ASSEMBLEIA DA REPÚBLICA

Anna Lindh Foundation EUROMED

National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences

Co-funded by the European Union

ALF Mediterranean Ethics Bodies Days

"Ethics in public policy: Euro-Mediterranean perspectives"

Draft Concept and Agenda of the Public Seminar, the 3rd Informal Dialogue of Mediterranean Ethics Bodies, and the 1st in-person meeting of the Informal Working Group of Mediterranean Ethics Bodies

Dates: 10-11 December 2026

Venue: São Bento Palace, seat of the Assembly of the Republic (December 10), and Royal Treasure Museum (December 11), Lisbon, Portugal

Languages: Arabic, English, French with interpretation

Co-Organisers: Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) and National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences (CNECV)

Rationale. From scientific and technological change and pressure on public health systems to climate-related risks and widening inequalities, Mediterranean ethics bodies face many of the same dilemmas, but work within different legal systems, mandates and cultural traditions. Peer exchange can help them identify shared concerns, learn from context-specific responses and provide more useful advice to public authorities. This aspiration to foster shared reflection aligns with the Pact for the Mediterranean call for "deeper integration" across the Common Mediterranean Space and enhanced people-to-people cooperation for "change, connections, and innovation".

Recognising this need, and with the aim of connecting knowledge, action, and policy, the Anna Lindh Foundation, ALF, launched the Mediterranean Ethics Bodies Initiative in cooperation with the Research Ethics and Integrity Sector of the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and with support from the Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf of the European Commission. The 2024 Dialogue in Oujda, Morocco, established direct relationships and the case for a trusted Community of Practice. The 2025 Dialogue in Tunis, Tunisia, widened participation and began designing a mechanism for joint ethics knowledge.

This process culminated in the establishment of the Informal Working Group of Mediterranean Ethics Bodies (IWG-Med), an informal, non-binding advisory mechanism designed to facilitate joint ethics reflection, produce collective knowledge outputs and strengthen cooperation among Mediterranean ethics institutions and communities.

The Lisbon meetings are designed to move the Mediterranean Ethics Bodies initiative from relationship-building to a practical cycle of joint reflection, public engagement, and collaborative output. It connects three audiences in sequence: a public seminar, a peer dialogue among Mediterranean ethics bodies and a working session for the founding members of the Informal Working Group of Mediterranean Ethics Bodies.

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Draft Agenda

Thursday, 10 December 2026

The role of Ethics in public policy: Intercultural perspectives

Public seminar, free entry, registration required

This seminar examines how diverse cultural, legal, and institutional frameworks across the Mediterranean region shape the role of ethics in public policies on Scientific Research, Public Health, and the Environment. Panellists will explore common ethics challenges, compare governance approaches, and discuss strategies for aligning distinct national regulatory frameworks and timelines with shared values to strengthen regional cooperation.

08:30-09:00 *Welcome and registration*

09:00-09:15 *Opening remarks*

- Maria do Céu Patrão Neves, President, National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences, CNECV, Portugal
- José Pedro Aguiar-Branco, President, Portuguese Parliament, Portugal

09:15-10:15 *Ethical governance for research and innovation.* Scientific progress increasingly depends on data-intensive, cross-border and interdisciplinary research. This panel will examine how ethics review and research integrity systems can remain rigorous while responding to artificial intelligence, open science and uneven institutional capacity. It will ask where regional alignment is useful, where national differences should remain, and how ethics bodies can anticipate emerging risks rather than react after deployment.

Moderator: Anália Torres, Member, National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences, CNECV, Portugal

Speakers:

- Stavroula Tsinorema, Member, Hellenic National Bioethics & Technoethics Commission, Greece*
- Abdelhafid Mokrane, President, National Council of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the University Profession, Algeria*

10:15-11:15 *Fair and trusted public health policy.* Public health authorities often make decisions under uncertainty while resources, risks and access are unevenly distributed. The panel will consider how ethics bodies can strengthen priority setting, protect people in vulnerable situations, support responsible use of health data and sustain public trust. Speakers will connect national experience to shared Mediterranean pressures, including ageing, displacement, mental health and preparedness for future crises.

Moderator: Inês Godinho, Member, National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences, CNECV, Portugal

Speakers:

- Brigitte Khoury, Professor, Director, Clinical Psychology Training Program, American University of Beirut & Member, International Bioethics Committee IBC, Lebanon*
- Stefano Semplici, Professor, University of Roma Tor Vergata, Italy

11:15-11:45 *Networking break*

11:45-12:00 *Ethical requirements for decision making in public policy.* Decisions in the public interest must draw on sound evidence while respecting diverse individual and community values. Focusing on health policy and life sciences research, this presentation will outline the CNECV's proposed ethical requirements for reducing bias, disclosing conflicts of interest and involving citizens through open, informed dialogue. It will also consider how anticipating impacts and reviewing decisions regularly can strengthen their legitimacy and sustain public trust.

Presentation:

- Maria do Céu Patrão Neves, President, National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences, CNECV, Portugal

12:00-13:00 *Climate justice across generations and shores.* Climate change and the transition it demands raise fundamental ethical questions about how risks, costs and opportunities are shared across communities, countries and generations. At a time when green policies in the region face growing social, economic and political pressures, this panel will explore human rights, protection of vulnerable groups, intergenerational justice, and the fairness of adaptation and transition policies. Speakers will consider the distinctive contribution that Mediterranean ethics bodies can make to these debates.

Moderator: Maria de Lurdes Martins, Member, National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences, CNECV, Portugal

Speakers:

- Abdelbasset Ben Hassen, President, Arab Institute for Human Rights, Tunisia
- Pedro Fevereiro, Member, National Council of Ethics for Life Sciences, CNECV, Portugal

13:00-13:15 *Closing remarks*

- Josep Ferré, Executive Director, Anna Lindh Foundation

*To be confirmed

** To be determined