



Press Release

UfM new projects to enhance Higher education, transport and business development in the Mediterranean

Three new projects recently labelled by the Union for the Mediterranean envisage the construction of a Jordanian National Railway as part of a regional railway network; the improvement of Higher education on food security and rural development; and the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Development Centre for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

Barcelona, 29 January, 2013. - The Senior Officials of the 43 UfM member states recently approved three new projects to be labelled by the Union for the Mediterranean. The new projects will contribute to the improvement of the Mediterranean transport networks, the support of business development and the enhancement of training and employability skills in the field of food security and rural development.

[Jordanian National Railway Project as part of a Regional Railway Network](#)

Promoted by the Ministry of Transport of Jordan, this 4-year project will integrate the Jordan railway system with the regional network by establishing an effective rail connection with neighbouring countries.

The construction of a “North-South Corridor” from the Syrian Border to the Port of Aqaba (509 km) is the first phase and the backbone of the project. The Corridor is the main rail line of this proposed network, connecting Amman, the surrounding logistics centres and the nation’s gateway port of Aqaba. The North-South Line will further extend to the north of Amman to connect with Syria. The realization of the North-South Corridor is expected to start in 2013 and finish in 2017.

[Higher Education on Food Security and Rural Development](#)

This two-year project, promoted by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), aims at enhancing the employability skills of all professionals participating in Higher education programmes and advanced training courses on food security and rural development.

The project envisages to improve CIHEAM’s on-going post-graduate training programmes through the implementation of five specific and complementary actions, namely, the provision of e-information to assist MSc students towards greater



elaboration of entrepreneurship, self-employment and gender equality; the implementation of a Mediterranean Doctoral Platform which provides high quality scientific and logistic support to PhD students; the development of e-learning as a life-long-learning tool at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes (MAIs) of CIHEAM; the enhancement of Quality Assurance Systems in the area of Agriculture and Related Science; and the strengthening of Degree Recognition and Internationalization of MSc Degrees.

The aforementioned activities will be carried out at each of the four CIHEAM institutes located in France, Greece, Italy and Spain as well as in other Southern member countries.

[Euro-Mediterranean Development Centre for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises \(EMDC\)](#)

Promoted by the Chamber of Commerce of Milan, the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Development Centre for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is conceived as an integrated and widespread network of business development support centres aimed at supporting MSMEs' access to market, finance, and human capital development.

The project will allow for the creation of an efficient networking infrastructure among Euro-Mediterranean entrepreneurs, institutions and investors, in order to support MSMEs along the critical stages of start-up, growth and internationalization.

The project will cover at a first stage four priority countries in the region: Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. A second stage envisages the expansion of the scope to the remaining countries of South and East Mediterranean region.

About the UfM

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is a unique Mediterranean institution bringing together 43 countries (27 EU member states and 16 Southern & Eastern Mediterranean countries). It constitutes a platform for coordination and consensus building among its partners.

The Union for the Mediterranean operates from the UfM Secretariat, established in Barcelona in March 2010, and focuses on delivering concrete regional cooperation projects in six priority areas: Higher education, civil & social affairs, transport & urban development, water & environment, energy and business development. As a catalyst of projects, the UfM assists the projects promoters in all the aspects of development and implementation, from project structuring to technical assistance, including financial planning and fund-raising.

Media UfM

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