



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE N. 14

HIGHLIGHT OF UfM ACTIVITIES 02

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UFM ACTIVITY REPORT 2015 RELEASED



"The work developed in 2015 has produced promising and tangible results, which now need to be amplified to address the pressing challenges of the region."

We must not lose sight of the incredible human, social and economic potential that the Mediterranean area – as it stretches into Africa – represents. This is a major asset in today's globalised world. Let us take a more ambitious, more proactive approach towards our future in the Mediterranean."

Extract from the Message of the UfM Secretary General



Read the UfM Activity Report 2015 on:
<http://ufmsecretariat.org>

DID YOU KNOW?

Today:



650 M tons
of sewage
are discharged annually
in the Mediterranean



180 million
people suffer from
water scarcity

By 2030:



nearly 80%
of the population
will live
in urban areas



The energy
consumption
in the South and East
could go up to 70%



CO2 emissions
could double

UfM Actions
for environment



18+ regional
cooperation projects on
sustainable
development



Investments
of more than
€4bn



New dynamics for regional cooperation in the Mediterranean

Last 2 June, at the Dead Sea in Jordan, Ministers of International Cooperation and Planning from the 43 member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) defined key steps to enhance the impact of regional cooperation.



EU Commissioner Johannes Hahn and Imad N. Fakhoury, Jordanian Minister of Cooperation and Planning, had jointly invited to this [first Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting for Regional Cooperation and Planning](#). Minister Fakhoury, co-president of the meeting, declared that *"the Euro-Mediterranean region faces increasing common challenges. Win-win regional cooperation is an essential complement to virtually any policies we pursue at national levels.*

Therefore, we have agreed to step up efforts to operationalise regional priorities, in particular by addressing them more actively in each country's planning activities and in the coordination of cooperation funded by different partners. [The two sides of the Mediterranean are in need for deeper economic integration](#) based on a win-win approach that supports global

efforts for regional peace, stabilization, reconstruction and economic integration."

He added that the success of this meeting was built on the encouraging achievements in specific sectorial cooperation in the past years (UfM Ministerial Meetings took place on various sectors such as Water, Employment and Labour, Trade, Women, Urban Development, Transport, Energy, Industrial Cooperation, Blue Economy, Environment and Climate Change and Digital Economy).

Commissioner Hahn underlined the opportunities held by regional cooperation and integration to increase economic growth and job creation in the Mediterranean region, and outlined the support that the recently revised European Neighbourhood Policy offers to this issue. *"The EU is fully committed*

to the development partnership with this region, and will help implement the vision of a region that collaborates, is integrated and inter-connected, while delivering on national specific priorities. [Our most important challenge today is to find ways for the young men and women in our region to see a meaningful future;](#) a sense of belonging to a local and global community where they can offer and get rewards for their individual skills. We need to send them the message that we see the future of this region as one of cooperation and exchange."

"This first UfM Ministerial Meeting on Regional Cooperation and Planning is setting a stronger regional cooperation framework for tangible initiatives and projects in the Mediterranean", said the Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, Fathallah Sijilmassi.

"We are here today to reinforce the regional dimension and the collaborative approach of our common cooperation efforts to foster human development and job creation especially for our youth, which is the main asset for the future and stability of our region. We need to place young people at the core of regional cooperation efforts to make them active players of the region's socio-economic future", he added.

[The EU is strongly committed to seeing progress in regional cooperation and integration](#), as reflected in the revised European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Following the ministerial meeting, several emblematic initiatives were launched: the EU initiatives for

financial inclusion, with a worth of €150 million access to finance for new entrepreneurs in the region; the Civil Society Fellowship Programme with the first 20 young civil society leaders meeting with Commissioner Hahn at the Dead Sea; and a €90 million renewable energy programme with Jordan, demonstrating how bilateral and regional efforts and policy agendas can meet and be mutually supportive.

Ministers recognised one month ago the need to boost economic integration among the countries in the region as one of the means to

create opportunities for the necessary inclusive growth and job creation.

