1. Introduction and motivation

As technology innovations drive the economy and the rapid adoption of ICTs, e-commerce is increasingly becoming key for more inclusive economic growth and for the competitiveness of developing countries. The COVID-19 crisis led to the acceleration of the dynamism of the e-commerce landscape and expanded its scope, including through creating new businesses, new consumer segments, and new products, as many companies were forced to accelerate their digitalization to be able to survive. The MENA region was no exception as its e-commerce market grew by 52% in less than a year in 2020 and is expected to continue to grow by at least 35% a year. This is particularly true as the region is one of the most digitally connected regions in the world with 88% of the population connecting online daily and 94% of the population owning a smartphone.

However, despite this considerable appetite, key digital sectors remain nascent, and the entrepreneurial potential is not yet fully exploited: e.g. only 8% of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have an online presence. This is owing to persistent digital divides as well as regulations that are not adapted to e-commerce which can create barriers for businesses.

There is no doubt that the e-commerce will benefit the South Med economies as a whole by providing a platform to build a whole ecosystem around it (including fin-tech, logistics, jobs, etc.). This will help startups, local businesses to grow a value chain and create a momentum for growth that is most needed.

Against this backdrop, ANIMA and FEMISE with the financial support of the European Union, are holding the second episode of “THE NEXT SOCIETY: NOW AND LIVE!” on E-commerce.

2. Objectives and Setting

The objectives of this webinar is threefold:

1. To share experiences of best practices in the E-commerce sector from three different angles: at the national and policy levels, at the intermediary level and at the entrepreneurial level.
2. To provide a vehicle of capitalization among the different partners and stakeholders of the project with the aim to stimulate innovation in the E-commerce sector.
3. To showcase the role of entrepreneurship in promoting E-commerce transformation.

This event will bring together policy makers, entrepreneurs, representatives of international organizations, public and private sector representatives and the Mediterranean innovation community to promote innovation and present replicable national policies, tech hub models and solutions developed by startups that contribute to improving innovation.
Agenda
April 19, 2022 - 2:00-3:20 PM (CET)
ON ZOOM

2:00 – 2:05 (5 min) Welcome and Introduction:
Dr. Maryse Louis, General Manager of FEMISE
Mr. Mathias Fillon, Coordinator of THE NEXT SOCIETY

2:05 – 2:25 (20 min) Showcasing Best Practices at the national and policy level
“Egypt’s Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA) partnership with Amazon Egypt to support small, medium-sized businesses”, Mr. Aly Gamay, Senior Program Manager at Amazon Marketplace, Egypt

“Boosting E-commerce in Jordan”, Mr. Anas Elayyan, General Manager at OpenSooq.com, Jordan

Moderator: Dr. Maryse Louis, General Manager of FEMISE

2:25 – 2:30 Q&A

2:30 – 2:38 (8 min) Testimonial 1: From Policy to Practice

“eCommerce Acceleration Programme (eCAP)”, Ms. Joelle Yazbeck, Executive Coordinator for the Beirut-based ICC-UNESCWA Center of Entrepreneurship for the MENA region

Moderator: Dr. Maryse Louis, General Manager of FEMISE

2:38 – 2:44 (6 min) Pitching 1
Let’s hear the story of an entrepreneur from Egypt who established their own start-up in the E-commerce sector. This entrepreneur has benefited from the TNS support.

Mr. Moustapha Bekheet, Founder and CEO of Retailak

Moderator: Ms. Passainte Atef, Policy and Economic Analyst at FEMISE
2:44 – 2:52  (8 min) Testimonial 2: From Policy to Practice

“NilePreneurs “, Dr. Mohamed Abbas, Deputy Director, NilePreneurs, Egypt

Moderator:  Ms. Passainte Atef, Policy and Economic Analyst at FEMISE

2:52 – 3:00  (8 min) Testimonial 3: From Policy to Practice

“Palestine Information and Communications Technology Incubator”, Ms. Megan Tannous, Project Officer.

Ms. Manar Younis, Project Manager at Jeeda

Moderator:  Mr. Mathias Fillon, Coordinator of THE NEXT SOCIETY

3:00 – 3:06  (6 min) Pitching 2

Let’s hear the story of an entrepreneur from Tunisia who established their own start-up in the E-commerce sector.

Ms. Marwa Moula, Co-founder of ILEYCOM

Moderator:  Mr. Mathias Fillon, Coordinator of THE NEXT SOCIETY

3:06 – 3:12  Q&A

3:12 – 3:20  (8 min) Takeaways and closing

Dr. Maryse Louis, General Manager of FEMISE

Mr. Mathias Fillon, Coordinator of THE NEXT SOCIETY