

The logo for unimed, consisting of the word "unimed" in white lowercase letters inside a blue circle.

Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo
Mediterranean Universities Union
Union des Universités de la Méditerranée
إتحاد الجامعات المتوسطية

The background of the cover features a photograph of a library. On the left, there are tall wooden bookshelves filled with books. Three incandescent light bulbs hang from the ceiling, casting a warm glow. The right side of the cover is a light-colored, textured surface with a faint map of the Mediterranean region.

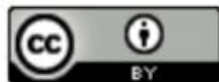
Libya Restart

A JOURNEY ANALYSIS

REPORT BY

Mediterranean Universities Union
UNIMED

2020

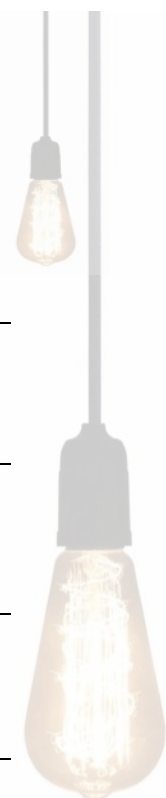


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Any error in data and statistics reported in the Libya Restart paper is the sole responsibility of UNIMED research team and represents only UNIMED views.



A brief overview of the Mediterranean Universities Union, UNIMED

UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union, founded in October 1991, is **an association of Universities** from countries of the Mediterranean basin (www.uni-med.net). It counts 130 associated Universities coming from 23 countries of both shores of Mediterranean (data updated to May 2020)¹. UNIMED aims at developing university **research and education in the Euro-Mediterranean area** in order to contribute to scientific, cultural, social and economic cooperation. The Universities in the UNIMED network operate in many different fields, and thus UNIMED operates on many different fronts. The image that best represents our association is that of a University Without Walls.

UNIMED carries out the following activities in favour of the associated Universities:

- ✓ Promote the international dimension of universities;
- ✓ Encourage the participation of its members in international projects;
- ✓ Planning and fundraising activities: information on calls for papers and opportunities offered by international organizations and the European Commission, partnership search, technical assistance, planning, dissemination;
- ✓ Promote mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region for students, researchers and academic staff;
- ✓ Create thematic SubNetworks to foster scientific cooperation within specific fields;
- ✓ Organise meetings, discussions, seminars and roundtables both at a national and international level;
- ✓ Provide training for academic and administrative staff of Universities, particularly for the personnel of International Relations Offices (IROs).

Through the many initiatives carried out over two decades, UNIMED has promoted collaboration among the universities of the Mediterranean, becoming a point of reference for **international university cooperation**.

UNIMED SubNetworks

UNIMED has also supported the establishment of a second-level network, constituted of SubNetworks focused on specific sectors. The SubNetworks structure allows for an intensive exchange of information among the participating actors from both Mediterranean shores for the creation of partnerships, collaborations and projects. The aim of the SubNetworks is to strengthen economic and social cohesion, in order to promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation on the one side and, on the other side, local sustainable development.

¹ The full list of UNIMED Associated Universities is in Annex II

The activities of the SubNetworks intend to increase the cooperation among Euro-Mediterranean universities, promote the development and harmonization of their educational systems so as to encourage, among other things, the reforms of the Bologna Process and the modernization of Higher Education systems in the Mediterranean.

UNIMED has currently established the following SubNetworks:

- ✓ Food and Water
- ✓ Transports and Logistics
- ✓ Employability
- ✓ eLearning and Open Education
- ✓ Mediterranean Tourism
- ✓ BlueMed
- ✓ Sport and Physical Activity
- ✓ Migration
- ✓ Journalism
- ✓ Mobility and Intercultural Dialogue
- ✓ Safety and Security of Critical Infrastructures



UNIMED actions in North Africa in the next three years: upscaling the Libyan experience

Francisco Matte Bon, UNIMED President

Libya was the last country in the Mediterranean area approached by UNIMED. Today several projects are ongoing, some others are in the process to be evaluated, other in the process to be imagined all together. When dealing with Libya, due the specific situation of the country (nowadays as well as in the contemporary history), it is quite natural to imagine and design national proposals, ideas, projects. Libyan needs are very specific, tightly related to its geographical location, the events of its recent history, political dynamics and traditional social structures. On the other hand, supporting Libya, even through national-tailored measures, means supporting the whole North-African region, for example reducing pressure on Tunisia. Despite the different needs, those countries' faiths are necessarily inter-connected. Supporting Libyan Higher Education System is indeed a key factor for supporting access of Sub-Saharan African countries to a more quality education as most of them (e.g. Chad) have strong links with Libya. Supporting Libya means also designing and testing actions for Higher Education in crisis contexts, measuring the degree of transferability of good practices in complex scenarios, for the benefit of Libya and other countries living similar conditions: Syria and Yemen, just to mention some.

Libya Restart will not remain an unicuum, an isolate experiment. On the contrary, it will represent a milestone of UNIMED's activities in the region, a first step towards a deeper and more reliable understanding of the Mediterranean. UNIMED analysis and studies will allow a better understanding of the needs of South-Mediterranean countries, in terms of economic, social and political transformation, and how it all relates to education. The region is changing and we need updated and innovative instruments to face those changes, especially in the field of education. With Libya Restart we have also deconstructed apparently well rooted stereotypes such as the lack of willingness of Libyan partners to cooperate, the impossibility to work in such critical conditions, the impossibility to cooperate with both East and West parts of the country together. Libya Restart represents a pilot initiative for UNIMED, which has proven to be successful also thanks to the strong contribution provided by Libyan colleagues and friends in the collection of data and writing of the paper. It is the results of several different hands, which shared a vision. It demonstrates the added value of our network: the actual, fruitful, intense participation of UNIMED members and the most profound exercise of knowledge sharing.

We made a first step in the right direction, more will follows.
Actions speak louder than words.



UNIMED and Libya: actions towards cooperation

Hmaid Ben Aziza, UNIMED Secretary General

Since the end of the last century, Higher Education throughout the world has undergone a deep change, in the way it functions and in relation to its governance, in terms of decisions and strategic orientations while offering training, looking for a better adaptation to the demands of the job market and the emergence of new profiles introduced by the digital revolution. To face these challenges, solutions must be collective. The Libyan Universities cannot remain at the margins of this revolution.

That is why the present report has been drafted, with the meaningful title of Libya Restart, which reports the results of a survey collected by 16 universities (15 public and 1 private), including 12 universities located in the west of the country and 4 in the east. This survey is representative of the scale of the institutions involved; and when the analysis highlights the heterogeneity of the components of the Libyan University System (in terms of quantity and quality), the report demonstrates to be a good reference to understand the reality of the system: its obstacles, needs and opportunities. A key concept seems to dominate the analysis: 'rebuilding the country' here and now, where the university is called upon to play a major role in the reconstruction process. The challenge is to pacify the country through knowledge, through the values of peace and harmony, through development and interregional dialogue. It is a matter of defining a national strategy for the Higher Education system, setting clear reachable objectives and tracing the means to be put in place for their realization. Without doubts, this can only be achieved, as the analysis shows, through successful cooperation with international partners, sharing experiences and participating actively in development programs implemented on a global scale. Libya has its place: all the potential and the commitment are there to successfully integrate and develop its universities.

Why Libya Restart?

Marcello Scalisi, UNIMED Director

UNIMED has been operating for about thirty years to foster the academic and scientific cooperation of universities located on the two shores of the Mediterranean. For the development of its activities, UNIMED made good use of different national and European cooperation programs by constantly trying to enlarge its range of cooperation. In the absence of a multiannual programming document since 2017, Libya has benefitted by annual Special Measures. Consequently, the participation of Libyan Universities in European cooperation schemes has been, until recent years, very limited.

The recently changed Libyan political framework, following the fall of Gaddafi's regime and the resultant end of the international embargo, led the international community and UNIMED in primis to use the Erasmus+ Capacity Building program as a primary tool to explore possible collaboration paths with Libyan Universities. Erasmus+ has represented a key to open the door for a fruitful cooperation, for fresh relationship with Libyan actors, for a better understanding the complex Libyan scenario. We therefore activated our university network, created stable and coherent channels of communication, established relationships with Libyan universities in order to jointly open the way for a long-lasting collaboration framework, with the only country of the southern shore of the Mediterranean that, at that time, was not yet part of the UNIMED network. Our actions in the country brought excellent results since the beginning, and this mainly thanks to the expertise of our network members and the willingness of Libyan Higher Education Institutions to cooperate to boost their international exposure. With the first Capacity Building project, ENROL (coordinated by one of our Italian associated university, the University of Calabria) we had the opportunity to concretely get in touch with several and different universities, which in turn allowed us to understand the Libyan Higher Education system and universities' strengths and weaknesses. With our past experience as a rich background, we started this journey analysis to have a comprehensive and up-to-date picture over the Libyan Higher Education system. The interaction with Libyan colleagues, a wide-ranging desk research and an empirical analysis lead us towards surprising results. What we have immediately seen is that, despite a fairly significant international isolation and closure, which lasted over 40 years, and even during a civil war with muddled boundaries, the Higher Education system not only did not collapse but maintained its activities, its structures, its autonomy and a line of cooperation between the East and the West of the country. Concurrently, over time, the number and variety of cooperation projects have increased.

Libyan system has proven to have dynamism and autonomy, in a problematic context. UNIMED has engaged in the Libya Restart initiative to highlight the Libyan enormous potential and its crucial importance for the whole Mediterranean. A potential that it is mainly related to its education system. The result is a truthful testimony of the vitality of the Libyan academic community. Thanks to this work we aim to offer to professionals, colleagues working in the field of international cooperation, and also international institutions, a starting point for discussion and a foundation to start imagining how to support country's reconstruction, how to build a dialogue that has too often been interrupted. With the Libyans, for the Libyans.



Methodological Note

This report relies on **quantitative and qualitative methods** and has been written by directly involving Libyan partners, colleagues and friends. This study is the result of almost one year of research and writing conducted by the UNIMED team (Raniero Chelli, Marco Di Donato, Silvia Marchionne, Anne-Laurence Pastorini, Eugenio Platania and Martina Zipoli) in collaboration with the Libyan Universities and the Libyan Ministry of Education.

The research was structured in three phases: a quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis and a validation process by the Libyan partners. During the first quantitative phase, UNIMED submitted a survey (Annex I to this report) to 18 Libyan Universities selected as follows:

1. Size and relevance of the institution at the national level;
2. Geographical distribution;
3. Balance among partners involved and not involved in EU funded projects;
4. Universities already in contact with UNIMED because of previous collaboration;

16 out of 18 answers have been received and analyzed by the UNIMED team. Please find here below the list of participating Universities:

- ✓ University of Zawia
- ✓ Misurata University
- ✓ Sirte University
- ✓ University of Elmergib
- ✓ Sabratha University
- ✓ Sebha University
- ✓ Libyan International Medical University
- ✓ University of Benghazi
- ✓ The University of Ajdabiya
- ✓ Omar Al-Mukhtar University
- ✓ Bani Waleed University
- ✓ University of Gharyan
- ✓ University of Tripoli
- ✓ University of Aljufra
- ✓ Libyan Academy
- ✓ Al-Asmarya Islamic University

Quantitative results were carefully analyzed and a qualitative analysis followed, allowing to further integrate data where more information was needed, or further explore interesting and meaningful results. **All interviews took place via Skype with Directors of International cooperation offices and in one case with the Vice-President of the University of Tripoli representing the Ministry of Education².**

² It was a direct decision of the Ministry of education to delegate Dr. Mabrouk al-Fares from the University of Tripoli as Ministry representative for the purposes of Libya Restart paper.

Here is the list of the interviews performed by the UNIMED team during the month of May 2018³:

- ✓ **University of Zawia:** Dr. Abdulbaset Kriama
- ✓ **Misurata University:** Dr. Ali Bakeer
- ✓ **Sirte University:** Dr. Jibriel Abusaleem
- ✓ **University of Elmergib:** Dr. Mohamed Elrawemi
- ✓ **Sabratha University:** Dr. Hamza Muftah
- ✓ **Sebha University:** Dr. Mayouf Mayouf
- ✓ **Libyan International Medical University:** Dr. Salma Boukhtawa
- ✓ **University of Benghazi:** Dr. Ahmed Alrasheed
- ✓ **The University of Ajdabiya:** Dr. Abed Oriby
- ✓ **Omar Al-Mukhtar University:** Dr. Sabah Lamlom
- ✓ **University of Tripoli:** Dr. Mohamed Al-Griw
- ✓ **Ministry of Education - Libya:** Dr. Mabrouk al-Fares

During the interviews, the UNIMED team has followed a semi-structured approach where further questions were addressed to the Libyan universities on different topics: on the national education system, country security, law reforms, University international cooperation performances, University research attitude, University role within society at large. Additionally, the UNIMED team consulted and validated the already published bibliography on the topic, by investigating primary sources in Arabic and secondary sources produced by International organisations in English, French and Italian. Please head to the bibliography section for a detailed list of consulted books and articles.

Finally, we sent the draft report to all the participating Universities to be validated and by asking for any additional comments. Suggestions and comments were integrated into the report and thus the UNIMED research team was able to finalise it into the current version of the document.

For all the terms and definitions translated from the Arabic language, the UNIMED team decided not to use a scientific transliteration. but to use the most common version available on the web, in order to facilitate the readability of the text also to a non-specialist public.

³ The transcription criteria chosen for reporting from Arabic into English the Universities name has been to report it according to the following criteria:

- 1) as described in the Participant Portal of the European Commission (in order to facilitate the searchability by potential partners reading this document);
- 2) As reported in University official document submitted to UNIMED request of membership adhesion;
- 3) As reported in University or Ministry of Education official document analyzed during the report writing.

The Libyan Higher Education System

The history of the Libyan Higher Education (HE) System starts in December 1955 with a Royal Decree establishing the University of Libya (al-Jama'a al-Libya) thanks to the efforts of the King Idris I. Place of establishment of the first two Faculties (Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education, founded through the Royal Decree) was Benghazi. With this first University of Libya, the Kingdom set up the basis for the creation of several other Universities in the near future (as foreseen by article 1 of the same Royal Decree). It is fundamental to note that in the King's vision, the University of Libya was not solely intended as the University of Benghazi and for the Benghazi area, instead it was intended as a national hub. In this sense, we can lately understand the creation of the University of Tripoli, established under this specific label in 1973⁴.

According to European Commission statistics, published in 2016 under the Tempus programme⁵, from that date the number of Libyan Universities constantly increased, as did the number of Higher Technical and Vocational centers.

Statistics from the Report Higher Education in Libya, September, 2016

Year	Public Universities	Private Universities	Higher Technical and Vocational centers
1999	14	-	51
2004	10 (plus 15 Departmental Universities)	-	65
2016	13	16 (7 accredited)	114
2018 ⁶	24	8 accredited by the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions	114

The Tempus Higher Education in Libya 2016⁷ report mentioned 13 universities. Nowadays, the Higher Education System in Libya is composed of 24 public universities⁸ located all over the country and 8 accredited private universities, as well as technical and vocational schools, which are also managed

⁴ This is clearly expressed in the statute of the University of Tripoli (UoT) provided by UoT offices.

⁵ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), International Project Management Office - OGPI - University of Alicante, *Higher Education in Libya*, September, 2016.

⁶ Data provided by the Libyan Ministry of Education office (September 2018)

⁷ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), International Project Management Office - OGPI - University of Alicante, *Higher Education in Libya*, September, 2016.

⁸ Data provided by the Libyan Ministry of Education office (September 2018). According to other University sources the number of number of both accredited private universities and the total number of private universities has increased in the end of 2018, beginning of 2019.

by the Ministry of Education through a dedicated board. In the past two years (2016-2018), the number of universities has consistently increased. In several cases, the new universities were branches of already existing ones which received autonomy. For instance, the University of Aljufra⁹ was created in 1993 as part of the Sirte University and later became independent in 2017. In 2016, for all the Libyan universities, the total number of faculties was 160. Nowadays, and only taking into account the 16 contributing universities, there are 231 faculties in public universities plus 8 accredited faculties in private universities. This extension and expansion seems to ensure a wider geographical presence of the HE system.

Higher Education in Libya is free for Libyan students, except for private institutions and for some specific Master's Degrees in public universities where (affordable) fees are requested. By regulations of the Ministry of Education, foreign students have to pay fees for their studies in Libya.

General statistics from the Ministry of Education, 2018

<i>Students in public universities: graduate level¹⁰</i>	450 883
<i>Students in public universities: postgraduate level</i>	9 299
<i>Students in private universities: graduate level</i>	N/A
<i>Students in public universities: postgraduate level</i>	N/A
<i>Academic programmes in public universities: graduate level¹¹</i>	1 263
<i>Academic programmes in public universities: graduate level</i>	354
<i>Academic programmes in private universities: graduate level</i>	53
<i>Academic programmes in private universities: graduate level</i>	N/A
<i>Faculty staff in public universities: graduate level</i>	15494
<i>Faculty staff in public universities: postgraduate level</i>	1.190
<i>Faculty staff in private universities: graduate level</i>	N/A
<i>Faculty staff in private universities: postgraduate level</i>	N/A
<i>Universities with postgraduate programmes</i>	12
<i>Faculties with postgraduate programmes</i>	71
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes (M.Sc.)</i>	367
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes (Ph.D.)</i>	43
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes in Humanities</i>	206
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes in Applied sciences</i>	158
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes in Medical sciences</i>	46

⁹ Same criteria for transliteration as explained above in footnote 1.

¹⁰ This data refer to 2013.

¹¹ Please note that last data available for this statistic refers to 2013.

Libyan Universities in depth: fact and figures

General overview

Among the 16 contributing universities, we have collected answers from 15 public universities and 1 private institution (the Libyan International Medical University). As per geographical distribution, 12 are located in the Western part of the country (Al-Asmarya Islamic University¹², University of Aljufra, Bani Waleed University¹³, University of Elmergib, University of Gharyan¹⁴, Libyan Academy, Misurata University, Sabratha University, Sebha University, Sirte University, University of Tripoli¹⁵ and University of Zawia) and 4 in the Eastern part of the country (University of Benghazi, Libyan International Medical University, The University of Ajdabiya and Omar Al-Mukhtar University). The inclusion of a private university allowed us to understand the difference in the institutional functioning and with regards to the relation with the Ministry of Education; at the same time, including universities from all over the country allowed us to perform a more comprehensive analysis, sticking as close as possible to the reality of this country. Both Western and Eastern Universities mentioned that despite the situation, cooperation still exists among them, and this is one of the most relevant unforeseen results that we found. At the international relations offices level, for instance, directors are in contact, meet regularly and share information. As an example, some colleagues from Western Universities gave us the contact details of staff in Eastern universities, asking us to involve them in the Libya Restart initiative. Also, they have, in the recent past, facilitated contacts for involving Eastern Universities in EU funded projects and initiatives.

Profile of the Higher Education Institutions in Libya

According to the survey conducted, the Higher Education Institutions in Libya are **more teaching than research oriented**. Answers to our survey showed that 3 are research oriented, 11 teaching oriented and 2 oriented towards vocational training.

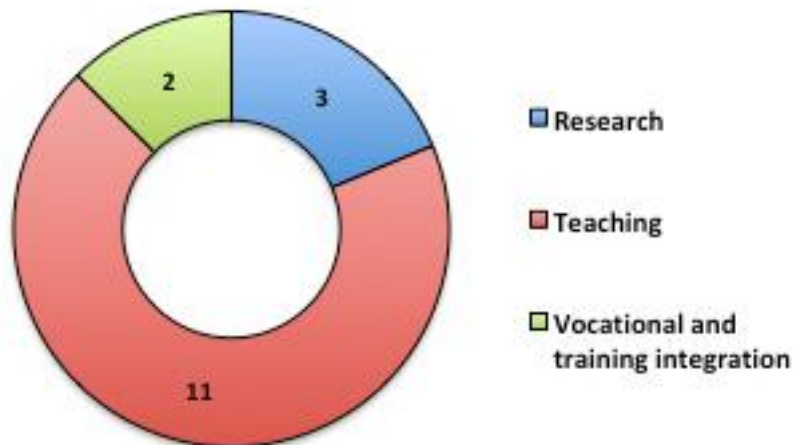
¹² Same criteria for transliteration as explained above in footnote 1.

¹³ Same criteria for transliteration as explained above in footnote 1.

¹⁴ Same criteria for transliteration as explained above in footnote 1.

¹⁵ Same criteria for transliteration as explained above in footnote 1.

Q: How would you describe the mission of your institutions?



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

As mentioned above, according to the statistics and data from the Ministry of Education, in August 2018 there were 231 faculties in public universities plus 8 Faculties accredited for private universities, for a total of 1.263 Academic degrees Bachelor courses¹⁶ and 354 Academic degrees Master courses. The following table highlights, for the benefit of our argument and in order to ease the readability of the document, some of the data we have already shown in pages 15-16, namely the distribution at the national level for post-graduate programmes:

<i>Universities with postgraduate programmes</i>	12
<i>Faculties with postgraduate programmes</i>	71
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes (Master)</i>	367
<i>Departments with postgraduate programmes (PhD)</i>	43

Please note that in the private sector, **the 8 private Universities are able to offer only Bachelor studies up-to date (for a total of 53 courses) and in 2018 no post-graduate courses were available.**

With regards to the scientific domains, academic postgraduates programmes are divided as follows:

- ✓ Humanities: **206**
- ✓ Applied sciences: **158**
- ✓ Medical sciences: **46**

The situation of the contributing universities is quite heterogeneous in terms of numbers:

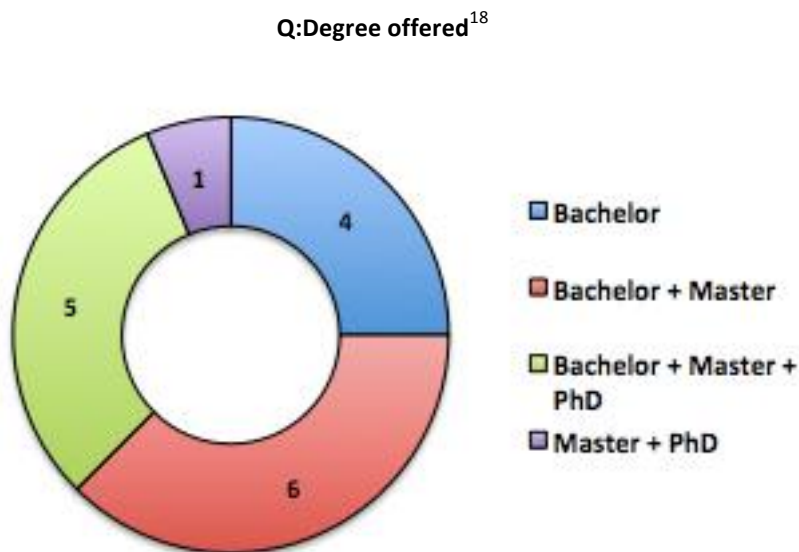
- ✓ from min 6 to max 26 faculties;
- ✓ from min 80 to max 3804 academic staff;
- ✓ from min 200 to max 8540 administrative staff;
- ✓ from min 2545¹⁷ to around max 75000 students.