They highlighted the crucial role of the Union for the Mediterranean to that effect, welcoming the work of the UfM Secretariat to help facilitate progress in regional cooperation and integration, including by promoting region-wide projects: **45 projects have been labelled** as of early June by UfM Member States, of which 22 were already under implementation on the ground.

At the informal UfM Ministerial Conference in Barcelona, last 26

November, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the UfM Member States and their representatives unanimously expressed their common commitment to work together on a deepened and operational regional cooperation, within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean. The first formal UfM meeting at Ministerial level since the EU revised its policy towards its neighbouring countries in November 2015 took part last June, and the first ever focused on the financial dimension of regional cooperation. Bringing together all strands of cooperation for results: from words to action on the ground.

Untapping the potential of the blue economy in the Mediterranean region

- The blue economy offers enormous potential for job creation and investment in the Mediterranean, thus contributing to human development, stability and regional integration. This untapped potential can only be exploited through the better coordination of maritime affairs among all Mediterranean countries.
- The 1st UfM Working Group on the Blue Economy took place at the end of May in Turku, Finland, with the aim of discussing the state of play of regional cooperation in the different areas relevant to the blue economy, fostering initiatives and projects and preparing for the launch of the UfM Forum on Blue Economy. The meeting was held just prior to the European Maritime Day (18-19 May).



The Mediterranean Sea has been called the superhighway of transport, trade and cultural exchange. The region boasts 450 ports and terminals. Thirty per cent of the global seaborne trade by volume goes through these terminals, as does a quarter of worldwide seaborne oil traffic. The Mediterranean region is the world's second-largest destination for cruise-ship tourism, and the coastal population of 150 million people more than doubles during the tourist season. Beyond economics, Mediterranean people can also take pride in their

environmental and cultural heritage, which is safeguarded in the form of 1000 ^[1] marine protected areas and 400 UNESCO world heritage sites.

The assets are impressive, as are the contributions of the maritime sectors to the economy, but there is still potential for more. In the EU alone, the **blue economy could unlock an additional two million jobs by 2020** and many more jobs could be created throughout the region, thus giving our young people real prospects for the future.

The blue economy needs the better coordination of maritime affairs among all Euro-Mediterranean countries and a stable governance framework in order to ensure business certainty for investors.

Euro-Mediterranean experts on the blue economy met for the first time after the Ministerial Meeting of last

November to discuss the state of play of UfM regional cooperation, including recently labelled projects, and to prepare for the launch of the UfM Forum on the Blue Economy. The meeting was held in Turku, Finland on 17 May, just prior to the European Maritime Day (18-19 May).

On 17 November 2015, the 43 countries of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) adopted a **Ministerial Declaration on the Blue Economy**. They endorsed the creation of the UfM Forum on the Blue Economy as part of a structured and integrated process to bring together the Mediterranean countries in order to exchange information and best practices, create synergies among current initiatives and provide input on future actions and maritime strategies.

Ministers emphasised the need to strengthen the potential of the blue

economy in the Mediterranean region, improve maritime governance and achieve an environment conducive to promoting jobs, innovation and knowledge-based business opportunities through the development of key maritime sectors.

The UfM Secretariat is currently promoting the two labelled projects endorsed by the UfM Member States right after the Ministerial Meeting: **Plastic Busters for a Mediterranean free from litter**; and the **Motorway of the Sea (MoS) Turkey-Italy-Tunisia project**.

UfM initiatives on the blue economy directly contribute to the **UN Sustainable Development Goal No. 14**: "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources".

[1] MAPAMED, the database on sites of interest for the conservation of marine environment in the Mediterranean Sea. MedPAN, UNEP/MAP/RAC-SPA. April 2016 release. Available on <http://www.mapamed.org>.

