

EuroMeSCo Work Plan 2012-2014

Approved by the General Assembly

Barcelona, 4th October 2012

1. Background

The objective of EuroMeSCo for the coming years is to become the leading forum for the study of politics and security in the Mediterranean and a platform which contributes to shaping Euro-Mediterranean policies, functioning as a source of analytical expertise.

The network must place itself at the centre of the changing nature of Mediterranean and Euro-Mediterranean politics and incorporate new research trends and institutions. The Secretariat considers that the existence of a powerful research network on politics and security is crucial to uphold regional cooperation between Europe and its Southern partners. The stakes for Europe and the network alike are high at a time when the region is embracing crescent multipolarity and the emergence of new powerful international actors.

The EuroMeSCo network must thus strengthen its activities and membership and be able to reach out to policy-makers at national and supra-national levels on both shores of the Mediterranean and in particular with the European Union, the Union for the Mediterranean and other regional organisations. For its members and researchers, it must become a tool to share resources, promote joint initiatives and spread their work, particularly via the network's and member institutes' websites.

This work plan includes the research programme, publication lines, activities, visibility strategy and funding priorities for the period 2012-2014. Among these actions, the following two are particularly innovative: the launch of a research programme on the "Arab Spring in a Comparative Perspective" and a series of capacity-building activities for Southern Mediterranean think tanks and research institutes.

2. Main Activities

2.1. Research Programme

The Arab Spring in a Comparative Perspective

EuroMeSCo has a long tradition of producing joint research projects between Northern and Southern experts on key issues of the Euro-Mediterranean agenda. It is the only network capable of producing joint research on political and security issues in the region and its studies are considered a benchmark for high-quality research.

Many of the 88 members and observers of EuroMeSCo come from countries affected by transitions to democracy in the last few decades. EuroMeSCo comprises 22 research centres and think tanks from Southern and Eastern European countries which experienced transitions to democracy in the 1970s and in

the 1990s. In addition, it has a total of 13 institutes whose countries have been affected in one way or another by the Arab Spring. Added to the expertise in political and security studies of network members, EuroMeSCo has a unique potential for engaging in comparative studies of political transitions.

Members of the network have on several occasions requested the launch of joint research initiatives to foster collaborative projects within EuroMeSCo. Today, Southern Mediterranean institutes and think tanks are asking for particular expertise in a number of policy and research areas regarding transitions to democracy. Previous experiences of the “dos and don’ts”, challenges and setbacks to democratic transitions could be of particular relevance. The role of think tanks and research institutes as active members of civil society is essential in monitoring and researching political reform, advocating particular policies and influencing political decisions.

Against this backdrop, the EuroMeSCo will promote joint research ventures among member institutes on comparative experiences of democratic transitions. The Secretariat of the network will serve as a platform for the coordination of joint research ventures, follow-up of simultaneous research projects, fund-raising coordination and dissemination of the results, with the active involvement and cooperation of member institutes. Joint work among EuroMeSCo members would multiply the impact of the work of the network and enable a wide dissemination to a large audience of experts, policy-makers and the general public in Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries.

Research initiatives will consist of the preparation of joint research and policy papers on current issues affecting the outcome of political transitions to democracy. Subjects for study will be decided at a later stage by participant researchers and institutes, but shall include institution-building, promotion of the rule of law, reform of the military and security sectors, transitional justice and the fight against corruption, among others. Particular attention will be given to the role of civil society in transitions to democracy, including the identification of new trends in civil society organisations, capacitation exercises on the basis of shared experiences and the identification of the role of new political and social actors, NGOs, research institutes and social platforms, among others.

Policy papers could be produced by research teams involving researchers from Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries. The number of publications, field trips, research workshops and presentation of the results will be decided depending on the financial resources available.

The Secretariat will promote the direct involvement of members of the network, its Steering Committee and Executive Committee in the design, launch and implementation of this research programme.