¹⁶ Please note that last data available for this statistic refers to 2013.

¹⁷ Libyan International Medical University has 1016 students but we focused only public universities to have a real term of comparison.

Degrees offered in the Libyan Higher Education System

In the Libyan Higher Education System, a **Bachelor's degree implies from 4 to 6 years of studies** (5 for dentistry, sciences, pharmacy, engineering; 6 for medicine). A **Master's degree implies 2 or 3 years of studies**, depending on the specialization, while **PhD degree implies 3 to 4 years of studies**. Among the 16 contributing universities, **only 5 offer a complete cycle**: from Bachelor to PhD. Few ones are currently working on their PhD programmes. During the qualitative interview, one contributor pointed out that the majority of Libyan PhD holders are currently graduated from a foreign university and highlighted the difference in quality of PhD programmes offered in other countries with respect to Libya.



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

Based on Article 107 of the Libyan Decision number 501¹⁹, the Libyan credit system is defined as follows: *Unit credit: one hour of theoretical lesson or two hours of weekly practical activity during the specific or general educational terms provided.*

As already mentioned previously, Libyan universities are multidisciplinary institutions as they offer courses ranging from applied sciences to humanities (with a majority of the latter). The Libyan International Medical University (it is useful to remind again that it is a totally private institution) appears as an exception as it is a university specialised in medicine.

¹⁸ B = Bachelor's Degree; M = Master's Degree; PhD = Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

¹⁹ The Libyan Decision number 501 is one of the crucial document in order to understand the Libyan Higher Education system and is the legal basis for running the system.

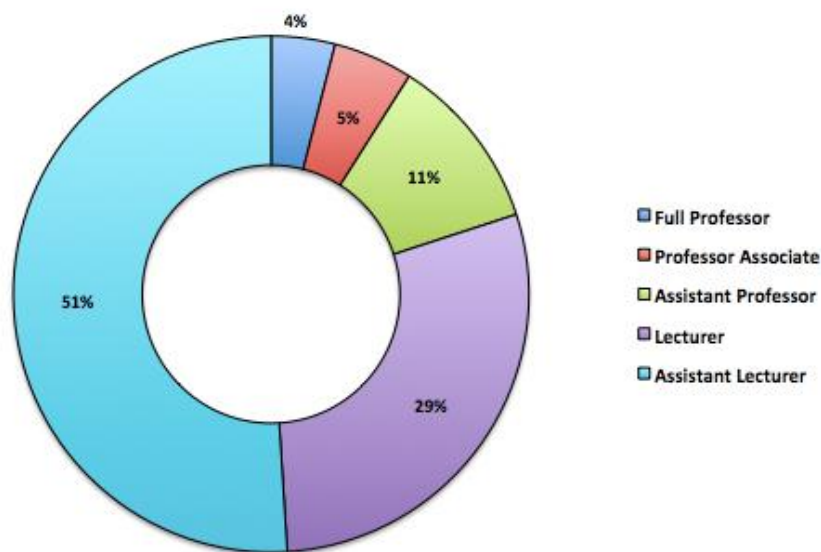
Academic staff

Before entering into numbers of academic staff currently employed in the Libyan Higher Education System, we believe it would be useful to briefly describe the steps and the categories for career advancement. Here below the career advancement path for academic staff²⁰:

- ✓ **Assistant lecturer** - *Requirements*: Master's degree
- ✓ **Lecturer** - *Requirements*: PhD degree **or** Master's degree plus 4 years of teaching as assistant lecture and 1 scientific publication;
- ✓ **Assistant professor** - *Requirements*: PhD degree, 3 years of teaching as lecturer, 3 scientific publications **or** Master's degree, 4 years of experience as a Lecturer and 3 scientific publications;
- ✓ **Associate professor** - *Requirements*: PhD degree, 4 years of experience as Assistant professor and 4 scientific publications **or** Master's degree, 6 years of experience as Assistant professor and 5 scientific publications;
- ✓ **Full professor** - *Requirements*: PhD degree, 4 years of experience as an Associate professor and 5 scientific publications²¹.

The following figure, based on the full data of interviewed universities, shows that for more than half of the total academic staff counted, **teaching is mainly delivered by assistant lecturers**.

Libyan professors according to their academic position



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

The percentage of full professors among all the academic staff in public universities varies from 1,2% to 4,8%. At the Libyan International Medical University, this percentage is up to 11%.

²⁰ Based on the contents of Al-Jamahiriyya al-'Arabiyya al-Libiyya al-Sha'biyya al-Ishtirakiyya al-'Athma, *Qarar al-Lajna al-Sha'biyya al-'Amma - Raqm 501 li-l-sana 1378 (2010 masihi)*. The Libyan Decision number 501 is one of the crucial document in order to understand the Libyan Higher Education system and is the legal basis for running the system.

²¹ Elaboration of data and statistics provided in the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) studies

Repartition between national and foreign staff in the contributing universities

Libyan Universities can hire foreign staff for academic and administrative positions, however Libyan and foreign staff are managed by two different offices. Along with the answers collected by UNIMED, 15 out of the 16 contributing universities **have foreign academic staff, ranging from a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 105 people**. Alike, 11 out of 16 universities have foreign **administrative staff, ranging from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 200 people**. In both cases, we realised that foreign staff (both academic and administrative) is mainly composed of people coming from other Arab countries and from Africa, who moved to Libya with their families also for other reasons (i.e. family members who work on oil platforms or in private companies or who escaped from regional conflicts during the past years).

The percentage of academic staff in relation to the total staff - meaning administrative and academic, Libyan and foreign staff - varies in a range from 18% to 53%. This is valid for all the interviewed universities except for University of Elmergib and Bani Waleed University, where the proportion between academic and administrative staff is quite equal.

Students

Considering the 15 public contributing universities, the total number of students registered goes from around 2 500 to 75 000 units, on a total number of Libyan students in Public Universities of 450 883 units for graduate studies and 9 299 for post-graduate studies. During the Gaddafi era, Libyan universities were used to welcoming foreign incoming students. **All the 16 universities currently integrate foreign students, mostly already living in Libya, representing 0.28% to 3.58% of the students** enrolled in public universities. At the Libyan International Medical University they represent instead 7.55%. Here it applies the same argument used above for the foreign staff: rather than being attracted by the Libyan HE system, the absolute majority of these foreign students are part of families emigrated into Libya for employment-related reasons or because of regional tensions in the past years.

According to our results, the supervision rate for the public universities (meaning the number of academic staff related to the number of students, i.e. how many teachers every 100 students) ranges from 1.42% to 9.67%. At LIMU this percentage is 20%.

Thanks to the resources provided by the Ministry of Education, we found that a total of 6 204 students enrolled in the 15 public universities interviewed are currently studying abroad (in the form of internships, trainships, stages, etc). Number varies from 2 to 1 591 units per each institution. More details can be found below in the paragraph: *Libyan universities national and international dimensions: partnership, networking, mobility*. According to the General People's Committee of 2005, students who benefit from a national scholarship have to work, once back, at least double the time spent abroad studying, in order to reverse their experience for the benefit of the local system²².

²² This provision is foreseen in article 17 of the decision n. 43 of 2005.

Governance and autonomy: The Libyan case in a global approach

Among the various factors influencing the results of higher education systems and their performance, literature has identified governance as a key determinant²³. A good governance structure and favourable regulatory conditions can promote innovative behavior among higher education institutions, enable development of strong quality assurance systems, and facilitate the designing of effective financing mechanisms. **One of the key elements that has been a recent focus in Higher Education reforms worldwide is indeed University Governance.** The concept addresses how Universities and Higher Education systems define their goals, implement them, manage their institutions and monitor their achievements. A key element in defining university governance is the overall framework of the system and the interaction between institution and state.

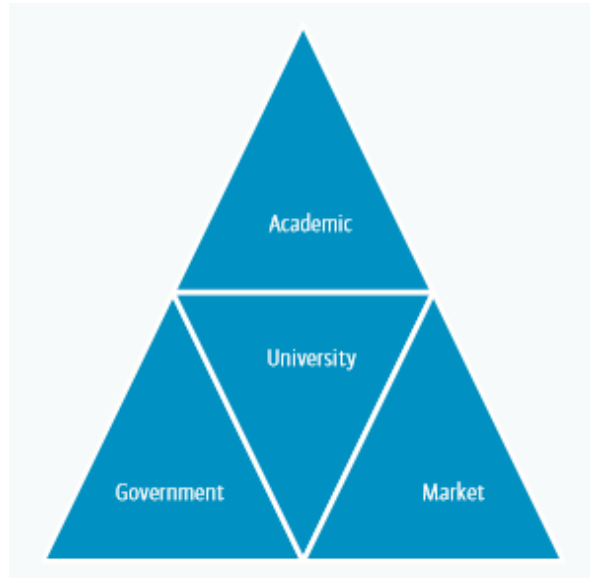
Altbach and Salmi²⁴ report that **the crucial characteristics of successful world class universities are: leadership, government policy, funding, the ability to continually focus on a clear set of goals and institutional policies, development of a strong academic culture, and quality of the academic staff.** University governance is therefore an important driver of change: how institutions are managed is one of the most decisive factors in achieving their goals. There are many governance models that vary according to the national context, the type of institution, the historical legacy, and other cultural, political, and, sometimes, economic factors. **It is clear that there is no single model or “one-size-fits-all” approach.** It is also clear that choosing a governance model for adoption by a given institution must be a well thought out decision. As Trakman suggested in 2008, “Good governance is much about timing and judgment: it requires boards of governors to recognise when a governance model is not working, why, and how to repair it²⁵.”

There is a wide variety of governance models; however, most of them can be defined based on the tension or balance between three main forces: **state, market forces and academic excellence, plus the capacity to exert academic freedom.** Taking into account how these three main forces interact, at one end of the spectrum there are centrally-driven, state-controlled universities and university systems; private, profit-oriented corporate institutions are at the other end of the spectrum, and varying degrees of power for academic staff and academic interests exist in between. Based on which force is predominant, University Governance Models can be identified.

²³ P. Aghion, P.M. Dewatripont, C. Hoxby, A. Mas-Colell, A. Sapir, *Higher Aspirations: an Agenda for Reforming European Universities*, BRUEGEL, Brussels, 2008 (<http://www.bruegel.org/publications/publication-detail/publication/1-higher-aspirations-an-agenda-for-reforming-european-universities/>).

²⁴ P. Altbach, J. Salmi, *The Road to Academic Excellence: the Making of World, Class Research Universities. Directions in Development*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2011

²⁵ L. Trakman, *Modeling university governance*, in “Higher Education Quarterly”, 62 (1-2), 2008, pp. 63–83.



The tension between government-led and market-driven higher education governance practices is seen worldwide. In the past two decades, many countries have opted to grant more autonomy to universities and to move from state-controlled to state-steered systems²⁶.

Among the variety of governance models, the academic-driven governance models are the most traditional and are based on the assumption that universities should be governed by academic staff. In **Academic Governance**, academic staff have the most representation and the greatest voice in defining the mission and management of the university. **Corporate Governance**, on the other hand, has emerged as a response to financial crises and following the need for universities to manage financial resources more responsibly. This model is prevalent in Australia, the U.S., and the U.K., and it emerged as a response to the need to improve public university management. Corporate Governance operates under the assumption that applying corporate approaches, such as financial accountability, helps to improve outcomes. This model usually implies that the head of the university is a professional corporate manager as opposed to an academic one. **Trustee Governance** gives management powers to appointed “trustee,” usually in the form of a Board of Trustees (BoT). Its members are not elected within the institution, nor do they represent the different stakeholders. The BoT usually has fiduciary responsibilities and due diligence in protecting the trust, including disclosing any factors that might constitute a conflict of interest with that trust. **Representational Governance** occurs when governance is vested in a wide array of stakeholders, including students, academic staff, alumni, corporate partners, government, and civil society.

It is clear that the adoption of a governance approach is an important decision in a given time and context for an institution or university system. It is also evident that the need to modify and adjust it to changing times is an important element of success. Finally, the **amalgam model**²⁷ (Birnbaum, 1991) provides a combination of Academic, Corporate, Trustee, and Representational governance. The

²⁶ J. Fielden, *Global Trends in University Governance*, in “World Bank Education Working Paper Series”, Washington D.C., 2008.

²⁷ R. Birnbaum, *Faculty in Governance: The role of Senates and Joint Committees*, in “Academic Decision Making”, 18 (3), 1991, pp. 8–25

advantage of the amalgam model is that it incorporates the strengths of each model to better suit the needs of an institution at a given point in time or to meet specific objectives. In the next paragraphs, our report describes the governance model applied in the Libyan Higher Education system.

Management orientation in HEIs in Libya

Among the questions we submitted to Libyan representatives, they were asked to provide the organisation chart of their institution and to explain their management model. According to the analysis of the organizational charts collected, Libyan Universities slightly differ from one another in their organizational structure and hierarchy. In the last years, developments have been made in the governance system, here follows an overview of the models applied.

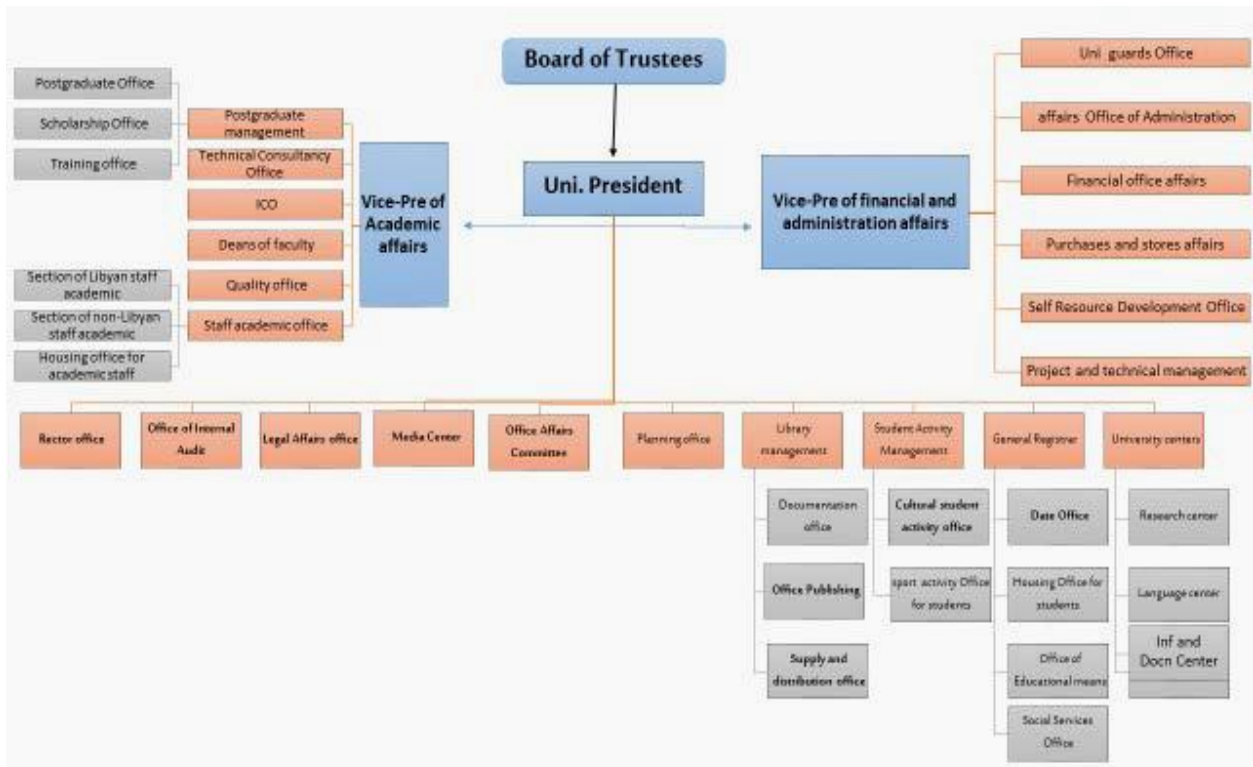
Despite in general the managerialism model of governance is weak in Libya, we found that for **Sirte University and Sebha University** the Board of Trustees is the first and most important governing body of the University²⁸. In an Anglo-Saxon definition, the Board of Trustees normally is the governing body encompassing many duties and responsibilities. The Board is responsible for the strategic planning and oversight of the President, who is in turn responsible for carrying out the plans of the Board of Trustees. Under the leadership of the Board Chair, the trustees offer advice and counsel to the President. The Board of Trustees is responsible for developing and approving the University's mission, strategic goals and objectives, and establishing policies related to programs and services. Another duty of the trustees is to approve the annual budget and to set major program fees.

However, it must be noted that both Sebha and Sirte are two exceptions in the general scenario of Libyan Higher Education Institutions, as all the other Universities have no Board of Trustees. In order to show concrete examples, we can look at the organizational chart of the **University of Tripoli**, where no BoT is present, but a Majlis al-Jama'a (University Council) acting above all, and above the Ra'is al-Jama'a (University President).

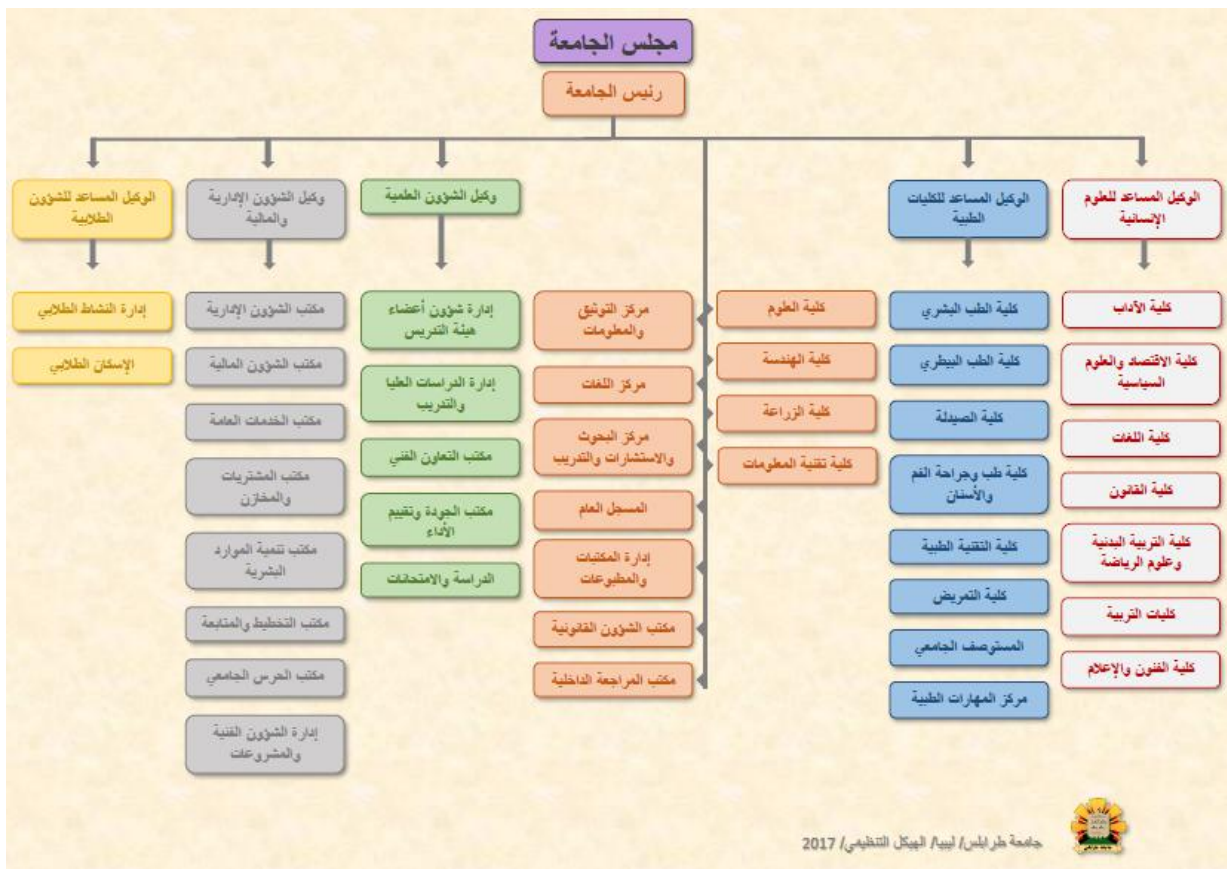
Another example of an organisational chart where the University Council is the main decision body is the organogram of University of Elmergib. Founded in 1991, this university is a non-profit public higher education institution located in the small city of Al Khums (population range of 250 000-499 999 inhabitants), Tripolitania, which has also branch campuses in the following location(s): Msallata, Elgarboly, Gasr Akhyar. In its organizational structure, the University Council is mainly composed of the University President and the Faculty members at the same level of hierarchy, while there are several offices depending directly from the University President (Ra'is al-Jama'a), from the cultural relations office to the internal affairs office, from the office of research and innovation to the legal department.

