



Union pour la Méditerranée  
Union for the Mediterranean  
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## UfM Secretariat and CIHEAM join forces to advance cooperation in higher education and food security in the Euro-Mediterranean region

### Press Release

- The Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), Fathallah Sijilmassi, and the Secretary General of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), Cosimo Lacirignola, signed a cooperation agreement to undertake joint initiatives benefitting higher education and food security in the Euro-Mediterranean region.
- The UfM-CIHEAM project “[Higher Education on Food Security & Rural Development](#)” was officially launched.
- Within the frame of this project, 20 scholarships have been allocated to Southern Mediterranean female students in the four CIHEAM institutes for the 2014-2015 academic year.

**Barcelona, 3 October 2014.** The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed yesterday at the headquarters of the UfM Secretariat provides a solid basis for strengthened collaboration and the coordination of mutual efforts to promote the UfM-CIHEAM project “Higher Education on Food Security & Rural Development”. The project seeks to enhance the current CIHEAM Master’s programmes and advanced training courses for professionals by:

- Increasing the participation of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean students and granting scholarships;
- Developing e-learning initiatives;
- Establishing international mobility initiatives and joint degrees;
- Implementing a Mediterranean doctoral platform that provides training and financial support to PhD students;
- Establishing an observatory to promote graduates’ entrepreneurship and employability skills; and
- Increasing women’s participation in all programmes.

This joint commitment will also help to accelerate efforts towards implementing common activities and initiatives that will advance regional cooperation in the fields of environment, water and Higher education and research.

*"I believe that food security, together with higher education and mobility related to this sector, are really at the heart of the development of the Euro-Mediterranean region and are crucial for the employability of the youth",* asserted UfM Secretary General Sijilmassi.

*"Our mission is complementary and our action will be stronger if we are able to set up joint concrete projects for Mediterranean people, especially in the fields of education, youth mobility and scientific diplomacy. Food security issues are strategic in the region and are totally linked to green growth and inclusive growth strategies",* added CIHEAM Secretary General Lacirignola.

Moreover, the meeting provided an opportunity to discuss specific actions to be undertaken in view of the upcoming Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Agriculture, which will be held in Palermo, Italy on 28 November, as well as the 11th CIHEAM Ministerial Meeting, which is set to take place in Lisbon, Portugal in September 2015.

#### **About the UfM**

**The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** is an intergovernmental institution bringing together 43 countries: 28 EU member states and 15 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. It constitutes a platform for political dialogue, coordination, cooperation and consensus building.

**The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean**, established in Barcelona in 2010, focuses on implementing regional cooperation projects and initiatives in areas such as energy, environment, education, transport, business development and social affairs. The Secretariat works in close collaboration with governments and with an active network of Euro-Mediterranean partners to assist project promoters throughout the entire project cycle: from technical assistance to project implementation, including financial planning and fundraising.

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