

20 YEARS

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Press Release



ANIMA is celebrating its 20th anniversary and brings together economic cooperation stakeholders to shape tomorrow's prosperity.

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, **ANIMA Investment Network** takes stock of what has been achieved to date and plans four major events throughout 2026 to look ahead to 2036. Business and investment communities, policymakers, and experts will be mobilized to anticipate disruptions, identify shared priorities, and develop a concrete cooperation roadmap addressing the economic challenges of the **Europe–Africa–Middle East region**.

“ANIMA is a unique organization, combining the passion and drive of start-ups with the discipline, knowledge, and rigor of a highly professional NGO.” – Candace Johnson, Honorary President of EBAN.

For the past two decades, ANIMA Investment Network has gone beyond project development; the network acts as a **catalyst for ecosystems in a rapidly evolving region**. With **€60 million mobilized and 40 large-scale programs**, **ANIMA has woven a unique network across Europe, Africa, and the Middle East**, transforming the vision of the Barcelona Process into a leading “Do-Tank.”



2002–2006: From vision to the emergence of a “Do-Tank”

While the Barcelona Process (1995) laid the foundations for a shared prosperity area, it was in 2002 that concrete action began, with a European Union call for proposals aimed at professionalizing investment in the South. At that time, half of the Southern Mediterranean countries had no dedicated agency and approached foreign investment from a purely bureaucratic perspective.



This led to the creation of the ANIMA project, with the support of the European Commission, **as a center of expertise dedicated to strengthening the investment attractiveness of Southern Mediterranean countries, which increased their share of global foreign direct investment from 1.6% to 4% between 2003 and 2006.**

In 2006, this shared ambition brought together **18 partners from 11 Mediterranean countries, who founded ANIMA Investment Network to deepen economic integration across the region.**

The objective is clear: **to act as a bridge between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East**, engaging countries in cooperative efforts aimed at transforming their economies and promoting their attractiveness.

The ANIMA network established its headquarters in Marseille with a clear ambition: **to move from diagnosis to concrete action and to multiply projects for the economic development of the Euro-Mediterranean region.**

“The founding organizations put in place a balanced governance structure between countries on both shores of the Mediterranean, while maintaining a technical secretariat independent from political contingencies, agile, able to engage with both governments and entrepreneurs, and tasked with deploying technical expertise for the benefit of all in order to turn our vision of shared prosperity into real investments,” explains Emmanuel Noutary, General Delegate of ANIMA.

A balanced partnership at the core of ANIMA’s DNA

Over the past two decades, the paradigm of cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean has undergone a profound transformation, shifting from a traditional development aid approach to a partnership-based strategy. **ANIMA Investment Network**, which has consistently placed each country and each organization on an equal footing in its operations and acts on the ground by relying on local stakeholders, has been one of the driving forces behind this shift.

The events and crises that shook the region around 2010 further reinforced this approach. The network’s approach is no longer limited to technical assistance; it now aims **to create sustainable value, generate impact,**

strengthen industrial sovereignty, and support a generation of entrepreneurs addressing major contemporary challenges. This transformation is grounded in the conviction that the private sector and innovation are the most powerful drivers for tackling the region's social and climate challenges. By structuring high-performing financial and technological ecosystems, ANIMA translates political will into measurable economic success, positioning the Mediterranean as a laboratory for responsible investment between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

Innovation at the heart of the network: driving ecosystems and agencies toward the future

ANIMA's story is one of shared transformation, exemplified by the outstanding journey of **Enterprise Greece**. Having joined the network as early as 2010 under the entity "Invest in Greece," the agency found in ANIMA a forward-looking partner to diversify the Greek economy beyond tourism and attract productive investment. Through structuring European programs such as Invest in Med and THE NEXT SOCIETY, the agency integrated the dimensions of innovation and internationalization, becoming today an active Vice-President and a source of inspiration for the entire network.