²⁸ We particularly thank Dr. Jibriel Abu Saleem (Sirte University) and Dr. Mayouf Ali Mayouf (Sebha University) for providing us with the chart.

Sirte University and Sebha University organisation chart

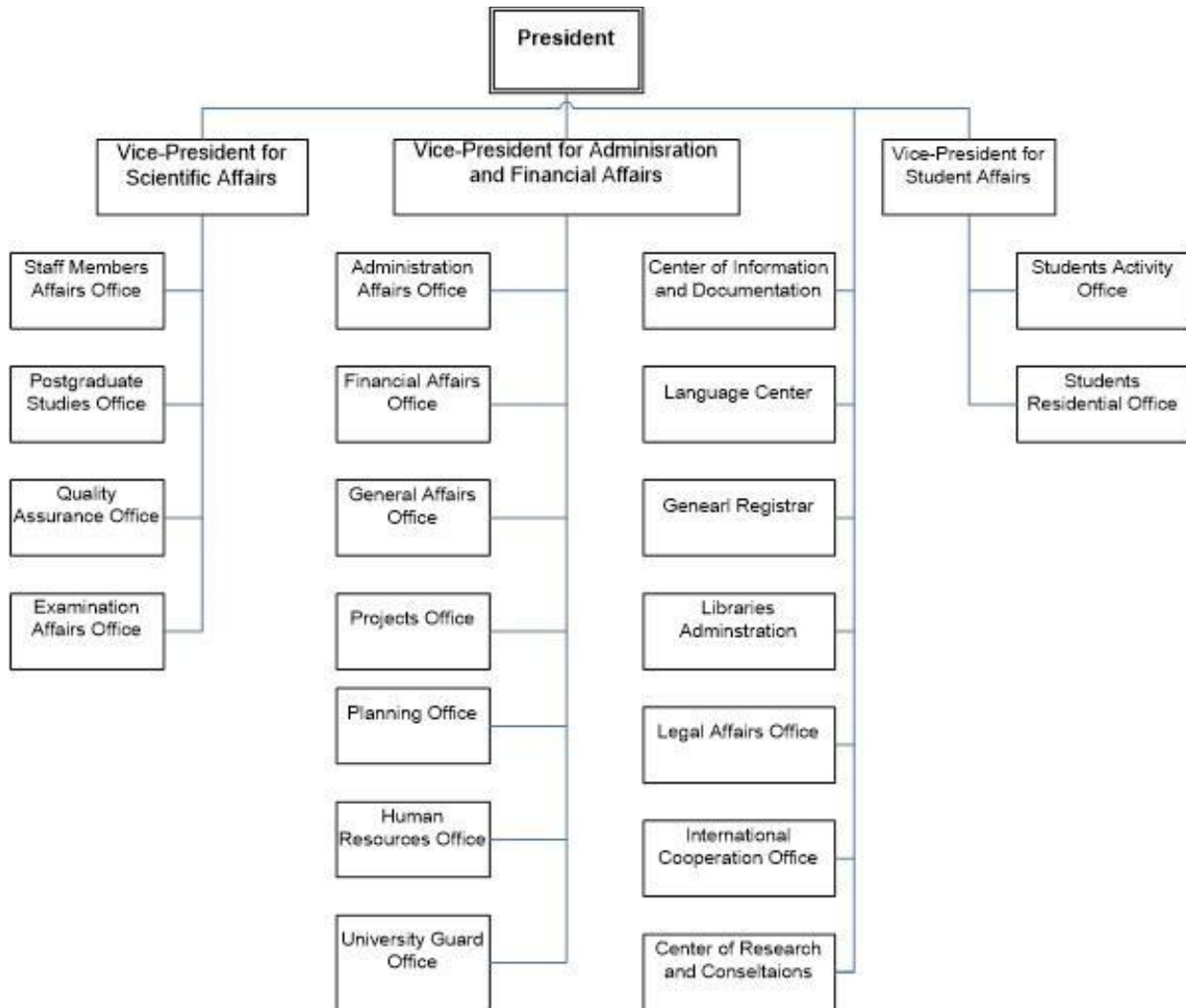


University of Tripoli organization chart



As a last example collected during our research, there is also the case where all branches directly depend solely on the University President, such as it happens at the **University of Gharyan**²⁹.

University of Gharyan organizational chart



Mission and University strategy

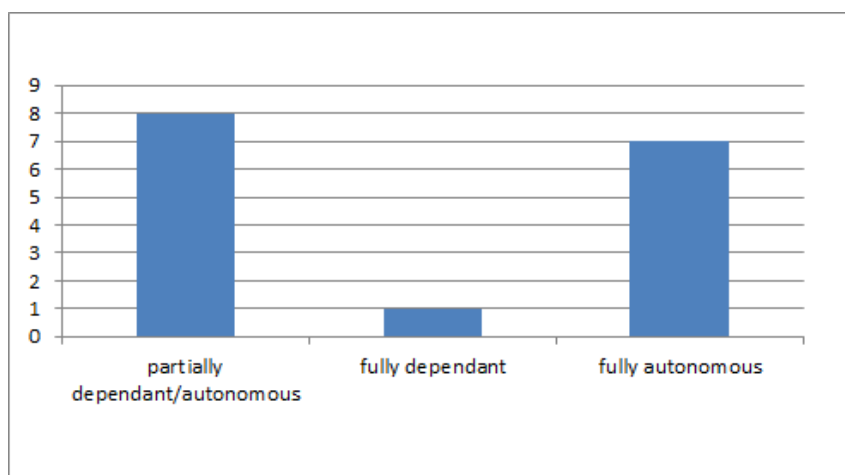
The clarity of the mission and goals of the university is the first element in assessing university governance. In the case of Libyan universities, the university mission is not formally defined at the national level, due to the absence of a national law that stipulates the objectives and general organization of the higher education system. Therefore, the general mission and its specific goals are formally and clearly stated by each university. This implies that the university engages in the process of defining its own mission, unique in respect to all other universities in the country. It was reported by respondents that the university reflects on its institutional mission every five years and makes changes if necessary. Similarly, the goals of the university are reported to be modified occasionally.

²⁹ We thank Dr. Seddeq Ghrare for providing this.

Generally speaking, the actors involved in defining the university mission and goals include representatives from the university itself, from the civil society, industry and business stakeholders, alumni and international partners, particularly those involved in fundraising. While setting goals, the main concern is to align them with the overall institutional mission.

Strong leadership and strategic planning are key elements of a well-performing university. Several elements of the day-to-day university management become therefore critical for the performance of the institution, and define to what extent a university is results-based managed, such as the existence of a strategic plan through internal reports and roadmaps. Key elements should be discussed during the strategic definition process: processes for the achievement of goals, detailed action plans, the vision of education, internal regulations and procedures, etc. **The findings of our analysis show that universities in Libya are partially autonomous in defining their own mission and university strategy.** The graph below shows how the majority of universities from our study declared to be partially independent in the process of mission definition, while seven of them perceive themselves as fully autonomous. Despite they all follow the regulations from the Ministry of Education, they declared to be fully autonomous in the definition of mission and strategy. Among those seven universities, there is the case of the Libyan International Medical University which is the only medical private university in the country. However, it is worth underlining that the other six universities that perceive their autonomy in defining the mission and university strategy, are all public universities.

Degree of autonomy in mission definition and university strategy



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

Several reasons can explain this perception of full autonomy by some universities. We do not claim to be exhaustive, but among these we could mention the following ones:

- ✓ the history of the university (old/ancient universities versus more recent/young universities)
- ✓ the size of the university (big universities versus small universities)
- ✓ the geographical position (the public universities who declared to be fully autonomous are also located in the East region)
- ✓ the political/historical situation (after the collapse of Gaddafi regime, universities perceive themselves to be more autonomous because of the fall of the *ancient regime* structure).

In the framework of our analysis, it is important to note that the survey submitted to Libyan universities can be considered as a self-evaluation exercise, therefore the interpretation of data has to be taken into consideration with caution and not in an absolute sense. Very often, the governance dimension of autonomy could be misinterpreted by centralised system universities with the degree of independence, which is a very different concept.

Generally speaking, universities that have declared to have a partial autonomy in defining their mission and strategy, have also admitted that there is a lack of clear strategy by the Ministry of Education, especially with regards to curricula development. This lack of strategy by the Ministry of Education implies that issues are managed on a local and institutional perspective instead of on a long-term overall perspective. It is important to note that the lack of a higher education strategy at the national level might lead the Libyan universities to perceive more institutional autonomy within their institution, due to the absence of a national regulation which could indeed generate a stronger feeling of autonomy in the matter. **The real challenge is to allow universities to benefit from national policies and strategies, on which basis each institution can define its own strategic institutional plan.** In this framework, among the needs expressed by the Libyan universities, there is the need to enhance the role and operativity of the University Council. Normally, central governments have clear leading roles, leaving some room for universities to be innovative and/or to accommodate local needs in a timely manner. This is not the case for Libyan universities, which do not have a national vision for the HE system from the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, on the other hand, individual universities' missions do not need to be centrally defined: for universities to be able to pursue their individual goals, it is mainly important to have a well-defined mission that tailors to the specific needs of the single university. What shall be addressed in Libya is the capacity of universities to define their own mission and strategy while being supported by a clear vision at the national level.

The interviews we had with Libyan representatives show that, the definition of the *university mission*, despite the perception of autonomy, translates into centralization, regulation, and often government control over the HE system. Not surprisingly, there is a strong inverse correlation between *mission* and *autonomy*. The more systems are centralised, the least autonomy is given to the universities, which is the case for Libya. The fall of the regime has also influenced the feeling of autonomy, where autonomy (both academic and financial, as seen further in the report) is indeed very limited.

Selection of Decision Makers

- ✓ With regards to the **selection of decision-makers in universities bodies, the current system for assignment of responsibility positions is the nomination:**
- ✓ University presidents are nominated by the Ministry of Education;
- ✓ Vice-presidents are nominated by the Ministry of Education based on the recommendation of the university President;
- ✓ Faculty deans are nominated by the University President;
- ✓ The university council is composed of: President, Vice-presidents, Deans.
- ✓ The President has the autonomy to choose the professors for each faculty to be the Dean³⁰.

³⁰ From UNIMED Survey, 2018

Academic autonomy

Autonomy concerns the relationship between each Higher Education institution and the central authority. It measures how freely HE institutions can take decisions in the context of the rules and regulations that shape each higher education system.

In this report we are examining this dimension in 3 subdimensions:

- ✓ **academic autonomy:** degree of freedom in decision-making on academic issues
- ✓ **financial autonomy:** degree of freedom in decision-making on financial issues
- ✓ **human resources autonomy:** degree of freedom in decision-making on HR management

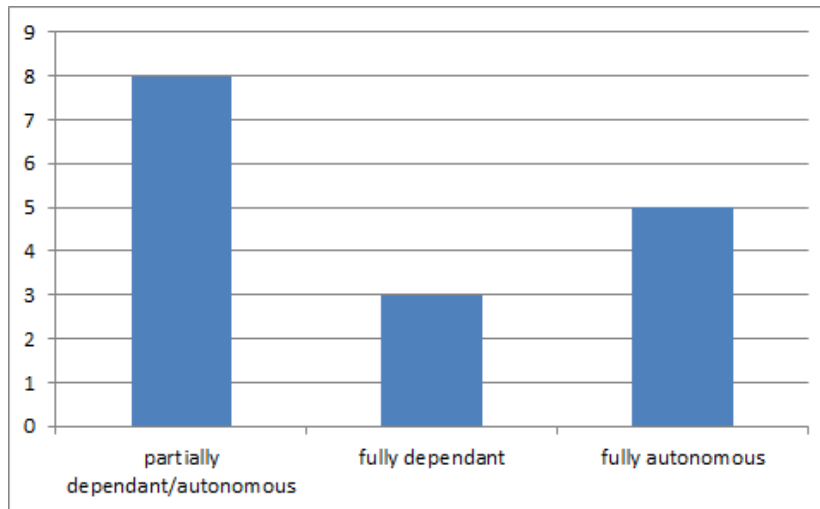
With regards to academic autonomy, we refer to the decisions related to teaching (study fields, student numbers, students selection, introduction of new programs and curricula structure) and decisions related to research activities (programs, research teams), that can be regulated by the central authority or freely managed by institutions.

Traditionally, in the Libyan HE system programmes and curricula are firstly developed and approved by faculties and universities. Universities have autonomy in determining the admission procedures and the overall number of students admitted at the institution and within different programs. However, there has recently been a trend towards centralising the reform of programmes and curricula, which aims at standardising about 60-70% of the content of all subjects at the university level³¹. This was done through meetings which took place in various universities, and with the department heads of the various fields of specialization. Therefore, we can say that **university academic autonomy in Libya is relatively low: universities have a partial level of autonomy, but all their decisions in academic matters have to be later approved by the central government, namely the Ministry of Education.** Generally speaking, private universities follow the curricula of public universities. During a whole-academic-year-system, students are required to study 10-12 courses each year, while in the semester-system, a total of 130–136 credit hours are required on average for the Bachelor's degree, which may peak at 150 credit hours in the field of engineering. The Universities interviewed stated to have partial autonomy in deciding on the types of courses offered, on the curricula structure (diploma, conditions of issues, assessment of students and format of exams) and in the introduction of new academic programs. However, although the university can (and does) introduce changes to the curricula and/or new programs and decide on the number of hours per program per year, it must receive approval by the Ministry of Education before actually implementing any of these changes.

It is worth mentioning, as done before, that our analysis is based on the perception of having more or less autonomy as expressed by the interviewed universities. Indeed, sometimes the perception of having little autonomy in respect to academic issues or financial matters, is justified by the knowledge of the weak legal framework regulating the governance system of the higher education institutions in Libya, and/or by a misunderstanding and a different interpretation of institutional mechanisms related to non-written laws regulating the performance of universities.

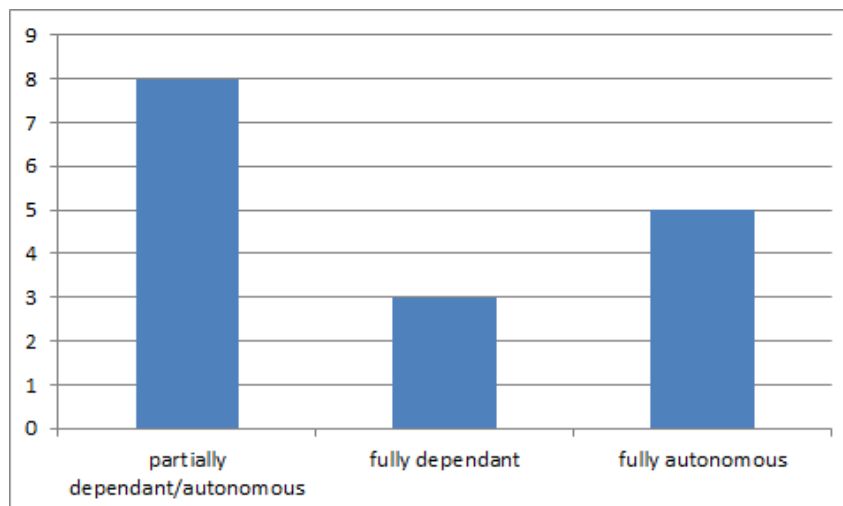
Degree of autonomy in defining the curricula structure

³¹ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

Degree of autonomy in introducing new programs



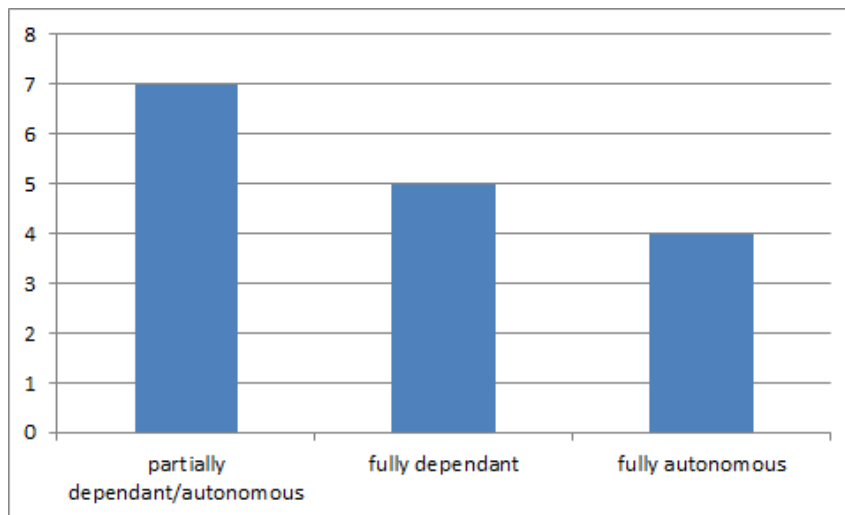
Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

In the analysis of academic autonomy, it is worth paying some attention to assessment methods, as assessment and student's evaluation have to be considered as a sub-dimension of the institutional autonomy. In Libyan universities, exams are the most common form of assessing students' performance. Other assessment types, such as accomplishing projects, term papers or group work are used depending on the nature and level of the course and number of students registered. Usually, there are two term or year exams, and a final exam, besides homeworks, in order to assess students' performance in each course. In the whole-academic-year-system students are required to pass all courses of the year to progress to the next year. University or faculty regulations may allow students to retake the final exam before the beginning of the following year if they fail in a certain number of courses, and they can progress to the next year if they fail for a second time in only one or two courses. Students take examinations for these past courses together with the finals of the new

academic year³². Degrees are awarded when students have passed all required courses in a specific field of study.

According to UNIMED experience in the projects PAgES and ENBRAIN (for more details on the project, see the following paragraph of the current report: *The cooperation through European Commission funded projects: Erasmus+, H2020, FP7*), Libyan Universities prefer to update the already existing Curricula instead of introducing new courses. This is because the perception is that the procedure for admitting and accrediting new programs is a highly bureaucratized and complex one. At the same time, the presence of dissuading non-written laws in the accreditation procedures, and the almost certainty of delays (estimated time for accreditation ranges from a few weeks to 1/2 years) is discouraging Universities to apply for new programs. Instead, they prefer to update, adapt and modify existing programs, in which case the procedures are simpler and faster, requiring only the approval of the University governance bodies.

Degree of autonomy in students admission



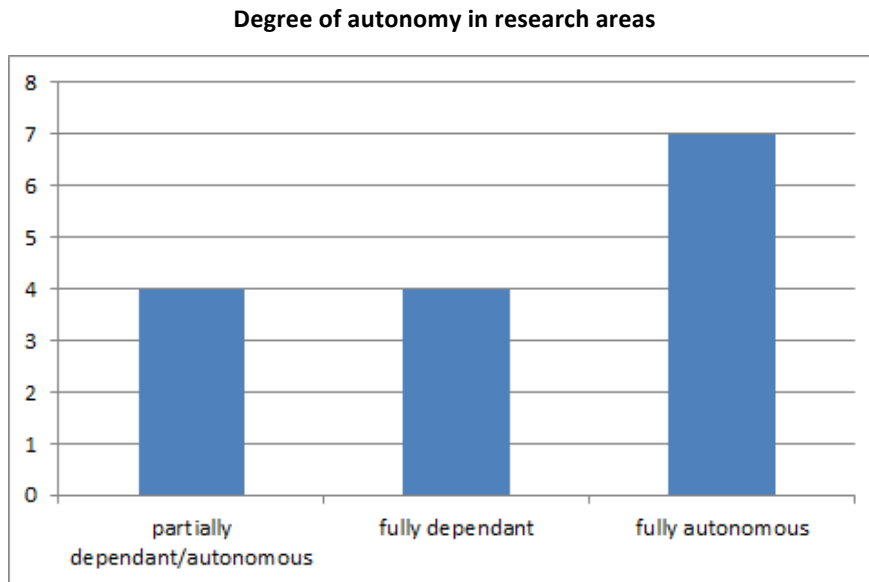
Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

All students are eligible to study in higher education institutions in Libya. During the history of Libya, every year the General People's Committee (in acronym GPCE, the institution that rules the country and subsequently regulates the management of higher education institutions, students' admissions, and tuition fees) determines the regulations for students' admission to higher education institutions, by taking into consideration the results of the examinations of the so-called "Secondary School Leaving Certificate", the needs of the society and the institutions capacities, as well as the students' specializations³³. According to these criteria, students can apply to the different departments or specializations at public or private universities, technical colleges or high vocational institutions. For admission to post graduate studies, students are required to have a Bachelor's degree and take a placement exam or be interviewed. **Public universities are autonomous to some extent.** They

³² Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011

³³ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011

operate under the supervision of the so-called “National Committee of Universities”, which is responsible for implementing the GPCE policy for higher education and acts as a coordinator among these universities³⁴. One aspect that is worth the attention is the granting of scholarships, that shows a centralised system and a top-down approach. The Ministry of Education sends a list with the names of the best students at the final exams, who can receive scholarships. There is no restriction policy: the same student can benefit from a scholarship for a Master’s degree and later for the PhD course.



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

The chart above shows that universities in Libya have a greater degree of autonomy in research fields, compared to teaching issues, although it was seen that the university profile is much more teaching-oriented than research-oriented. Universities are currently engaged in establishing (if not already done) research units and centres within each faculty of the university. **Research is indeed an integral part of academic staff responsibilities in universities. Research is done through research activities carried out by individuals or research-groups of academics, in order to meet promotion requirements, for professional development or as a part of their post-graduate duties.** Universities and other higher education institutions participate in solving social, economical and technological problems and challenges through scientific research.

