



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

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AUB Champions Circular Innovation through the MEDWISE Project

A new European Union-funded initiative, MEDWISE – Mediterranean Waste Innovations for Sustainable Environments, has officially started under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme, uniting partners from Italy, Spain, Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye and Palestine, to accelerate the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy in the waste management sector across the Mediterranean region.

Launched in July 2025, MEDWISE brings together research centres and private actors to tackle the region's mounting waste crisis—where most municipal refuse still ends up in landfills—by testing and scaling innovative, circular-economy solutions that save resources, cut emissions, and create green jobs.

The project will develop and implement three approaches: AI-powered intelligent sorting and minimal food waste; decentralized composting of organic fractions; and industrial symbiosis, turning one industry's by-products into another's raw materials.

Pilot actions will take place involving municipalities, associate organisations, and citizens across the partner countries, with common technology tests implemented throughout the six nations.

By facilitating cross-border knowledge exchange and building capacities among local authorities and businesses, MEDWISE will accelerate the transition to a resource-efficient, circular Mediterranean economy. The project also focuses on the human and social dimension, engaging students, researchers, start-ups and local operators in different cultural contexts within training and awareness-raising initiatives to transform waste into opportunity.

"Our goal is simple but powerful: prove that waste can become a driver of innovation, competitiveness and sustainability," said Professor Giuseppe Mancini, project coordinator from the University of Catania and lead beneficiary of the project. "By sharing solutions that already work, combined with innovative approaches, we can move faster towards a greener, fairer Mediterranean."

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The project is expected to demonstrate replicable circular waste management models that can be adapted across Mediterranean regions, contributing to reduced landfill use and lower greenhouse gas emissions. It will also foster the development of new skills and green employment opportunities, while promoting policy integration that supports long-term environmental and sustainability goals.

Representing Lebanon, the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit at the American University of Beirut (AUB) plays a leading role in both the implementation and capitalization phases of the project. AUB's involvement spans the entire project cycle; from mapping using systems thinking and policy mapping to driving implementation, learning, and knowledge transfer across partners.

AUB will implement resource management solutions by establishing decentralized composting units as pilot models for circular organic waste management, operating industrial symbiosis (IS) networks, and deploying the SWMIS platform in Lebanon.

Also, AUB will lead capacity-building and knowledge transfer activities, including training students and professionals on circular economy practices, supporting municipalities in adopting sustainable solutions, and contributing to regional awareness and cooperation.

These efforts aim to deliver a functional composting model integrated into the MEDWISE platform, strengthen municipal and professional capacities, enhance regional collaboration, and provide policy-relevant insights for integrating circular economy principles into national frameworks.

About the project

MEDWISE – Mediterranean Waste Innovations for Sustainable Environments is co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme.

Total budget: 2,491,900 €

European Union contribution: 2,217,791 € (89%)

Total duration: 36 months (July 2025 – July 2028)

Partners: University of Catania (Italy), Universitat de Vic, Universitat Central de Catalunya (Spain), Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development (Italy), American University of Beirut (Lebanon), EDAMA Association for Energy, Water, Environment (Jordan), Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi (Turkey), Leaders International Organization (Palestine)

Project website: <https://www.interregnextmed.eu/project-page/medwise/about>

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Note to Editors**About AUB**

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 790 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9000 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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