This collective momentum has never ceased and has translated into tangible results at the regional level. ANIMA has supported **more than 350 technology start-ups**, fostered the creation of **40 research-based start-ups**, and **structured eight clusters in the agrifood sector**. By launching, as early as 2010, the first Business Angels networks in Jordan, Morocco,

and Tunisia, the network contributed to building the financial and collaborative infrastructure essential to the emergence of a new generation of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, through highly targeted matchmaking engineering (B2B, B2I, B2G), ANIMA has generated **4,500 commercial agreements between European, Mediterranean, and African companies**. Beyond connections, this has resulted in **€12 million raised by start-ups** and **65 international cooperation projects** initiated under the network's impetus.

"I discovered ANIMA through the team with whom I co-founded CONECT, a new Tunisian employers' organization, in 2011. Since then, we have remained highly active within the network. Participating in ANIMA's projects has provided us with international resources and partners to support Tunisian companies. We have also benefited from ANIMA's work on the impact of investments to develop our CONECT CSR label. Thanks to this support, our label is now part of Responsibility Europe, the network of leading CSR labels." Tarak Chérif, President of ANIMA, President of CONECT International.



Public-private dialogue: reforming for the future

ANIMA has built a network of more than **400 experts** mobilized to produce unprecedented territorial intelligence. With **100 publications** and **20 advocacy papers**, the network has

become a strategic compass in the region, providing governments with the technical assistance needed to steer their economic policies on a scientific and data-driven basis.

A discreet architect of major reforms, the ANIMA network has helped remove barriers, from drafting **the first investment law in Syria** to the creation of **Invest Cyprus**.

“Our agency underwent a complete transformation when Cyprus joined the European Union. Between 2004 and 2007, the Cypriot government sought to expand the agency’s mandate and carry out a profound reform to enhance its agility and effectiveness. The ANIMA team and the network’s experts helped us define Cyprus’s strategic positioning, trained the agency’s future leaders in global best practices, and connected us with other Mediterranean agencies. The creation of Invest Cyprus symbolizes the success of a model of economic cooperation based on the sharing of experience and the transfer of know-how.” Marios Tannousis, CEO of Invest Cyprus.

The ANIMA network has also contributed to **intellectual property reform in Lebanon** and to the **promotion of R&D incentives for companies in Morocco**.

Making the Europe–Africa–Middle East region a destination of choice is ANIMA’s daily mission. Through flagship events such as the Mediterranean Economic

Week, MEDA Week, the Mediterranean Leaders Awards, and the JNDA Bridge Africa Forum, co-organized with Le Club des Bâisseurs, the ANIMA network has brought together more than 10,000 decision-makers. However, attractiveness also relies on expertise: over the past 20 years, ANIMA’s FDI Academy has trained more than **5,000 professionals** in best practices for promoting foreign direct investment (FDI).



“The resilience of ANIMA and its members is our strength, and the journey we have made is significant. Over the past 20 years, successive crises have required us to constantly adapt, challenge preconceptions, and continue explaining the complementarity between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Today, climate and social challenges, as well as issues of sovereignty, call on us to redouble our efforts for a sustainable future along the Africa–Mediterranean–Europe axis.” Emmanuel Noutary, General Delegate of ANIMA.

2026: An odyssey to shape the Mediterranean of 2036

Today, driven by a multicultural team, a Board of Directors representing 11 countries, 70 member organizations from over 20 countries, and a pool of 400 experts, ANIMA is rolling out its new 2025–2027 strategy,

“Cohesion, Transitions and Innovation” structured around four major pillars: **Economic Integration and Resilience, Green and Sustainable Transition, Digital Transformation and AI, and Innovation and R&D.** The network continues its economic cooperation activities to address the challenges of critical transitions across the EMEA region.

Celebrating ANIMA's 20th anniversary is an act of commitment. Four major milestones, co-organized with the network's longstanding partners, will punctuate 2026, transforming shared challenges into collective opportunities.

International Symposium
“Mediterranean 2036: Ensuring Economic Prosperity for the Future,”
in Athens (Greece), April 22–24, 2026



On the occasion of ANIMA's 20th anniversary, Enterprise Greece and ANIMA will organize a forward-looking international symposium in Athens to reflect on the economic future of the Mediterranean region and its neighboring areas, connecting three continents. The symposium will mobilize business and investment communities, policymakers, and experts to anticipate disruptions, identify shared priorities, and translate foresight into concrete cooperation roadmaps.