In general, research is government funded by a very high percentage. The National Authority for Scientific Research (NASR) through various research centres, supervises scientific research in Libya³⁵. Despite that, **some activities suffer from a lack of management and some research centers are not properly activated.** This would lead to say that **the biggest priority for Libyan universities in the area of research is establishing research priorities, promoting specialization strategies within universities and supporting existing research centres and research units.** Moreover, lack of funding

³⁴ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011

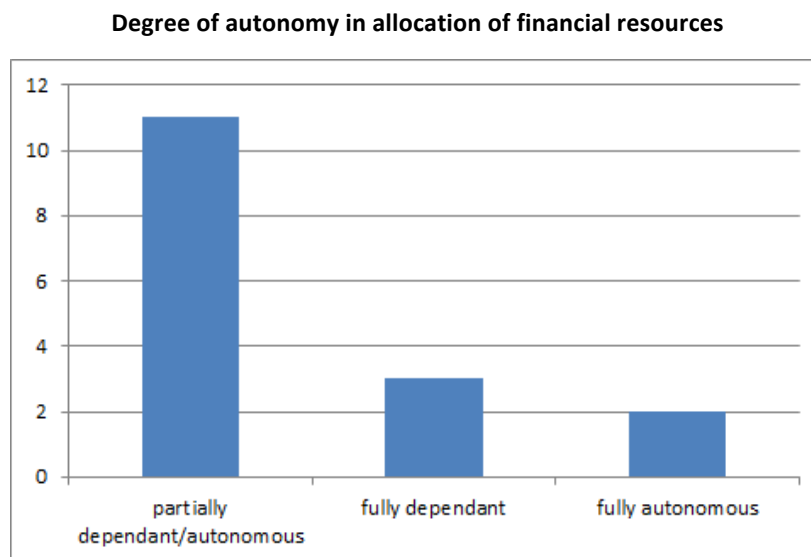
³⁵ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011. For more information about NASR it is possible to visit: <http://ali.ly/ar/> (Last access May 2019)

has been a major issue mentioned by most of the respondents, and the specialization strategy is considered by most of them as the best solution to face the issue.

Financial autonomy

The Ministry of Education allocates an annual budget for each university and technical college, based on a suggested budget issued by the very institutions, and according to some criteria such as institution's population, current infrastructure, needed constructions and facilities, etc. students' fees are very small, we can say symbolic. Students pay only registration fees in the beginning of the academic year or semester. Other limited financial resources are generated through grants, investments, and services provided to the public. On the other hand, as it is easy to understand, private higher institutions are self-financed: the main financial resources are students' fees and services provided to the public. From a legal point of view, Libyan universities, under any circumstances, are not authorised to accept tuition fees.

Findings show that **universities in Libya rely heavily on fundings received by the central government**. Only very few universities can also rely on other funds, as it is the case for the Libyan International Medical University, Omar Al-Mukhtar University and The University of Ajdabiya. These institutions rely also on funds from private companies, such as businesses, industries and private owners. Very little funding is received from loans and grants obtained by international organizations, outsourcing and contracts. **Universities can surely benefit from further developing these alternative sources of revenue**, and from further engaging in research or provision of continuing education services, **but still they have very limited autonomy in managing and allocating the financial resources available**.



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

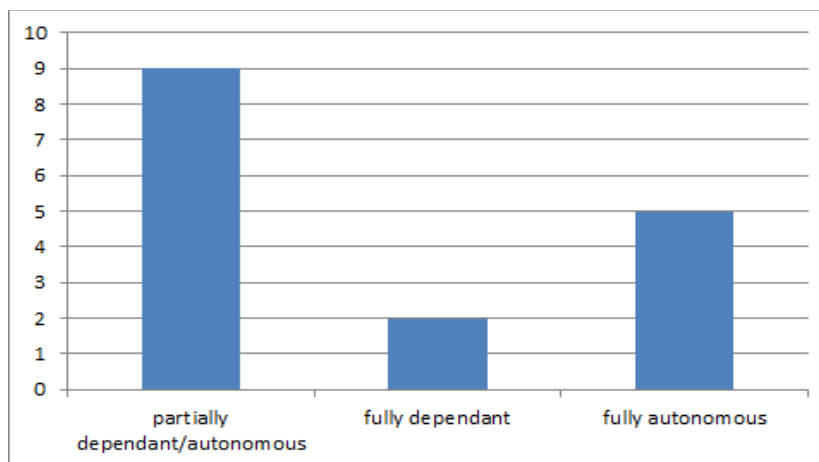
Having very limited autonomy in allocating financial resources is clearly one of the biggest barriers to a university financial autonomy, which is mostly affected by the current regulations and the lack of a national strategy for developing research activities and knowledge-transfer activities (just to give an

example of how the limited financial autonomy has an impact on the daily management of universities). Restrictive measures in Libya, such as limitations on foreign currency transactions, restrictions on wire transfers or the absence of independent bank accounts for each University, are further reducing the financial autonomy of universities and preventing their international cooperation development.

Human resources autonomy

Human resources autonomy (both for academic and administrative staff) is the way HE institutions can manage their staff either according to a strong dedicated regulation decided by national law and central administrative levels, or more freely according to internal rules (subject only to national labour regulation). **For each position (professor, researcher, academic staff involved in third mission activities) rules may vary and may be explored separately.** In particular for **third-mission** activities, the central authority may impose time limits for the staff involved. In the case of Libyan universities, at the university level, faculty members are appointed by the University President³⁶ based on the recommendations by the concerned department and faculty. Academic staff appointments at higher institutions and scientific research centres are made by the GPCE&SR³⁷ based on the recommendations of the National Committee for Technical Education and National Authority for Scientific Research. In private higher institutions, academic staff members are appointed through contracts for one semester, one year or longer. Having said that, administrative staff autonomy is perceived as slightly higher than academic staff autonomy, because the university has a certain degree of freedom when deciding on aspects of human resource management, as long as decisions comply with the national law governing employment for administrative staff. To give an example, see the figure below:

Degree of autonomy in human resources policy for technical-administrative staff



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

³⁶ Sometimes referred as “chancellor” as per official denomination used in official documentation.

³⁷ GPCE&SR is the General People’s Committee for Education & Scientific Research which is a body that according to the law, entitled “Law No. 18 for Education” stipulates the conditions and criteria for the establishment of public and private institutions, concerning the higher education sector in Libya, included public and private universities, technical colleges, and academies.

Quality Assurance: the Libyan System

Quality in Higher Education, according to Article 11 of the World Declaration on Higher Education published by the United Nations (1998)³⁸ is defined as:

(a) Quality in higher education is a multidimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions, and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, are vital for enhancing quality. Independent national bodies should be established and comparative standards of quality, recognised at the international level, should be defined. Due attention should be paid to specific institutional, national and regional contexts in order to take into account diversity and to avoid uniformity. Stakeholders should be an integral part of the institutional evaluation process.

(b) Quality also requires that higher education should be characterised by its international dimension: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students, and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances.

(c) To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continuous staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic staff development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between higher education institutions, and between higher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries. The new information technologies are an important tool in this process, owing to their impact on the acquisition of knowledge and know-how.

Quality Assurance in Higher Education refers to the process of maintaining standards in a reliable and consistent way, granting excellence in performance, performing procedures, processes or systems to safeguard and improve the quality of education and other activities³⁹, and ultimately it makes universities accountable for their provision of knowledge, ensuring public trust in their function and impact. Quality Assurance is naturally related to the governance and management of the institution, its capacity to operate autonomously being accountable, responsible and responsive. The strategic position and role of universities in the development of any country and of the national policy is beyond doubt. The university mission in a knowledge-based society is primarily to promote knowledge, through research and teaching. **In order for universities to accomplish high-stakes goals and fulfil their mission, it is essential to find ways to achieve sustainable quality standards in teaching and learning.** The integration of Quality Assurance principles into Higher Education, while having the base objectives of defining and recognising quality, has an additional added value due to the important socio-economic role that education plays in developing local, national and global societies. This is particularly true when it comes to the Libyan case.

³⁸ http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/wche/declaration_eng.htm. (Last access: December 2018)

³⁹ AA. VV., *Audits of quality assurance systems of Finnish higher education institutions. Audit manual for 2008-2011*, Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC), Tampere, 2008.

The Libyan context

The education system in Libya has seen rapid development shape its future. It has significantly improved and advanced compared to other developing countries⁴⁰. However, according to the British Council, roughly 90% of university level students are enrolled in public universities, that are straining to meet the demand⁴¹. In 2011, a revision and rewriting of national curricula was undertaken, with the main purpose of removing Gaddafi's influence and the teaching of the Green Book. However, Libyan universities faced a number of challenges, among them the security situation, that has resulted in a de-prioritization and delay of any reform efforts concerning higher education.

In addition, **due to the political division, several university branches become separate universities, leading to institutional fragmentation, declining quality of research and teaching processes**, and the lack of facilities to support education (i.e. libraries, laboratories, archives)⁴². Evidence that has been definitely confirmed by our research work during the survey, but also that comes out during the implementation of several EU funded projects. The Report of the European Commission on Higher Education in Libya, 2011⁴³ identifies among the major challenges also the lack of a national strategic plan fostering quality over quantity; outdated curricula, teaching and assessment methods (which struggle to align with international quality standards, scientific developments and the needs of the market). “Quality can only be achieved when all the staff members in the university continually focus on enhancing and expanding their collective awareness and capabilities for enforcing and adopting new teaching methodologies and developing new curricula, based on the institutional mission and sound clear outcome objectives.”⁴⁴ It goes without saying that **the process of improvement and expansion of the capacity of the Libyan universities includes having a well-functioning quality assurance system** as a key component.

National Quality Assurance Framework for Higher Education in Libya

The National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions (NCQAA) has been established in Libya in 2006 by the Libyan Minister of Education, with one main office in Tripoli. It is responsible for the recognition and equivalence of diplomas, accreditation and quality assurance of the public and private higher education institutions (Report of the European Commission Higher Education in Libya, 2016⁴⁵). The NCQAA accredits all educational institutions within all scientific and vocational fields in Libya. Two smaller departments were then opened in Benghazi and Sebha (to cover the eastern and southern areas of Libya and to reduce the pressure on the Tripoli main administration) but later closed. After 2011 and to date, there are two offices for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Libya: one is located in Tripoli and a second one opened in al-

⁴⁰ A. Tamtam, F. Gallagher, A. G. Olabic, S. Naherd, *Higher education in Libya, system under stress*, in “Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences”, 29, 2011, pp.742-751.

⁴¹ AA. VV., *BTI 2018 Country Report — Libya*, Bertelsmann Stiftung, Gütersloh, 2018.

⁴² AA. VV., *BTI 2018 Country Report — Libya*, Bertelsmann Stiftung, Gütersloh, 2018.

⁴³ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011

⁴⁴ M. S. Ambarek, *The need for Quality Management Systems in Libyan universities*, in “Libyan J Med”, 5, 2010

⁴⁵ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), International Project Management Office - OGPI - University of Alicante, *Higher Education in Libya*, September, 2016.

Beida⁴⁶. The departments in Tripoli and al-Beida are now following the exact same procedures; they work closely together, however they are still formally independent from each other. The two departments can receive applications by anyone in the country, notwithstanding the provenience. **The Center has published the first accreditation and quality assurance standards for Libyan higher education institutions, according to which the quality of higher education system in the country is evaluated.** The guidelines are shared with all HE institutions and define the requirements for universities to comply with. For the purpose of the Libya Restart Report it was not possible to fully analyze these guidelines, therefore every reference is based on secondary sources.

According to the Report of the European Commission on Higher Education in Libya, 2011⁴⁷, the accreditation body was founded to design and implement a system “for evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance in public and private higher education institutions”. The center is owned and monitored by the Libyan Ministry of Education (while it is formally a separate body), and operates under the umbrella of the Ministry with regard to administration and funding. The rules, standards and procedures for quality assurance and accreditation are established by the law n. 501⁴⁸. It is not clear to what extent the QA office is able to advise and influence the Ministry of Education in respect to higher education policy, if deemed necessary for the benefit of HE institutions. Other than the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training, there is no other office or institution responsible for accreditation and quality assurance, either private or governmental in Libya⁴⁹. While the Ministry is uniquely responsible for practically all aspects in relation to the management of higher education institutions, students’ admission and tuition fees, it has little to do with curricula, teaching or examinations offered by universities and colleges. Traditionally, programs and curricula are developed by faculties and universities, and later approved by the Ministry, with a bottom-up approach. In this process, **the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions should act as the missing link between the proposition by academics and the final approval by the Ministry, ensuring compliance with quality standards** both in terms of teaching methodology and contents of the programs offered.

The cooperation between universities and the National Center also implies occasional visits to the university on behalf of a team from the National Center. Visits are scheduled without notice and may require access to archives and documents of the institution. In the words of a respondent “*They can come anytime to monitor and visit*”. The visits have a major focus on the administrative, financial and logistic aspects (criteria and standards are thoroughly detailed in the guidelines)⁵⁰.

While the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation is in charge of accreditation as well, very few information were available to UNIMED in this regards, especially on the criteria used for the accreditation of institutions and/or educational programmes. As reported by a respondent⁵¹ for the accreditation of the whole institution, an application is sent to the NCQAA and initially

⁴⁶ A small city around 200 km far from Benghazi, always in the East of the country.

⁴⁷ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *EU-TEMPUS Libya Review of Higher Education*, Brussels, January, 2011

⁴⁸ Al-Jamahiriyya al-'Arabiyya al-Libiyya al-Sha'biyya al-Ishtirakiyya al-'Athma, *Qarar al-Lajna al-Sha'biyya al-'Amma - Raqm 501 li-l-sana 1378 (2010 masihi)*.

⁴⁹ A. Aloreibi, M. D. Carey, *English language teaching in Libya after Gaddafi*, in R. Kirkpatrick (edited by), *English Education Policy in the Middle East and North Africa*, Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 93-114.

⁵⁰ A. Aloreibi, M. D. Carey, *English language teaching in Libya after Gaddafi*, in R. Kirkpatrick (edited by), *English Education Policy in the Middle East and North Africa*, Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 93-114.

⁵¹ UNIMED survey, 2018

reviewed by a committee, which establishes if it can be accepted, notifies the applicant and collects a fee. The application then goes through an academic and administrative assessment, but it seems that the standards and criteria used for the assessment are not clear neither detailed. At the end of the process, the committee only advises through a recommendation on whether the standards for accreditation are either present, partially present or not present. The criteria for institutional accreditation are not available for consultation, are restricted for internal use at the NCQAA (at least, that was in 2014 as reported by a respondent⁵²). Therefore, the quality and adequacy of the process is difficult to verify, as the accreditation criteria are not available for the public to view. Accreditation may last from 2 to 5 years, depending on various aspects, such as the programs offered and the recommendations of the assessing committee⁵³. All public universities funded before 2006 have not gone through the process of accreditation and have been considered accredited de-facto. The process is undergoing for all private universities. As recalled at the beginning of this report, 24 public universities and 8 private universities have been accredited or considered accredited.

Quality Assurance at the Institutional level in Libyan Universities

The NCQAA mandates that all higher education institutions in the country have Quality and Performance Evaluation offices (QPEOs), to work directly with the governing body in Tripoli, closer to the National Center in Tripoli or in al-Beida. **Among all the Universities interviewed, 15 out of 16 stated to have a Quality Assurance system.** The QPEO at the University work directly with the National Center to develop a culture of quality assurance at the institution, through the organization of conferences, seminars, workshops and publications to sustain the quality of HE in all regions of the country. According to the results we collected from the interview with the Ministry of Education, the QPEO at the University performs the following tasks:

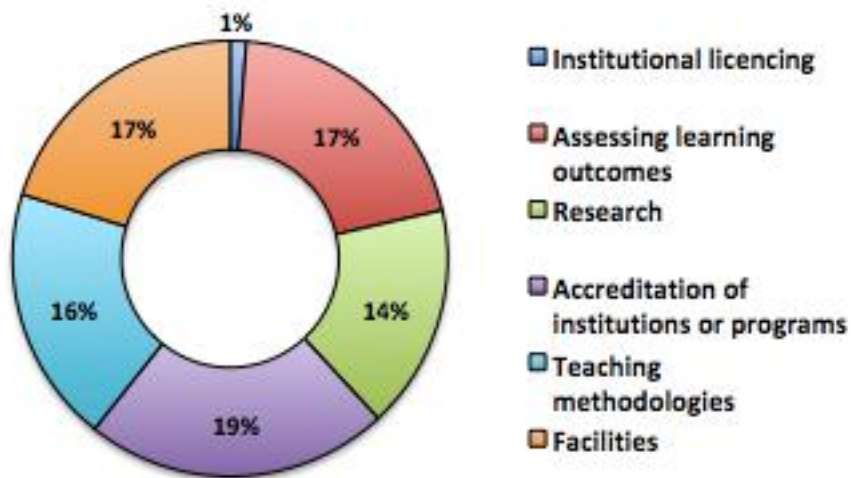
- ✓ Suggests/proposes standards for education and offers them for accreditation and follow-up;
- ✓ Proposes standards for performance and quality control in university education, with regard to professors, curricula, laboratories, buildings, administration, processes;
- ✓ Supervises information exchange among local, regional and international institutions, and compares the standards applied by other national and foreign universities with those applied in his/her own university, and endeavours to develop and adopt them;
- ✓ Proposes the setting up of measures and guidelines for the development of performance and QA in university education;
- ✓ Conducts and participates in self-studies in order to harmonize university education with what is needed in the labour market, and puts recommendations in this regard;
- ✓ Writes periodic and annual reports on the office activities, conducting regular self-assessments.

⁵² UNIMED survey, 2018

⁵³ A. Aloreibi, M. D. Carey, *English language teaching in Libya after Gaddafi*, in R. Kirkpatrick (edited by), *English Education Policy in the Middle East and North Africa*, Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 93-114.

From UNIMED survey⁵⁴, it emerges that the QA system at the university deals with different issues.

Q: If existent, is/are the QA system(s) address the following items:



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

In other words, the QPEO deals with ensuring compliance of the university education and processes with QA standard, and fosters the adoption of quality standards at the institution. The compliance to the standards on behalf of managers and teachers at the institutional level, and whether teaching practices actually derive and align to these main policies, seems to be still a work-in-progress in most institutions. It is not a case that only 4 out of 16 of the respondent institutions have added a specific reference to improving QA measures in their plans for the next years⁵⁵, and only 6 out of 16 have specifically indicated the will to have capacity building on quality processes/quality management/quality assurance and evaluation for their administrative staff⁵⁶.

Despite it is compulsory for all institutions to have a QA office, in some universities it is yet to be established, or is not fully operative. When asked “*When was the last time that an institutional self-assessment was conducted?*” only 9 out of 16 universities have responded; among responses, most of the self-assessments have been conducted quite recently (over the past 3 years). In addition, offices are supposed to *follow up and implement all general policies of quality assurance and performance assessment procedures all over the university, both in the academic and administrative aspects*, but there is no clear specification of which these measures and procedures are. **Quality Assurance is therefore mostly applied in regards to administrative and financial matters (for which criteria are specifically designed), rather than to teaching/learning practices and methodologies⁵⁷.**

⁵⁴ UNIMED survey, 2018

⁵⁵ UNIMED survey, 2018

⁵⁶ UNIMED survey, 2018

⁵⁷ A. Aloreibi, *The Impact of the Adopted Quality Assurance Procedures and Teaching Practices at the University of Ajdabiya on the Learners' Learning Behavior*, Unpublished

Libyan universities national and international dimensions: partnership, networking, mobility

As it has been written by Daniela Kaisth⁵⁸, “supporting Higher Education in crisis, post-conflict and transition is an imperative for the next century”⁵⁹ and “neglecting students and scholars during crisis and conflict is a serious mistake”⁶⁰. We believe it is possible to add two more dimensions that deserve attention: during conflict and post-conflict period it is necessary to support not only education but also Higher Education in a harmonised way, to guarantee a continuity line in the students’ education path; secondly, it is vital in conflicted areas to support Universities as fundamental players for society reconstruction from the social, cultural and economic points of view. In this sense, we embrace the findings of the book *Higher Education and Post-Conflict recovery* when the author describes Universities intervention in post-war or in-war areas, providing benefits for short-term stabilization, providing non violent alternative to youths, providing humanitarian and relief services through students, and skills for stable jobs. In addition, Universities are key actors for long-term stabilization⁶¹.

If we have a closer look at the Libyan case, it is fundamental to note that Libyan Universities appear to be the main reliable actor in the country after the civil war and one of the few, if not the only actor, able to survive the political division between East and West. This has been clearly stated during several interviews and by different respondents. During our interviews, we discovered that cooperation among International Relation Offices, and especially International Relations Offices’ directors, seems to be constant and ongoing, and mainly independent from political issues, in such a way that Universities from the western part of the countries actively participated in providing contacts of their colleagues from the East (i.e. University of Benghazi and Omar Al-Mukhtar University). Universities continued to work and cooperate despite the presence of terrorist organizations such as Daesh⁶² in the city of Sirte, and despite the destruction of local facilities. Indeed, they felt even more their crucial role for the future of the country.

In this framework, the European Union support in the short, medium and long term, appears to be decisive, also due to the good reputation of the European Commission in the country. Despite historical relation with the United States and the United Kingdom, European Union member states (especially France, Germany, Italy and Spain) are considered as key players in the field of Higher Education and this is very clear if we have a look at the participation of the Libyan Universities in the Erasmus Plus KA2 Capacity Building Actions funded after 2011. Particularly for Italy and France, this is also the result of the diplomatic missions that operated in Tripoli during the recent years, despite the well-known problems of the country.

International cooperation and mobility are crucial for knowledge transfer, skills improvements, intercultural dialogue. It has an impact on research and also serves for strengthening graduate

⁵⁸ IIE (Institute of International Education) Vice President at the time she wrote the article quoted.

⁵⁹ <http://www.nxtbook.com/naylor/IIEB/IIEB0115/index.php#/16> (Last access June 2018)

⁶⁰ <http://www.nxtbook.com/naylor/IIEB/IIEB0115/index.php#/16> (Last access June 2018)

⁶¹ S. Milton, *Higher Education and Post-Conflict recovery*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2017.

