



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

Activity Report 2013



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Union for the Mediterranean in 2013

In accordance with its mandate, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM Secretariat) has developed in 2013 several projects and initiatives to be implemented in the Euro-Mediterranean region. It has acted as a regional cooperation platform directly working on strengthening the cooperation between the EU and the entire Mediterranean region and the enhancement of integration efforts in the Mediterranean through projects of a regional and sub-regional dimension developed within *ad hoc* variable geometry frameworks.

To this effect, it has operated as a platform for the development of projects, already labelled or currently under study, which can yield a closer cooperation and integration in the Mediterranean. UfM as platform for regional integration and project based organisation has multiply its contacts and actions with Mediterranean countries and stakeholders to facilitate the development and implementation of new projects and activities, along with the up-scaling of initiatives currently underway which together can contribute to a wider cohesion in the region. It has operated as a platform for the

development of projects, already labelled or currently under study, which can yield a closer cooperation and integration in the Mediterranean.

The UfM Secretariat has given **full priority in 2013 to finalising the funding, launching and starting the implementation of several labelled projects** and has concentrated its efforts on developing more meaningful projects in the fields with greater potential for cooperation.

Three labelled projects were launched, - their funding having been secured in 2013: project *Young Women as Job Creators*, project *Overcoming governance challenges to the mobilisation of financing for the Mediterranean water sector* and the project *LOGISMED-TA* in the field of transport and logistics.

Two new projects were labelled (*Generation Entrepreneur* and *Integrated Intervention Programme for De-Pollution of Lake Bizerte in Tunisia*). Approximately 50 projects and initiatives entered the pipeline of the UfM and are currently in a phase of study, or already in a phase of active development. Around fifteen projects from this pipeline have been brought in 2013 to a level of maturity that should allow the Secretariat to present them for labelling in 2014.

The UfM Secretariat has at the same time carried out its mandate as **facilitator and promoter of regional integration** by encouraging consensus building, the development of regional and sub-regional networks and dialogue between stakeholders from the Mediterranean region on a number of themes and sectors of relevance for the development of the region and for Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. The successful holding by the UfM Secretariat of the first Economic Forum of the Western Mediterranean in October has opened the door to enhanced cooperation between all economic actors in the region.

During 2013, **the institutional pillar of the UfM has been reinforced by the resumption of meetings at ministerial level**. The UfM Secretariat participated actively in the organisation of three UfM ministerial Conferences in the fields of Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (Paris, 11-12 September 2013), Transport (Brussels, 14 November 2013) and Energy (Brussels, 11 December 2013). In 2013 the UfM Secretariat has also strengthened its relations and synergies with its institutional partners operating in the UfM institutional framework, such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM and the Euro-Mediterranean Assembly of Regional and Local

Authorities (ARLEM) and the Anna Lindh Foundation.

Based on its initial experience during 2012, the UfM Secretariat during this year **improved its tools for processing the projects pipeline** and internal coordination mechanisms to follow-up on all the initiatives and projects on which the UfM is working. An internal manual on projects which has the objective of accompanying the action of the Secretariat in its operational work on project ideas, project proposals, projects being prepared for or being implemented and projects monitoring was finalised and approved with a set of templates to be used by the project managers during the whole cycle of the project

from identification to the launching of the project after labelling.

Being an extensive **platform for building funding partnerships and financial networking** is ranked high in UfM priorities. In this sense, the UfM Secretariat developed a financial resources networking action plan which was carried out in the course of the year according to its fixed objectives and targets. The UfM Secretariat focused its efforts on strengthening and building funding partnerships with a complementary set of potential partners (European-based financial institutions, Non-European funders and Private Sectors and Foundations), with strategic or project-focused agreements reached with some of them.



Stimulating employment and supporting SMEs

In response to the socio-economic context and the needs expressed by Mediterranean countries during last years, the UfM Secretariat focused during 2013 on developing initiatives supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and promoting job creation. Among many other activities, the

UfM Secretariat launched the Med4Jobs initiative, ensured the labelling of one project in the framework of this initiative - Generation Entrepreneur- and successfully hosted the first Economic Forum of the Western Mediterranean in Barcelona.

Economic Forum of the Western Mediterranean (5+5 Dialogue)

The first Economic Forum of the Western Mediterranean took place in Barcelona on 23 October 2013. The UfM Secretariat co-organised the forum with Spain, as host country, the European Institute of the Mediterranean, Casa Mediterráneo and with Portugal and Mauritania, as co-presidencies of the 5+5 Dialogue. Inaugurated by the Spanish Prime Minister, Mr. Mariano Rajoy, it gathered ten Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Presidents of employers' associations of Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia, as well as 200 business leaders from the region.

The event aimed at strengthening the economic cooperation between Western European countries and the Maghreb region. Conceived as a platform for debate and identification of concrete areas of cooperation, the Forum sessions focused on the role of the Western Mediterranean in a global economy; the economic cooperation between Europe, Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa; public services and sustainable urban development; Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as vectors of business development and economic growth; project funding for development; and Mediterranean arbitration.