Coordinated action to improve road safety in the Mediterranean

- The 1st informal Expert Meeting on Road Safety in the Mediterranean (17 May 2016) gathered experts from key institutions to agree on further action to improve road safety in the region.
- "The UfM is very well placed to coordinate road safety prevention efforts in the Mediterranean", said Jean Todt, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for Road Safety.
- "The UfM Secretariat stands ready to contribute to road safety efforts in the region within the framework of its activities in the transport sector, by providing a wide intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platform to build on a concerted agenda", said UfM Secretary General Sijilmassi. "The figures on road traffic accident victims and the socio-economic impact are staggering. It is time for action", he added.

The **road safety situation in the Mediterranean region constitutes a challenge with overwhelming health, social and economic impact**. Indeed, in the 15 Southern Mediterranean, North African and

Middle Eastern countries which are members of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), road accident victims were very high, with an economic cost estimated to be 3-5% of the GDP.

This issue is also of great concern to European Union Member States, and thus there is a need and scope for a truly shared Euro-Mediterranean common agenda to address this issue.



As depicted by **Habib Turki, Project Coordinator for Africa and Middle East of the International Road Transport Union, IRU**, “road traffic is a key element of economic integration and growth, and thus good infrastructure and road safety have a direct impact on development, although we must remember that the overwhelming majority of traffic accidents can be attributed to the human factor, and thus public awareness, education and training are of critical importance.”

The UN General Assembly proclaimed 2011-2020 the [Decade of Action for Road Safety](#). The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 2 targets on road safety: halve the number of global deaths and injuries by 2020 and provide access to safe, sustainable transport systems for all by 2030. The General Assembly adopted in April 2016 the Resolution “Improving global road safety”, including the possibility of establishing a Road Safety Trust Fund to support these initiatives.

In light of these facts, and given the renewed international political momentum, participants agreed that it is time for urgent action through regionally concerted efforts of all involved stakeholders. In the words of **Olga Sehnalova, Member of the**

European Parliament: “My presence here shows the political support for this initiative. I look very positively to urgent action on road safety prevention in the Euro-Mediterranean region”.

With these aims in mind, the first informal [Expert Meeting on Road Safety in the Mediterranean region](#) was held in mid-May at the UfM headquarters in Barcelona, as a forum to exchange experiences and good practices, analyse current efforts and actions, as well as explore ways to substantially improve road safety in the Mediterranean region.

The main operational conclusion was that, as the European and Latin American experiences demonstrate, regional concerted action has

proven very effective to prevent and substantially reduce road traffic accidents.

Maria Seguí, Spain’s Director General for Road Traffic and Vice-President of the Ibero-American Road Safety Observatory, OISEVI, elaborated on the positive impact of this regional Observatory, created in 2008 in order to exchange reliable data and good practices and to coordinate regional initiatives: “I am very happy to present the successful experience of the Ibero-American Road Safety Observatory and I believe it could inspire similar initiatives in the Euro-Mediterranean region.”

Participants expressed their support for a regional approach to road safety prevention in the Mediterranean and agreed to explore the possibility of [establishing a Regional Observatory on Road Safety in the Mediterranean](#), based on other successful regional experiences.

The meeting was chaired by Fathallah Sijilmassi, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean and Jean Todt, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for Road Safety. UfM-labelled projects in the fields of transportation and infrastructure, such as the Trans-Maghreb Highway, include a road safety component.



From COP21 to COP22: Building a common regional Mediterranean agenda to achieve climate targets

- Keeping the global temperature rise to below 2°C, the target set by the Paris Agreement, calls for actions that cannot only rely on nationally-determined contributions. A coordinated regional approach on Climate Action is needed to successfully achieve this target in the Mediterranean, one of the most sensitive areas in terms of the impact of climate change.
- Over 50 climate experts from UfM member countries, representatives from international organisations working in the field of climate action (UNEP, EBRD, etc.) and civil society representatives gathered last 12 May under the auspices of the French Ministry for Environment, Energy and the Sea, as COP21 Presidency, to agree on a work programme for a regional agenda on climate action in the Mediterranean.



