



Call for Papers

Youth and the Mediterranean: Exploring New Approaches to Dialogue and Cooperation

Youth between the ages of 15 and 29 are the single largest and fastest expanding demographic group in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Their role in putting dominant societal norms to a test and fuelling new social, political and cultural processes can hardly be overestimated. Youth were among the primary instigators for the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, as well as the most active demographic group to have challenged authoritarianism both before and after 2010. More than five years since the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, however, youth in the MENA still suffer from the highest unemployment rates in the world and the chronic lack of jobs and opportunities are widely considered a principal factor fuelling radical ideologies in the area. While many studies have focused on youth in the Arab world, it is increasingly rare to hear how young people themselves view and interpret current developments unfolding in their society and how these relate to the ongoing international debate on the future of the Mediterranean region.

In this context, the New-Med Research Network intends to give voice to youth themselves, providing a platform for **8 young professionals** to present their ideas and contribute to the ongoing debates about conflict, security and radicalisation with a view to proposing new ideas and approaches to re-launch dialogue and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. Candidates should be **under the age of 32**, hold an internationally **valid passport from, or permanent residency in, one of the countries of the MENA region**¹, and should be preferably **based at a university, NGO, or local media outlet**.

By hearing directly from a select number of young scholars of Middle Eastern or North African descent, the New Med network aims to broaden debates and include diverse perspectives, thus forging new links between generations, sectors and geographies while providing an alternative to the often European-dominated debate about current security challenges in the Mediterranean region.

Candidates who fit the above profile are invited to submit applications to **write a policy paper**, between **2,500-3,000 words in length** (complete with footnotes and bibliography), in English and dealing with one of the themes outlined below.

Successful candidates will be selected by the **New-Med Steering Committee** on the basis of their **innovative research proposals, CV and cover letter**. Final decisions will be made by the Steering Committee, which will pursue an adequate gender, age and nationality balance among

¹ Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Israel, Lebanon, Yemen, United Arab Emirates, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Tunisia. Applicants from Turkey are also eligible.

the selected candidates. Successful candidates will be contacted directly by the end of October, 2016.

Selected authors will receive a **remuneration of 300 euros for the policy paper** upon its final submission and after approval by the New-Med Steering Committee. Selected authors will also be invited to present their papers at a **one-day international conference** scheduled for January 2017 in Rome.

The New-Med network will cover travel costs, accommodation (two nights) and a ‘speed-dating’ welcoming reception followed by an informal networking dinner before the conference. This will allow participants to get to know each other and to engage in network building.

Following the conference, authors will be given the opportunity to revise and update their papers and these will be considered for publication as an [IAI Research Paper](#) within the framework of the [New-Med Research Network](#).

Established in 2014, New-Med is a research network of Mediterranean experts and policy analysts with a special interest in the complex social, political, cultural and security-related dynamics that are unfolding in the Mediterranean region. The network is developed by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), in cooperation with the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, the Compagnia di San Paolo of Turin, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and the German Marshall Fund (GMF) of the United States.

A priority of the network is to promote a non-Eurocentric vision of the region, featuring as much as possible views from the South and other areas of the Mediterranean. The network also seeks to provide a platform where emerging researchers can put forward new perspectives about regional cooperation. By undertaking research and outreach activities, this “track II” initiative aims to foster the scholarly reflection on the changing scenarios in and around the Mediterranean and provide key input to the political dialogue taking place in international fora, including in the context of the OSCE Mediterranean Dialogue. Since its inception, the New-Med Research Network has organised nine international conferences and published thirty-nine research papers on various themes tied to Euro-Mediterranean relations.

A complete description of the New-Med Research Network, including access to past publications, is available from [IAI's website](#).

Policy Papers

Conflict, Security and Radicalisation: Exploring New Approaches to Dialogue and Cooperation

The Mediterranean region, broadly defined, is experiencing a number of complex and overlapping crises. Their implications extend well beyond the Mediterranean itself with a direct impact on Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and the broader international system. Heightened threat perceptions have focussed in particular on the unfolding refugee crises in the Mediterranean, the Syrian conflict and the ongoing efforts to counter the self-proclaimed Islamic State, also known as ISIS, ISIL or *Daesh*. Yet, while security has (re)emerged as the primary prism applied to regional developments, many of these challenges cannot be addressed through military or diplomatic means alone. Decades of bad governance, fraying state-society relations and

incessant geostrategic rivalries have all contributed to the present state of affairs in the region, creating the conditions for the present, organic crisis affecting the MENA region as a whole.

Policy papers should seek to **critically address the complex interlinkages between conflict, security and radicalisation in the MENA region** reflecting on the root causes of the present situation while advancing concrete and innovative recommendations aimed at local, regional and international actors. Analysis of the root causes and present implications should be balanced with an innovative approach to assessing future trajectories and developing policy prescriptions capable of placing the Mediterranean region on a more inclusive and sustainable path. Particular appreciation will be given to contributions that combine analysis with policy-relevant proposals. Papers that will identify elements of a positive counter-narrative to the present, generally negative discourse about Mediterranean cooperation will be taken in particular account. Candidates can choose to focus on one of the following sub-themes but are encouraged to propose research topics that go beyond these specific examples:

- The Refugee crisis and Migration
- Radicalisation and the ISIS threat
- New and Old Conflicts (e.g. Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, Palestine, Western Sahara, Sudan, Saudi Arabia-Iran)
- Foreign Intervention and Geostrategic Rivalries
- The Crisis of the State System in the MENA region
- Environmental Challenges and Climate Change

Application

Candidates should submit applications to Ms. Nathalie Champion (n.champion@iai.it) no later than **15 September 2016**.

Applications should include:

- A Cover Letter (max 500 words) in English outlining the candidates experiences, innovative ideas/approaches and motivations for applying
- CV in English (max 3 pages)
- A 600 word abstract in English of the policy paper that includes a statement about the focus of the paper or the precise research questions and a motivation for the significance and novelty of the analysis and approach.