

23 January 2020

ARLEM Activity Report

2019

In 2019, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) focused its work on the following priorities.

1. Sustainable economic development

- **27 February, Seville:** The first "ARLEM Award - Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean" ceremony takes place within the 10th ARLEM plenary session. The award goes to Najwa Shukri and her brother Ali Shukri from Libya (entrepreneurs) and to Abdlrauf Beitelmal, Mayor of Tripoli, Libya (local/regional authority) where their company "Zimni Jdeed" is based. It is a brand for design and the fashion industry developed and inspired by traditional Libyan heritage. They employ six women and their project has potential for development and job creation in the future. It can also be replicated in other countries in the region and serves as inspiration for others.
- **28 February, Paris:** ARLEM is represented at the second meeting of the UfM Thematic Working Group on Affordable and Sustainable Housing by Hicham Imane, CoR member.
- **2-3 April, Cascais, Portugal:** ARLEM rapporteur Olgierd Geblewicz (PL/EPP) presents key recommendations of his report on youth entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean to the UfM co-presidency, ministers and other representatives of UfM member states at the 4th UfM ministerial conference on employment and labour. The ARLEM Award: Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean is presented as a tangible good example in the UfM ministerial policy conference on "Jobs, skills and opportunities for all" with a contribution from Najwa Shukri. The ARLEM rapporteur and winning company have media interviews with Spanish and Portuguese news agencies, magazines and radio stations.
- **2 July, Tel Aviv:** As a follow-up to the ARLEM award, Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean, CoR and ARLEM members meet two shortlisted young Israeli entrepreneurs. Haim Bibas, president of the Federation of Local Authorities in Israel, and two other Israeli mayors exchange ideas with CoR and ARLEM members.
- **16 July, Barcelona:** To prepare his ARLEM report on the blue economy, the rapporteur, Vincenzo Bianco, exchanges views with experts from the UfM secretariat and the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission.
- **17 July, Brussels:** The ARLEM secretariat participates in the UfM's senior official meeting at which participants are briefed on the follow-up to the 4th UfM Ministerial Meeting on Employment and Labour, held in Cascais 2-3 April 2019 (see above) and the preparation of the Second Ministerial Conference on the Blue Economy, which is the topic of one of the 2019 ARLEM reports (by Vincenzo Bianco, PES/IT).
- **18 October, Brussels:** ARLEM rapporteur, Vincenzo Bianco (IT/PES), presents and discusses his draft report on the blue economy in the Mediterranean at the fifth meeting of ARLEM's commission for sustainable territorial development with Luca Marangoni representing the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission, Isidro González, deputy secretary-

general in charge of Water and Environment at the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, and ARLEM members.

ARLEM rapporteur, Jihad Khair, Mayor of Beit Sahour, Palestine, briefly presents his draft report on regional integration in the Mediterranean.

- **8 November, Barcelona:** ARLEM vice-president, Jean-François Barnier, participates at the VIIIth meeting of the Mediterranean Citizens' Assembly Foundation that brings together more than 120 experts and members of its network of citizen circles from all over the Mediterranean. The meeting from 7 to 10 November discusses the situation of youth on the three Mediterranean shores and makes proposals to offer the youth of the region a brighter future.
- **19 November, Brussels:** The evaluation committee of the ARLEM award: Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean (made up of representatives of the European Commission, the UfM secretariat, the European Training Foundation, the Joint Research Centre, the IMC-CPMR, Eurochambres, the NGO "Womenpreneur" and ANIMA Invest and chaired by the CoR) meets and draws up a shortlist of five candidates from the 40 applications received from ten countries.