The COP21 triggered special momentum for tackling climate change globally. All the UfM Member States signed the Paris Agreement in New York on 22 April 2016 and they are now preparing for the COP22 in Marrakech in November 2016. As part of this preparation, the French Ministry for Environment, Energy and the Sea, and COP21 Presidency, hosted on 12 May the [4th Union for the Mediterranean Climate Change Expert Group \(UfMCCEG\)](#) in the Oceanographic Institute of Paris, a private institution founded by Albert I, Prince of Monaco.

More than 50 climate expert representatives from UfM member countries, key international organisations working in the field of climate change such as the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), as well as civil society representatives gathered with last May in Paris. Participants followed up on the Paris Agreement and on the implementation of actions related to the fields of local authorities, private sector investments and capacity building.

A work programme for 2016 aiming at enhancing the Mediterranean climate agenda under a regional umbrella of medium-term strategy was planned to be adopted at the end of the meeting.

"Climate Change is a threat multiplier for stability and security in the Mediterranean, one of the most vulnerable regions in terms of climate change impacts. Enhanced regional cooperation to face this common challenge is therefore needed and the UfM offers a unique platform for it," said Jorge Borrego, recently appointed UfM Deputy Secretary General for Energy. *"The UfM Climate Change Expert Group meeting has demonstrated, through active dialogue, the willingness of the Euro-Mediterranean countries to [tackle climate threats by bringing up a regional approach](#). Such a positive message is an encouraging sign for the region's stability and integration."*

A Mediterranean follow-up dialogue on climate action will thus continue in the coming years after the 4thUfMCCEG. [The MedCOP Climate 2016, which is going to take place on 18 and 19 July 2016 in Tangier](#) with the full support

of the Union for the Mediterranean, will mark another important milestone towards the development of a Mediterranean region-wide climate agenda for the COP22, which will be held in Marrakesh at the end of the year.

The UfM Climate Change Expert Group was set up in 2014 to act as a regional dialogue platform, showcasing how a complex system of relevant initiatives, programmes and structures may be brought together in order to create synergies while including

stakeholders, the private sector and various levels of governance. Its aim is to enhance regional dialogue and catalyse the identification, support and development of specific projects and initiatives for both mitigation and adaptation.

UfM meeting of international experts on women's empowerment: still much work to be done in the region

- 50 international experts on gender equality from UfM governments, international organisations and civil society organisations met on 25-26 April at the UfM headquarters in Barcelona to prepare the ground for the Ministerial Meeting on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society, planned to take place in the first half of 2017.



The objective of the UfM regional dialogue process is to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the UfM ministerial commitments (included in the [2013 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society](#)) and prepare for the next Ministerial meeting, pushing forward a regional agenda on gender equality and women's empowerment through the exchange of information, experiences, best practices and operational initiatives.

"This regional dialogue will not only monitor stakeholders' commitments with regards to women's rights and participation in economic, political and social life, but it will also explore how to best recognise and promote the role of women as drivers for human development and stability in the region," said Delphine Borione, UfM Deputy Secretary General for Social Affairs. "Giving equal rights and opportunities to women and men leads to more stable, prosperous and inclusive societies. UfM members are strongly engaged

in this endeavour, which contributes to addressing the region's many challenges more efficiently."

The Mediterranean context has dramatically changed since the latest Ministerial meeting. In addition to the economic crisis and the high unemployment rate, [the region is facing pressing and serious challenges](#) linked to terrorism, extremism and the tragedy of the refugee crisis and illegal migration. Women and children are the primary and biggest victims. Participants pointed out that the Regional Dialogue should ensure that the specific needs of women migrants and refugees are addressed and that the role of women as agents for social change, peace and stability is fully recognised and developed.

The UfM regional dialogue's methodology

Four working groups were working on four areas identified as priorities to be covered by the Ministerial Declaration: 1) Women's participation in economic life; 2) Women's access to leadership and decision-making

positions; 3) Combating violence against women and gender-based violence; and 4) Dispelling stereotypes through education and culture. In each topic, participants assessed the current situation in the region and provided specific and relevant recommendations. They also shared information on national and regional best practices.

