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EU-South MED Cluster Matchmaking Event & TechDays

In the context of the Logismed Fair

Casablanca (Morocco), 9-11 April 2019



The European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) on behalf of the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) and THE NEXT SOCIETY (TNS) an initiative co-funded by the Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), organised the EU - South MED Cluster Matchmaking Event & TechDays on 9-11 April 2019 in Casablanca, Morocco. The overall objective of the Event was to facilitate contacts and collaboration between European clusters and clusters from South-Mediterranean countries.

The Event included the participation of 17 European clusters and two SMEs from eight European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Serbia and Spain). The European cluster delegation met with representatives of the South MED delegation that included 22 clusters from Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine. The clusters represented different sectors including agriculture and food industry, energy and environment, information and communication technologies (ICT) and mechatronics, textile and transport and logistics.

The cluster delegations took advantage of various sessions, which included: a visit to LOGISMED 2019 (8th Edition of the Transport and Logistics International Salon for Africa and Mediterranean); speed-pitching session for clusters; cluster-to-cluster (C2C) meetings; three workshops; three field visits to MASCIr, ESITH and CTI; and additional networking activities.

During the cluster matchmaking event, 150 formal meetings between the South MED and the European cluster delegations were conducted, in addition to the informal meetings and

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interactions that took place through the various networking activities included in the agenda. Preliminary feedback has been very positive and several opportunities have been identified by the delegates through this event.



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The European cluster delegation was comprised of 17 cluster organisations from 8 COSME countries, namely Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Serbia and Spain. The cluster related fields encompassed diverse industries related to the agriculture and food industry, energy and environment, information and communication technologies (ICT) and mechatronics, textile and transport and logistics. sectors.



Figure 1. European Cluster Delegation

The agenda of the “EU-South MED Cluster Matchmaking Event & TechDays” was designed to promote cluster cooperation between cluster organisations in Europe and South Mediterranean countries to begin the exploration of common visions and potential partnerships. Furthermore, the Event aimed to provide EU clusters access to South Mediterranean markets (including Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine*, and Tunisia) through close cooperation with locally based organisations.

In this context, the Event included: a guided tour to the LOGISMED Fair; speed-pitching session for clusters; cluster-to-cluster (C2C) meetings; three workshops; three field visits to MASCIr, ESITH and CTI; and other additional networking activities.

These activities are further presented below.

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The Event started with the visit to **Logismed** in the morning of April 9th where the cluster delegations participated in a guided tour of the Fair in order to see and learn about the new trends in transportation and logistics.



Figure 2. Guided tour of Logismed¹

The cluster specific activities started in the afternoon of April 9th with the Opening of the EU-South MED Cluster Matchmaking Event & TechDays. Welcome and opening remarks were given by Ms. Ulla Engemann (Head of Unit of Advanced Technologies, Clusters and Social Economy of DG Grow, European Commission), Ms. Ingrid Schwaiger (Deputy Head of Unit for Regional Programmes Neighbourhood South of DG Near, European Commission), and Ms. Fatima-Ezzahra AIT EL HABTI (Head of Office of Moroccan Cluster Development, Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment and Digital Economy of Morocco).



Figure 3. Welcome and opening remarks

After the initial remarks of the three speakers, a pitching session took place where each cluster of the European and South Mediterranean delegations had 2 minutes to introduce their cluster and present the objectives to be achieved through the Event.

¹ All the photos have been provided by The Next Society (TNS)



Figure 4. Presentation of clusters during the EU-South MED Cluster Matchmaking Event & TechDays

Following the introduction of clusters, three workshops took place. The first workshop titled “Industry 4.0 – Case study on MASCiR” was conducted by Mr. François Bourzeix (Embedded Systems Department Manager at MASCiR). The workshop focused on the evolution of the image processing system through a profound revolution with the development of deep learning systems. The innovative solutions adapted to the issues encountered by industrial and agricultural actors that were developed by the Embedded Systems Department of MASCiR were presented and discussed.

The second workshop titled “Clusters in Maghreb, between globalisation and territorialisation” was facilitated by Ms. Paulette Pommier (Associated expert at IPEMED). The workshop focused on exploring collaboration opportunities between MENA clusters based on a study conducted on cluster demography in relation with public policies in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia over the last 5 years.

The last workshop titled “How to do business between Europe and South MED: The seven main things about South MED countries to develop a successful C2C cooperation” was facilitated by Mr. Alain Tubiana (International expert in cluster management and South MED region, cluster management and collaborative innovation consulting). The workshop focused on participant experience and conceptual input by the moderator, in order to design a method towards a safe and productive relation between EU and South MED clusters. Cultural and business issues were addressed in this workshop.



Figure 5. Workshops

The first day finished with a networking dinner at La Sqala restaurant where participants had the opportunity to network informally while experiencing traditional Moroccan food.

The second day was entirely focused on a C2C matchmaking session. The session started with the welcome and introductory remarks from Ms. Natalia Martínez Páramo (Head of Unit COSME, Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, European Commission), Ms. Noelia Dosil (consultant of Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação, European Cluster Collaboration Platform) and Ms. Raphaele Cohen (Innovation Project Manager at ANIMA Investment Network, The Next Society).



Figure 6. Matchmaking session opening

The C2C matchmaking session included the 17 European clusters and 2 SMEs representing the European delegation and 23 South MED clusters.



Figure 7. C2C matchmaking meetings

150 formal meetings were held between the European and South MED delegates. The first impressions and feedback received indicate several potential cooperation activities resulted from the initial contacts.

"This was a successful event for AgroTransilvania Cluster. There are potential opportunities for collaboration in R&D and innovation projects and opportunities to create consortiums for future projects."

Felix Arion (AgroTransilvania Cluster)

"I have got a very good view of the cluster community in the region. I have also understood how to do business with the region. The event has been a great opportunity for our European Strategic Cluster Partnership to enter the region and we expect to have positive outcomes and results in the future."

Ramón Vivanco (Archenerg Cluster & COSMENERG-4i)



Figure 8. European delegation

Finally, on April 11th there were three visits to different Moroccan organisations. In the morning, participants travelled to Rabat to visit MASCiR – Moroccan Foundation for Advanced Science, Innovation & Research, where the representatives of MASCiR gave a presentation on the organisation and provided the participants a tour of the facilities.

In the afternoon, the delegates visited the ESITH – École Supérieure des Industries du Textile et de l'habillement in Casablanca, where the participants toured the facilities and learned about the projects that are under developed at the centre.

The final visit was at CTI – Centres Techniques Industriels Marocains, also in Casablanca, where participants toured the facilities of the centres.



Figure 9. Field visits at MASCiR and ESITH