

13 February 2019

ARLEM Activity Report

2018

In 2018, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) focused its work on the following three priorities, as decided at the 9th plenary session in Giza, Egypt, on 21 February 2018 in the form of the ARLEM action plan 2018-2019:

1. Migration

- **21 February, Giza:** ARLEM members debated the role of local and regional authorities in managing migration at their 9th ARLEM Plenary Session. Peter Bossman (SI/PES), then Mayor of Piran, CoR rapporteur on Partnership Framework with third countries on Migration, presented his opinion. Mr Osman Toprak, Vice Mayor of Gaziantep, Turkey informed on the integration policy of the city towards the Syrian refugees.
- **10 April, Malaga:** ARLEM Co-President Mohamed Boudra, President of the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Community Councils, participated in the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty Conference on Migration and Municipal Finance.

2. Sustainable economic development

- **ARLEM Report on youth entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean:** Domenico Gambacorta (IT/EPP), then President of the Province of Avellino, elaborated a draft report, based on both a CoR **study** commissioned to this end and input by ARLEM members through a survey as well as by the European Commission (Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) through meetings. At the 4th meeting of ARLEM's Commission for sustainable territorial development, the draft report was discussed with representatives of the European Commission's Directorate-General Neighbourhood and Enlargement and ETF. Olgierd Geblewicz (PL/EPP), President of Westpomerania Region, continued the work as rapporteur, submitting a revised version to the 10th ARLEM plenary for adoption.
- **29 June, Patras:** Peter Bossman (SI/PES), then Mayor of Piran and member of both the CoR's CIVEX commission and ARLEM, spoke at the conference of the CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission on "The added value of EU Cohesion policy and cooperation in the Mediterranean".
- **20-21 September, Brussels:** Andreja Potočnik (SI/ALDE), then Member of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Tržič, participated in the first UfM Thematic Working Group on Affordable and Sustainable Housing.
- **10 October, Brussels: Workshop on Fostering local development in the Mediterranean via tourism & cultural heritage,** organised as part of the European Week of Regions and Cities as a contribution to the European Year of Cultural Heritage. Chaired by ARLEM Co-President Mohamed Boudra, President of the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Community Councils, and bringing together speakers from Central Macedonia (Greece), Tel Aviv (Israel), Ain Draham (Tunisia) and the European Commission, the workshop presented good practices and lessons learned on how to harness tourism and cultural heritage as tools for sustainable and inclusive local

economic development, while also identifying priorities and challenges linked to the specific context of the Mediterranean region.

- **11 October, Brussels:** As recommended in the draft ARLEM report on youth entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean, the **ARLEM Award: Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean** was launched at the 4th meeting of ARLEM's Commission for Sustainable Territorial Development. This initiative aims to showcase a successful example of young entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region as an inspiration to others, demonstrate the positive impact that local and regional authorities in Mediterranean partner countries can have on the entrepreneurial ecosystem and highlight how young entrepreneurs in Mediterranean partner countries actively take the future in their hands and create jobs for local economic development, thus establishing a positive narrative. 24 applications were received in the weeks thereafter from Albania, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.
- **23-24 October, Brussels:** The rapporteur's expert and the ARLEM secretariat participate in the 8th Meeting of the UfM High Level Working Group on Employment and Labour.
- **13 December, Brussels:** For the selection process of the ARLEM Award: Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean, the evaluation committee met (composed of representatives of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, the European Training Foundation, the Joint Research Centre, Medcities, the Intermediterranean Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, as well as Eurochambres and chaired by the CoR), resulting in a shortlist of four candidates.

