

JOIN-MED

“Establishing the EU-Mediterranean ICT Research Network”

The first objective of Join-MED is to create a sustainable network of ICT research organisations in the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC) and Europe, reinforcing the Research Cooperation between these two regions on a wider scale. To support all networking activities Join-MED will develop an interactive web-based directory of research organizations from both regions, the MPC and EU, promoting closer research cooperation across the region.

The second objective of Join-MED is to support the Information Society policy dialogue and the co-ordination of national policies on international S&T co-operation in the MPC: formulating a harmonized MPC ICT policy through an open dialogue, among the MPC as well as with Europe; as well as establishing close links with existing and emerging cooperation projects addressing the MPC.

The 4th Project Meeting of the JOIN-MED Project took place at the Higher Institute for Applied Sciences & Technology (HIAST) in Damascus, Syria on the 14th and 15th of October, 2009. Represented by Dr. Ahmad Nasri and Dr. Hassan Charif, the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS, Lebanon) participated in the proceedings in which an overview of the project and the status of the activities were reviewed and important decisions taken for the implementation of JOIN-MED.

A key part of the project, the establishment and updating of the EU-MPC network towards extending the reach of the current directory of ICT researchers and developers was discussed, making it more efficient and effective in partner search facilities and finding MPC partners for upcoming FP7 Calls. Members of JOIN-MED committed themselves to the updating of all relevant registration entries within the EU-MPC directory.

A revision “Harmonized Policy” document; and a recommendation was made to have a pro-active approach by motivating countries to have a national R&D strategy for ICT; noting that while Lebanon does not have a dedicated R&D programme for ICT, there exists a general R&D Programme which foresees funding for ICT R&D activities.

The first networking event of JOIN-MED was scheduled in Amman, Jordan, 5-7 December, 2009.

International Networking Event on Med-EU ICT Cooperation

75 Participants from neighboring Arab and EU Countries, including 4 participants from Lebanon, attended the first **International Networking Event on Med-EU ICT Cooperation**, held in the framework of the JOIN-MED Project on “Establishing the EU-Mediterranean ICT Research Network;” under the patronage of His Excellency Eng Basem Rousan, Minister of ICT in Jordan; and hosted at the El Hassan Science City and by the Royal Science Society in Amman, Jordan (5-7 December, 2009)



Our main focus during the coming three days is on NETWORKING. The real value for you to get out of this event is ... in the contacts that you make. The success of the event depends on [you].

Thies Wittig, IT Consult GmbH, Germany

During the scheduled proceedings, key obstacles to ICT Research were identified as: insufficient infrastructure and the lack of a research culture, lack of interest and partnerships in the private industries, lack of awareness of the commercial value of R&D and lengthy bureaucratic procedures. It was generally agreed that in moving forward, the MPC needs to become more active, in terms of R&D strategies, R&D support for the private sector and a cross regional - while this is a major task, one should start with small initiatives, yielding faster results, rather than try to develop overall national strategies; Best Practices should also be more generously applied. It is vitally important that the MPC region develops their joint strength instead of trying to tackle these issues individually; while internal collaboration within the country, reflected in target R&D policies, are crucial in order to pool resources.



The next JOIN-MED Consortium meeting will be hosted and organized by the National Council for Scientific Research, CNRS in Beirut, Lebanon on May 21-22, 2010.