support services throughout a 7-month period (September 2022 – April 2023).

The selected SMEs will be supported by a team of experts to:

- Explore their innovation capacity and improve their performance in terms of innovation/technology/product/service
- Understand their needs for partnership and cross-border collaboration with counterparties
- Get prepared for the establishment of Open Innovation partnerships
- Design jointly new innovative R&D concepts in the targeted sectors
- Develop their technical, commercial, financial & legal skills related to innovation & technology transfer
- Establish new partnerships and develop new projects with key players & expand their network.

### 2.1 Supporting services and benefits for SMEs



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The selected 24 SMEs will receive innovation support services to implement cross-border OI collaborations to better exploit their business idea. The services that the EMPHASIS partnership offer to the 24 beneficiaries are summarized below:

- Innovation Audit
- Exploitation Road mapping
- Training Seminars
- Twinning Activities
- Open Innovation Missions

### 2.2 Targeted sustainable priorities

The applied solution should cover at least one of the priorities below in order to be eligible. It is not compulsory for the applicants to operate in one of the sectors, but they should offer a solution/idea for at least on priority underneath the sectors. Cross-sectorial solutions are welcome.

#### Agri-food

- Improving the competitive position of agricultural crop product and livestock production in international markets
- Improving understanding of the relationship between nutrition, health and wellness, and the consequences for the agricultural food products and foodstuffs
- Sustainable Production
- Valorising food products from traditional Mediterranean diet
- Food Safety in local food chain
- Sustainable farming systems

#### Sustainable Energy

- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energies
- Sustainable buildings and cities
- Smart electric grid
- Energy storage
- Energy for circular economy
- Energy for transport and mobility
- Hydrogen for climate neutrality
- Reducing the Environmental Footprint of Fossil Fuels
- Smart communities / cities with low energy consumption and almost zero emissions

#### Environment & Sustainable Development



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- Waste management
- Prevention, protection and restoration of air, soil, groundwater, and marine environment
- Protection, promotion, and sustainable management of biodiversity
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change and response to natural and man-made disasters
- Water resources availability and quality within catchments and aquifers
- Sustainable, integrated water management
- Irrigation technologies and practices
- Use of alternative water resources

### Transport & Logistics

- Strengthening of the freight transport and supply chain system in order to increase the added value and the competitiveness
- Development of smart infrastructure and transport systems
- Sustainability in transports
- Strengthening of the intermodality and autonomy in urban transports of passengers and goods

### Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries

- Strengthening of the innovation for developing new products and services for visitors of archaeological sites / museums / collections and other poles and cultural activity events
- Promotion and enhancement of digital entrepreneurship in the fields of Culture, Tourism and CCI

### ICT Information & Communication Technologies

- ICT approaches (AI, Data mining, etc.) to applied fields like agritech, fintech
- Outsourcing of ICT services in different subsectors ( banking ; insuretech ; fintech etc...)

## 3. Dissemination process for the Open Call

The different project partners worked on a strategy for the dissemination of the call at national level, to raise awareness of the call and attract potential SMEs that could apply. These were the actions and activities undertaken by the partners to promote the Open Call:

- The call for proposals was announced as a news on the project website: [OPEN CALL: EMPHASIS offers FREE Innovation Support Services towards Sustainability to 24 Mediterranean SMEs! | ENI CBC Med](#)



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- The call was announced on the project's social network profiles: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#)
- Some partners organised informative sessions to raise awareness of the call and explain it to potential SMEs, start-ups and spin-offs that would qualify for the call, as well as answering questions:
  - [CEEBA \(Egypt\)](#)
  - [ASCAME \(Spain\)](#)
- Partners also held bilateral meetings with interested SMEs

## 4. Application Process and Deadlines

### 4.1 Application process

For the application, the applicants had to fill the online application template and attach a pitch deck in the form, as well as agree with the terms of the declaration on honor. The application is available on this link: [LeadUS Mentoring Program 2015-16 \(jotform.com\)](#).

