



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **New regional programmes to support media, culture and private sector development in the Southern Mediterranean**

The European Union has today approved two new programmes for the South Mediterranean region aiming at contributing to an inclusive growth and reinforcing the sectors of media and culture as vectors of development.

*"These two new programmes address two pressing demand from our partners: supporting job creation and consolidating the democratisation processes. In particular, I am convinced that more independent media and a thriving cultural sector play a pivotal role in boosting socio-economic development and political pluralism in the Southern Mediterranean."* Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle said.

A thriving private sector is essential to create much needed jobs for the youth, a key factor for the success of transition towards a more inclusive development in the Southern Mediterranean. The EU regional programme in support of the Private sector development in the Southern Mediterranean will contribute to sustainable growth and employment generation in the region in three ways. It will foster the development of a conducive business environment. It will set up quality Euro-Mediterranean networks providing adequate support and services for investing in micro, small and medium enterprises (mSMEs). It will demonstrate the potential of cultural and creative industries in promoting inclusive growth.

Without effective media and dynamic cultural actors, democracy can not take root, and governments can not be held accountable by local civil society organisations. The EU regional Programme on Media and Culture for development in the Southern Mediterranean region is intended to enhance the institutional framework for media and culture and support civil society actions. This will reinforce them as vectors of freedom of expression and contributors to sustainable economic development. The programme will enhance the independence of the media in the region, complementing existing trainings for journalists and supporting the Mediterranean partners in their reflexion on the optimal regulation of the media and the media legislation.

It will also contribute to cultural policy reforms and reinforce the capacity of cultural policy makers, while promoting investment in culture and the development of cultural operators' business capabilities.

A close coordination will be developed and maintained between the two programmes in order to maximise synergies, efficiency and impact in the implementation of activities related to the development of cultural and creative industries, targeted by these two new regional programmes.

The total value of both programmes is EUR 29 Million, where EUR 12 Million is earmarked for private sector development programme and EUR 17 Million for the media and culture programme.

### **Background Information:**

These two regional programmes complement bilateral actions in the related policy areas. They are based on the objectives and principles described in the Regional Strategy Paper (2007-2013) for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership<sup>1</sup>; the Regional Indicative Programme 2011-2013 for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership<sup>2</sup>, as well as the policy orientations laid down in the two Joint Communications of the European Commission and of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy "A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean"<sup>3</sup> and "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood"<sup>4</sup>. They cover the 10 southern ENP partners, namely Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria (the co-operation with Syria being temporarily suspended) and Tunisia.

### **For more information**

Website of EuropeAid Development and Cooperation DG:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm)

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<sup>1</sup> C(2007)672 of 27 February 2007.

<sup>2</sup> C(2010)9365 of 22 December 2010.

<sup>3</sup> COM(2011)200 of 8 March 2011.

<sup>4</sup> COM(2011)303 of 25 May 2011.