⁶² Arab acronym for ISIS.

employability. International Relation Offices are the main actors inside the university for the promotion, planning, management and follow-up of all kind of international activities. All the 16 universities have an International Relation Office that, as previously mentioned, depends on the Vice-president for Academic Affairs. The director is nominated by the University President based on criteria like experience, competences and English language skills. The composition of these offices depends on the university: it can be composed by a director, a vice-director and several agents, or by only one director and one assistant. According to our results, **IROs directors created a permanent group of IROs (including both Eastern and Western universities) and meet every 2 or 3 months for sharing experiences and information.** This is additional proof that cooperation in the country continues despite political instability and that academic cooperation is not fully involved in the country tensions. This does not mean that Universities' representatives are not suffering from the crisis conditions, or that they are not touched by the political and institutional instability of the country. Far from it. Nevertheless, universities are playing a compensatory role and are acting as science diplomacy practitioners. Apart from the academic backgrounds of the involved staff, which facilitates cooperation on common grounds, this is also possible thanks to **personal relations (a very strong factor in the Libyan experience)**, relative small number of country citizens (around 6 millions, meaning 2 millions less than London, and considering that the absolute majority of the population is concentrated on the coastal part of the country), and inevitably when discussing of Libya, tribal and families loyalties.

When asking to the IROs staff what are their main missions, we noted a perfect concordance in the perception of their role among the interviewed Universities:

- ✓ responsible for the cooperation with local, national and international universities or bodies (including the enterprises), through Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or projects;
- ✓ coordination for the students/staff mobility;
- ✓ promote the university visibility at the international level;
- ✓ player of the university internationalisation.

Cooperation among Libyan universities

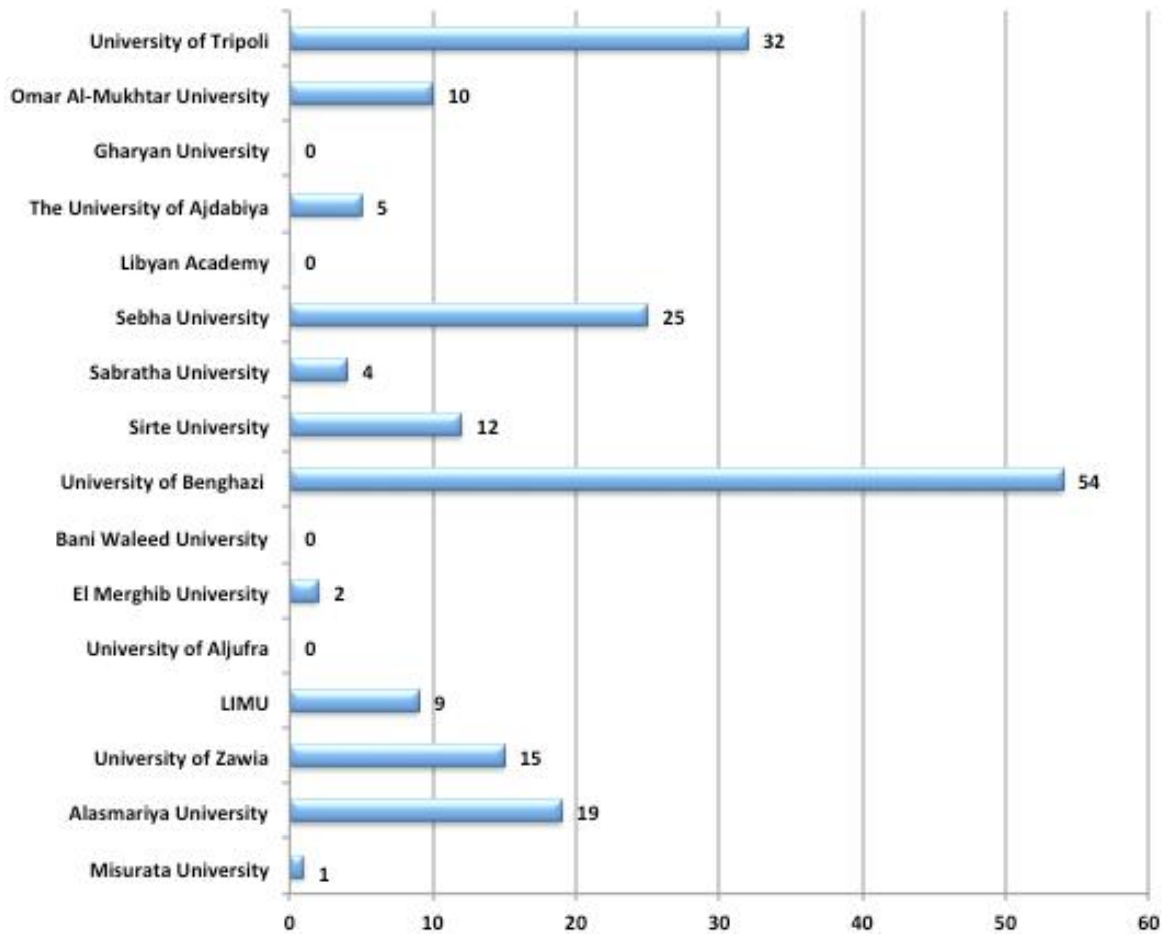
Among all the responses collected, 6 universities reported having no agreements with other Libyan universities. We investigated further this aspect with the qualitative interviews, which confirmed that cooperation exists between Libyan universities but without written agreements, because of the country traditions. Cooperation takes different forms: joint research, exchange of students and staff, research evaluation, exams examination, IROs Directors meeting regularly for sharing experiences and informations, etc. This takes places despite the lack of formal institutional agreements.

Cooperation with international universities

The situation is very different from one university to another. Some are engaged in many activities with international institutions and actors, others have very little international presence. There is an evident historical factor: young universities such as the University of Aljufra and the University of

Gharyan were established only recently and still need time to create networks, find partners, establish agreements. Another key factor is the participation in European funded projects: most of the existing international agreements have been favoured by the joint participation in European projects of European and Libyan universities. These agreements target mainly: educational and scientific cooperation, students and staff exchanges, joint research actions. Agreements with foreign universities exist mainly with universities located in Egypt, Britain, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Jordan.

Number of International agreements declared by the interviewed universities



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

All the 9 Libyan universities which have been involved in Tempus or Erasmus+ projects in the past years, have participated to our survey. Four for them have also declared having a mobility office, managed by the IROs, to boost international cooperation and mobility.

Mobility funded by national programs

As previously mentioned, thanks to a national program funded by local government, 6 204 students from the 16 universities investigated during the UNIMED research are currently studying abroad. The process is twofold: on the one side, the top ten graduates from secondary school are offered by the Ministry of Education the opportunity to pursue their studies abroad; on the other side, the Ministry of Education itself decides whether giving approval or not for additional scholarships, with a top-down approach towards university departments. Scholarships can fund each level of graduation and one person can benefit from several scholarships. In our surveyed universities, the most part of the scholars study for Master and PhD degrees. Students are free to choose their hosting university, regardless of university agreements.

Libyan Universities participation at the mobility funded by national program

University	Number of expatriate students abroad
The University of Ajdabiya	27
Al-Asmarya Islamic University	386
Bani Waleed University	109
University of Benghazi	1561
University of Elmergib	644
University of Gharyan	400
Libyan Academy	4
Libyan International Medical University	2
Misurata University	6
Omar Al-Mukhtar University	879
Sabratha University	76
Sebha University	779
Sirte University	428
University of Tripoli	800
University of Zawia	640
University of Aljufra	N/A ⁶³
TOTAL	6204

Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018

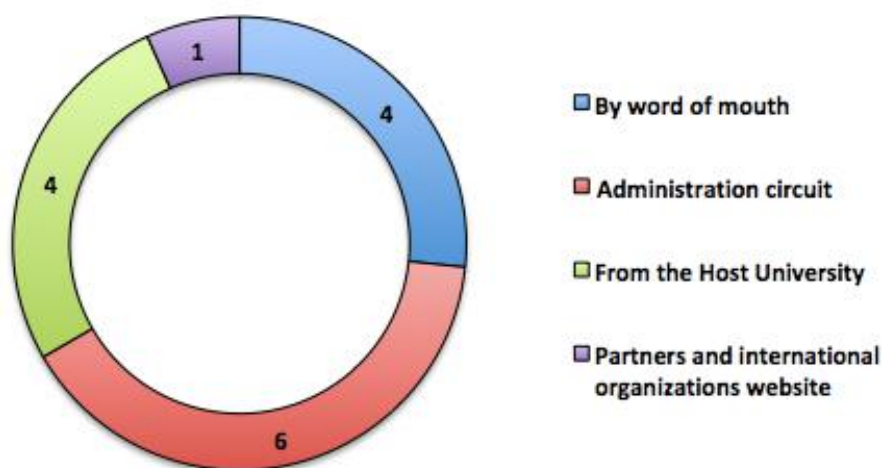
⁶³ No data provided from the University of Aljufra

The geographic coverage of these scholarships is quite spread: from other Arab countries (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan), to Europe (Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal), to the USA and Canada, and Asia (specifically Malaysia).

Mobility funded by EU projects

In 2015-2016 there were six Erasmus projects running which involved Libyan Universities, with a total funding of €143 000, and 32 planned mobilities to Europe, short-term academic mobility programmes for students (3-12 months) and staff (5-60 days) and long-term programmes for all levels of education, namely BA, MA, PhD, which were fully funded, according to the Libya Desk at EU HQ⁶⁴. The Libyan Universities involved in the projects were the Misurata University, the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia, and their European partners were the universities of Granada, Riga and Tallinn. In the framework of the Erasmus + International Credit Mobility (KA107) programme, the universities of Misurata and Zawia signed an agreement for students mobility towards Spain and Turkey; and agreements with Germany and United Kingdom to develop bilateral mobility schemes for academics. It is worth mentioning that mobility development is highly affected by restrictions imposed by the country’s reality and regulations. This is particularly true when we look at the (few) Embassies operative in Tripoli accepting Visa applications for Libyan students and professors, if we consider the financial requirements which are demanded for Visa applications, as well as the actual facilities available for travellers (there are only two airports in the country which are operative at the moment, Mitiga-Tripoli and Misurata, with very few destinations available, Tunisia and Turkey, plus some flights to Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan but no direct flight with Europe). The following figure reports how IROs receive information on international mobility programs:

Q: Information on international mobility programs reaches you through:



Elaboration of data and statistics from UNIMED survey, 2018⁶⁵

⁶⁴ <https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/eu-in-action/stories/europe-opens-libyan-students> (Last access December 2018).

⁶⁵ Only 15 Universities answered to this question. Consequently the total number of answers represented in the graph is equal to 15 and not 16.

Information arrives mainly through the administrative circuit, but the informal way remains relevant. At regional or international level, improvements can be made to strengthen the circulation of information. In this sense, the National Erasmus Office plays (and should play) a crucial role. In the very moment the UNIMED research was concluded (June 2018), the National Erasmus Officer in Libya was still under appointment, and this represented a severe limit for the definition of a national strategy to exploit the benefits offered by the Erasmus+ programme. The nomination of Mr. Ali Bakeer (from Misurata University) as the new National Erasmus Officer in the period between the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, may fill this delay and push the Libyan Universities towards a more comprehensive and coherent action in taking advantage of the opportunities opened by the European Commission. The NEO will hopefully play a mediator role between Europe and the Libyan Higher Education Institutions by pushing both systems towards a mutual understanding in terms of needs and opportunities.

The cooperation through European Commission funded projects

According to our sources, before 2012 there were no Libyan institutions involved in any European funded project. The first European project in which Libyan Universities were involved was FOCUS- Fostering Quality Assurance Culture at Libyan Universities, started in 2011.

Please find below the list of projects funded by the European Commission in the framework of Erasmus+ as described by the European Commission itself in the *Erasmus+ for higher education in Libya* paper published on March 2018⁶⁶. At the moment this current research was concluded (June 2018), UNIMED was able to provide more detailed information on several European programmes involving (or not) Libyan universities. These data are reported in the following tables and dedicated sheets⁶⁷.

International credit mobility (ICM)

	2017	2016	2015
<i>Proposals received involving Libya</i>	6	3	6
<i>Projects selected involving Libya</i>	4	2	4
<i>Students and staff moving to Europe</i>	27	11	21
<i>Students and staff moving to Libya</i>	5	0	0
<i>Percentage of regional budget</i>	0.35	0.14	0.41

⁶⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/erasmus-plus/factsheets/neighbourhood/erasmusplus_libya_2017.pdf (Last access June 2018).

⁶⁷ The list has to be intended as non exhaustive and it is open to external contribution by sending an email to authors at unimed@uni-med.net

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees⁶⁸

	2017	2016	2015	2014
<i>Total EMJMDs selected</i>	39	27	15	11
<i>Total proposals received</i>	122	92	76	61
<i>Proposals received involving Libya</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>EMJMDs selected involving Libya</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Full partners from Libya in EMJMDs</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Associates from Libya in EMJMDs</i>	0	0	0	0

Capacity-building for Higher Education projects

	2017	2016	2015
<i>Proposals received in call overall</i>	833	736	515
<i>Projects selected in call overall</i>	149	147	138
<i>Proposals received involving Libya</i>	3	2	5
<i>Projects selected involving Libya</i>	1	2	1
<i>Projects coordinated by Libya</i>	0	0	0

Libya in Jean Monnet

	2017	2016	2015	2014
<i>Proposals received in call overall</i>	1117	1034	879	493
<i>Projects selected in call</i>	238	270	260	212
<i>Applications from Libya</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Selected projects from Libya</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Networks involving partners from Libya</i>	0	0	0	0

⁶⁸ Regarding EM Master's scholarships Libya it can be noted that from 2004 until 2017 (in 13 years) Libya HE system benefited of only 3 scholarships (200 and 2012 from global budget and 2017 from regional budget). Regarding EM Doctoral fellowships (2010-17) no fellowship has been awarded for nationals of Libya.

European Commission
TEMPUS
FOCUS - Fostering Quality Assurance Culture at Libyan Universities



Start: 15/10/2011 - End: 14/07/2015

Project Reference: 517399-TEMPUS-1-2011-1-ESTEMPUS-JPGR

EU Grant: 396,053.01 EUR

Coordinated by: Universidad de Alicante

Partners: University of College Cork, Royal Institute of Technology, **Libyan International Medical University, Omar Al-Mukhtar University, University of Benghazi**, Högskoleverket (Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

The project objective addresses the development of sustainable Quality Culture and Capacity Building in Libyan Universities. As its title suggests, the project FOCUSes on supporting the modernisation agenda of Libyan universities through the promotion of QA and enhancing quality awareness at the university level. FOCUS, more specifically, aims at developing a viable and sustainable QA system within Libyan universities through the implementation of a capacity building programme, the development of a quality strategic plan and the enhancement of QA methodologies and mechanisms, which are in line with the national and Tempus priority.

**European Commission
FP7
WELL - Water and Energy for Life in Libya**

Start: 01-07-2012 - End: 31-12-2014

Project Reference: 295143

EU Grant: 495,769.27 EUR

Coordinated by: General Water authority - Alghiraan Janzour, Libya

Partners: Centro de Investigación de Recursos y Consumos Energéticos (CIRCE), REDINN SRL,
Fundació CTM Centre Tecnològic.

The WELL project (Water and Energy for Life in Libya) aims to strengthen the capacities of the General Water Authority while turning it into an international centre of excellence and reinforcing the cooperation capacities and research activities in Libya's water and energy sectors by defining research priorities in water and energy to respond to socio-economic needs, facilitating participation in the European water research initiatives and inclusion in the European Research Area. Europe needs to improve its knowledge on these areas.

Water and energy challenges are so sensitive to climatic circumstances, and therefore to climate change. The EU needs well developed data-sets and models to be able to identify the best responses to the current – and future - water and energy problems. The development of new technologies and approaches are needed to tackle these problems. This task cannot be performed without the coordination of the EU with other countries, especially those closer countries that are facing similar problems, as it is the Libya case.

Considering the actual crisis (water shortage) in Libya, the WELL project represents a model to overtake "standard" CSA project, pointing out the importance of the Governance inside the Triple Helix (Policy, Research and Business) in Libya and fostering capacities of GWA to participate at FP7 calls.

The specific objectives of the WELL project are:

- ✓ Better coordination between policy, research and business in Libya.
- ✓ Enabling better participation in framework programmes.
- ✓ Enhancement of EU-Libya S&T partnership in energy and water research.
- ✓ Capacity building for solving specific energy and water issues.
- ✓ GWA's strengthening and cooperation capacity reinforcement.
- ✓ Energy and water research results dissemination.
- ✓ Fostering innovation in Libya through active participation of SMEs in FP7.
- ✓ Increase job opportunities that encourage gender equality in Libya, in particular for young scientists.

European Commission

TEMPUS

BUCUM - Building Capacity in University Management



BUCUM
BUilding Capacity in University Management

Start: 15-10-2012 - End: 14-10-2016

Project Reference: 530485-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-UK-TEMPUS JPGR

EU Grant: 1,073,137.74 EUR

website: www.bucum.eu

Coordinated by: Cardiff Metropolitan University

Partners: Salamanca University, Ionian University, La Sapienza University, Magna Charta Observatory, European Student Union, Osel Consultancy, Shoofly publishing, Leadership foundation, Arab Academy for Science and Technology, Alexandria University, Suez Canal University, Superior Institute for Science and Technology, Cadi Ayyad University, Lebanese University, Modern University of Business and Science, **Misurata University, University of Zawia, MOE Libya**, MOHE Egypt, MOHE Lebanon, MOHE Morocco.

This is a regional JEP in Governance Reform involving ten universities in Libya, Morocco, Egypt and Lebanon satisfying the regional priority 'University Management and Student Services'. The wider objective of the project is to demonstrate that good management practices can build sustainable HE cooperation between nations. The project does this by addressing the challenges facing the management of a global university in the 21st Century. There are five specific objectives which are: 1. To identify the common deficiencies in University Management throughout the four partner countries. 2. To train/retrain university staff in new management approaches including short courses, Master level modules and e-learning material. 3. To establish centres of good governance at each partner university. 4. To install rigorous quality assurance processes. 5. To demonstrate that with good management, strong bridges can be built between four ENPI countries. The project will advise on key management skills and structures and use a 'training the trainers' methodology where fifty trainers will be trained. Initially, common needs will be identified by a scoping process led by the UK based Leadership Foundation. These results will feed back to the development of a number of short courses, Master's level modules and an Adaptive, web-based Learning System. This will enable three levels of management to be addressed: existing managers, aspiring managers and potential managers (graduate students who wish to pursue a career in university management). The Master's modules can be assembled to form a Master's degree in University Management. The short courses will be accredited by the universities and the four Ministries will accredit the new Master's programme. Each partner University will form a Centre of Good Governance which will be the focus for the training and networking. The centres will be disseminating agents and ensure the long-term sustainability of the project outcomes.

TEMPUS

UNIGOV - Modernising University Governance and Management in Libya



Start: 15-10-2012 - End: 14-10-2015

Project Reference: 530720-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-ESTEMPUS-JPGR

EU Grant: 885,128.93 EUR

website: www.tempus-unigov.eu

Coordinated by: Universidad de Alicante

Partners: London Metropolitan University, Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Tallinn University of Technology, **Libyan International Medical University, Sebha University, University of Elmergib, University of Benghazi, Misurata University, University of Zawia, Omar Al-Mukhtar University, MOE Libya**

Modernising UNiversity GOVERNance and Management in Libya is a three-year project co-funded by the European Commission's Tempus programme. It aims at facilitating and reinforcing the ongoing governance reforms in Libyan higher education system through enhancing accountability and promoting institutional autonomy. Libyan higher education institutions (HEIs) and research activities were once completely supported by the country. However, they are now exposed to a new and free-market economy after the civil war and dramatic political reform. Increasing concerns have raised on financing and governance of HEIs in the country and in fact, it is one of the main challenges in the education system.

With the support of the Libyan Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, six public and one private universities in Libya will work together with four European HEIs (see partners) to achieve these specific objectives: ensuring sound financial management and financial accountability and strengthening universities networking capacities.

European Commission

TEMPUS

MC-EnMa Development and Implementation of a Master Course "Energy Management" in three Libyan Universities



Start: 1/12/2013 - End: 31/11/2017

Project Reference: 544603-TEMPUS-1-2013-1- DE-TEMPUS-JPCR

EU Grant: 722,503.58 EUR

Coordinated by: Hamburg University of Technology

Partners: Università degli Studi di Firenze, University of Innsbruck, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Sebha University, University of Benghazi, University of Tripoli

Goal of the Mc-EnMa project is to support Libyan universities during the ongoing restructuring process after the civil war on their way to meet European higher education standards in the medium term. Additionally, a contribution to an improved energy management within the Libyan energy system will be made taking e.g. environmental aspects into consideration. Due to huge oil and gas resources the Libyan energy system is primarily based on fossil fuels so far, even though there is great potential in renewable energies - especially for the use of direct solar radiation for heat and/or electricity generation as well as wind for electricity provision. Thus the specific goal of the Mc-EnMa project is the development and implementation of a Master Course "Energy Management" given the students a detailed insight into all aspects related to energy with a special focus on Libyan conditions. This includes aspects like energy efficiency, energy trading and markets, fossil and renewable sources of energy as well as energy transport, energy use and sustainability aspects. This MC will be implemented in three universities in Libya. It will be designed to be easily transferable to other universities with a similar structure. To ensure high-quality results as well as a sustainable implementation within the Libyan partner universities a quality management system will be implemented throughout the overall project as well as the Master Course itself. This includes e.g. a "train the trainer"-course and a quality assessment system for the various courses. The content of the courses will be available in English as well as probably in Arabic to contribute to an incremental opening of the Libyan universities to non-Arabic students. The participating universities from Libya will also develop a promotion kit to make this MC more popular in their country. Besides this, the content of the different courses will be made available on the web to allow easy access for all students.