All the applicants had to be in line with the following guidelines to ensure a successful submission in the EMPHASIS open call:

- The applicant was required to fill online all the sections of the application template. - Every text should not exaggerate the total of 1000 characters.
- All the info required under the headings, including any relevant details about the information provided as a content guide, which could help demonstrate the potential of the proposal had to be provided
- The applicant had to fill the declaration on honor along with the application form, provided also online.
- The applicant had to submit a pitch deck as an attachment in the form.
- The pitch deck had to follow the structure of [Annex 3 – Pitch Deck](#) (page 28).
- The applicant was encouraged to submit images, complementary texts, or graphs to the attachment section of the application.

### 4.2 Deadline

When the Open Call was launched, the deadline for submissions was 15/06/2022. However, to achieve a greater number of submissions to reach the minimum of 80, the deadline has been postponed twice:

- First extension: 29/06/2022 for all the partners
- Second extension: 6/07/2022 only for Spain and Lebanon

## 5. Applications received

In total, the Open Call received 83 submissions from SMEs, start-ups, and spin-offs from the 6 participating countries of the project. Below are some important statistics about the applications received:

### 5.1 Applications received per country

The number of applications per country are the following:

- Greece: 18
- Jordan: 27
- Italy: 18
- Egypt: 10
- Spain: 6
- Lebanon: 4

In the image below are the percentages of applications per country:

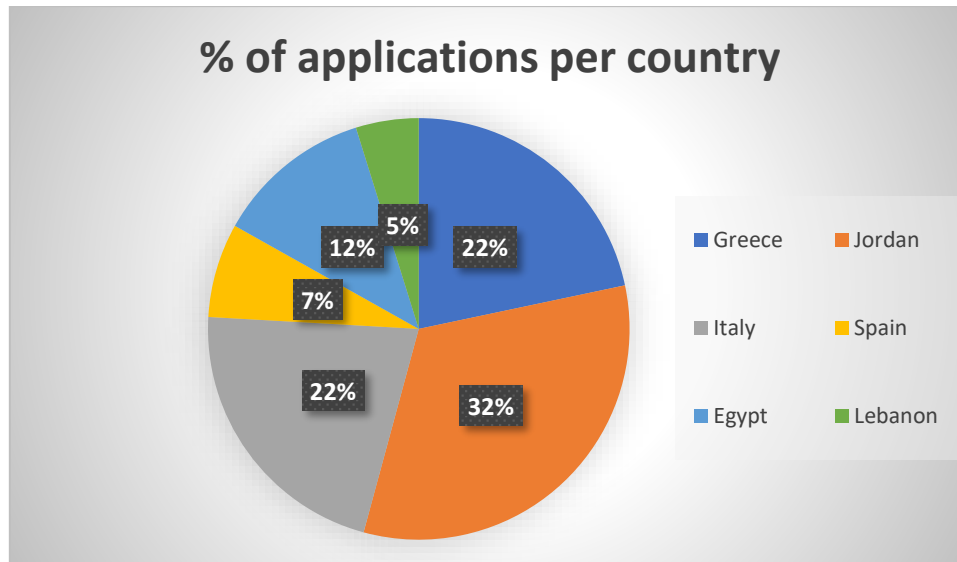


Figure 1 Percentage of applications received per country

### 5.2 Applications per sector

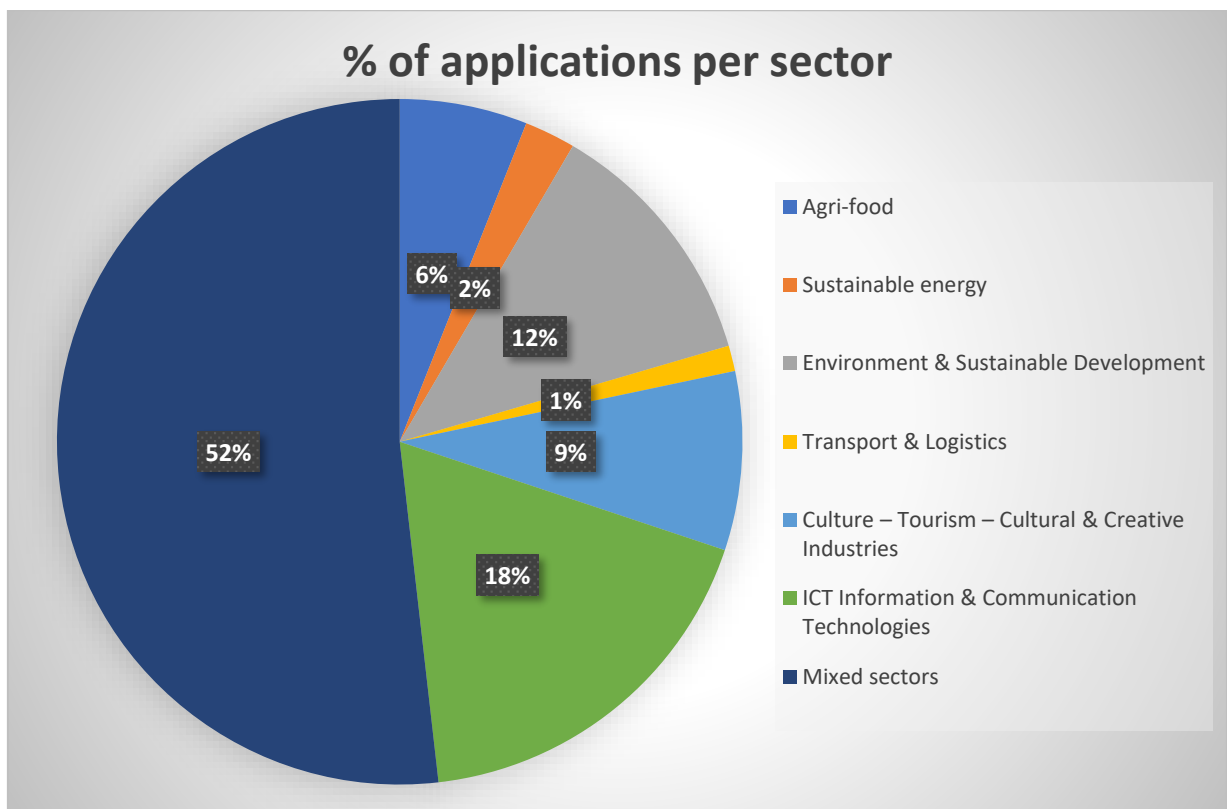
The number of applications per sector are the following:

- Agri-food: 5
- Sustainable energy: 2

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- Environment & Sustainable Development: 10
- Transport & Logistics: 1
- Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries: 7
- ICT Information & Communication Technologies: 15
- Mixed sectors\*: 43

In the image below are the percentages of applications per sector:



*Figure 2 Percentage of applications received per sector*

\* The mixed sectors category includes SMEs that consider themselves part of more than one sector, such as:

- Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development + Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries
- Agri-food + Environment & Sustainable Development + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Environment & Sustainable Development + Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries





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- Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Agri-food + Environment & Sustainable Development
- Environment & Sustainable Development + Transport & Logistics
- Agri-food + Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development
- Environment & Sustainable Development + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Environment & Sustainable Development + Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Agri-food + Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development
- Agri-food + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Agri-food + Environment & Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development + Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries
- Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Sustainable Energy + Transport & Logistics + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Transport & Logistics + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development + Transport & Logistics
- Agri-food + Environment & Sustainable Development + Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries
- Agri-food + Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries
- Sustainable Energy + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Agri-food + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Culture – Tourism – Cultural & Creative Industries + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Agri-food + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Sustainable Energy + Environment & Sustainable Development + Transport & Logistics
- Transport & Logistics + ICT Information & Communication Technologies
- Agri-food + Sustainable Energy
- Agri-food + Environment & Sustainable Development

### 5.3 Research Result uptake

Among the interest of EMPHASIS, is the exploitation and further development of solutions coming from a research result uptake. This dimension was also taken into consideration for the open call. In fact, over the half of the applicants' solutions (57%) are coming from research.