The working groups were moderated by a two-person team consisting of

a UfM country and an international organisation (Italy and UNIDO on economic issues; France and the OECD on leadership; Egypt and UN Women on the fight against violence; and Morocco on stereotypes).

The four groups will present their conclusions and results to the Ad-hoc UfM Senior Officials Meeting on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society on the margins

of the [UfM Conference on Women's Empowerment, set to take place next 5-7 October 2016 in Barcelona.](#)

Some of the international and Euro-Mediterranean institutions that are part of this multistakeholder platform include UN Women, UNIDO, the OECD, the EBRD, the European Commission, the Anna Lindh Foundation and the League of Arab States.

UfM project to foster youth employability: a key shared priority for the future of the Mediterranean

- The Employability in the Mediterranean Conference took place on 14 April in Marseille in the presence of the Minister for Professional Training and Employment of Tunisia, Zied Ladhari, and with the attendance of over 120 participants including Young Mediterranean Leaders and representatives of local, national and international institutions as well as representatives from the Mediterranean private sector. Young beneficiaries of the UfM-labelled project New Chance Mediterranean (MedNC) were also present.
- Minister Ladhari said: "There are many synergies between Mediterranean countries on topics concerning unemployment and there are so many interregional actions that can regenerate opportunities for businesses, people, job seekers, states and governments. This is the time to take action for young people and for all of the Mediterranean. We talk about the neighborhood policy but we are more than neighbors. The Mediterranean is a family. We have a shared history and a common destiny. The future cannot be prosperous on only one side of the Mediterranean."



Youth unemployment rates in the Mediterranean region were among the highest in the world during the second half of April 2016: 25% on average, which was double the worldwide average^[1]. This crucial issue affected countries on both the southern and the northern shores of the Mediterranean. In fact, the European average was 23%, but a higher rate could be seen in southern European countries: over 50% in Greece and Spain, over 40% in Croatia and Italy and over 30% in Portugal. In the Maghreb and the

Mashreq, youth unemployment was three times higher than it was for adults, with one out of three young people being classed as a “poor worker” and university qualifications offering less and less guarantees in obtaining future employment.

Last April, almost 60% of the population in the Mediterranean region was under the age of 30. **By 2020, the number of young people under the age of 15 is forecasted to increase to over 18%.** This represents an asset for the region, and therefore, a positive and action-oriented

regional agenda on youth employability is indispensable to unleash the region’s human and economic potential capital and to contribute to stability and integration in the region.

[1] International Labour Organisation, KILM Database

THE MEDNC NETWORK: A KEY SOLUTION TO ENHANCE YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The UfM-labelled project **New Chance Mediterranean (MedNC)** is a regional cooperation programme aimed at consolidating a network of centres boosting the employability of young people who have dropped out of school before obtaining a degree and unemployed graduates from the Euro-Mediterranean region, with a particular focus on women, through the provision of an innovative training programme inspired by the Second Chance Schools (E2C) teaching model.

The project, promoted by the Office of Economic Cooperation for Mediterranean and Middle East (OCEMO) with the support of the Second Chance School of Marseille (E2C-Marseille), the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region, is part of the **Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4Jobs)** led by the UfM Secretariat.

PROVIDING-ON-THE-GROUND REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

For almost two decades, approximately 50 Second-Chance Schools (E2C) spread over 100 sites in **France** have been offering

comprehensive support (in the form of reinforcement of soft skills, internship experiences in partner companies in alternation to the training and aid in social aspects) to improve the social and professional inclusion of young, unqualified school-leavers. In 2015 15,000 young people benefited from this scheme with inclusion rates of between 50% and 60%.

In **Spain** where the drop-out rate in schools is almost 50%, local centres have developed actions specifically designed towards uneducated young people aged between 14 and 24 who are uneducated, with no qualifications and no job. Some of these schools have joined efforts to constitute a national network, Escuelas de Segunda Oportunidad (E2O).