European Commission
FP7

STAGE-STE - Scientific and Technological Alliance for Guaranteeing the European Excellence in Concentrating Solar Thermal Energy



Start: 01-02-2014 - End: 31-01-2018

Project Reference: 609837

website: www.stage-ste.eu

EU Grant: 9,997,207 EUR

Coordinated by: Centro de Investigaciones Energéticas, Medioambientales y Tecnológicas (CIMEAT)

Libyan Partners: The center for solar energy research and studies (CSERS)

Concentrating Solar Thermal Energy encompasses Solar Thermal Electricity (STE), Solar Fuels, Solar Process Heat and Solar Desalination that are called to play a major role in attaining energy sustainability in our modern societies due to their unique features: 1) Solar energy offers the highest renewable energy potential to our planet; 2) STE can provide dispatchable power in a technically and economically viable way, by means of thermal energy storage and/or hybridization, e.g. with biomass. However, significant research efforts are needed to achieve this goal. This Integrated Research Programme (IRP) engages all major European research institutes, with relevant and recognised activities on STE and related technologies, in an integrated research structure to successfully accomplish the following general objectives: a) Convert the consortium into a reference institution for concentrating solar energy research in Europe, creating a new entity with effective governance structure; b) Enhance the cooperation between EU research institutions participating in the IRP to create EU added value; c) Synchronize the different national research programs to avoid duplication and to achieve better and faster results; d) Accelerate the transfer of knowledge to the industry in order to maintain and strengthen the existing European industrial leadership in STE; e) Expand joint activities among research centres by offering researchers and industry a comprehensive portfolio of research capabilities, bringing added value to innovation and industry-driven technology; f) Establish the European reference association for promoting and coordinating international cooperation in concentrating solar energy research. To that end, this IRP promotes Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) and, in parallel, performs Coordinated Projects (CP) covering the full spectrum of current concentrating solar energy research topics selected to provide the highest EU added value and filling the gaps among national programs.

European Commission
TEMPUS
Tuning MEDA - Tuning Middle East and North Africa



Start: 1/12/2013 - End: 30/11/2016
Project Reference: 543948-TEMPUS-1-2013-1- ES-TEMPUS-JPCR
EU Grant: 1,207,333.20 EUR
website: www.tuningmeda.org

Coordinated by: University of Deusto

Partners: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, London School of Economics and Political Sciences, London School of Economics and Political Sciences, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Universite d'Angers, Università Degli Studi Di Padova, University of Malta, University of Cyprus, Islamic University of Gaza, International University for Science and Technology, Arab International University, The Syrian Consulting Bureau for Development and Investment, Yarmouk University, Jordan University of Science and Technology, Hashemite University, Association of Arab Universities, University of Monastir, University of Jendouba, University of Tunis, Modern University for Business and Science, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, University of Balamand, Beirut Arab University, Directorate General Of Higher Education, Lebanon, **Libyan International Medical University, Omar Al-Mukhtar University**, Université Mouloud Mammeri de Tizi ousou, Université d'Alger 1, University Mohammed First, Université Moulay Ismail, Cairo University, Suez Canal University, Palestine Ahliyah University College/Bethlehem

The Tuning MEDA project is aimed at the implementation of the Bologna tools in Southern Neighbouring Area universities by building a framework of comparable, compatible and transparent programmes of studies. In order to achieve this, four specific objectives have been identified: to apply the Tuning methodology in universities of SNA in four subject areas: Law and Good Governance including Human Rights; Healthcare and Nursing; Construction Trades, Engineering and Architecture; Tourism; to develop Tuning Reference Points in four subject areas; to develop, implement, monitor and improve degree programmes for the first cycle programmes; and to promote regional and international cooperation between SNA and EU universities. The project is designed to facilitate the modernisation of higher education in SNA by applying the Tuning methodology for the development of the degree programmes in partner universities and development of the following lines: curricula design and delivery, employability of graduates, recognition of the degree programs, quality of higher education, and staff training. The main output and outcomes of the project include: A well-established group of trained academics and managers, Reference Points for the design and delivery of degree programmes Law and Good Governance including Human Rights; Healthcare and Nursing; Construction Trades, Engineering and Architecture; Tourism; Four BA Degree Programme Profiles, Four Student Learning Guides and Degree Programme Curricula; Regional Seminars; International Conferences; High Level International Policy Forums; Multilingual interactive website.

European Commission
Erasmus+, KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education
ENROL- Empowering and Networking the International Relationships Offices of the Libyan
University System



Start: 15-10-2015 - End: 14-05-2018
Project Reference: 561654-EPP-1-2015-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
EU Grant: 711,533 EUR
website: www.enrol.eu

Coordinated by: Università della Calabria

Partners: UNIMED, Mediterranean Universities Union, Universidad de Granada, Universidad de Evora, Sirte University, University of Tripoli, University of Zawia, Misurata University.

Libya is undergoing a phase of dramatic changes with an inherent instability, which will hopefully find a positive solution in the near future, but the Libyan University system is struggling to enhance its presence on the International Scenario in order to exploit in full its high potential in terms of knowledge and capabilities. In order to do this, the role of International Relationships Offices is absolutely crucial and for these reasons the ENROL proposal is being submitted with a wide participation of Libyan Universities. Its specific objectives are: to bring the participating Libyan Academic Institutions closer and closer to their European counterparts in order to strengthen the cooperation and the exchange of mutual benefits. This Main objective can be articulated in the following sub objectives: to enhance the internationalization capabilities of International Relationships Offices of the involved Libyan Universities; to develop the networking among Libyan Academic institutions so as to maximise the synergies between them and the sharing of knowledge and experiences regarding the internationalization process; To improve the operational functioning of the IROs by strengthening the Quality Assurance and the financial management so as to guarantee better results of operations. Its main expected outcomes are: increased performance of International Relationships Offices (IRO) thanks to the extensive training delivered to the staff; The IROs are networked and therefore they take advantage of the synergies coming from knowledge sharing; An e-learning platform with online courses on the functioning of IROs and an online knowledge base are available to all interested parties; The Administrative and quality assurance systems of the target Libyan Universities are in place. Hence the main impact expected is in terms of an enhanced presence and connection of the Libyan Universities on the European scenario.

European Commission
Horizon 2020

**5TOI_4EWAS - Quintuple Helix Approach to Targeted Open Innovation in Energy, Water,
Agriculture in the South Mediterranean Neighborhood**



Start: 01-03-2016 - End: 28-02-2019

Project Reference: 692523

EU Grant: 1,949,644.00 EUR

Coordinated by: Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona

Partners: INNOVA BIC – Business Innovation Centre srl, INNOLABS srl, UNIMED, Mediterranean Universities Union, EUREC EESV Fachhochschule Münster, Centre For Renewable Energy Sources And Saving Fondation, ITEMS International, GIRAF PM Services GmbH, Berytech Foundation, An-Najah National University, Agence Nationale De Protection De L'environnement, Agence Nationale De Valorisation Des Résultats De La Recherche Et Du Développement Technologique - Algeria, Ministry of Higher Education And Scientific Research - Tunisia, Association R&D MAROC, Institut National De La Recherche Agronomique d'Algérie - Algeria, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, AQAC, Turkiye Bilimsel Ve Teknolojik Arastirma Kurumu, Royal Scientific Society - Jordan, Chambre De Commerce Et d'Industrie Du Centre - Tunisia, Federation of Egyptian Industries / Environmental Compliance Office and Sustainable Development, **University Engineering Consulting Office - Libya**, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de la Formation des Cadres, Direction de la Technologie, Morocco

The 5TOI_4EWAS project is focused on Targeted Open Innovation in energy, water and agriculture societal challenges through a balanced innovation-friendly ecosystem in the Southern Mediterranean Neighborhood (SMN) based on quintuple helix and NEXUS approach. The project will enhance and support regional smart specialization and development by increasing research capacity, effective mobility of young innovators/researchers and shared knowledge to improve their participation in the EU research area. It will contribute to the establishment of favourable and stable conditions for international cooperation and the set-up of a Common Knowledge and Innovation Space of specialization in the SMN for a real socio-economic impact, based on co-ownership and mutual benefits.

European Commission
Erasmus+, KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education
EuNIT – European project design and management In the South MediTerranean region



Start: 15-10-2016 - End: 14-10-2019
Project Reference: 573522-EPP-1-2016-1-FR-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
EU Grant: 1,000,000 EUR
website: www.eunitproject.eu

Coordinated by: Aix-Marseille Université

Partners: UNIMED, Mediterranean Universities Union, Università degli Studi di Roma “La Sapienza”, Università di Messina, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Universitat de Barcelona, Université Nice Sophia Antipolis, University of Split, Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Yarmouk University, Université Antonin, Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth, University of Balamand, **Misurata University, University of Tripoli, University of Zawia.**

EuNIT targets the management and operation of HEIs in Jordan, Lebanon and Libya by focusing on increasing their international activity. In order for HEIs in these countries to increase their participation in international cooperation projects and benefit from opportunities available to them through programmes such as Erasmus+, H2020 and ENI, they require greater expertise in project design and management. EuNIT aims to equip these HEIs with the necessary skills and resources. It will produce: -A comprehensive training programme for 24 selected staff from 8 partner HEIs in Jordan, Lebanon and Libya, combining theory, practical work and international travel, adapted to the needs of South Mediterranean HEIs to enable them to increase their participation in EU initiatives and international cooperation. -8 EU project design and management units dedicated to EU cooperation and research projects set up in partner HEIs in Jordan, Lebanon and Libya. -A regional network bringing together HEIs in the South Mediterranean region for the exchange of good practices and experience in project design and management. -2 external training sessions run by Jordanian, Lebanese and Libyan trainers reaching out to HEIs across Jordan, Lebanon & Libya targeting 80 staff. -Massive Open Online Courses in EU project design and management accessible to all HEIs. The project aims to impact the 8 partner HEIs from Jordan, Lebanon and Libya. Then, the dissemination strategy will enable activities to reach firstly all HEIs in Jordan, Lebanon and Libya and secondly other Partner Countries in the South Mediterranean region. HEIs in the countries concerned should become more independent in designing and managing EU projects, being able to increase the amount of project applications they submit, and targeting more closely their needs in terms of developing and modernising their HEI. To this effect, HEIs in the South Mediterranean region will be able to develop sustainable international partnership

European Commission
Erasmus+ KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education
INSTART Project – Euro-African Network of Excellence for Entrepreneurship and Innovation



Start: 15-10-2016 - End: 14-10-2019
Project Reference: 573967-EPP-1-2016-1- ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
EU Grant: 704,491.66 EUR
Coordinated by: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Partners: (Only for Libya)* University of Zawia, Misurata University.

The main objective of the INSTART project is to improve the knowledge triangle education-innovation-research by promoting innovation in Universities in the South Mediterranean region and transfer of technology from universities to enterprises in order to increase the level of innovation and technology in south Mediterranean society in general through the implementation of a Network of Excellence for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Both concepts of entrepreneurship and innovation give businesses the ability to promote and sustain the dynamics and processes of creativity based mainly on identification, design, and optimization of innovation, whether strategic, technological, organizational and social and extending their activities to other sectors. This network of excellence will focus on training, expertise and the exchange of know-how between the members of the consortium that can be beneficial for two main categories: - Businesses seeking to grow through innovation - University graduates who want to create their own businesses. The training will be in the form of short courses and seminars in entrepreneurship and innovation. Expertise will be conducted through technical actions: diagnostics, workshops, putting into practice innovative ideas... etc. Entrepreneurship will also include a component to support the creation of a business. This modernization of training programs and new methods of interaction with the business sector will be reinforced by developing teachers' training through the creation of new curricula, and improvement in the level of expertise in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation. The project suggests a value-building strategy of the results of training and research in "Management of innovation and entrepreneurship" through the transfer of knowledge acquired in the project to the economic sector. To do this, the project aims at the creation by professors and experts from each institution, of a circle of knowledge and know-how on the management of innovation and entrepreneurship to sustain the achievements of the project.

* Due the huge amount of partners we listed only the Libyan beneficiaries. The Consortium is composed of 4 Universities, and one Scientific and Technological Park from EU countries - Spain, Portugal, Italy and Poland - and 12 Universities from Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia with support from social partners as Chambers of Commerce, Clusters, Networks and Associations from these MED countries. The full list is here available: <http://instart.ulpgc.es/partners/> (Last access May 2019).

European Union

Support to Libya for Economic Integration, Diversification and Sustainable Development (SLEiDSE)



Start: 2016 End:2019

website: www.sleidse.org

Coordinated by: Expertise France

Partners: International Trade Centre, Chambre de Commerce Franco-Libyenne, Libyan Ministry of Planning, Libyan Ministry of Finance, **Tripoli University, Benghazi University, Zawia University, Sebha University, Sirte University, Ajdabiya University, Misurata University, Omar Al Mukhtar University**, Al Gabal Al Gharbi University, Libyan Municipalities (Bani-walid Municipality, Ghryain Municipality, Jalo Municipality, Suk alGomma Municipality, Turbok Municipality), Libyan enterprises (Libyan Enterprise Incubators – Tripoli, Libyan Enterprise Incubators – Benghazi, Libyan Enterprise Incubators – Misurata)

Support to Libya for Economic Integration, Diversification and Sustainable Development (SLEiDSE) is a four-year programme funded by the European Union and implemented by Expertise France. It aims to promote the development of a dynamic and diversified Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Sector (MSME) in all regions of Libya, capable of creating employment and livelihoods for Libyans, and in particular for women and youth, through widely and accessible MSME support services. Therefore, it supports young and women entrepreneurs who want to develop their own activities and lack resources, knowledge and support. For instance, SLEIDSE programme provides future entrepreneurs with online training sessions in partnership with ITC.

In a post-crisis context, where unemployment reaches records and domestic economy is highly dependent on oil-related activities, supporting the youth in creating and developing private businesses is a crucial issue for Libya. Its objective is to open the way for a sustainable diversification of the economy and a domestic growth based on a wide panel of activities. In widely opening its service offer to young Libyans, SLEIDSE Programme is an ambitious contribution to pave the way for a better future in Libya.

In order to achieve these objectives, SLEIDSE programme realises a series of activities in close relation with major economic players in Libya: to support the development of young and women entrepreneurs who want to develop their own activities and lack resources, knowledge and support; to improve the attractiveness of entrepreneur careers among the youth and the women, communicating on the entrepreneurship and developing a mentoring programme; to improve access to finance to MSMEs and entrepreneurs by setting-up credit lines and guarantee fund in close cooperation with the Libyan authorities and financial institutions; to raise the capacities of business support organizations so they can give strong support to MSMEs and entrepreneurs.

European Commission
Erasmus+, KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education
EnBRAIN - Building capacity in renewable and sustainable energy for Libya



Start: 15-10-2017 - End: 14-10-2020
Project Reference: 586221-EPP-1-2017-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
EU Grant: 743,136 EUR
website: www.enbrain-project.com

Coordinated by: Politecnico di Torino

Partners: UNIMED, Mediterranean Universities Union, Universitat de Barcelona, Universidad de Evora, Sirte University, University of Tripoli, University of Zawia, Misurata University, Sebha University

Africa is a crucial player to tackle the world energy challenge since major global energy, climate and sustainable goals depend on the future of this region. Energy demand in Africa will increase by 50% from 2012 to 2040 according to the International Energy Agency. Although African greenhouse gases will share around 5% of global emissions at 2040, major climate change impacts will hit this vulnerable region with extreme weather events and socio-economic disruptions. Finally, the achievement of 2030 Sustainable Development goals will depend on how the access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy will be provided in Africa. Beyond these challenges, energy can be a game-changer to promote sustainable development in Africa. Northern Africa has a key role because of its overlooking position on Europe, its historical tradition in the energy field and the huge potential in renewable sources. Libya has the largest proven oil reserves in Africa as well as a huge potential for renewable energy, however, the country still depends on fossil fuels. The current conflict and its reflection on the energy scene have made urgent a transition of the national energy system. The overall objective of this proposal is to develop an innovative educational platform based on new courses and digital tools able to capture the disrupting changes of the future energy transition based on the growing use of renewable energy and access to modern energy services. A Master in Renewable and Sustainable Energy will be conceived based on a multi-level approach to capacity building. In addition, the project aims to engage citizens in sustainability via the creation of a MOOC for citizens. In the long-term, this project will affect three target groups including 1) government, with an increase of economic development and job creation, 2) organizations, with a multi-stakeholder commitment from the public to the private sector, and 3) individuals, with an increase of skills and engagement.

European Commission
Erasmus+ KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education
WHEEL– Network for the Modernisation of the Higher Education Sector in Libya



Start: 15/01/2019 - End: 14/01/2022
Project Reference: 598610-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
EU Grant: 997,997 EUR

Coordinated by: University of Genova

Partners: Universidad de Alicante, Al-Asmarya Islamic University, Bani Waleed University, Libyan International Medical University, Misurata University, Sebha University, Sirte University, University of Benghazi, University of Elmergib, University of Tripoli, University of Zawia.

WHEEL is a logical next step to act on the findings from the UNIGOV project on the main challenges facing Libyan HEIs. In a divided country, with no reliable countrywide HE data collection since the outbreak of the 2011 revolution, a vision of the role of HE is missing. Libyan universities are limited in their ability to collaborate & share knowledge. They also suffer from lack of funding, poor technological capabilities and no possibilities of professional development.

To address all of the above, WHEEL will formalise a Network of HEIs to foster inter-institutional collaboration and dialogue and to allow the Consortium, which represents around 75% of Libya's university population, to act as a unified voice in lobbying for policy developments. The Network will gather a comprehensive dataset of current HE statistics collected through the WHEEL project (Blueprint policy document). The creation of an online platform to facilitate the activities of this Network will be accompanied by technological upgrades within each Libyan HEI. The main efforts will go towards improving institutional management, capacity and other key functions (quality assurance, development of research & innovation capacities, etc.) through a series of 'train the trainer' workshops and regional & national conferences.

As the Libyan members of the Consortium will own all outcomes and products after the project ends, the WHEEL Network and its findings will be sustainable in the long-term. In the short term, the Consortium's institutional and technological capacities will be improved and the HEIs will possess qualified and trained staff to continue to progress these capabilities. Effective regional & national dissemination through newsletters & social media will attract non-member HEIs to the Network, which will gain a critical mass to influence policy and promote development in other local HEIs, but also to continue to develop and expand the Network, which crosses political and geographical borders.

European Commission

Erasmus+ KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education

PAgES, Post-Crisis Journalism in Post-Crisis Libya: A Bottom-up Approach to the Development of a Cross-Media Journalism Master Program



Start: 15/01/2019 - End: 14/01/2022

Project Reference: 598349-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

EU Grant: 890,892.00 EUR

website: www.pages-project.ly

Coordinated by: Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione – IULM

Partners: UNIMED, Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo, Universidade de Aveiro, Universidad de Granada, Sapienza Università di Roma, **University of Tripoli, Sirte University, Misurata University, University of Zawia**

PAGES aims at contributing to the modernization of the HE in Libya through a bottom-up approach for the design and pilot of a Master Course in Cross-Media Journalism. The Master targets young people studying communication and young professionals, who wish to specialise in the strategic field of digital journalism. The Master Course will be designed by means of a participatory approach, involving teachers from the EU and Libya, students and journalists. Teachers will be provided with the required skills for the delivery of the Master Course through a set of CB initiatives: online Repository for Training Faculty, online Space for discussion and study visits at two EU universities. The length of the Master Course is of 2 years (120 ECTS), and it will be taught in English. The aim of the project is to promote local expertise, and we expect the Master to be held in all Libyan Universities. The first year will be piloted during the lifetime of the project.

“Media freedom is increasingly limited by political and criminal violence that has made objective reporting dangerous. Many journalists and media outlets have censored themselves” (Freedom in the World Report, 2017). The end of dictatorship triggered many hopes, but institutional change could not provide society with all instruments necessary to political debate. It would be naive, on the other hand, to put faith on technology, according to a misunderstood Internet-centrism: social media can be a powerful tool, but people must be trained to fully understand their utility. It is necessary to define new skills and engender a new awareness of the part played by information in the building of a democratic country. Euro-Mediterranean cooperation is of paramount importance, with respect to this goal. Specific Objectives: to exchange best practices in the field of HE and cross-media journalism by means of an analysis of the state of the art; to create or improve Multimedia Labs in Libyan Universities to support technical training; to build capacities of staff through a training framework and study visits at the EU universities; to develop a curriculum in Cross-Media Journalism based on a wide consultation; to set-up and offer a Master Program in Cross-Media Journalism in Libya.

European Commission
Erasmus+ KA2 – Capacity-building in the Field of Higher Education

Libya Up - Labs of Innovation and Business for Young Actors of start UP

Start: 15/11/2019 - End: 14/11/2022
Project Reference: 610482-EPP-1-2019-1-IT-EPP-KA2-CBHE-JP
EU Grant: 961,650.00

Coordinated by: Link Campus University

Partners: FAKULTETA ZA UPORABNE DRUŽBENE STUDIJE V NOVI GORICI ZAVOD (Slovenia), PARAGON LIMITED (Malta), University of Benghazi, Bright Star University, Elmergib University, Gharyan University, Misurata University, Libyan Academy Misurata, Sebha University, Gulf of Sidra University, Sirte University, University of Tripoli, University of Zawia

The project aims to increase the cultural and entrepreneurial contribution of Libyan Universities in the country's economic and social growth process. The goal is to improve their organizational skills to connect academic research activities to the labour market and civil society, in particular through the implementation of TTO - Technology Transfer Offices (corresponding to the UTT - Technology Transfer Offices present in some Italian universities). In fact, Libyan Universities need support both to improve internal organization, and to strengthen coordination and networking activities aimed at expanding their international visibility. They play a primary role in promoting national innovation processes, already possessing high academic levels. However, they would be able to further stimulate internal developments only if they can disseminate their research results sufficiently. Therefore, for the Libyan academic world, TTOs represent a window on the business and job market, through which showing outside research and ideas, promote creativity, enhance social dialogue and introduce young people to professions. The project, after an analysis of the country's social, legal and economic situation, as well as the level and potential of scientific and technological research in the university environment, focuses on the development of the aforementioned dissemination/promotion system.

Activities:

- ✓ Develop innovative and multidisciplinary skills to promote the activities of Libyan Universities;
- ✓ Facilitate the exchange, flows and knowledge creation between universities;
- ✓ Stimulate the spirit of enterprise and the ability of universities to conduct innovative activities;
- ✓ Create a national and international network on the themes of the project.

