MENARA METHODOLOGIES

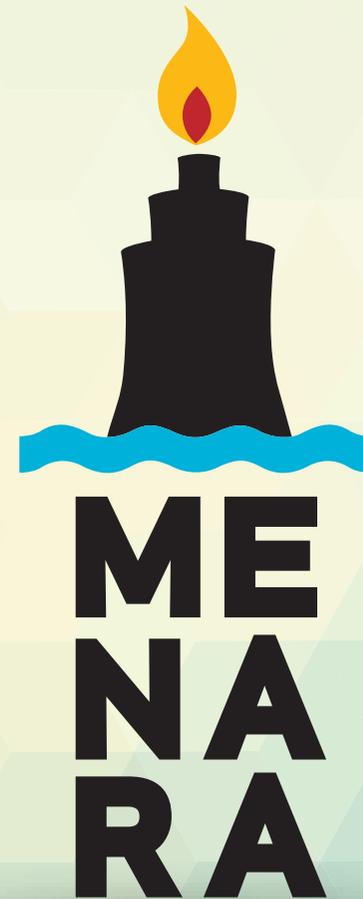# MENARA CONSORTIUM

The MENARA Project will achieve its goal by **analysing ideational and material factors and by conducting in-depth research on specific case studies on ongoing dynamics at three different levels** (domestic, regional and global). All the research will be based on quantitative and qualitative methods - including fact finding missions in the SEMCs and the Middle East, interviews, focus groups, Delphi surveys - and innovative foresight techniques.

Research will be accompanied by **pioneering dissemination methods**. This will include the translation of research results into accessible deliverables such as **audio-visuals, futures notes series, infographics and interactive maps, and a Massive Open Online Course**.

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2 Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Italy
3 Dansl Institut for Internationale Studier, Denmark
4 Izt Institut fuer Zukunftsstudien und Technologiebewertung Gmbh, Germany
5 Universite Al Akhawayn d'Ifrane, Morocco
6 Kamusal Politika ve Demokrasi Calismalari Dernegi, Turkey
7 King's College London, United Kingdom
8 Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary
9 European University Institute (EUI), Italy
10 American University of Beirut, Lebanon
11 Egmont-Institut Royal des Relations Internationales, Belgium
12 Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Energie, France
13 Qatar University, Qatar
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MENARA PROJECT

Over the past decade, the **South and East Mediterranean Countries (SEMCs) and the Middle East have witnessed profound geopolitical shifts, prompting extraordinary levels of unpredictability and instability**. At the domestic level, various deep-reaching social and political changes have been unfolding amid contestation processes since 2010. The effects of new patterns of contestation during the so-called Arab Spring live side by side with long-lasting domestic dynamics such as sustained demographic pressures (youth bulge, rural exodus) and the polarization of sectarian politics and communal strife.

At the same time, other geopolitical shifts like the growing importance of violent and non-violent non-state actors, nuclear proliferation, failed and fragile states, forced migrations and changes in the distribution of natural resources are reshaping many of the traditional features of the pre-2011 geopolitical order, while others may have the potential to do so in the near future. Consequently, **understanding the nature, scope and depth of these transformations becomes crucial for fully evaluating how the regional geopolitical future may look like**.

The Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture: Mapping geopolitical shifts, regional order and domestic transformations (hereafter, the MENARA Project) studies the **geopolitical order in the making, identifies the driving forces behind it**, sheds light on bottom-up dynamics and **assesses the implications of these processes on the EU and its policies towards the region**.

In order to do so, the MENARA Project poses a single all-encompassing question to help articulate a consistent and coherent research project: **Will the geopolitical future of the region be marked by either centrifugal or centripetal dynamics or a combination of both?** The project is articulated in three levels of analysis (domestic, regional and global). To answer this research question we first examine how it is translated and applied at each of these levels.

MENARA OBJECTIVES

(1) **To conceptualise the notions of "order" and "region"** in light of the geopolitical shifts underway in the SEMCs and the Middle East.

(2) **To identify and map the domestic, regional and global dynamics and trends** that shape the regional order.

(3) **To identify and map the key domestic, regional and global actors that shape the regional order**, and enhance knowledge of their mutual relations and interdependence.

(4) **To build future scenarios** for mid-term (2025) and long-term (2050) timeframes.

(5) **To inform EU policies and strategies** through policy-relevant analysis and the production of targeted policy recommendations based on systematic evaluation.