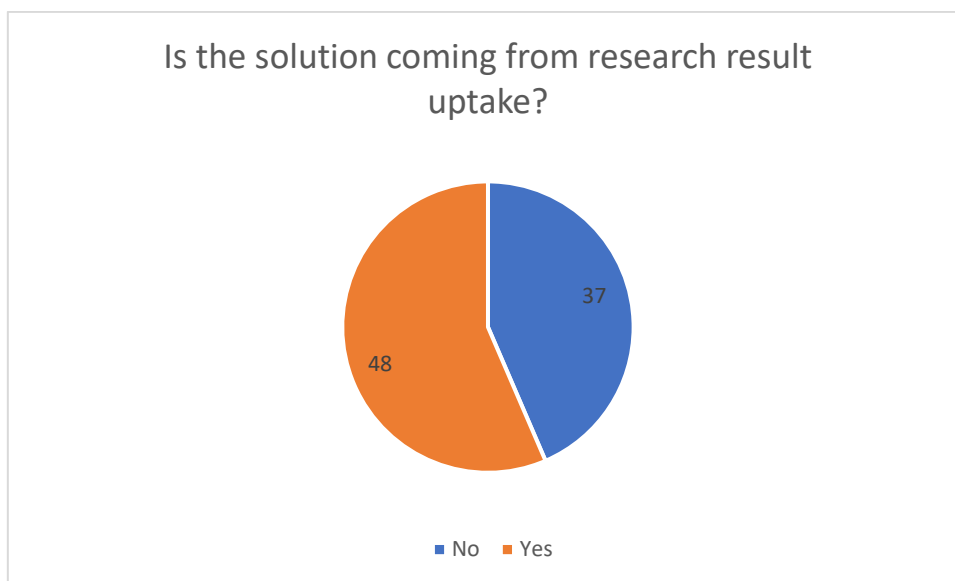


Figure 1 Research result uptake solutions

#### 5.4 Interest among Euromed

With regards to the interest of applicants to cross-border collaborations, the Greek, Italian and Spanish applicants show more interest in Egyptian companies, while the Lebanese, Jordanian and Egyptian to Spanish companies. Though, there is a balance of selections as depicted in the figures below:

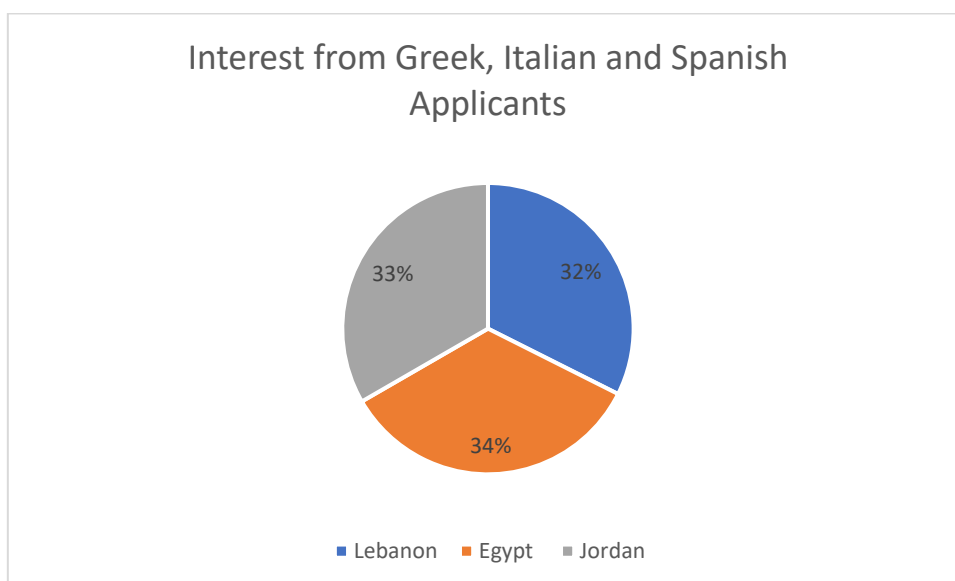


Figure 2 Interest from Greek, Italian and Spanish Applicants

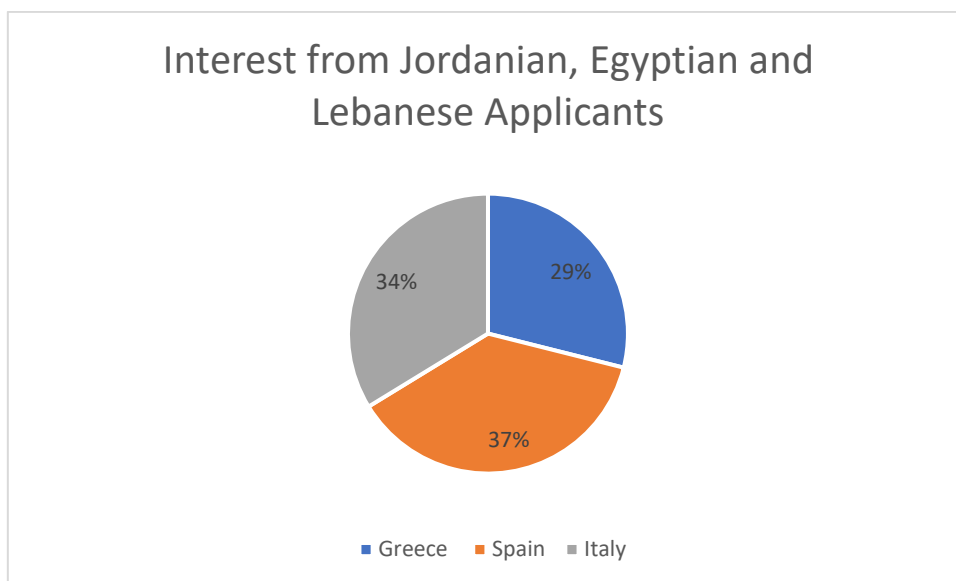


Figure 3 Interest from Jordanian, Egyptian and Lebanese Applicants

In addition, The percentage of applicants that already have identified and/or existing partners to the countries of interest is low.

In particular the 88% of the applicants have not identified partners and 89% of the have not existing partnerships in the targeted countries.

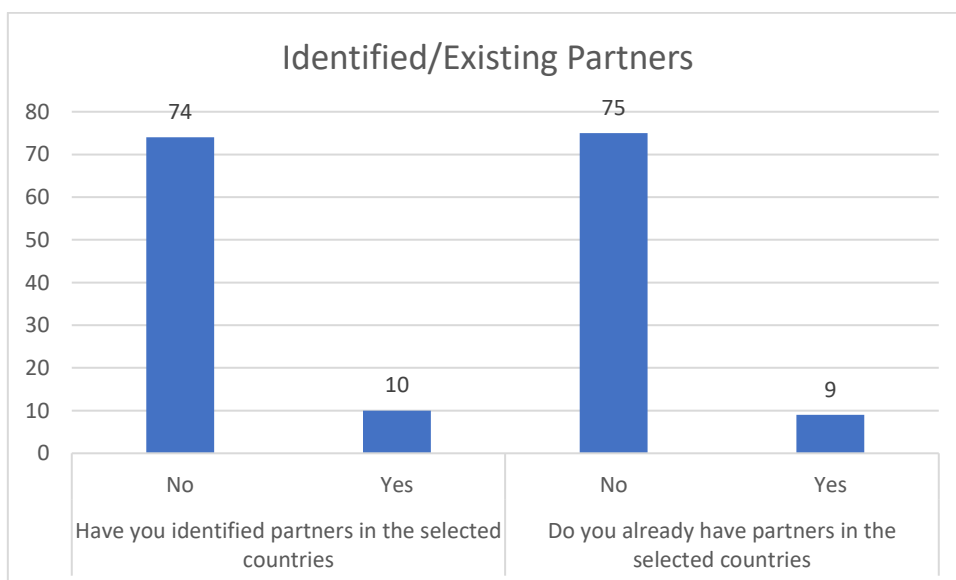


Figure 4 Identified/Existing Partnerships