

Progetto:

“Italia, Europa, Africa: priorità e convergenze per rilanciare la partnership”

Workshop “Looking beyond Europe. The rising influence of non-European powers in the Maghreb”, Palazzo Clerici 15 gennaio 2026 (All. 1)

Policy Paper “Per il rilancio dell'Europa in un Maghreb multipolare”, a cura di Caterina Roggero, 28 aprile 2026

<https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/reviving-euro-maghreb-ties-in-a-multipolar-mediterranean-236078>

https://www.ispionline.it/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Policy-Paper-ISPI-2026-Reviving-EU-Maghreb-Ties-in-a-Multipolar-Mediterranean.BIS_-2.pdf

Policy Paper “Per il rilancio dell'Europa in un Maghreb multipolare”, a cura di Caterina Roggero, 28 aprile 2026

https://www.ispionline.it/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/POLICY-PAPER-ISPI-2026-Per-il-rilancio-delleuropa-in-un-maghreb-multipolare.BIS_.pdf

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Workshop “Il Piano Mattei a due anni dal lancio Cosa cambia per la cooperazione e gli investimenti?”, Palazzo Clerici 5 marzo 2026 (All. 2)

Dossier “From One Crisis to Another: Building Resilience in North Africa’s Volatile Food Systems”, a cura di Aldo Liga, 6 marzo 2026

Four years ago, the outbreak of the war in Ukraine contributed to trigger **a global food crisis**. In North Africa, a region highly reliant on food imports, particularly cereals, the crisis quickly evolved into **a threat** that higher prices and potential supply disruptions could exacerbate other social grievances, leading to protests, turmoil and instability. Although this risk has gradually receded, the possibility that wars, geopolitical competition and the pervasive impacts of climate change could trigger another sustained spike in prices has not disappeared. On the contrary, **it**

looms over the region's future. Indeed, today's escalating conflict involving the United States, Israel, and Iran, which has already spilled into neighbouring countries, is already affecting food markets in its early days: the Strait of Hormuz is a crucial shipping route for exports of urea, sulphur and ammonia, essential components for nitrogen or phosphate fertilisers, whose prices have already jumped sharply. This is an additional reminder of how food security in North Africa oscillates perilously between one crisis and the next, as the region strives to forge **its own resilience amid structural vulnerabilities**. How are North African countries preparing for this new potential crisis and the ones that may follow? What political, economic, and technical investments can **bolster the resilience of their food systems** and address deep-rooted fragilities? And what role can international cooperation play in supporting these efforts?

<https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/from-one-crisis-to-another-building-resilience-in-north-africas-volatile-food-systems-231337>

Dossier “Across the Red Sea: Middle East-Horn of Africa Relations After the Iran War”, a cura di Lucia Ragazzi, Luigi Toninelli, Elio Brando, 5 agosto 2026

The Horn of Africa and the Middle East have long been bound together through shared maritime routes, security dynamics, economic interests and political influence. The wars that have shaken the Middle East over the past three years – from Gaza to Iran – are accelerating and transforming this relationship, reshaping not only their immediate theatre but also the wider strategic arena stretching across the Red Sea into the Horn of Africa. Current conflicts are exposing the vulnerability of the maritime chokepoints connecting the two regions, deepening their strategic interdependence and exacerbating political competition of key MENA actors in the region.

How has the strategic landscape of the Red Sea changed since the outbreak of the Iran war? How are the priorities and stances of countries in the Horn of Africa shifting in this phase? And how is their approach to this increasingly contested maritime space likely to evolve?

<https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/across-the-red-sea-middle-east-horn-of-africa-relations-after-the-iran-war-242526>

Policy Paper “La terza via? Il Piano Mattei nella crisi degli aiuti”, a cura di Lucia Ragazzi e Giovanni Carbone, 29 settembre 2026

<https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/la-terza-via-il-piano-mattei-nella-crisi-degli-aiuti-245080>

<https://www.ispionline.it/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/POLICY-PAPER-ISPI-2026-la-terza-via.-il-piano-mattei-nella-crisi-degli-aiuti.pdf>

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Traduzione in inglese del Policy Paper “A Third Way? The Mattei Plan and the Aid Crisis”, a cura di Lucia Ragazzi e Giovanni Carbone, 29 settembre 2026

<https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/a-third-way-the-mattei-plan-and-the-aid-crisis-246368>

Looking beyond Europe

The rising influence of non-European powers in the Maghreb

Closed-door workshop

15 January 2026, 2:30-6:30 p.m. – Milan, ISPI Palazzo Clerici (via Clerici 5)

Concept

The historically privileged relationship between Europe and the Maghreb is now at risk of erosion, challenged by the growing influence of non-European actors across the region.