European Commission

Erasmus Mundus

**Al Idrisi I & II - A scholarship scheme for exchange and cooperation
between Europe and North Africa**



website: www.al-idrisi.eu

Coordinated by: Universidad de Granada

Partners: Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Université de Poitiers, Université Jean Monnet, Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna, Università degli Studi di Padova, Universidade de Coimbra, Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Université des Sciences et de la Technologie d'Oran "Mohamed Boudiaf", Université Badji Mokhtar, Cairo University, **The Open University, University of Zawia, Misurata University**, Université Hassan 1er, Université Hassan II, Université Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah, Université Abdelmalek Essaâdi, Université de Monastir, Université de Carthage

Erasmus Mundus - Al Idrisi I & II: A scholarship scheme for exchange and cooperation between Europe and North Africa is an Erasmus Mundus Action 2 - Strand 1 partnership for Lot 1 (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia) that will establish an active institution-based mobility network among 19 North African and EU partner universities and 6 associate universities supported by 3 associate institutions and the Ministries of Higher Education in the region. The project will allow undergraduate, master and doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows and academic and administrative staff to gain valuable experience, knowledge and contacts abroad. Some North African students will even have the possibility to return to their home countries holding a relevant master or doctoral degree. The project focuses strongly on regional needs in North Africa and the development of specific and relevant areas that were defined by the partners. Furthermore, the project will provide improved education and training opportunities for vulnerable groups and socio-economically disadvantaged students and promote equal access to higher education for students from less developed areas.

Quick facts on Capacity Building Action in which UNIMED has been/is involved

The previous general scheme regarding the Capacity Building actions happening right now in Libya does not really show the impact of these projects in the country. Far from being exhaustive and cross-cutting, we still want to express our point of view (mainly as daily Erasmus+ practitioners) on the development of the Libyan universities in this regard. In the past 3 years, starting with the experience of the ENROL project, **we have witnessed a strong improvement in the management of Erasmus+ tools and rules on behalf of the Libyan universities and staff, with a constant improvement of their performance in the programme.**

The only closed project is so far ENROL, but we can already say that the trainings received by the Libyan Partners have been already exploited. From our experience, this has been very clear during the preparation of the proposals for the call 2017 of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building Action when we received, as UNIMED, several requests for partnership and project proposals. Very interesting from our data is that a request to further develop a project proposal came from the University of Zawia as a direct result of a training performed in the framework of the EuNIT project. The University staff identified some specific needs of their own system (namely the lack of quality research centers) and asked, through UNIMED, the support of European Partners to engage in a capacity building action. They were able to correctly identify the needs, imagine a proper partnership to answer these needs and correctly use the Erasmus+ programme to define a proper proposal. Independently from the results of the submission, the whole process can be considered as a first, tangible, positive result of the Erasmus+ action in the country, providing awareness to the Libyan University on how to exploit and correctly address the Erasmus+ programme for their own benefits and for their own further development.

Libyan Universities in the society at large: Scientific research, industry and civil society cooperation

Scientific research

Recent studies, such as *Science, Technology, Innovation, and Development in the Arab Countries* by Omar Bizri, recognised that the level of research output in Libya is relatively low, mainly because of four reasons:

- ✓ Limited funding to research activities
- ✓ Lack of research infrastructures and technical inadequacies of administrative staff
- ✓ Limited amount of time and limited skills of academic staff to perform and supervise research activities
- ✓ Brain drain effect.



Research and innovation actions can be defined, as Bizri said, as embryonic, and several international organizations (World Bank, UNESCO, UNDP) recognised **the need to move forward towards a more mature phase for the research and innovation environment in the country**. The improvement of the research capacities of Libyan research centres has been clearly expressed as a priority during several meetings with Libyan Universities and can be considered as a “natural consequence” of the training Libyan Universities are receiving in the framework of EU funded projects, which provided them with new skills and capacities. Universities are the most relevant bodies interested and engaged in scientific research in various branches of knowledge. In this sense, Higher Education Institutions serve to support and find solutions to society challenges, providing experts, scientists and researchers in various fields of knowledge in addition to modern equipment and laboratories.

Another key element is international mobility of academics and students, which brings important benefits in terms of research and development, as it enhances knowledge flows, stimulates new ideas, develops cooperation for joint research and fosters innovation, reducing the risk of brain drain by creating links for sustainable cooperation. Linkages between higher education institutions and other actors, such as private firms and research centers, also may help to develop innovation sustainable systems in Libya; as well, attracting foreign researchers/companies may improve local capacity and enhance research cooperation between institutions. Many issues have to be studied and analysed in Libya, whether they are social, systemic or economical (immigration, pollution, innovation, energy, water, etc) but for the benefit of the country researches should be more and more driven by national academics and students, which know best the history and the context in which they live and study. For this reasons, in the last years the World Bank Group has developed a strategy for the MENA region that intends to promote social inclusion, create opportunities for young people, further develop regional cooperation in sectors such as education and economy, the protection of refugees, expanding and deepening partnerships internationally.

According to the results of the UNIGOV (Modernising UNIversity GOVernance and Management in Libya) project⁶⁹, which aimed (among other things) to identify the challenges of Higher Education Institutions in Libya, strengthening scientific research is one of the key priorities. International ranks of universities prove right the results of the UNIGOV project, as these ranks give high portion of percentage to researchers citation. There are no Libyan universities among QS world university ranking in 2018, nor among the first 4000 universities within other international superior rankings. **Research quality and quantity of the Libyan universities are weak compared to international universities in Europe, but also compared to other North African countries.** This is due to many factors, including lack of research management, weakness of staff research skills, lack of IT skills and lack of access to national and international funds. Obviously, the lack of security in the country and the war-like-state dramatically affected Universities performances.

Furthermore, to our knowledge and through our contacts with the Libyan universities, we are aware of only a few FP7 and H2020 research projects that have been carried out in Libya since the opening up of the programmes to the MENA countries. In this sense, there is a **huge need to train university**

⁶⁹ The project has been funded in the framework of TEMPUS programme from 2012 to 2015 (last access December 2019).

staff members to expand their capacity to be more involved in scientific research projects, so that new partnerships will be built across the region and on an international scale. This will complement the World Bank Development strategy in the region and support the achievement of the Libya vision 2030 and sustainable development goals for 2030. These programs are supporting not only training, but also inclusion and economic sustainability in the country. But, as stated by Falco and Forni “in an attempt to recommend a comprehensive vision with concrete actions to start relaunching the economic and social fabric in Libya, it is crucial to focus on the most immediate challenges that the country is facing. For example, [...] improving education by providing a high-quality and unified education system across Libya, from primary schools to universities, is beneficial also in terms of expanding opportunities in the labour market, as human capital is the most valuable asset”⁷⁰. Responses collected by Libyan HEIs staff often point out the difficulties faced in writing up projects and accessing information on funding opportunities, due to the **lack of expertise and qualified human resources (academic and administrative staff)** dedicated to these tasks. HEIs struggle to put forward their ideas concerning researches independently. Furthermore, even **research management** is a task which requires a set of specific skills (e.g. financial management, organization of activities, etc) for which university members are not trained. This lack of expertise is curtailing the potential of HEIs to develop further on research and be involved in initiatives which could be highly beneficial to their staff and students in terms of research and innovation.

Industry

Graduates employability is one of the most important issues for Higher Education, not only for Libyan universities but for HEIs worldwide. To comply with this additional mission, universities have to establish connections among education and research and their socio-economic context. Improving relations between universities, industry and local authorities is necessary to improve the employability of graduates and the socio-economic sustainability of the country. **Libyan Universities were for the most part unable to provide us with the unemployment rate of their graduates and estimates range from 4% to 90%**. One of our contributors mentioned that this rate is not easily available because the **Graduate Offices in the General Register and the faculties themselves are inactive**. Other respondents mentioned also **the absence of an Alumni Office** that would help to follow-up on the employability of the graduated students.

The results of the survey and our qualitative interviews show that the employability issue is not yet a priority for the university, for different reasons:

- ✓ mainly due to a **lack of strategy and tools**;
- ✓ the university already plays its part by hiring graduates on teaching positions;
- ✓ **the university is not responsible for that**.

The Universities surveyed stated that they establish relationships with firms and companies essentially due to their research activities, receiving funds by these private actors mostly for doing specific research. Some institutions signed agreements with foundations, firms or/and public entities

⁷⁰ <https://www.ispionline.it/it/publicazione/libya-vision-2030-economic-development-agenda-reconciliation-20644>, (Last access December 2019)

in order to have them hire graduates from a specific discipline. These initiatives should be further developed and structured in a comprehensive strategy, including both the university - with its specific economic environment - and the decision-makers, for a major adequation between university education and market needs.

When asking Universities how to involve enterprises in the university activities, in order to ensure an active and continuous communication, the following comments and suggestions were made by 13 out of 16 respondents:

- ✓ *the relationship between university and industry should be strengthened through a win/win approach;*
- ✓ *there should be a major focus on hard sciences such as engineering and/or applied sciences;*
- ✓ *developing academic programs and research programs according to the market needs;*
- ✓ *developing traineeship programs for students;*
- ✓ *organising forums, workshop and seminars;*
- ✓ *establishing incubators.*

When further interviewed, respondents pointed out **the need for a greater support on behalf of the Ministry of Education to develop this cooperation** and the need to instill the culture of employability in the universities.

Civil Society cooperation

Nowadays universities are becoming more and more relevant in their capacity to address country's problems and assist the society at large, in exploring solutions and facilitate national development, through high-quality training, international cooperation, capacity building and interactions with social, political and economic actors. In 2012, Milad El Harathi (University of Benghazi)⁷¹ said: "The policy expects the Libyan universities specifically to make an optimum contribution to national development by intensifying and diversifying their programs for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the new Libyan society. [...] The policy also provides that university research will be relevant to new Libya's development goals and needs. It is evident from these policy expectations that the university institution should be the basic think tank of the Libyan society in all areas. It should continuously generate ideas and knowledge and disseminate them, develop skills and abilities in all who seek knowledge within its walls. The university institution in new Libya should be the vanguard of societal responses to emergent political, economic, social and environmental problems."

This has been also confirmed during an interview with the representatives of the International Relations Office of the **University of Tripoli: the university mission is, among others, to serve the community**. Activities and programmes should be conceived to serve the society and fill the needs of the Libyans, the University should be the starting point for reconstructing the society. Higher Education Institutions feel the commitment towards the society, serve the community "*in a direct but informal way*", may and should be the starting point for reconstructing the country. Universities do

⁷¹ M. El Harathi, *Quality Assurance Concepts of Institutionalization: Some Indicators towards Higher Educational Development Policy in Libya*, in "Journal of Education and Vocational Research", 3 (10), 2012, pp. 327-331.

not have a specific office dealing with the emerging societal challenges, and/or an administrative body in close connection with the civil society, capable to put the engagement of higher education institutions towards the society as a formal priority. Nor is there a budget foreseen for the purpose. The Ministry of Education does not have yet a formal strategy for the *university's third mission*.

However, Universities from the East and the West can and do play an important role in filling political division, they keep working together and support the advancement of the whole country.

In addition to these considerations, it is interesting **to mention what emerged during an interview we had with the manager of the Ajdabiya City Cultural Center**, which has been also confirmed by other Libyan representatives during several interactions at UNIMED meetings: **local Universities in the country are deeply connected with the society life and are considered by citizens as one of the most (if not *the* most) reliable institutions in the country**. The relevance of Higher Education Institutions has been also confirmed by the manager of the Ajdabiya City Cultural Center when he recalled how **people decided to come back to their houses during the crisis of 2011 and 2014 only when Universities started working again**. This becomes particularly significant if we consider that universities (and generally speaking the public sector in Libya) were used during the Gaddafi era to provide job places to the unemployed citizens. Such significance of HEIs both in terms of stability and as an economic driving factor emerged not only from our qualitative interviews, but also if we have a closer look to statistics: according to ETF⁷², “the public sector is perceived as an important source of employment and stability by Libyan citizens. The private sector employs only around 4% of the labour force”⁷³.

⁷² ETF is the European Training Foundation, the EU agency supporting countries surrounding the European Union to reform their education, training and labour market systems. For more information please consult their website here: <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/about>.

⁷³ https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/m/01BE9A2F283BC6B2C1257D1E0041161A_Employment%20policies_Libya.pdf (Last access December 2019)



Needs and constraints of the Libyan HE system: a SWOT analysis

In the framework of the current analysis, we have understood that the political interventions and strategies for Higher Education in Libya put in place in the past decades have, on the one side, introduced new concepts and perspectives for teaching/learning and research activities, and allowed for the creation of new and improved institutions, but on the other side have not prepared universities for the “increasing demand in higher education [...] That unfortunately led to the problems that the Libyan universities are currently facing such as student overcrowding, continuous change in bylaws, leadership and organisations (merging and re-merging of universities), reduced autonomy, dissociation from societal needs, stagnation and compromised student performances⁷⁴.”

Having said that, our research has also identified a quite high number of positive opportunities for the Libyan Higher Education system, supported by the strong will of universities staff members for training, advancement, cooperation, improved quality of performances. We have therefore conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) Analysis, used to evaluate the system current features and to develop strategic planning. A SWOT analysis assesses internal and external factors, as well as current and future potential ones. Identifying core strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats lead to fact-based analysis, fresh perspectives and new ideas.

In few words, we have grouped our results in:

- ✓ **Strengths** describing what HEIs excel at and what makes them unique and valuable;
- ✓ **Weaknesses** describing what stops the institution from performing at their optimum level;
- ✓ **Opportunities** refer to favourable external factors giving a system an advantage or benefit;
- ✓ **Threats** refer to factors that have the potential to harm the system.

A SWOT analysis is presented in a visual form, as you can see in the figure below. Our SWOT analysis is presented in the following dedicated page. The analysis has been used as the knowledge base to develop a set of recommendations.



⁷⁴ M. S. Ambarek, *The need for Quality Management Systems in Libyan universities*, in “Libyan J Med”, 5, 2010.

STRENGTHS

- Some Universities have unique locations in terms of geographic coverage, bridging position towards other countries and other universities, reaching out capacities. For example, Sebha University in the South covers around 38% of the whole country; Bani Waleed University can be a connecting point between different parts of the country.
- Willingness for further upscaling of their capacities (i.e by establishing incubators).
- Science diplomacy activities in place between Universities, continuous cooperation between HEIs in the East and the West despite political divisions.
- IROs Directors regular meetings and cooperation.
- Presence at the institutional level of QA offices, International Relations Offices, research centers.
- Willingness to reform governance model in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.
- English as teaching language already introduced in several programmes and Master courses. Students used to study in English.
- HEIs considered as most reliable sector in the country.
- Public Higher Education in Libya is mostly free for Libyan students, or (affordable) fees are requested.
- Partial autonomy in defining university mission/strategy.
- Thanks to TEMPUS and KA2 Capacity Building projects, involved Universities have improved their skills and internationalization performances.

WEAKNESSES

- Low and inadequate QA standards and insufficient capacities of university human resources.
- Partial academic and financial autonomy, with a consequent need to improve institutional governance by defining a clear mission and a strategic plan. Centralization by the Ministry of Education has generated (up-to-date) more boundaries to advancement than benefits.
- Underdeveloped teaching skills and old capacities in terms of teaching practices, tools and assessment methods and research skills and management.
- Evident lack of suitable equipment and resources for scientific research. Generally speaking, infrastructures and equipment, especially communication and ICT infrastructure, are very poor and inadequate.
- A set of discouraging written and non-written rules determining complex administrative procedures for teaching updating, accreditation of new degrees, Inter-University Agreements, etc.
- Limited participation of smaller and more peripheral universities in international projects.
- Scarce University social responsibility (for example employability is not perceived as an issue by HEIs).
- Rare international exposure of teaching staff, constraints to mobility opportunities for academics and students.
- Frequent changes in the University leadership (Rectors, Vice-Rectors and IROs Directors) affects the possibility of creating long lasting cooperation and institutional daily life.

OPPORTUNITIES

- University is considered as a starting point for social and economic reconstruction, as an innovation hub and an employment opportunity.
- The ongoing crisis is perceived by local Universities as an opportunity rather than a limitation (increased autonomy perception).
- Universities explicitly ask for the introduction of pedagogical innovation and innovative contents.
- Universities explicitly ask for the design of a research agenda and research management training path at the national level.
- There is the opportunity in the upcoming future to expand the geographical scope of international cooperation and engage the less involved universities.
- Thanks to the cooperation put in place among national universities (despite formal agreements) there is the opportunity to transfer capacities from central and urban Universities to peripheral Universities, from peripheral universities to other countries and expand regionally.
- Universities will to engage in training programs in order to improve institutional management, financial management, academic and administrative capacities, quality performance, and overall their capacity of to define their own mission and strategy supported by a clear vision at the national level.
- The process of improvement and expansion of the capacity of the Libyan universities includes having a well-functioning quality assurance system.
- Exploit the opportunities opened by international initiatives and European-funded projects.

THREATS

- Current political instability, conflicts and war-like situation in recent years, deeply affecting University performance and the society at large.
- Financial restrictions affecting the possibility of transferring money to/from the country.
- Security restrictions affecting the mobility to/from/within the country. The absence of several international diplomatic missions is affecting Visa procedures preventing staff / students mobility. Furthermore the mobility of staff could be, as it may be the case of female staff, affected by some laws/societal rules preventing their participation.
- Massification of HE system.
- Uncontrolled proliferation of private Universities.
- Economic growth driven more by profit than sustainability.

Recommendations⁷⁵

The main objective of the Libya Restart analysis was to set the basis for future cooperation between the Libyan Higher Education Institutions and the European ones. In order to facilitate this, UNIMED identified needs, constraints, barriers and opportunities of national, regional and international interest.

The aim of this final section of Libya Restart is to present our conclusions, drawn from the analysis of the questionnaires and interviews, and as a result of the discussions with our Libyan colleagues. The scope is to generate a set of recommendations for further exploitation and future actions. The wider objective is to provide a starting point for system improvement, to be discussed with Libyans and international stakeholders, as a basis for reflection and dialogue at the 2020 Libya Restart conference.

The recommendations should not be intended as *“written in the stone”* but rather as *“food for thoughts”*, as a guideline for their development, expansion, revision.

Recommendations are direct, at different levels, towards the following actors:

- ✓ Libyan Institutions and national authorities;
- ✓ Libyan Universities and in general to the whole Libyan Higher Education system;
- ✓ European Universities and the European Higher Education system;
- ✓ European Union, for the benefit and support of existing and future policies;
- ✓ European Commission, with particular regard to the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs;
- ✓ European national authorities, such as agencies for international development and cooperation;
- ✓ International stakeholders, organizations and NGOs with a particular focus and interest on Libya, such as IOM and UNHCR.

Recommendations are grouped into sections, according to the topics of the analysis conducted. Each recommendation is briefly explained and concrete actions are proposed as examples for the follow-up.

⁷⁵ These recommendations are the results of the SWOT analysis and do not represent in any case an exhaustive list of topics. The aim of Libya Restart is to discuss these recommendations with the relevant stakeholders in order to verify their effectiveness and promote concrete actions on their basis.

Governance and Autonomy

1

Development of an effective and tailored university governance system through a benchmarking system. Such a system will allow institutions to improve their leadership, adequate management and funding - together with the development of clear goals and policies and performance improvement. One of the key elements that has been the recent focus in higher education reform worldwide is university governance. This concept describes how universities and higher education institutions define their goals, implement them, manage their institutions and monitor their achievements. The overall framework of the system and the interaction between the institution and public authorities are crucial in defining university governance. Within this explanation, institutional autonomy and how it is perceived by the university community are considered important drivers of change: how institutions are managed is one of the most decisive factors in achieving their goals. Universities in Libya would need to develop a specific and tailored governance system which could allow them to improve management and leadership, and the clear definition of goals and policies. In this framework, to facilitate the process, Libyan Universities should introduce a benchmarking system, where universities from the EU and other countries in the South-Mediterranean region transfer and share good practices on university governance, especially on how to improve university performances, definition of goals and policies. This benchmarking study could be also followed by the organisation of *ad hoc* seminars, where universities will meet their peers, where staff (academic and administrative) have the opportunity to increase their capacities in leadership, management and policies.

Support the Libyan Ministry of Education for the definition of a shared national strategic vision for the Higher Education System through a reinforced role of University Presidents Council. Libyan Universities would benefit from a participative approach in the re-definition of national policies and strategies for HE, which will grant a solid common base to Universities' institutional plans. A starting point should be enhancing and making more relevant the role of University Presidents Council in the process. In a good governance university system, it is very important to have a comprehensive national strategic vision for Higher Education, on which universities can rely to define their own institutional strategic plans. In this regard, the role of the University Presidents Council should be strengthened in the re-definition of the national strategy for HE, by which institutional plans should be inspired. To achieve this crucial objective, University Presidents should increase the number of regular meetings to set up the basis for the definition of the national strategic vision, taking into consideration the specificities of each university, their mission and objectives. These meetings' results should be shared with international partners and then followed-up with the Ministry of Education, in order to co-design a vision and strategy for HE at the national level, framed into the national reform process.

2

3

Increasing University academic autonomy. Academic autonomy will allow a more flexible approach towards teaching innovation, pedagogical methodologies, introduction of new courses and programmes, assessment methodologies, management. University's academic autonomy in Libya has proven to be relatively low: universities have partial level of autonomy, all their decisions in academic matters have to be later approved by the central government, namely the Ministry of Education. Recently, there has been a trend towards centralising the reform of programmes and curricula, aimed at standardising about 60-70% of the content of all subjects at the university level. Consequently, the necessity to increase university's academic autonomy in Libya has become a priority in order to diversify the teaching and learning pedagogical offer, pedagogical methodologies and to have the possibility to introduce new courses and programmes. Autonomy can be achieved by organising training activities for academic staff, where they learn about new teaching practices, assessment methodologies, management of the academic offer, digital tools, etc. European universities and international organisations, at the vanguard of teaching and learning innovation, can share experiences and good practices on how to manage new and innovative teaching techniques and assessment methodologies. Within this capacity building action, teaching guidelines, tailored on the Libyan HE System, could also be developed for the benefit of the academic staff at the Libyan HEIs. On a long term perspective, the Libyan universities will benefit from the introduction of new tools and methodologies in their daily academic routine, ensuring a more flexible approach and increasing their autonomy in renewing and managing courses and programmes.