In the Southern Mediterranean, public and private actors and the civil society are also very active. In **Morocco**, the OCP Foundation has launched a “Social Actions and Youth Support” programme that benefited thousands of young people in 2015. In **Algeria**, the Danone and Cevital corporations, partnered with the Algerian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, set up the School Miftah Ennajah, a sales school for jobless and unqualified young people. In **Tunisia**, the New Chance

Association is offering training to graduates from three Institutes -ISCAE, ISG and ISET; the first two are linked to the Universities of La Manouba and of Tunis respectively, and the third to the General Directorate of Technical Education.

EMPLOYABILITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE: OUR PEOPLE SPEAK OUT

Following previous steering committees held in Casablanca, Tunis, Barcelona and Rabat, the partners of the MedNC Network gathered in Marseille on the occasion of the *Employability in the Mediterranean Conference*.

The objectives of this event were to give a voice to young people and to demonstrate through several effective examples from the Euro-Mediterranean region, that multiple solutions in favour of youth employability are being implemented.

The meeting was jointly organised by OCEMO, the E2C-Marseille, AFD, and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region, with the support of the UfM Secretariat at the *Villa Méditerranée*.

UfM launches two regional cooperation projects to promote inclusive investment in the Mediterranean

- The UfM Secretariat and ANIMA Investment Network launched two Euro-Mediterranean projects aimed at developing investments that contribute to inclusive growth in the Mediterranean.
- A more effective regional integration is crucial to ensure a better socio-economic future for the region. Broader connectivity, trade and investment, as well as a steadier path towards sustainable development could greatly increase the competitiveness of the whole Euro-Mediterranean region in the global economy.



EMIPO – EUROMED Invest Promotion and Observatory is an important Euro-Mediterranean project aimed at fostering private investments and business partnerships in the Euro-Mediterranean area by fostering SMEs interest in this regional market. Emmanuel Noutary, ANIMA General Delegate, emphasised how this partnership combining public and private actors “is part of a long-term plan to address the deficits in wealth-sharing, investment and integration”.

Promoting regional economic cooperation and integration is at the core of UfM-labelled projects. Projects EDILE and EMIPO were launched in Barcelona by the UfM Secretariat and ANIMA Investment Network, the cooperation platform for economic development in the Mediterranean. The launch took place at the Conference “Promoting inclusive investment in the Mediterranean”, held on 13-14 March at UfM headquarters. The Conference was organised by the UfM Secretariat, ANIMA Investment Network and IESMed, the cooperative platform to boost the Mediterranean Social Economy.

There is great potential for increased regional economic integration. A recent study conducted by the UfM Secretariat indicates the following trade flow distribution in the region: 90% within the EU; 9% between the EU and its Southern neighbours; and only 1% among the

Southern Mediterranean neighbours. Association agreements and other free trade instruments have provided a positive framework for the development of economic relations in the Mediterranean. However, EU GDP per capita is still on average 6 times higher than in the Southern Mediterranean countries. In 2014, the EU Trade balance with its UfM Southern partners had a surplus of €49 billion, representing the second most important trade surplus and compensating more than a third of the EU trade deficit with China^[1].

EDILE – Economic Development through Inclusive and Local Empowerment is part of a regional approach and proposes an official label recognising investments that have a positive local impact, with the aim of helping to generate additional benefits, such as employment, subcontracting and environmental friendliness.

Claudio Cortese, Senior Deputy Secretary General of UfM, added that “the development of the private sector, the support for the creation of jobs, the equitable division of economic benefits as well as the strengthening of cooperation and regional integration are **the key factors for socio-economic development and stability in the region**”.

The conference organised in March mobilised over 55 economic development and social economy actors from both shores of the Mediterranean, representing organisations such as national investment agencies, ministries, development agencies, business federations, chambers of commerce, international development institutions and enterprises.