3. Political future and good governance

- **ARLEM Report on governance and transparency in the Mediterranean region:** Rapporteur Lütfü Savaş, Mayor of Hatay, Turkey, elaborated a draft report, based on a CoR **study** commissioned to this end. At the 4th meeting of ARLEM's Commission for sustainable territorial development, the draft report was discussed with representatives of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and of Transparency International. The rapporteur submitted a revised version to the 10th ARLEM plenary for adoption.
- **6 February, Brussels:** The ARLEM secretariat participates in the UfM's Senior Official Meeting.
- **20-21 March, Brussels:** Markku Markkula (FI/EPP), Chair of the City Board of Espoo and ARLEM Vice President, spoke at the Regional Conference "EU for Climate Action & Sustainable Energy in the Southern Neighbourhood".
- **5-6 June, Brussels:** At the 12th edition of the European Development Days, focused on 'Women and Girls at the Forefront of Sustainable Development: protect, empower, invest', Mary Freehill (IE/PES), ARLEM rapporteur on "Women's empowerment in the Mediterranean region", moderated the session "Leaders of change: Promoting female leadership in the Maghreb".

- **5 June, Strasbourg:** Christoph Rouillon (FR/PES), Mayor of Coullaines, participated in the meeting of the Bureau of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe.
- **8 October, Barcelona:** Francisco De la Torre Prados, Mayor of Malaga (Spain) and Vice President of ARLEM, represented the Assembly at the Third Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean that brought together the Foreign Affairs Ministers from UfM Member States to reaffirm their political commitment to increasing cooperation and integration in the region, commemorating the 10th anniversary of the UfM.
- **11 October, Brussels:** Concerning the financial support provided to the EU's neighbours in the next EU long-term budget period (multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027), ARLEM members discussed the impact of current proposals for local and regional authorities in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation with Hans Janssen (NL/EPP), Mayor of Oisterwijk and CoR rapporteur on "Neighbourhood and the world", as well as a representative of the European Commission's Directorate-General Neighbourhood and Enlargement. The ARLEM Bureau adopted a **position paper on the proposed Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument**.
- **11 October, Brussels:** The CoR brochure "**EU financial assistance available to local and regional authorities in Mediterranean partner countries**" was launched in English, French and Arabic. ARLEM members received hard copies and the brochure was published online.
- **19 October, Tunis:** Jesus Gamallo Aller (ES/EPP), Director-General for External Relations and Relations with the European Union, Region of Galicia, took part in the meeting of the Executive Bureau of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe.
- **20-24 November, Marrakech:** The CoR secretariat participated in the 8th Africities Summit of UCLG-Africa; Director Laurent Thieule spoke in the session "United in diversity & adversity: Articulating Scales of Territories and Action".

"Nicosia initiative" for Libyan local authorities (supported by the Delegation of the European Union to Libya)

- **6-17 February, Tunis:** Second capacity-building workshop for Libyan municipalities and universities organised by Crown Agents, CIEDEL (Lyon, France) and the Training Centre for International Cooperation (Trento, Italy). The workshop covered project management, financial management, and human resources management.
- **23 February, Trieste:** Kick-off of the PATH-DEV project on local economic development (focus on the fishery sector) with the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, supported by Italy.
- **19-22 March, 26-30 March, 2-5 April, 9-12 April, Tunis:** Series of four workshops on positive peace for 180 young Libyan community leaders organised by UNICEF and the Institute of Economics and Peace. Four CoR members and one ARLEM representative participated and

shared their experience in post-conflict peace-building, social and economic inclusion of young people, and prevention of radicalisation.

- **27 September – 2 October, Tunis:** Third capacity-building workshop for Libyan municipalities and universities organised by Crown Agents, CIEDEL (Lyon, France) and the Training Centre for International Cooperation (Trento, Italy) with the financial support of the European Commission. The workshop covered curriculum-building and a "training the trainers" module, in order to give the participating Libyan universities the tools to deliver needs-based training for municipality staff locally.

ARLEM statutory meetings 2018

- 20 February, Giza: 20th meeting of the ARLEM Bureau
 - 21 February, Giza: 9th plenary session of ARLEM
 - 11 October, Brussels: 4th meeting of ARLEM's Commission for Sustainable Territorial Development
 - 11 October, Brussels: 21st meeting of the ARLEM Bureau
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