The Forum was a unique opportunity to have a debate between high level business delegations and Ministers of Foreign Affairs in order to foster trade, investment and regional cooperation between the 5+5 countries. The forum was fruitful in terms of agreements and consultations. Among these outcomes: the First Meeting of the Heads of business Associations of the 5+5 Dialogue.

A Joint statement was issued in which they call the European Union and its Mediterranean southern partners to: “foster and achieve deep and comprehensive free trade agreements and implement the Union for the Mediterranean as the two first steps for the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Region as envisaged in the Barcelona process”. They also agreed to establish a 5+5 Business Council. The Maghreb Employers Union (EMU) announced the creation of the “Maghreb Trade and Investment Initiative”.

Main highlights

- More than 300 participants and 200 business leaders from the Euro-Mediterranean region
- 10 Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Presidents of employers' associations of the 5+5 Dialogue's countries
- Keynote speech by the Head of the Spanish Government
- Official announcement by the Maghreb Employers Union (UME) of the launching of the *Maghreb Initiative on Trade and Investment (IMCI)*, which aims to boost intra-Maghreb trade by providing a roadmap and action plan for the short, medium and long term
- Establishment and first meeting of the 5+5 Business Council announced by a joint statement of the Heads of the 5+5 business delegations



Generation Entrepreneur

Is it the first project under the Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs, known as Med4Jobs, it received the UfM label at the October's Senior Officials Meeting held in Vilnius. By supporting and developing an entrepreneurial eco-system at multiple levels, the project works through grassroots business education in primary and secondary schools to hands-on training on business creation, and finally to private sector mentorship and seed funding for real enterprises. The project aims to contribute to employment and job creation in the region, and approximately 79,000 school and university students from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries involved in the project are to be the expected beneficiaries.

Institutional partnerships

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UTICA (Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce and Crafts) and the UfMS on September 18, 2013.

The Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4Jobs)

The Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4Jobs) aims to promote and replicate a number of visible private sector job creation projects in the South and Eastern Mediterranean. Med4Jobs has been conceived as a cross-sectorial, project-based initiative in line with the UfM mandate. It covers both the supply and demand side of the labour market by targeting three core issues: employability, job intermediation and business enabling infrastructure.

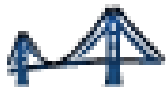
This initiative was launched by the UfM Secretariat at the [Mediterranean Economic Conference on “Employment and Territorial Development”](#) organized in Tunis on September 17-18, 2013. Co-organized with the Tunisian Government, the conference raised the awareness on issues of employment and local development in the region.

The initiative was presented at a number of related events and workshops to explore potential synergies and linkages with various actors in the field of employment and private sector development. The UfM Secretariat has been in direct consultations with different stakeholders and promoters to review a number of project proposals that address the three core pillars of the Med4Jobs initiative.

Main highlights

- 300 participants from 25 UfM Member States.
- Keynote speech by the Head of the Tunisian Government.
- Official launching of the UfM Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4Jobs).
- Signature of an agreement between Shekra Crowd Fund and Injaz Al Arab to provide financing opportunities to Southern Mediterranean young entrepreneurs.
- Signature of an agreement between the UfM Secretariat and UTICA (*Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat*) to strengthen support to SMEs in the Mediterranean countries.





Facilitating transport and mobility over land and sea

In the field of transport, the UfM Secretariat actively participated in the preparation of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport that was held on 14 November 2013 in Brussels. It also continued to promote the labelled projects (the official launch of the project LOGISMED-TA was held last 17 June

2013 in Barcelona) and established institutionalised cooperation schemes with other partners (two Memorandum of Understanding were signed: one with the Group of Ministers of Transport of the Western Mediterranean- CETMO- and the other with the International Road Transport Union).

Transport Ministerial Conference

The UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport was successfully held on 14 November 2013 in Brussels. Since the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Transport took place in Marrakech in December 2005, this second Conference has marked the first “Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Transport”.

The UfM Secretariat actively participated together with the EU in the preparatory work of the Conference which had started in November 2012.

The Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum was tasked by the Ministers with establishing the new Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) for 2014-2020 according to the priority guidelines that have been adopted at the Conference. The UfM Secretariat was given the responsibility to provide permanent technical support to the operation of the Forum.



UfM Working Group on Transport

Two Working Group meetings were organised with the aim to spread and share with a panel of international experts the results of internal evaluations of transport projects.

The 5th Working Group meeting was held in February 2013 regarding the definition of specific evaluation criteria for transport matters and the development of a model of Trans-Mediterranean-Transport Network (TMN-T) for the evaluation of the projects included in the multimodal “core” TMN-T for the 2030 scenario.

The 6th Working Group meeting was held in November 2013 to inform the panel of experts on the main outcomes and on the perspectives of the Second UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport, to present the up-to-date situation of the three labelled projects and finally to present the state of play regarding the multi-criteria methodology for the assessment of transport projects.