For decades, relations between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean have developed primarily on a bilateral basis – between former colonial powers and individual Maghreb states, or between the European Union (EU) and its southern partners. Since the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the ambition has been to build a multilateral architecture of cooperation. Yet, thirty years after the Barcelona Process, the EU is once again attempting to revitalize a project that has never fully realised its potential.

Meanwhile, perceptions in the Maghreb have shifted. The European Union and its member states are no longer seen as the exclusive or even the preferred partners for external engagement. The Euro-Maghreb relationship is increasingly being redefined in a competitive context, as new actors consolidate their presence and appeal.

Two major non-European powers – Russia and China – have already developed consolidated ties with most Maghreb states. Although their relations may not yet match the historical depth of Europe's engagement, Russian strategic involvement and Chinese economic and infrastructure-driven influence are now tangible realities, gaining renewed momentum in recent years.

In a region marked by persistent instability – unresolved territorial disputes, economic fragility, uneven development, and stalled democratic transitions – additional players have entered the scene. Turkey and the Gulf monarchies have become significant political, financial, and security stakeholders, while the United States under Donald Trump's Administration is seeking a new protagonism, as highlighted by recent developments surrounding the Western Sahara issue.

This closed-door workshop is in preparation for a Policy Paper that ISPI is realising for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The Policy Paper seeks to offer a strategic roadmap for how Europe can effectively reposition itself in the Maghreb and compete with these emerging and returning global actors.

This closed-door workshop is designed as an opportunity for leading experts to engage in a high-level discussion of these dynamics, contributing perspectives and proposals for actionable and impactful policies. In particular, the workshop intends to bring forward the voices and analytical views of Maghreb stakeholders. Through the participation of high-level speakers from the region, it aims to address a central question: how do Maghreb governments and societies perceive the presence, intentions, and influence of non-European powers in their region?

Agenda

2:00-2:30 p.m. | Registration and welcome coffee

2:30-2:45 p.m. | Welcome remarks

Antonio VILLAFRANCA, Vice President for Research, ISPI

Pietro DE MARTIN TOPRANIN, Head of the Policy Planning Unit, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

2:45-4:15 p.m. | Crises and Conflicts in the Maghreb: Navigating the Space for External Interference

Dalia GHANEM, Program Director and Senior Fellow, Middle East Council on Global Affairs

Nadia HACHIMI-ALAOUI, Professor and Researcher in Political Science, International University of Rabat (*speech in French*)

Ahmadou OULD ABDALLAH, President, Center of Strategies for the Security in Sahel Sahara

Discussant: **Pasquale FERRARA**, Italian Ambassador and former Political Director, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Senior Advisor, ISPI

Discussion

Chair: **Caterina ROGGERO**, Senior Research Fellow, MENA Centre, ISPI

4:15-4:45 p.m. | Coffee break

4:45-6:15 p.m. | Hidden Players: Understanding Russia and China's Influence in the Maghreb

Tinhinan EL KADI, Postdoctoral Researcher, Technology and Industrialisation for Development (TIDE) Centre, University of Oxford

Yahia ZOUBIR, Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Middle East Council on Global Affairs

Discussant: **Armando BARUCCO**, Secretary General, European University Institute and former Italian Ambassador to Morocco

Discussion

Chair: **Aldo LIGA**, Research Fellow, MENA Centre, and Scientific Coordinator MED-Mediterranean Dialogues, ISPI

6:15-6:30 p.m. | Closing remarks

Nicola MISSAGLIA, Head of Communications and Publishing and Curator, MED-Mediterranean Dialogues, ISPI

6:30 p.m. | Cocktail

The event is organised in preparation for the ISPI Policy Paper on this topic, realised by ISPI with the support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation pursuant to art. 23-bis of Presidential Decree 18/1967 which will be published in March 2026.

With the support of:



Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale

Participants

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Armando BARUCCO, Secretary General, European University Institute and former Italian Ambassador to Morocco

Sanaa BENBELLI, Research Fellow, Research Laboratory LADSIS, Hassan II University of Casablanca

Irene BONO, Associate Professor of Politics, University of Turin; Invited Researcher of the 2025 DEA Programme

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Yahia ZOUBIR, Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Middle East Council on Global Affairs

Il Piano Mattei a due anni dal lancio

Cosa cambia per la cooperazione e gli investimenti?

Milano, ISPI - Palazzo Clerici (via Clerici, 5) – 5 marzo 2026, 14.30-16.30

Concept

Il **Piano Mattei**, lanciato dal Governo italiano nel gennaio 2024, è ormai pienamente in corso d'opera e si pone quale elemento chiave **nell'evoluzione delle relazioni tra Italia e Paesi africani** alla luce dell'attuale contesto nazionale e internazionale.