^[1] European Commission (Directorate General for Trade) from Eurostat (Comext, statistical regime 4), 16 October 2015

FEATURED INTERVIEW

UfM interviews Mohamed Bouagina and Hassan Al-Zara

Mohamed Bouagina and Hassan Al-Zara are two young Tunisian and Syrian beneficiaries of the UfM-labelled project “Euro-Mediterranean Masters and PhD programmes” at the EMUNI University (Slovenia). They are currently studying the Masters in Intercultural Business Communication.



Mohamed Bouagina, Tunisia.
Beneficiary of the UfM project “Euro-Mediterranean Masters and PhD programmes” at the EMUNI University (Slovenia)

UfM: What is your assessment of this Masters programme and its content?

Mohamed Bouagina (M. B.) : So far I have learned a lot and the programme definitely has this special component that makes it different from the other programmes. I would definitely recommend it to other students.

Hassan Al-Zara (H. A.) : Overall I am satisfied with the Masters. Our Masters programme has two key areas: business and languages (communication). I am really happy with the Masters and I hope we will keep this balance between these two areas because learning languages is very important and helpful regarding business prospects for me as a graduate.

Coming from different countries and having this intercultural environment in our class is also a great experience.

UfM: Tell us about the situation of young people in the Mediterranean. Do you think there are enough opportunities in the region for them? In your opinion, what needs to be improved?

M.B.: The region has a lot of potential. The young generations and students are really eager to see the region at peace so that we can advance even further. Being a young person from the Mediterranean region and having had this opportunity to meet young people coming from different places in the same region has made me realise that we share common

denominators but we are also different.

This diversity is what makes this region so rich – the region that shares the same sea but the Northern and Southern rims remain different. I believe that fostering youth mobility between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries would have a great impact and both shores would have a better chance to get to know each other's cultures. This could really help in the future and it's up to the older generations to give young people the chance to decide about their future and not to have their future decided for them.

“The region has a lot of potential. The young generations and students are really eager to see the region at peace so that we can advance even further.”

Mohamed Bouagina, Tunisia.



Hassan Al-Zara, Syria.
Beneficiary of the UfM project “Euro-Mediterranean Masters and PhD programmes” at the EMUNI University (Slovenia)

UfM: Where do you see yourself in the future?

M.B.: I see myself as somebody contributing to the greater establishment of my country. I believe Tunisia can contribute to world peace, and as a firm believer in this I would love to contribute through my work to an international NGO that works in the development area and is doing something valuable. Ideally, I would like to return to Tunisia and find the right

opportunity to make good use of the knowledge I have acquired.

H.A.: I see myself as bridge, connecting people and cultures, between the European and Mediterranean countries.

"Coming from different countries and having this intercultural environment in our class is a great experience." Hassan Al-Zaza, Syria.

So I hope that I will play this role: communicating with people and bringing them together for the future of our countries.

About the programme

The Euro-Mediterranean Masters and PhD programmes aim at training committed and highly-competent young professionals who will contribute towards the transformation of the Mediterranean region from their future positions in companies, government,

research centres and non-profit organisations.

Established under the framework of the Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean (Paris, 13th July 2008), the EMUNI University is an international network of over 200 universities headquartered in Slovenia.

The main mission of the EMUNI University is to strengthen mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue among Euro-Mediterranean countries by implementing postgraduate study and research programmes which will significantly contribute towards the development of higher education, science and research.

AGENDA

18-19 July 2016 Sustainable Development: MedCOP Climate 2016. Tangier, Morocco

18-20 July 2016 Youth Employability: Launch of the UfM-labelled Toolbox Project. Amman, Jordan

8-9 September 2016 Sustainable Development: EIB Med Conference (FEMIP). Rabat, Morocco

26-27 September 2016 Youth Employability: 3rd UfM Ministerial Meeting on Employment and Labour. Jordan

5-7 October 2016 UfM Conference on Women's Empowerment. Barcelona