Institutional partnerships

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the UfM Secretariat and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) in Geneva on 15 April 2013 with the aim of developing common initiatives in the field of transport and logistics in the Mediterranean region, harmonising and securing cross-border customs procedures, speeding up and facilitating customs transit process, reducing transaction costs and border waiting times, and allowing the region to benefit fully from trade and transport facilitation.

In the margins of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the UfM Secretariat and the Group of Ministers of Transport of the Western Mediterranean (GTMO 5+5). This MoU institutionalised the already active cooperation with CETMO, the Secretariat of the GTMO 5+5.

Completion of the Central Section of the Trans Maghreb Motorway

The UfM Secretariat pursued its contacts with the project promoter, CETMO, and the Ministries of Transport of Morocco and Tunisia in order to develop the two national infrastructure projects further. The meetings were very useful to clarify the general framework of the Moroccan and Tunisian sections of the project and to update the “Technical Dossier”.

Moreover, the UfM Secretariat started developing the so called “horizontal component” of the Project together with the promoter (CETMO) and with the partnership of IRU (International Road Transport Union), aimed at integrating the works with the realisation of ancillary infrastructures (border points, rest areas, maintenance points, etc.), and at introducing a series of “soft” components (international transit agreements, training activities for the customs personnel, etc.) that will make the infrastructure immediately viable by regional traffic, once the construction works are concluded.

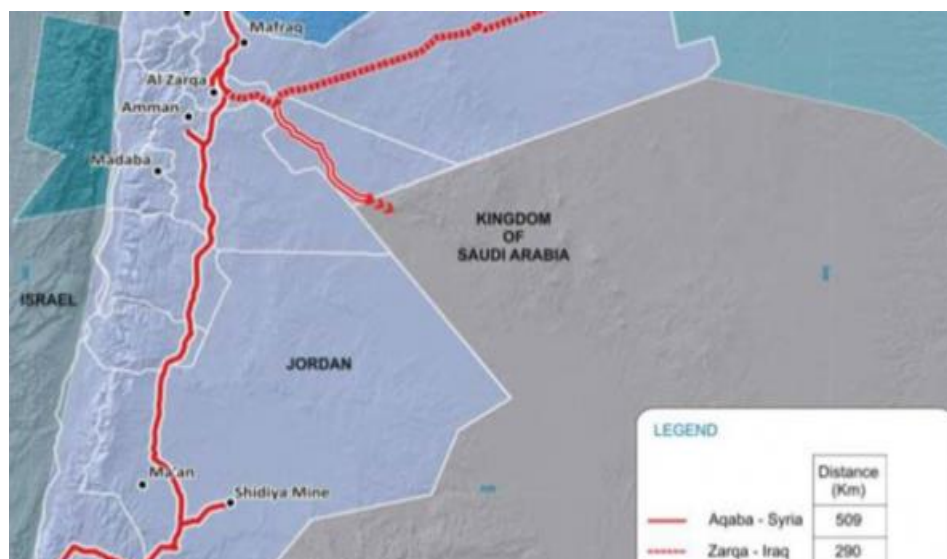
Jordanian National Railway Project as Part of a Regional Railway Network

After the labelling of the project in December 2012, the UfM Secretariat worked on a comprehensive Project Roadmap in the first half of 2013, which was submitted to the Jordanian Ministry of Transport in June 2013 and received the approval of the Jordanian authorities.

The Project Roadmap introduced an innovative approach for the project, based on the evaluation of the relationships and connections with other initiatives in the transport sector, both at national and regional scale.

In the meantime, the final design of the “Mini Project” was concluded and the selection process of the company that will realise the construction of this phase was initiated.

In a meeting held in November 2013, a program of complementary studies to be executed in the first half of 2014 was approved for the project. These studies will regard, specifically, an updating of the traffic and the market study of 2009, a new railway operational model and an interoperability study aimed at evaluating the best standard to adopt for the Jordanian National Railway Project. Of the above, The UfM Secretariat coordinates and supports the study on the railway operational model and the interoperability study.



LOGISMED-TA

Financial commitments were secured from the European Commission and from the Deauville Partnership Transition Fund. The official launch of the project was held on 17 June 2013 in Barcelona with the presence of the Ministers of Transport and high representatives of the countries involved in the project, EC Commissioner Stefan Füle and EIB Vice-President Philippe de Fontaine Vive.

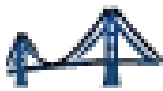
CETMO started the technical work for the preparation of the first tenders, regarding the “countries” action lines, such as the training programs addressed to the personnel (government functionaries, port authorities, customs officials), and the creation and strengthening of logistics associations.

During the UfM Transport Ministerial Conference in November 2013, the UfM Secretariat received an invitation from the Minister of Transport of Algeria to discuss with the Algerian authorities the modalities of including Algeria in the project. A working visit is envisaged in early 2014 for this purpose.