Nel corso del 2025 è diventata manifesta la tendenza a **ridurre gli aiuti allo sviluppo** da parte dei principali donatori. Questa dinamica solleva nuovi interrogativi in merito al rapporto con i Paesi in via di sviluppo. L'Italia si colloca, in questo quadro, in parziale controtendenza: Roma ha mantenuto sostanzialmente stabili gli aiuti e il Piano Mattei incarna la volontà di continuare a investire nella cooperazione. Al contempo, si registra **un mutamento dell'approccio** delle principali iniziative internazionali per lo sviluppo, sempre più orientate al coinvolgimento di **attori privati** e all'**attrazione di investimenti**.

Anche il Piano Mattei riserva un importante ruolo al **settore privato**, con l'intento di valorizzarne il ruolo di attore dello sviluppo nei Paesi partner e di promuovere sinergie tra **mondo delle imprese e terzo settore** italiani. Come si stanno relazionando al Piano Mattei questi diversi attori? Come stanno sviluppando la loro collaborazione nell'ambito di questo nuovo approccio? E in che modo i cambiamenti visibili nel settore della cooperazione internazionale incidono sulle strategie degli attori privati, e delle imprese in particolare, per operare ed essere promotori di crescita e sviluppo in Africa?

All'indomani del **summit Italia-Africa**, che si è posto come ulteriore tappa per valutare lo stato dei rapporti reciproci in un mutato contesto globale, questo incontro a porte chiuse invita a un confronto tra esperti, rappresentanti delle istituzioni, delle imprese e del Terzo Settore e sarà condotto nel rispetto della *Chatham House Rule*.

Il workshop si inserisce nel percorso di preparazione di un Policy Paper che ISPI sta realizzando con il supporto del Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale. L'incontro è concepito come un'occasione per consentire ad attori coinvolti nella realizzazione del Piano Mattei e ad esperti del settore di confrontarsi in una discussione di alto livello sui temi in oggetto, portando le proprie esperienze e contribuendo con analisi e proposte di policy.

Programma

14.00-14.30 - Registrazione e welcome coffee

14.30-15.30 - Come le partnership cambiano forma: aiuti, investimenti e il Piano Mattei

La discussione si concentrerà sulle trasformazioni nelle relazioni tra le economie africane e i partner internazionali, in un contesto in cui emergono nuove priorità e nuovi modelli di collaborazione economica. In un quadro in evoluzione, come sta cambiando la cooperazione allo sviluppo e in che modo si intreccia oggi con investimenti, commercio estero e iniziative di partnership pubblico-privato? In che misura investimenti e commercio estero sono alternativi e in che misura complementari agli aiuti? Quali sono le implicazioni delle nuove tendenze e trasformazioni per lo sviluppo africano e quali le opportunità per imprese e investitori interessati a un nuovo quadro di relazioni economiche? Come si collocano in questo contesto l'Italia e il Piano Mattei?

Interventi iniziali:

- **Giovanni Carbone**, Head Osservatorio Africa, ISPI; Professore, Università degli Studi di Milano
- **Domenico Fanizza**, già Executive Director, African Development Bank e Fondo Monetario Internazionale
- **Annalisa Prizzon**, Principal Research Fellow, Development and Public Finance Programme, ODI Global - *(in remoto)*
- **Domenico Rosa**, Capo Unità Partnership Strategica con l'Africa e i Paesi ACP, DG INTPA, Commissione Europea

Moderata: Lucia Ragazzi, Research Fellow, Osservatorio Africa, ISPI

15.30-16.30 - Il Piano Mattei a due anni dal lancio: esperienze dagli attori coinvolti

A poco più di due anni dal lancio, rappresentanti delle varie componenti del Sistema Italia coinvolte nel Piano Mattei – Istituzioni, Imprese, Terzo Settore – condividono le loro esperienze, riflessioni e raccomandazioni sui punti di forza e sugli aspetti da migliorare nell'iniziativa italiana. La sessione lascerà ampio spazio al dibattito tra i partecipanti.

Interventi iniziali:

- **Enrico Petrocelli**, Head International Institutional Relations, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP) - *(in remoto)*
- **Silvia Stilli**, Portavoce, Associazione organizzazioni italiane di cooperazione e solidarietà internazionale, AOI
- **Antonio Tomassini**, Vice Presidente, Confindustria Assafrica & Mediterraneo

Moderata: Giovanni Carbone

L'incontro è promosso in preparazione della stesura di un Policy Paper sul tema, che sarà realizzato a cura dell'ISPI con il supporto del Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale ai sensi dell'art. 23-bis del DPR 18/1967

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