Increasing University financial autonomy. Universities should be granted higher autonomy in managing and allocating available resources, in developing alternative sources of revenue, through provision of continuing education services, participation in international projects, cooperation with the industry sector, etc. Very little funding is received from loans and grants obtained by international organizations, outsourcing and contracts. Universities in Libya have very limited access to other sources of revenues, except for the budget and financing of the Ministry of Education. Instead, they should benefit from further developing alternative sources of revenue, and from further engaging in research services or in the provision of continuing education services. Increasing financial autonomy for universities in Libya will be a long process, which may start by organising regular yearly meetings among university Rectors, Financial Directors and administrative staff, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance aiming at sensitising all actors and stakeholders on the importance to diversify financial resources for the universities.

4

Quality Assurance

5

Constant training of university staff members to guarantee quality standards in performance and teaching/learning activities. For the benefit of the HE system and its beneficiaries, Universities should guarantee a constant update of university staff skills, in particular on the following issues: quality assurance, institutional management, pedagogical innovation, teaching and research methodology. By training academic and administrative staff, the University can guarantee a high level of performance and efficiency, together with a high quality standard of teaching and learning, on a long-term basis. The University should define a three-step awarding scheme: first raising awareness on the topics and their importance for HE, second defining a training scheme for both academics and administrative personnel, third providing awards for participants as an incentive for professional growth. On a short-term basis, the University should build on existing Quality Assurance offices for the identification of needs and for the organization of tailored trainings, exploiting the possibilities for capacity building offered by international programmes.

Strengthening Quality and Performance Evaluation offices (QPEOs). To allow Universities to rely on a well-defined and widely shared quality culture, it is crucial to upscale and upgrade the existing Quality and Performance Evaluation offices, in a way that they become a reference point to disseminate QA practices; define and share quality indicators (not only for administrative and financial issues but also for teaching/learning processes); support managers, administrative and teachers in improving the quality standards of the institution. As a long-term result, the University will be empowered in terms of management and administration capacity, as well as by raising the quality of the education provided. On a short-term basis, the QPEOs should: design an institutional strategy where QA mechanism, indicators and practices are defined; raise awareness among colleagues, the university leadership and academics on the importance of QA; support university staff in implementing quality processes; conduct periodical monitoring and assessments. A closer collaboration with the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions (NCQAA) and the other QPEOs is further recommended, in the framework of a more comprehensive national strategic plan, as well as strong capacity building action is highly recommended.

6

7

Widening the scope of action of the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions (NCQAA) in supporting universities' QA processes. The NCQAA should act as the missing link between Higher Education Institutions and the Ministry of Education: it should widen its scope of action, not only granting the compliance of Universities in terms of administrative, financial and logistic aspects (criteria and standards are thoroughly detailed in the guidelines on

accreditation and quality assurance standards for Libyan HEIs), but also verifying the compliance with the highest quality standards both in terms of teaching methodology and contents of the programs offered. Enlarging and enhancing the role of the NCQAA in supporting Universities towards curriculum innovation, assessment methods, modernization of teaching and learning experiences, would generate a tangible increase in the quality of the education offered. This should not imply centralization. On the other hand, the National Center should support University's academic autonomy offering training and M&E instruments; increasing discussions with universities on how to conform to the highest international quality standards; providing universities with strategic directives. As an example, the education system should establish an award for quality and excellence at the departmental level, to inspire more good work and quality in education.

Making the process of accreditation of Universities more systematic and accountable, in particular increasing control over the proliferation of private Higher Education Institutions. Institutional accreditation is particularly important because it helps determine if an institution meets or exceeds minimum standards of quality, evaluates its credibility and proficiency. The process of institutional accreditation must be made systematic and accountable, where the criteria for evaluation are widely known. Particular attention must be paid to the establishment and accreditation of private higher education institutions: it is vital to ensure the quality of the educational programs offered, to avoid an uncontrolled growth of institutions which are not aligned with the national strategy for HE and with the highest quality standards.



International Cooperation



Strengthening Universities' exposure and performance at the international level. International cooperation and mobility are key tassels for the country's developing process, allowing for knowledge transfer, skills improvements, exchange of good practices and human resources development (both for academics and administrative staff). Universities' exposure at the international level may have an impact on research activities as well as on graduates' employability, enhancing the capacity of Universities to produce a change in society. Despite some HEIs are involved in several international initiatives, there still are Universities which have very little international exposure, limiting their possibilities of improving through cooperation and by taking part in study visits "seeing with their own eyes" what happens in more advanced institutions. EU Members States are considered key players for Libyan Universities, as it is also demonstrated by the participation of Libyan Universities in the Erasmus Plus programme post 2011. The support of the European Union in the short and medium term seems to

be decisive above all in terms of capacity building actions, reinforcing the possibilities for Libyan institutions to network at the regional and international levels and to learn from the exchange with more experienced institutions. On the long term, it would be beneficial for Libya to benefit of mobility programmes and/or dedicated funds for Libya (i.e. a special window within the E+ programme for mobility, as it has been done for Tunisia and Algeria).

Funding of science diplomacy actions, giving them relevance and recognition. In post-crisis contexts, it is necessary to guarantee a continuity line in the students' education path and support Universities as fundamental player for society reconstruction. Universities can be, and are, above and beyond political divisions: Libyan Universities seem to be among the few actors, if not the only, able to survive to the political division between East and West and capable of dialogue with international Universities and organizations despite political instability and mobility limitations. International Relations Offices, researchers and academics are constantly in contact at the national and international levels, pursuing joint actions and consultations for advancement. Universities need to continue working and cooperate, within national borders and beyond, to directly advance a country's national needs, to address cross-border interests, to meet global challenges. In the short run, science diplomacy actions will support exchanges of knowledge and facilitate international scientific-diplomatic cooperation, providing opportunities for dialogue that are at the moment simply not possible. In the long term, scientific collaboration can be a way to make diplomacy through "parallel means", easing political tensions, guaranteeing stability, mitigating the economic crisis, reducing the country's isolation, supporting long-term stabilization.

10

Widening the outreach of Libyan Universities:

- a) enhancing the pan-African dimension of the Libyan Higher Education system, exploring the possibilities to develop Intra-African programmes on common topics of interest for HEIs and strengthening South-South cooperation arrangements. Due to the geographical location of some institutions (e.g. Sebha University) Libyan Universities should be considered as natural receptors and interlocutors for reaching the Sub-Saharan African region, so it is recommended to encourage this dimension and promote regional partnership.
- b) promoting the participation of Libyan Higher Education Institutions in research programmes focused on sensible issues that have an impact in the region and worldwide, and for which Libyan contribution brings additional value (i.e. migration).
- c) expand the geographical scope of international cooperation in Libya, engaging into cooperation programmes and mobilities the less involved universities, the more peripheral and/or youngest universities, to allow them to benefit from internationalization and regional collaborations.

11

Universities in the society at large

Prioritization of the National Research Agenda. Libya needs to move forward towards a more mature research and innovation environment in the country, where Universities are able to engage in high-quality scientific research activities and support the definition of successful actions tackling the challenges of society. Higher Education Institutions have the potential of providing expertise, scientists and scholars, so that research outcomes really contribute to country's developments. However, Universities will be able to do so only relying upon trained and skilled human resources, and well equipped and functioning infrastructures; by an efficient framework for R&I management; benefitting from specialization strategies within universities. In the short term, improving the capacity of universities to produce and manage research activities, allowing students to engage in high-quality scientific research, is the minimum requirement for Libya. In the long run, a National Research Agenda (in cooperation with the Ministry of Education) will frame research activities in a more comprehensive vision for the country, improving the overall capacity of generating valuable research and sustainable advancement. Moreover, a reliable, accountable and efficient national research system will be more attractive for foreign researchers and companies, and will reduce the gaps generated by a severe brain-drain effect.

12

13

Enhancing the social relevance of Universities in cooperation with local actors. During our research work, it clearly emerged that Universities (both in the east and west part of the country) are considered by citizens as one of the most (if not the most) reliable institutions in the country. HEIs are expected to generate stability, to drive economic growth (both in terms of offering job places and in terms of graduates employability), to fill political divisions, to serve the community. However, Libyan HEIs do not yet have dedicated offices (or funds) dealing with their social dimension, neither do they rely on a formal strategy by the Ministry of Education for the university's third mission. Curricula and programmes should be designed to strengthen graduates employability, to serve the needs of the society, so that the University becomes the starting point for reconstructing the country. Universities should establish durable and stable relations with the actors of the civil society, reinforce the transfer capacity with industries, create and promote synergies with local actors and organizations for a fruitful use of resources and to avoid duplication of efforts, engage in the co-creation of policies with decision-makers for sustainable development. This would only be possible starting by defining a cooperation scheme between national authorities, HEIs and socio-economic stakeholders to foster mutual dialogue, employability, sustainable development. In the long run, this win-win approach and the continuous communication flow between decision-makers, universities and stakeholders will generate, on the one side, a vision for the country in which all main players are involved, on the other hand, a strategic alliance supporting growth and social cohesion.

Authors Profiles

Raniero Chelli

Active since 1985 in European projects (mainly in RTD, training and international cooperation), as a Commission Official (ESPRIT Programme 85-88), Project Manager, Project Design specialist, Evaluator and reviewer, Quality assurance manager, National Delegate in IST management Committees and as a trainer on EU programmes and funding. He is currently the Coordinator of EU project at UNIMED, to facilitate access to EU funding by identifying appropriate calls for proposals, helping them in setting up successful proposals and consortia, and where applicable, supporting the management of selected projects with a particular emphasis on Quality Assurance. Over the years, he has managed more than 10 significant projects funded by the European Commission through R&D Framework Programmes, TEMPUS, Erasmus+ and Euromed Heritage and he has consequently acquired an outstanding experience in managing large and complex international publicly funded projects, especially as regards the planning the activities of highly diversified consortia, conflicts resolution and administrative matters.

Marco Di Donato

PhD researcher in Political Thinking and Political Communication, Marco Di Donato also holds a Master's Degree cum laude in Arabic language and Islamic Studies at the L'Orientale University of Naples (Italy). He focuses his research on the Islamist movement in the Middle East area. Author of several publications with Italian and International publishing houses, in 2015 he published his first monograph on "Hezbollah, the Lebanese Resistance Movement" edited by Mimesis, in 2018 he published his second monograph on Salafism and in 2019 his third one on Islamic political thought. Proficient in Arabic and English, he was professor (2013-2015) of "Islam and Politics" course at FUA (Florence University of Arts) in Florence. Since 2014, he is part of the UNIMED Research Unit. From 2016-2018 he worked as Professor of "History of Islamic Countries" and "Islamic Thought" at the University of Trento. In the last academic year (2018/2019) he has been professor in "Radicalization theories" at the University of Siena.

Silvia Marchionne

Silvia Marchionne holds a Postgraduate Master's Degree in International Cooperation and Development, with a focus on Middle East and North Africa region, a Master's Degree in "Arabic Language and Islamic Studies" at the L'Orientale University of Naples and a Bachelor's Degree in Languages and Intercultural Communication. Part of the UNIMED team since 2013, she works within UNIMED in the International Projects and Networking Team as Project Manager. She gained experience in research activities and analysis for Euro-Mediterranean and international projects, in proposal writing, monitoring and evaluation and in project management (with particular focus on governance of higher education and employability issues in the MENA region). She is also in charge of networking activities with UNIMED university members. Furthermore, she acts as external consultant for the World Bank programme "University Governance and Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the MENA region" focusing her research .



Anne Laurence Pastorini

Anne-Laurence Pastorini joined UNIMED in 2017 where she acts as project manager and contributes to research and networking activities. She holds a Master's Degree in International law - international administration (Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne university) and gained experience in international cooperation within different institutions such as the FAO office in Ecuador, CISP (italian NGO) and the French Embassy in Algeria, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, World Bank Regional Office in Dakar. University cooperation has been the main direction within this positions with a focus on the Maghreb region. Before joining UNIMED, she was in charge of the Mediterranean - Arab world partnerships for Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University where she accompanied also the creation of the Chaire Maghreb.activity on Algeria and Tunisia. She speaks Arabic, English and French.

Eugenio Platania

Eugenio Platania holds a Postgraduate Master's Degree in international relations and diplomatic studies and a Master's Degree in Law, with a focus on industrial policy in the European, French and Italian legal system. Part of the UNIMED since March 2019, he works within UNIMED in the international projects and networking team as Assistant Project Manager. He has been working in the field of international cooperation in the Mediterranean area since 2015 thanks to his experience as junior consultant at the CIHEAM-Headquarters in Paris. He is currently a Teaching Assistant at the Department of European Law of the University of Rome "La Sapienza". He speaks Italian, English and French.

Martina Zipoli

Martina Zipoli has joined the International projects and networking team of UNIMED in 2016. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Sciences and Cooperation Studies (Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Italy) and a Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA) from the University of Bergen (Norway) with a specific focus on organisations and politics, and on Higher Education Institutions. She has been working with EU funded projects in the field of education since 2014, and gained experience in proposals writing, research activities, monitoring and evaluation, and project management. She speaks Italian, English and Norwegian, and has some knowledge of Spanish and French.



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Annex I

Survey

State of play in Libyan Higher education system



This survey, addressed to university representatives, aims at drawing up an objective and current state of play in Libyan universities. The analysis of this survey will help defining universities needs and propose actions to strengthen their capacities.

Email Address:

GENERAL INFORMATIONS About your University

1. How would you describe the profile of your institution? Please choose one option.
 - More teaching than research oriented
 - More research than teaching oriented
 - Higher National College
2. How would you describe the mission of your institutions. Please choose one:
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Vocational integration
3. Year Founded
4. Type (check all that apply):
 - For profit
 - Independent
 - Private
 - Public
 - Not for Profit
 - Other
 - Comments
5. Degrees offered (check all that apply):
 - Bachelor
 - Master
 - Doctorate
 - Certificate
 - Diploma
 - Other
 - Comments
6. Number of Libyan students
7. Number of Libyan professors (Please specify the categories according to academic status – full professor, associate professor – Typologies of contract)
8. Number of Libyan administrative Staff
9. Number of Foreign students
10. Number of Foreign academic staff
11. Number of Foreign administrative staff
12. Number of expatriate students abroad (Please provide geographical location - mobility + type of scholarships)
13. Please explain the selection process of each of the following:
 - President
 - Vice-President



University Council

Dean

14. Please attach the academic and administrative organigram (organizational chart) of your university (in English and in Arabic)

FUNDING AND AUTONOMY

1. What are the different sources of funding for the university?

Funds from the State or regional authorities (budget allocation, grants, other)

Tuition fees for students

Funds from the owners of the institution (if private)

Funds raised from private enterprises (industrial, commercial)

Loans from banks

Loans from international organizations

Funds obtained through contracts (consulting, outsourcing of services)

Revenues from Research Grants

2. What is the degree of autonomy of the University on the following items:

(select among 3 options: fully dependent; partially dependent/autonomous; fully autonomous)

Mission definition and University strategy

Definition of short-term objectives and long-term objectives

The structure of the curricula (diplomas, conditions of issue)

The total number of students admitted? (I.e. can the university refuse any enrolments)?

The introduction of new programs

Identification of areas of research

Academic partnerships with other institutions

Human resources policy: for academic staff

Human resources policy: for Technical - Administrative staff

The allocation of available financial resources

QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. Is there a Quality Assurance system in your institution? Yes/No

2. If existent, is/are there QA system(s) to address the following items?

Institutional licensing

Accreditation of institutions or programs

Variable budget allocations are linked with results

Assessing Learning Outcomes

Implementation of corrective measures

Teaching methodologies

Research

Facilities

3. What are the mechanisms used to follow up on evaluations' results?

Establishing of Action Plans

Variable budget allocations are linked with results



Implementation of corrective measures

Others

4. Who leads the mechanisms used to follow up on evaluations' results of the QA system? And how frequently is this done?
5. When was the last time that an institutional self assessment was conducted?
6. When was the last time that a program was accredited? By whom?
7. How many programs of the total have been accredited in the institution?
8. Has the institution put in place standardised sanctions against:
 - Examination fraud
 - Unethical behavior of faculty (sale of exams)
 - Non compliance with admission standards
 - Unethical management of faculty careers
 - Others
9. Does the institution follow a standardised process for procurement?
10. Do students evaluate their learning experience, their courses, their lecturers?
11. Please describe students involvement (union groups etc.)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

1. Is there an international office in your university/institution? If yes, how is the selection of the director and the members made?
2. What is the International office in charge for and what is its role?
3. How many agreements with Libyan universities have been established? (please list them)
4. What type of agreements are they?
5. How many agreements with Foreign universities have been established? (please list them)
6. What type of agreements are they?
7. Is there a department responsible for mobility programs in your university? Yes/No/Comments
8. Information on international mobility programs reaches you through: (Please select the most appropriate answer)
 - The administrative circuit
 - The university website
 - From the host university
 - By word of mouth

UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY COOPERATION

1. How is it possible, according to your view, to involve enterprises in the activities of your institution in order to ensure an extensive and continuous communication between HEI and their socio-economic partners?
2. How does your institution tackle the issue of employability of graduates?
3. Please provide the available unemployment rates of graduated students (for example average unemployment rate 6 months after graduation)
4. How do you consider the role of vocational training courses outside the University CV?



FUTURE STRATEGIES

1. Please describe the Scientific Domains in which your University would like to receive capacity building training
2. Please describe the Scientific Domains in which your University would like to enhance its research activities
3. Please indicate the top 3 Scientific Domains in which your University would like to specialise in the forthcoming years
4. Please indicate 3 administrative domains in which your University would like to receive capacity building trainings
5. Please identify possible barriers and constraints for Scientific and University cooperation between Libya and European Higher Education Institutions
6. Please identify possible barriers and constraints for Scientific and University cooperation between Libya and Arab Higher Education Institutions

Annex II
UNIMED Associated Universities





ASSOCIATED UNIVERSITIES

UNIMED represents 130 members from 23 countries

ALBANIA

- European University of Tirana
- Metropolitan University of Tirana
- University of Aleksandër Moisiu Durrës

ALGERIA

- University of Algiers 1
- University of Bouira
- University of El Oued
- University of Frères Mentouri-Constantine 1
- University of Mohamed Khider Biskra
- University of Sétif 2

CYPRUS

- Cyprus University of Technology
- Girne American University
- University of Cyprus

EGYPT

- Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport
- University of Alexandria
- University of Cairo
- University of Damanhour
- University of Sadat City

FINLAND

- Tampere University

FRANCE

- Aix-Marseille University
- University of Montpellier
- University of Rouen

- University of Strasbourg
- University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

GREECE

- National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

IRAQ

- Duhok Polytechnic University
- Middle Technical University
- University of Duhok
- Wasit University

ITALY

- Foro Italico University of Rome
- Gabriele D'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara
- International Telematic University UNINETTUNO
- International University of Language and Media-IULM
- International University of Rome-UNINT
- Link Campus University
- Marche Polytechnic University
- Mercatorum University
- Pegaso Telematic University
- Polytechnic of Turin
- Sapienza University of Rome
- University Cà Foscari
- University of Bari
- University of Bologna
- University of Cagliari
- University of Calabria
- University of Catania
- University for Foreigners of Perugia

- University of Messina
- University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
- University of Padova
- University of Palermo
- University of Pavia
- University of Perugia
- University of Pisa
- University of Salento
- University of Sassari
- University of Siena
- University of Teramo
- University of Urbino

JORDAN

- Al-Ahliyya Amman University
- Amman Arab University
- Isra University
- Princess Sumaya University for Technology
- University of Jordan
- University of Petra
- University of Yarmouk
- Zarqa University

LEBANON

- Antonine University
- Holy Spirit University of Kaslik
- International University of Beirut
- Lebanese International University
- Lebanese University

LIBYA

- Azzaytuna University
- Libyan Academy Misurata
- Libyan International Medical University
- Sebha University
- University of Aljufra
- University of Elmergib
- University of Gharyan
- University of Sabratha
- University of Sirte
- University of Tripoli
- University of Zawia

MOROCCO

- Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine
- International University of Rabat
- Mohammed V University
- University Ibn Tofail of Kenitra
- University of Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah of Fès

OMAN

- Middle East College

PALESTINE

- Al-Aqsa University
- Al-Quds Open University
- An-Najah National University
- Arab American University
- Islamic University of Gaza
- Palestine Technical University
- University of Bethlehem
- University of Birzeit
- University College of Applied Sciences

PORTUGAL

- University of Evora
- University of Tras-os-Montes and Alto Douro

QATAR

- Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

SPAIN

- University of Barcelona
- University of Girona
- University of Granada
- University of Murcia



SYRIA

- Academy of Health Sciences
- Al-Baath University
- Al-Furat University
- Al-Hawash Private University
- Al-Sham Private University
- Arab International University
- Arab University of Science and Technology
- Tishreen University
- University of Al Andalus
- University of Aleppo
- University of Damascus

TUNISIA

- University of Carthage
- University of Kairouan
- University of La Manouba
- University of Monastir
- University of Sfax
- University of Sousse
- University of Tunis
- University of Tunis El Manar
- Virtual University of Tunis

TURKEY

- Boğaziçi University
- Istanbul Aydın University
- Manisa Celal Bayar University
- Suleyman Demirel University

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

- Gulf Medical University

YEMEN

- University of Aden



Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo
Mediterranean Universities Union
Union des Universités de la Méditerranée
إتحاد الجامعات المتوسطية



UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union, founded in October 1991, is an association of Universities from the Mediterranean basin countries. It counts 127 associated Universities coming from 23 countries of both shores of the Mediterranean (data updated in December 2019). UNIMED's aim is to develop university research and education in the Euro-Mediterranean area in order to contribute to scientific, cultural, social and economic cooperation.