Core objectives

- Increasing the training offer and improving the level of qualifications of logistics platforms’ operators and managers
- Improving the performance of the logistics sector in the Mediterranean region
- Contributing to the creation of a more competitive and efficient network of Euro-Mediterranean logistics platforms





Promoting sustainable and innovative urban projects

The UfM Secretariat also developed its action in the area of Urban development: the preparatory work of the Euro-Mediterranean Sustainable Urban Development Strategy was successfully concluded, paving the way for the holding of a second UfM Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Urban Development in 2014. In the framework of the

“Urban Projects Finance Initiative”- the financing component of the Strategy- the process of identifying 10-15 projects for possible UfM labelling continued in 2013.

Urban Projects Finance Initiative

UPFI is an initiative of the *Agence Française de Développement*, the European Investment Bank and the German KfW Banking group, with funding from the EU's Neighbourhood Investment Facility. The UfM Secretariat, as member of the Steering Committee, attended several meetings throughout the year. It also chaired the Follow-up Committee meetings that were composed of EC and the IFIs (Afd, EIB, KfW of Germany and the French CDC) to closely follow the progress on the study. Out of 117 projects, an initial group of 50 projects from the nine participating countries (Turkey, Palestine, Israel, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and Algeria) was selected and was later reduced to 25. For the selection of the final 15 projects, the UfM Secretariat headed the UPFI Delegation missions to the countries involved, to hold discussions with project promoters and public administrations involved. Five countries were visited from September to December, namely Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan.





Boosting the development of renewable energies and energy efficiency in our region

In the field of Energy, the UfM Secretariat was involved in the organisation of two *ad hoc* Senior Officials meetings held in Jordan and in Barcelona and in the UfM Ministerial on Energy that was held last 11 December 2013, which represented an important step for the development of a more structured dialogue on energy in the Mediterranean area. The UfM

Secretariat completed the elaboration of the Mediterranean Solar Plan (MSP) Master Plan, delivering on its mandate, and pursued its efforts to develop financial tools to implement renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in the framework of the MSP-Project Preparation Initiative.

The Mediterranean Solar Plan

The technical work on the Master Plan ended with the Joint Committee of MSP national experts held on 19-21 February in Barcelona.

The political level took over with the organisation by the UfM co-presidencies of two *ad hoc* Senior Officials Meetings in Jordan (29-30 May) and in Barcelona (5 November). The participation during the process of representatives from the UfM Member States, the European Commission, International Financial Institutions, International Organisations, National Energy Agencies and other energy related organisations as well as the industry has been essential and valuable for the elaboration of the MSP Master Plan.

The MSP Master Plan, elaborated under the coordination of the UfM Secretariat, did not reach the unanimous consensus required to be approved during the UfM Ministerial Meeting on Energy that took place in Brussels on 11 December 2013. Nevertheless, the UfM Member States expressed their support to the work already done by the UfM Secretariat, and acknowledged the UfM Secretariat as the appropriate platform for a more structured dialogue regarding energy in the region.

Concerning the financial tools to implement renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, the UfM Secretariat has been working with EIB regarding the MSP-PPI (MSP-Project Preparation Initiative), in order to fully utilize its potential for projects' technical assistance in 2014.





Underpinning water and environment projects for a sustainable future in the Mediterranean

In the field of Water and Environment, the UfM Secretariat continued to promote the labelled projects, in particular the project Desalination Facility for the Gaza Strip with regard to its fundraising strategy, and the project on Overcoming governance challenges to the mobilisation of financing for the Mediterranean water sector by supporting its launch on 28-29 May at the UfM's premises

and by starting its implementation. A new project (Integrated Intervention Programme for De-Pollution of Lake Bizerte in Tunisia) was labelled in October 2013. Apart from the continued efforts to identify, appraise and develop projects for UfM labelling, the UfM Secretariat advanced the works for the preparation of an UfM Ministerial Conference on Environment and Climate Change to be held in 2014.

Rabat Conference for Sustainable Development

In partnership with the *Confédération Générale des Entreprises du Maroc* and the City of Rabat, the UfM Secretariat co-organised the Rabat Conference for Sustainable Development, held 13 and 14th November 2013. It was an occasion to promote, in the framework of an annual meeting, reflection, change and innovation, as well as to give a voice to the agents involved in implementing sustainable development.

Preparation of the Ministerial on Environment and Climate Change

Work advanced on a Ministerial Conference on Environment and Climate Change, planned for May 13th 2014 in Athens, under the Greek Presidency of the EU. The proposal for this Ministerial on Environment and Climate Change was put forward at the Senior Officials meeting in Malaga and endorsed at the Senior Officials meeting in Vilnius (3rd of October 2013).

