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**EMTPA - EuroMed Training of Public Administrations
Regional Training and Consultancy Programme on Public Administration for the
Mediterranean Partners**

**Defining competences and skills for Public Managers
in the Euro-Mediterranean Region**

Working Group 1 - Report

**Proposals for enhancing the Euro- Mediterranean cooperation in
Public Administration**

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Methodology of the working group:

At the beginning of the works, a short recall was made about the activities of the EMTPA network. This network has reached its term, since the financial project of the European Union was planned until the end of 2009. It will transfer its activities to an association, which will be created at the end of the year in Barcelona, to continue cooperation among its members.

Each participant presented the initiatives carried out by his/her administration or school to develop international cooperation. Bilateral and multilateral partnerships were presented by the different institutions.

A free debate begun after the presentations. It was based on three main ideas:

- Cooperation in training programmes
- Quality criteria for the Schools of government
- Communication and exchange tools of public administrations

The first two points tackle the issue of cooperation among Schools of government of the Euro-Mediterranean region, whereas the third point gave the opportunity of a more general analysis on cooperation among administrations.

Cooperation in training programmes

Participants examined the possibility of introducing common master degree courses, which could refer to master degree courses already existing in the different countries, such as the Tunisian master degree course quoted during the meeting.

Master degree courses proposed by Schools of government always face the problem of the recognition of the diploma. This implies that these courses are often handled in collaboration with Universities..

Nevertheless, these training courses are practical training courses, aiming at being directly used by the civil servant in his duties. If the diploma is not officially recognized, it could have a high value by means of the acknowledgment of the training course in the career promotion of the civil servant.

Cooperation in training programmes also means a particular attention towards the language used, which should be studied for each training programme. Participants emphasized the role of the working language: it is a relevant choice that also implies a cultural framework.

To carry out a common training programme, the stakeholders of training should define a common curriculum design that could answer the specific needs of civil servants attending the programme, coming from different countries. The idea of a common Master degree on European affairs for civil servants of the MEDA region was mentioned.

Quality criteria

The participants discussed about the use of common quality standards that could be introduced within the different schools.

The UN-DESA and IASIA have developed “Standards of Excellence for Public Administration and Training” which could be an interesting working tool since they provide indicators to the National schools of government which are different from the indicators used by Universities. Nevertheless, participants insisted on the need to adapt these indicators at a national level to take into consideration the peculiarities of the considered country in order to avoid the risk of global indicators which are not relevant within the national framework.

Local committees are studying the implementation of these indicators. It seems useful to identify good practices for the different indicators in order to have markers which allow the positioning in this frame of reference.

The issue of the accreditation was also raised. An assessment method by the peers, working inside the network, seems the best way to follow.

The communication and exchange tools

The communication and exchange tools used by schools of governments are crucial in order to implement cooperation strategies among Euro-Mediterranean partners.

The websites are essential information tools for the administration which can, this way, communicate with citizens but also with foreign partners. They are an indispensable tool for sharing

knowledge and tackling specific problems of each administration, whose experience can be useful for another foreign administration facing the same problem.

Nevertheless, websites have not always the desired number of visitors. They do not promote interactivity with the user. New tools could be developed by administrations such as wiki websites or social networks that may reach the user more directly. This kind of tools has variable results according to the different experiences told: enthusiastic in the case of the recruitment of Israel diplomats or a little less in the case of a German alumni network. The EMTPA network could perhaps use this kind of tool in the future? It seems a little too soon for the moment.

The communication of National Schools of government towards the young people emerged as a priority. Indeed, only communication towards young generations would be able to reinforce the attempts of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation within the MEDA programme.

The Schools of government could in particular increase the offer of international work experience within the administrations for young civil servants or young bachelors interested in the public sector. These practical initiatives, which already exist on a smaller scale, would have immediate effects in term of cooperation, exchange and mutual understanding. We could also hope that they could be undertaken in spite of the political restraints. The national schools of government could collaborate with Universities also in this field and use existing programmes. The development of programmes such as Erasmus or Leonardo at the Euro-Mediterranean level could be a relevant tool of cooperation. The problem of the language was mentioned again. A good knowledge of the language where the work experience takes place is an indispensable condition.

The debate also insists on the fundamental role of interpersonal exchange in order to keep the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation alive. Direct contacts among the stakeholders, thanks to study visits or experts meetings on specific problems for example, are crucial in order to promote concrete initiatives. The organization of networks, such as the EMTPA or GIFT-MENA networks , which give to civil servants the opportunity of international meetings, is necessary. The interest of this EMTPA meeting was underlined in this occasion, since it allows direct exchange among stakeholders of public training programmes

Finally, in order to improve communication among different partners of the Euro-Mediterranean region, training courses on different organizations and administrative cultures could be developed. This would enable to reinforce reciprocal understanding and intercultural dialogue. Each country has its own administrative and cultural rules which should be known if the administrations want to cooperate.

Next steps or proposals to enhance the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in Public Administration

To continue activities of the Euro-Med Public Administration network, perhaps within the network MEDPAN, and to attempt to find other European funds for such activities.

The network activities could include projects for a professional exchange programme (under the form of traineeships for instance) and for meetings on specific topics of high interest for Public Administrations of the region.