2.2. Publications

The Secretariat will consolidate the different types of publications and offer to EuroMeSCo researchers and institutes a platform for the dissemination of policy-oriented research. It will coordinate EuroMeSCo’s publications resulting from the research programme “The Arab Spring in a Comparative Perspective” as well as continue the ongoing publication lines.

well as a monthly newsletter.

The outcomes of the research programme proposed above will be published in **EuroMeSCo Papers**, which are high-quality research and policy-oriented analyses. This line of publications will also include the papers presented by relevant experts at the Annual Conference 2012 “Europe, the Mediterranean and the Arab Spring: Crisis as an Opportunity”. Selected topics and authors are:

1. Internal dynamics in countries of the Arab Spring and the role of civil society
Mustapha Kamel Al Sayyid, Executive Director, Partners in Development, Egypt
Ahmed Driss, Director, Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales, Tunisia
Ahmed Mohamed Abd Rabou, Assistant Professor, Cairo University, Egypt
2. Geostrategic consequences of the Arab Spring
Amr El-Shobaki, President, Arab Forum for Alternatives, Egypt
Erzsébet Rózsa, Executive Director, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, Hungary
3. How to reinvigorate Euro-Mediterranean relations? The role of the Union for the Mediterranean
Kristina Kausch, Senior Researcher, FRIDE, Spain
Lotfi Boumgchar, Counsellor, Institut National d'Études de Stratégie Globale, Algeria

The Secretariat will also publish other relevant papers in the course of 2012-2014 on the basis of spontaneous submissions and the results of other EuroMeSCo research activities.

The Secretariat will also publish new **EuroMeSCo Briefs**. These are the result of shorter policy-oriented versions of EuroMeSCo Papers, as well as publications commissioned to relevant experts and authors. Following previous practice, Briefs will be aimed at stimulating and enriching debate on key issues of the Mediterranean region.

Their publication will enable the network to produce dynamic and updated documents on the varying trends of Euro-Mediterranean politics and policies. EuroMeSCo Briefs will be published simultaneously on the websites of the IEMed and EuroMeSCo, as well as other research institutes in case of interest.

The Secretariat will also publish new **EuroMeSCo Reports** as soon as conferences and seminars are organised. The discussions held at the Annual Conference 2012 will be reflected in a report available on EuroMeSCo's website soon after the end of the conference. The outcomes of other events organised by EuroMeSCo such as “The Multilateral Track of Euro-Mediterranean Relations: The Role of the Union for the Mediterranean”, held on 3rd October 2012, will also be published in a EuroMeSCo Report. This will be usual practice for conferences and events organized by EuroMeSCo in 2012-2014.

2.3. Network and capacity-building activities and seminars

Following a first successful event organised in Brussels in collaboration with the European Policy Centre, the IEMed envisages holding a series of **research workshops and capacity-building**

sessions, which stand as the second pillar of the EuroMeSCo Work Plan 2012-2014.

These activities will be aimed at strengthening the capabilities and influence of research institutes and think tanks in Southern Mediterranean countries. They will be preceded by a series of identification missions to Southern Mediterranean countries in order to identify the most appropriate partners for the workshops and capacity-building sessions.

Research workshops and capacity-building sessions will also increase the ability of think tanks to produce analysis and monitor reform in Southern Mediterranean countries, to generate independent analyses and a systematic follow-up of political reform and to evaluate the scope for democratic transitions, warn about imminent setbacks and provide long-term scenarios. The workshops will also enhance the dialogue capacities of members of the network with local and regional authorities and their influence on Euro-Mediterranean policy-making. EuroMeSCo will serve as the platform for sharing best practices among think tanks and reinforce their institutional capacities.

The Secretariat has planned to hold three workshops in Egypt, Morocco and Spain in 2013 in collaboration with members of the network as well as the institutes identified in missions across the region, following previous practice.