- The UfM Secretariat strengthened its collaboration with the Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit (UNEP-MAP). The two institutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the side-lines of the CoP Meeting in Istanbul in December 2013.
- The results of the efforts to complete and update the lists of depollution investment projects that are underway, planned or needed to achieve the 2025 objectives of the Barcelona Convention, i.e. the regional strategy to protect the Mediterranean Sea against pollution, were released in December and will allow the UfM Secretariat to begin the process of selecting priority projects with member countries in respect of the UfM criteria on depollution.

The study led by the UfM Secretariat, in cooperation with UNEP-Map and EIB was concluded in December 2013 and updated the list of depollution investment projects, needs and related potential pollutants loads reduction. It provides an overview of the achievements of the past 7 years regarding the depollution of the Mediterranean and analyses the remaining needs towards the depollution of all the countries bordering the Mediterranean. The outputs will be used in 2014 to contribute to the revision of the 'Mid-term review of H2020' and set the action plan until 2020.

The active coordination among participating institutions ensured ownership of the coming results to form the basis of the revision of UNEP-MAP Depollution Strategic Action Program and National Action Plans.

- The UfM Secretariat hosted (September 2013) a workshop on water operator partnerships organised by the Global Water Operators Partnership Alliance of UN Habitat.
- Following a MoU signed between the UfM Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, a meeting on Waste Management was held in Barcelona in late December 2013 gathering a number of key experts from both regions. With a first successful meeting, linkages between the two Secretariats were identified and are to be continued throughout 2014 and provided a valuable opportunity for the Secretariat to expand and further its activities in this field.

Desalination Facility for the Gaza Strip

The UfM Secretariat continued work to support the Gaza Desalination Project labelled in June based on the established Fund-Raising plan and worked on the implementation towards a potential donor conference. While 50% of total financing for the Desalination Facility for Gaza project remains confirmed from Arab Gulf donors, efforts continued to secure the outstanding financial commitments, notably from European counterparts, but also non-EU, non-Arab donors. Further visits and meetings took place in the first half of 2013 to raise more positive interest for support (Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Italy, Jordan, Palestine, Finland and organisations in Washington). The need to convene in 2014 a pledging event was communicated to the Palestinian Authorities with the possibility of the Paris II Donors Conference for Palestine providing an alternative platform to secure outstanding financial commitments during 2014.

World Bank, Islamic Development Bank and EIB have also agreed to work together on the finalisation of the Project Financing Mechanism to receive the project funding.

On the technical side and with the coordination role of the UfM Secretariat, the EIB and PWA have issued a Project Information Memorandum (updating of all previous existing studies), and the technical assistance for the implementation of the project has been approved and funded by the European Commission and tendered through the FEMIP Support Fund for 2013.

More recently, the EIB concluded the tendering process and thus launched the technical assistance for the implementation of the project and in parallel, the Palestinian Authority received the firm commitment from the World Bank in November 2013 to manage and advance the technical preparation of the associated components (i.e. water conveyance and non-revenue water) of the UfM labelled project.

Integrated Intervention Programme for De-pollution of Lake Bizerte in Tunisia as part of the Horizon 2020 agenda

The UfM Secretariat presented the integrated program of protection against pollution of Lake Bizerte (Tunisia) for labelling at the Senior Officials meeting in Vilnius (October 2013). It is recognised by UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan as one of the major regional pollution Hot Spots of the Mediterranean because of its trans-boundary impact. Finalisation of financial agreements with European Donors were announced in early 2014 while a contribution through the Commission's NIF is being finalised and a final contribution from the EBRD is expected to be announced in March 2014. This marks an important step towards the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Horizon 2020, being the first ever labelled investment project. Efforts to finalise a multi-stakeholder committee in charge of sustainable environmental management of the lake have continued so as to ensure continuous dialogue with local stakeholders and were officially included to the project design at labelling.



Project on overcoming governance challenges to the mobilisation of financing for the Mediterranean water sector

Having successfully worked towards the labelling and promotion of the project “Governance and Financing for the Mediterranean water sector” promoted by OECD and GWP-Med, the UfM Secretariat supported its launch on 28-29 May, with ministerial representatives from participating countries. An official letter was received during the launching event for the involvement of Egypt as the seventh priority country in the project.

Regarding the fundraising plan, the Swedish International Development Agency has become a key partner in the project by signing an agreement with GWP-Med for financing the regional component of the overall project. An EIB-OECD agreement over the EIB contribution was also signed later in June.

Implementation started with the organisation of first national consultation workshops in Tunisia and Jordan (October 2013).

Core objectives

- Identification of mechanisms to overcome key governance bottlenecks that impede the efficient use and mobilisation of financing.
- Provide analysis of the opportunities and challenges arising from public-private partnerships (PPP) in water infrastructure
- Support the development of consensual action plans based on international good practices





Towards a greater students' mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region

In the field of **Higher Education**, the UfM Secretariat continued to promote the labelled projects (among which, the Euro-Mediterranean University of Fez, in order to secure its funding), worked on a number of projects for its labelling and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNIMED to develop and strengthen bilateral cooperation. The area of student mobility has become a priority in

2013: the UfM Secretariat concentrated on information-gathering activities and analysis and held working meetings with relevant actors, institutions and stakeholders with a view to drafting a Youth mobility framework initiative in a benchmarking perspective. In the field of Research, the UfM Secretariat was engaged in a number of coordination actions.