Foresight lies at the heart of this Greek milestone. Co-organized with Enterprise Greece, the symposium will bring together experts and decision-makers to envision the region's trajectories over the next decade.

The objective of this event is to anticipate disruptions and build shared roadmaps to secure value chains between Europe, the MENA region, and Africa. It is here that the network will celebrate past achievements while projecting the innovation of tomorrow.

EUROMED DAYS – Investment Summit
“Connecting Regions, Driving Growth: Mediterranean–Europe Investment Partnerships for a Resilient Future,”
in Nicosia (Cyprus), June 15–16, 2026



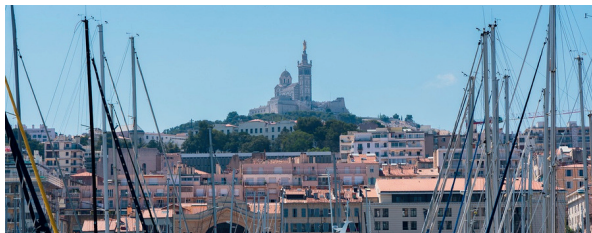
As Cyprus assumes the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2026, Invest Cyprus, in partnership with ANIMA, will co-organize a high-level regional investment forum bringing together public and private sector leaders from across Europe, the Mediterranean, and Africa. This initiative aims to leverage Cyprus's strategic position as a bridge between regions and as a platform for investment cooperation aligned with the EU's strategic priorities.

The Forum will serve as a flagship event of the Presidency, positioning Cyprus as a regional convenor and thought leader in shaping the future of cross-border investment partnerships, innovation, and sustainable development.

The objective of this event is to activate concrete solutions in strategic sectors (Green Transition and Tech, Investment in Human Capital, Defense, ICT and Digital Innovation, Financial Services). In collaboration with global stakeholders (WAIPA, WAPPP),

this summit will facilitate business matchmaking to turn intentions into industrial projects.

Capitalization Conference “Euromed Power: Boosting Innovation and Industrial Value Chains,” in Marseille (France), November 3–4, 2026



Building on the “Mediterranean 2036: Ensuring Economic Prosperity for the Future” symposium held in April 2026 in Athens, this conference will bring together European and MENA countries to share experiences and jointly reflect on structuring innovation and industrial ecosystems—a strategic priority for both European and MENA sovereignty. EU institutions, policymakers from the MENA region, industries, clusters, and business networks involved in implementing the Euromed Clusters Forward initiative over the past five years will participate to showcase their progress and contribute to shaping future initiatives.

Best practices in clustering and industrial upgrading will be shared. This is a matter of sovereignty: how can we join forces so that Europe and the MENA region become leaders in the digital and green transitions through interconnected ecosystems?

Investment Forum in Rabat (Morocco), December 2–4, 2026



The closing of this anniversary year will take place in Morocco, in partnership with AMDIE and Morocco Now. This forum will serve as the operational highlight, featuring the final “Tech Days” of the Euromed Clusters Forward project.

This event aims to showcase key transition sectors: green transition, agrifood, Industry 4.0, and automotive. Moroccan stakeholders and companies, along with ANIMA’s partner countries, will present their opportunities, offerings, and innovations in these strategic areas. It will provide a unique platform to foster diaspora engagement and forge new sustainable partnerships, concluding 20 years of expertise with renewed momentum toward the future.

ANIMA Investment Network firmly believes that the resilience and sovereignty of the EMEA region require collective action, integrated value chains, and bold economic cooperation. As a platform for engineering and dialogue between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, ANIMA continues to turn transition challenges into concrete opportunities. By building bridges between innovation ecosystems and decision-makers, the network remains, more than ever, committed to shaping a prosperous, sustainable, and shared future over the next decade.