In addition to these events, other network activities will include **research workshops associated with the research programme** described above, as well as **collective efforts for the organisation of joint research activities** with members of the network. So far, the Finnish Institute for International Affairs (Finland), FRIDE and Real Instituto Elcano (Spain), and the Global Political Trends Centre (Turkey) have expressed their interest in jointly organising research workshops in the near future in collaboration with EuroMeSCo and its Secretariat.

An **Annual Conference** will also be held during the period 2012-2014 with the objective of reinforcing the visibility of the network and cultivating relations and exchange of ideas among its members.

The conference will foster the participation of high-level experts and practitioners, with a significant number of Southern Mediterranean participants. It will focus on the changing dynamics of the region as a consequence of current political developments and will pay special attention to the role of civil society and key international players.

All members and observers of the network will be invited to attend the conference. The Secretariat will use the opportunity provided by this meeting to contact relevant institutes and researchers that are not members of EuroMeSCo to familiarize themselves with the activities of the network. First-class researchers will be invited to present a paper in the conference, which will be subsequently published as a EuroMeSCo Paper.

The contents of the sessions and names of the panellists will be agreed with the members of the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee and the Chair of the General Assembly, as has been previous practice.

During the last year, the Secretariat, in consortium with Southern members of the EuroMeSCo Steering Committee, submitted a proposal to the European Commission in the framework of the Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development Programme and the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility on “Strengthening the Capacities of Non-State Actors”, with reference EuropeAid/131140/C/ACT/Multi. The project included funding for EuroMeSCo-related activities in order to bring the network back to the European arena.

Unfortunately, the proposal was not considered to fulfill the requirements of this Call for Projects. Immediately afterwards, the Secretariat explored alternative funding opportunities at the European Union level, including high-level contacts with officials and decision-makers. In the coming years, the Secretariat will pursue its efforts in bringing the work of EuroMeSCo back under the auspices Europe, in particular to the instruments of the European Commission and the European External Action Service, including the Civil Society Facility, the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument, and the European Commission’s Research Programmes, among others.

The Secretariat will also pursue a second track of active fund-raising with relevant national and international foundations, organizations and institutions which might be interested in the research programme presented above and the network’s activities and seminars.

In order to reinforce collaborative projects among members of EuroMeSCo, the Secretariat will establish regular contacts with member institutes to explore joint funding for the activities presented in this work plan. These contacts will particularly target the members of the Executive and Steering Committee, who will be asked to collaborate and, if possible, sponsor some activities of the network. Fund-raising strategies will aim as much as possible at promoting joint efforts between Northern and Southern members of the network.

4. Enhancing the Visibility of the Network

The Work Plan 2012 established a roadmap for increasing the visibility of the network, particularly by means of improving the quality of its website and newsletter and requesting the collaboration of member institutes. Much progress has been made to accurately reflect the activities of the network and member institutes via the regular publication of the monthly newsletter.

The contents of the website have been updated throughout 2011 and 2012, including the description of EuroMeSCo members and observers. The Secretariat will work to strengthen the online visibility of the activities of the network in 2012-2014. In particular, the following activities will be implemented: generating the French version of the website, reinforcing the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter, and enlarging the number of recipients of the monthly newsletter.

The Secretariat will also strengthen the visibility of the network by using the resources available at the IEMed to hold public presentations of EuroMeSCo research products, where national and international media will be invited. In line with the agreements reached at the General Assembly 2011, member institutes have been asked to include the EuroMeSCo logo in a visible part of their website and to consider the organisation of

joint research activities and seminars in collaboration with EuroMeSCo when possible.

A final tool to enhance the visibility of the network will be the publication of the monthly newsletter. Following previous practice, the Secretariat will aim to improve communication channels with members of EuroMeSCo to select the most relevant publications and events to be advertised. It will also work to enlarge the number of recipients of the newsletter, which currently amounts to over 1100 people, including experts, academics, think tanks, national and international decision-makers and the public in general.