The Euro-Mediterranean University of Fez

Efforts to secure the necessary funding for the University to be launched continued throughout 2013. A Public-Private partnership agreement was signed on 25 October with the Government of Morocco.

The UfM Secretariat oversaw the work and activities carried out by the promoter:

- **Construction:** with the objective of starting the construction of the University in August 2014 and inaugurating in September 2015, a tender for the selection of the architectural firm was launched.
- **Academic:** The UfM Secretariat provided advice to the University on the approach to select among world-renowned personalities the members of the governing bodies. The UfM Secretariat accompanied the University in obtaining several academic partnerships. It is foreseen that the academic year (2014-2015) will begin with 10 students in the temporary offices of Fez Shore. A Master and a PhD in Environmental engineering will be the first programmes to be implemented.
- **Fundraising:** the UfM Secretariat assisted the promoter in the elaboration of an investment file that will be used to present the project to potential donors. A donor conference would be organized by the UfM Secretariat in the second semester 2014.
- **Promotion:** the UfM Secretariat supported the preparation of brochures and visual identity of the University.



Student mobility

In line with the objective to engage in coordination activities with different stakeholders to explore ways for universities from Southern Mediterranean countries to implement some of the mobility-related objectives of the Bologna process, student mobility has become a priority in 2013. The Secretariat concentrated on information-gathering activities and analysis, with the aim of identifying areas where the UfM Secretariat could bring the greatest added-value.

The UfM Secretariat met with relevant actors and institutions in charge of student mobility (EC, UNIMED, TETHYS and UNICA) and participated in several events (“1st Arab-Europe Conference on Higher Education”, EC Information Day on “Erasmus for All for Southern Mediterranean countries”, “1st Forum on Mediterranean Trainings - Mediterranean Office for Youth”) to take stock of the situation.

A working meeting with stakeholders, experts and potential project promoters was held at the UfM Secretariat on 27 November (Barcelona). The conclusions of the meeting confirmed the need of developing South-South and North-South Euro-Mediterranean mobility. It also highlighted the need for the UfM Secretariat to act as a platform, providing visibility and synergy to somewhat compartmentalised ongoing mobility schemes and projects in the region. The Secretariat has since elaborated on these recommendations and established contacts with other regional mobility schemes.



Research

In the field of Research and Innovation, the UfM Secretariat was engaged in coordination actions such as the Mediterranean Innovation and Research Coordination Action-MIRA (by attending the Final Conference), MedSpring (by nominating two staff members in the Euro-Mediterranean Expert Group) and ERANETMED (by confirming the UfM's interest in being part of the steering committee).

Institutional partnerships

A Memorandum of Understanding to further develop and strengthen bilateral cooperation concerning areas of common interest between UNIMED and the UfM Secretariat was signed in November 2013.



Fostering gender equality and women's socio-economic empowerment

In the field of Social and Civil Affairs, the UfM Secretariat played an active role in the preparation of the third UfM Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society, held on 11-12 September in Paris. The UfM Secretariat continued to promote the labelled projects (the

project Young Women as Job Creators was officially launched on 30 April 2013) and developed the projects pipeline. In the area of civil protection, the UfM Secretariat initiated contacts and exchanges with institutional partners in charge of civil protection.

Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society

The third Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society was held in Paris, France, on 11-12 September 2013. The Secretariat played an active role in the preparatory process, working together with the Co-Presidents and the Member States on the conclusions of the Conference and contributing with the UfM Secretariat's Progress Report on Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, directly linked to the Conference's Conclusions.

The UfM Secretariat was given a mandate to organise a project-related conference in March 2014 in Barcelona in an effort to facilitate concrete project delivery and funding. The Secretariat started the preparatory process by consulting with major players across the region. Additionally, the UfM Secretariat contracted an external expert on gender issues to conduct a mapping of the region's major stakeholders, strategies, projects, initiatives and funding sources. This study will help the Secretariat in delivering the future UfM Secretariat's Strategy for women empowerment and gender equality for the Euro-Mediterranean region.



Third edition of the International Forum of mentoring and networking

The 3rd Women Mentoring International Forum was organised by the Moroccan Mentoring / Networking Network with the support of the UfM Secretariat. This edition focused on the Socio-economic integration of young women in the Euro-Mediterranean region. It gathered governmental representatives, international organisations, business and professional women and young entrepreneurs and students with the objective of promoting mentoring as a key factor for women socio-economic empowerment. Around 300 participants attended the Forum that became the perfect space for open dialogue, exchange of experiences and networking among the attendees.