About ANIMA Investment Network

ANIMA is a cooperation network dedicated to economic development in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. As a key player in shaping transnational investment strategies, ANIMA strengthens economic ties and facilitates partnerships between Africa and beyond its borders. Its mission is to foster economic growth and sustainable development by supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic integration, while mobilizing diaspora resources for development in the Mediterranean and Africa.

www.anima.coop

People behind ANIMA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



Emmanuel Noutary
General Delegate



Clémentine Brisson-Lesage
Director Administration
& Finance



Andy Ramorasata
Director Development &
Consultancy



Lydie Cornand
Director Information
System & Pedagogic
Coordinator

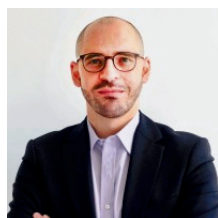


Virginie Ruyer
Communication Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



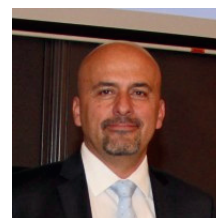
Tarak Chérif
CONNECT, Tunisia
President



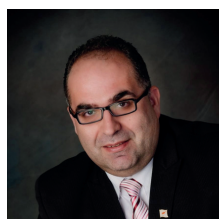
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Berytech
Foundation, Liban
Treasurer



Vasso Kyrkou
Enterprise Greece,
Greece
Vice President



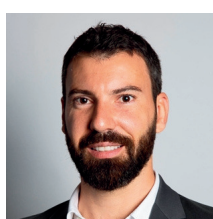
George Catinis
SEBC, Syria
Vice President



Marios Tannousis
Invest Cyprus,
Cyprus
Administrator



Radwa Kamouna
GAFI, Egypt
Administrator



Vincent Languille
Metropole Aix-Marseille-
Provence, France
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Olivier Andretic
Business France,
France
Administrator



Nathalie Faruggia
Malta Enterprise, Malta
Administrator



Yasmine Soufiani
AMDIE, Maroc
Administrator



Sonia Fernandez
AMEC, Spain
Administrator



Jalel Tebib
FIPA, Tunisia
Administrator

Our expertise



Diagnostics and studies

ANIMA conducts studies, mappings, and diagnostics to shed light on business opportunities, investment conditions, and economic dynamics across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. These works highlight sectoral opportunities, market profiles, and territorial development strategies, drawing on ANIMA's expertise and network of specialists, and providing guidance to both public and private decision-makers.

Public–Private Dialogue and Public Strategies

The organization facilitates dialogue between public and private actors, notably through advocacy panels and policy guidance documents that bring together decision-makers, institutions, and stakeholders to co-develop public strategies supporting economic development and territorial attractiveness. ANIMA subsequently provides advisory missions to ministries to implement these new strategies.

Cooperation Engineering

ANIMA deploys cooperation and project engineering to design, structure, and manage cross-border economic development initiatives.

This includes supporting the implementation of cooperation projects among organizations in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, leveraging its partner network and technical expertise.

Training and Technical Assistance

As an accredited training organization, the network offers programs to strengthen the skills of actors in economic development, investment promotion, and international cooperation. In parallel, ANIMA provides direct technical assistance or support through calls for proposals, relying on a pool of over 400 experts to assist institutions and organizations in their strategic initiatives.

Networking and Matchmaking

ANIMA is first and foremost a connector, thanks to its deep understanding of ecosystems. The network animates an international network of over 70 member organizations and 400 experts, facilitating matchmaking, best-practice exchanges, and connections among companies, investors, public institutions, and actors within the Euro-Mediterranean economic ecosystem.

ANIMA 20th Anniversary Partners

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Press Contact

**Emmanuel Noutary**

emmanuel.noutary@anima.coop

0033 682 23 69 33

www.anima.coop

**Virginie Ruyer**

virginie.ruyer@anima.coop

0033 658 24 41 46

www.anima.coop

ANIMA

The logo for ANIMA features the word "ANIMA" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a stylized graphic consisting of three horizontal, overlapping curved segments that form a circular shape. Below the text, there are two horizontal white lines: one under "AN" and one under "MA".

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