2. Political future and good governance

- **25 March, Brussels:** The ARLEM secretariat participates in the 5th meeting of the UfM Working group on the Blue Economy.
- **28 March, Brussels:** The ARLEM secretariat participates in the UfM's senior official meeting.
- **28 April, Tétouan, Morocco:** The co-chair, Mohamed Boudra, speaks at the opening of the North Morocco Local Democracy Agency.
- **14-15 June, Hammamet, Tunisia:** ARLEM member Jasna Gabrič represents the Assembly at the Quadrilogue seminar on Broadening the Space for Youth, Peace and Security, organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe.
- **30 June, Ramallah, Palestine:** At the 23rd enlarged meeting of the ARLEM bureau at the invitation of Musa Hadid, Mayor of Ramallah, members discuss how cities and regions can foster youth participation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Mediterranean region, and how local and regional authorities contribute to partnership for the SDGs, with the CoR rapporteur on SDGs, Arnoldas Abramavicius (LT/EPP), Juan Espadas Cejas and Sufian Mushasha from the UNDP. ARLEM and CoR members also visit selected sites in Ramallah, Bethlehem and Beit Sahour, including UNRWA's Aida Camp.
- **18-19 July, Barcelona:** ARLEM rapporteur Mary Freehill takes part in the UfM Regional Dialogue on Women Empowerment.

- **10 October, Barcelona:** co-chair Mohamed Boudra contributes to the 4th UfM Regional Forum: "Paving the way forward", highlighting the importance of dialogue and diplomacy including at the sub-national level for regional stability. In the presence of foreign affairs ministers, the UfM secretary-general invites ARLEM co-chairs to a 2020 summit with the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM and the Anna Lindh Foundation.
- **18 October, Brussels:** At the fifth meeting of ARLEM's commission for sustainable territorial development, ARLEM members discuss "Women's empowerment in the Mediterranean – what place for women in the political life at local level?" with Aicha Ayari who supported female Tunisian candidates at the Tunisian local elections through the association "Actions in the Mediterranean" (AIM), Christiane Overmans, vice-president of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and of its German section, Mina Bouhdoud, vice-president of the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Municipal Councils, and Manuela Bora (IT/PES), member of the Marche Regional Council and Regional Minister. Isabella Tovaglieri (IT/ID), Member of the European Parliament, contributes to the debate, Mary Freehill (IE/PES), Councillor Dublin City and ARLEM rapporteur on Women's empowerment, concludes it and Simone Susskind, AIM founder, moderates it.
- **22 November, Barcelona:** co-chair Mohamed Boudra speaks at the seminar on "Towards a revised Euro-Mediterranean partnership: Making decentralised cooperation and collaborative governance a priority", organised by CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs).
- **25 November, Lisbon:** CoR and ARLEM member Christophe Rouillon (FR/PES) speaks at the workshop "Why does localising SDGs matter?" at the Lisbon Forum, organised by the Council of Europe, its Congress and its North-South Centre.

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

- **January-March, Libya:** Local pilot implementation of individual modules developed during the continuous learning workshops for Libyan municipalities and universities is launched in several Libyan municipalities, including Sabha, Zawiya, Benghazi and Zintan.
- **27 February, Seville:** CoR members and staff, Libyan mayors and Nicosia initiative focal points, the EU Delegation to Libya, implementers and European, Euro-Mediterranean and African LRA associations coordinate and discuss future activities of the Nicosia initiative. Several new partners come on board.
- **16-19 July, Vigo:** As part of the Nicosia Initiative, fisheries experts from five Libyan coastal municipalities, and representatives of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia Region and Informest, visit the Region of Galicia to learn about good practices in areas such as shellfish farming and fish processing and to explore opportunities for future cooperation.

- **September-November, Libya:** A three-month pilot vocational training course on fisheries is held in the five coastal municipalities of Tripoli, Zliten, Sirte, Benghazi, Tobruk, supported by IPA and SPARK.
- **20-21 November, Tunis:** The Nicosia Initiative is presented and discussed at the Heads of Cooperation Meeting, bringing together Member States' embassies, and at the 5th Implementers' Forum on EU support to Libyan municipalities, hosted by the EU Delegation to Libya.

ARLEM statutory meetings 2019

- 26 February, Seville: 22nd meeting of the ARLEM bureau
 - 27 February, Seville: 10th ARLEM plenary session
 - 30 June, Ramallah: 23rd meeting of the ARLEM bureau
 - 18 October, Brussels: 5th meeting of the ARLEM's Commission for Sustainable Territorial Development
-