In 2013 UfM Secretariat has strengthened its relations and synergies with its institutional partners, including Anna Lindh Foundation and others relevant institutions and bodies involved in the Mediterranean.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM)

The UfM Secretariat has worked closely with the PA-UfM and participated in several events and meetings organised by the EU presidency (January-March) and the Jordanian Presidency of the PA UfM (March-December). In line with the preparation of the 2014 March Women's Project-Conference, the UfM Secretariat organised jointly with the PA-UfM the Committee on Women's Rights on 29 November 2013 in Barcelona. This meeting was an opportunity to focus on two main topics: "the situation of women in armed conflicts" and "Women and job creation".

Furthermore, UfM Secretariat participated in relevant meetings of the PA-UfM with a specific focus on UfM's projects and programs: European Parliament debate on Mediterranean issues (9 October, Strasbourg), EU – Maghreb Young Leaders (4-6 November, Brussels).

Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)

A Memorandum of Understanding between the UfM Secretariat and the PAM was signed on 9 April 2013 to lay down the basis for strengthening cooperation between the two sides.

Social and Economic Councils (ESEC) and assimilated Mediterranean institutions

As a first step toward a concrete cooperation, the UfM Secretariat organised jointly with the ESEC the first ESEC summit which took place in Barcelona on 11/12 November 2013.

The Summit brought important civil society and professional representatives to exchange on the main UfM priorities.

Euro-Mediterranean Assembly of Regional and Local authorities (ARLEM)

The UfM Secretariat strengthened its cooperation with ARLEM through the signature of a joint declaration of intent (February 2013). On 23 May 2013, UfM Secretariat jointly organised in the framework of the ARLEM bureau a workshop which was an opportunity to identify common priorities such as sustainable urban mobility, strengthening the role of women and supporting employment. Representatives of local and regional Euro-Mediterranean authorities also shared their experiences in local employment promotion and support for entrepreneurship, particularly for women and youth.

The UfM Secretariat is currently studying and evaluating the possible ways of concrete cooperation and synergies with ARLEM members and key institutions in the region. One area where such work is being carried out is the development of an initiative focusing on capacity building of regional and local authorities that could be launched in the course of 2014.

Skills for Success: **Employability Skills for Women**

Promoted by AMIDEAST (America-Mid East Educational and Training Services) and labelled in June 2012, it absorbed a significant part of the UfM Secretariat's fundraising activities in the area of social affairs. In addition to the financial contribution from Norway, the UfM Secretariat obtained the financial support from Flanders. A decision was made in late 2013 to officially launch the project's first phase in 2014, comprising Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco, whereas the implementation of the project in Egypt and Tunisia would possibly constitute the project's second phase in 2015.



Developing **Women Empowerment**

Labelled by the 43 UfM Member States in December 2011, it is based on a new permanent promoter, Foundation of the Women of the Euro-Mediterranean, which was founded in September in Barcelona. It is composed and governed by representatives from the North and the South of the Mediterranean, including non-governmental organisations, academic and research community and the public sector. The Foundation's 6 founding members are the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) from Spain, *Forum Femmes Méditerranée* from France, *Réseau Universitaire et Scientifique Euro-Méditerranéen sur le Genre et les Femmes*

(RUSEMEG) from Morocco, *Fédération de la Ligue Démocratique des Droits des Femmes* from Morocco, Center for Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR) from Tunisia and the French Republic. The fundraising activities were started in cooperation with the new promoter, whereas the French Government initially secured 150.000 euros for the first year of its functioning, mostly for setting up of the project's trilingual interactive internet platform.

Young Women as Job Creators

Facilitating Young Women the Access to Work by Promoting Entrepreneurship in Universities

Promoted by AFAEMME (Association of Organisations of Mediterranean Businesswomen) and labelled in September 2011, it was officially launched on 30 April 2013 in Barcelona, with the participation of the presidents of AFAEMME and the four businesswomen associations from the four participating countries, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Spanish private company *Gas Natural Fenosa* and the European Investment Bank as the project's donors.

The project implementation started on 15 May in Spain (Barcelona) where the first Women Entrepreneurship Day (*WED*) was held, followed by a total of 18 *WEDs* that were held at 32 local universities, higher education centres and national businesswomen organisations' headquarters across the region, with the participation of some 800 students. An agreement with AFAEMME was reached to replicate the project in two additional phases during 2014 and 2015 with a total of seven additional countries (Tunisia which expressed in May its intention to participate in the project and other countries which could include Egypt, Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Lebanon and Turkey).



Core objectives and expected results

- To promote self-employment and entrepreneurship among young female university students who are interested in starting their own businesses.
- Students will participate in Women Entrepreneurship Days, a series of seminars hosted by local universities, faculties and higher education centers offering coaching, advice and tools to set up a company. They will also receive specific business mentoring through programmes provided by national businesswomen associations.
- Approximately 2,000 young female students are expected to participate in Women Entrepreneurship Days.
- A minimum of 70 young women are expected to successfully start their business projects by the end of the programme



Building funding partnerships and financial networking, a priority

Priority was given to defining the UfM Secretariat's cooperation and financial networking strategy as a prerequisite to contribute to the implementation of labelled projects. The UfM Secretariat has developed a cooperation and financial strategy action plan for the year 2013 which was carried out in the course of the year according to its fixed objectives and targets. Moving to actual concrete cooperation on specific actions and projects with approached bilateral institutions will

be the focus of work in this direction for 2014.

The UfM Secretariat focused the efforts at strengthening and building funding partnerships with a complementary set of potential partners. It built these activities upon relations already established with partner organisations – namely EC, EIB... -, through bilateral missions and visits or in wider regional or international fora. The fundraising plan lies on three pillars: European based financial institutions, Non-European funders and private sector and foundations.

Pillar One: **Strengthening relations with European based financial institutions**

The following actions have been pursued by the Secretariat during 2013:

- Official visits and working meetings were organized with several donors, where promising synergies for institutional collaboration and funding have been found and will be pursued through a more targeted approach in 2014.
- High-level dialogue and stronger cooperation has been developed with the EIB and the EBRD which both have seconded staff at the UfM Secretariat. UfM Secretariat participated in the 14th Meeting of the Committee of the FEMIP and high-level meetings were held. With the EBRD, further synergies were built for common activities namely in the field of renewables energies and resource efficiency.
- As a consequence of contacts through official visits, working meetings and extensive dialogue, a strategic agreement was reached with the government of Norway to fund projects in the field of social affairs. The potential for similar framework agreements will be further explored in 2014.
- Bilateral funding agreements were also concluded with Flanders to fund an UfM project for women empowerment with the potential to renew agreement in the future if successful as well as with the Swedish co-operation in the area of water governance and management.
- The UfM Secretariat also organized a seminar with the Heads of Cooperation of the EU Delegations in the region, to develop synergies with the Delegations and thus define ways of working together on different UfM projects and EU-UfM activities in the region.

Pillar Two: **Strengthening relations with Non-European funders**

- The UfM Secretariat has gradually developed in the course of the year its outreach strategy towards potential partners, in the public and private sector, in the Gulf region. The UfM Secretariat has equally strengthened its contacts with the African Development Bank, with which strong synergies in projects and initiatives could be developed.
- The Deauville Partnership Transition Fund: Special attention has been given to strengthening UfM activities within the framework of the Deauville Partnership's Transition Fund activities to promote transformational projects in the transition countries and encourage coordination between IFIs. The UfM Secretariat takes part in the work of the steering committee of the Transition Fund (namely helping secure funding for the UfM labelled LogismedTA project) and was engaged in a number of initiatives under the Governance Pillar of the Deauville Partnership.

Pillar Three: **Strengthening relations with Private Sector and Foundations**

In 2013, the UfM Secretariat carried out an internal mapping listing major private companies and foundations related to the fields of work of the Secretariat and an approach has been defined to contact private companies to test the interest in funding UfM activities and projects.

Amplifying the message

One of our main objectives is to raise awareness on the UfM's activities as platform for cooperation for regional integration and offer information on the specific projects and initiatives launched during the year. To that effect, the Secretariat has reinforced its relation with key media across the Euro-Med region and has developed a range of new communication tools and publications.

During 2013, the UfM Secretariat's work has been featured in relevant Euro-Mediterranean media outlets including Asharq Al-Awsat, Al Hayat, La Vanguardia, L'Economiste Maghrébin, Econostrum, Atlas Info, Agence France Presse (AFP), Agence Europe, etc. Furthermore, operational collaboration with Press Officers of the EU Delegations in UfM countries has been established. They have supported the Secretariat in the diffusion of the main press releases, thus reaching wider audiences in the Euro-Mediterranean countries.

The UfM Secretariat has launched a new redesigned website offering an improved user experience through better navigation and access to content. A multilingual platform has also been developed and launched in order to make the UfM website available in English, French and Arabic. Thanks to these actions, the website performance has improved progressively in terms of total number of visits and the information reaches now wider audiences in the Southern Mediterranean countries. Likewise, the UfM bi-monthly newsletter keeps more than 8,000 stakeholders, opinion leaders and people with interest in Mediterranean affairs up to date on the latest news, projects and work carried out by the Secretariat. The first issue of the UfM newsletter in three languages was launched this year.

During 2013 the Secretariat reinforced its presence in the most important social networks increasing the base of fans and followers in Facebook and Twitter, respectively. The Secretariat has reported live on its events through Twitter and created dedicated picture and video galleries in Flickr and Youtube.

- Extensive media coverage with over 100 UfM-related articles and news items on projects and initiatives launched and ministerial meetings held.
- Launching of new redesigned multilingual website and e-newsletter (EN, FR, AR)
- Production of publications, leaflets and projects fact-sheets
- 51,4% new visits to UfM website
- More than 15,000 likes in Facebook
- More than 8,000 stakeholders informed on a regular basis on UfM latest news





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