*v. 23 Nov 2021*

**Meeting of Schools of Architecture and Urban Planning**

**of the Euro-Mediterranean region**

*Latest EU initiatives involving architecture and schools of architecture and urban planning*

*How to strengthen links and boost the capacity of schools of architecture and urban planning in the region*

Online meeting, Thursday 9 Dec 2021, 10:00-12:00 CET (Barcelona time)

Working languages: English, French and Arabic

The Union for the Mediterranean is an intergovernmental institution bringing together the 27 European Union Member States plus 15 countries from the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean, to promote dialogue and cooperation among them, under the co-presidency of the EU and Jordan.

The UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040 establishes a common vision for tackling urbanisation challenges in the region. It is the result of a 3-year collaboration between the European Commission and all 42 UfM Member States, aiming to improve the quality of life for all citizens by building better, more inclusive, climate-resilient cities and communities.

The Action Plan, drafted by a team of the Delft University of Technology (TU Delft), in the Netherlands, promotes science-led, evidence-based, inclusive, and integrated planning, investment and implementation of urban projects, with coordination at the local, national, and regional governance levels. It also involves cooperation between national and local authorities, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, academia, and other stakeholders.

After its endorsement by the UfM Member States on 1 July 2021, now it is time to align forces to put it into action, bringing together policy and education

According to the Action Plan, the science-policy interface is a key dimension for boosting planning and design capacity in the region. Universities across the Euro-Mediterranean region are seen as catalysts of this process, providing on-the-job training to planning professionals, through lifelong learning programmes (LLPs) and educating the next generation of urban planners and designers. Local universities must build bridges between science and research on the one hand, and public authorities, spatial policies and urban interventions on the other.

This requires harmonization and coordination of the curriculums of urban planning and architecture schools, including coordination of terminology and conceptualization, methods of analysis, planning frameworks, tools, and resources, as well as areas of study, in accordance with specific national and local needs, and respecting the traditions and specializations of each university. This is important for creating a large community of planners and designers who “speak the same language” and have roughly the same capabilities to implement positive change, without losing sight of the cultural differences and teaching and learning traditions of each country.

Related activities foreseen by the Action Plan are, among others:

* Organization of inter-university workshops and design-focused planning exercises, focusing on real contexts and results that could inspire elected officials and local project promoters.
* Organization of summer schools for spatial planning and design students from the region.
* Updating and coordination of the curriculums of urban planning and architecture schools, seeking mutual learning and exchange of knowledge.
* Organization of Erasmus+ capacity building programs in the field of higher education (the European Commission’s Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency).
* Establishment of a working group towards a Mediterranean Sustainable Urbanization Knowledge Hub, aiming to monitor urbanization in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and to support policymaking at a national level.
* Organization of online urban planning and design education via MOOCs (massive open online courses).

This meeting intends to launch an annual gathering of Schools of Architecture of the Euro-Mediterranean region committed to the organization of training and capacity building courses, programs, and summer schools and committed to working towards the review, updating and convergence of curriculums. In concrete, objectives for the annual gathering are:

* Map past and current initiatives linking EU and non-EU Schools of Architecture and Planning in the region
* Offer networking possibilities among those Schools of Architecture and Urban Planning already active at a regional level
* Channel the interest of those willing to establish links with other schools of architecture in the region
* Disseminate the possibilities that EC programmes and initiatives offer to universities at a regional level
* Structure present and future research so that it could contribute to the implementation of the UfM Action Plan
* Help discuss updates to the curriculum of the studies of Architecture and Urban Planning schools in the region.
* Strengthen links between schools of architecture and public authorities and decision-makers
* Data gathering and the creation of a knowledge hub

All these actions aim to boost employability and skills of current and future professionals in the areas of planning and design of the built envirionemt, and to create a community that will carry out the implementation of the Action Plan. Between each annual meeting, ad-hoc information meetings on EU calls, programs and opportunities aligned with the objectives of the Action Plan might be organized.

Tentative Agenda

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| 10:00 – 10: 05 | Welcoming Address  Union for the Mediterranean |
| 10:05 – 10: 15 | [*UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040*](https://ufmsecretariat.org/urban-agenda/)*, contextualization*  Roberto Rocco, TU Delft  The UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040 establishes a common vision to tackling urban challenges in the region. |
|  | **Opportunities for Schools of Architecture and Planning in the region:** |
| 10:15 – 10:30 | *“The international dimensión of* [*Erasmus+*](https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/)*: opportunities for cooperation among UfM Member States”.*  German Bernal Rios, European Commission, DG EAC  The international dimension of the new Erasmus+ programme 2021-2027 offers more mobility and cooperation opportunities in higher education and other sectors than ever before, with the Southern Mediterranean and the Western Balkans among its biggest priorities. |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | *The vision of the report* [*“Towards a shared culture of architecture - Investing in a high-quality living environment for everyone”*](https://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/new-report-provides-recommendations-to-ensure-high-quality-architecture-and-built-environment)  Veronika Valk-Siska, Chair of the EU Member States Experts’ group on architecture. Counsellor for Architecture and Design, Ministry of Culture of Estonia.  The report is the outcome of a Member State expert group, which proposes key criteria to assess the quality of places as well as policy recommendations to create a shared culture of architecture. |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | *The international dimension of the* [*New European Bauhaus Initiative*](https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/index_en)  *Opportunities for Schools of Architecture and Planning*  Marcos Ros Sempere, Member of European Parliament, part of European Bauhaus' Friendship Group in the European Parliament.  The New European Bauhaus is a creative and interdisciplinary initiative, convening a space of encounter to design future ways of living, situated at the crossroads between art, culture, social inclusion, science and technology. |
|  | **Examples of regional initiatives:** |
| 11:00 – 11:10 | [*Erasmus+ project card | Erasmus+ (europa.eu)*](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/586437-EPP-1-2017-1-AT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP)*,* [*IMPAQT*](https://impaqt.edu.eg/) *project– Technische Universitaet Wien, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Ain Shams University, Alexandria University, Suez Canal University, National Housing and Building Research Center, Engineering Consultans Group, Universita degli Studi di Cagliari, Universitaet Kassel, Nile University*  Carles Crosas, School of Architecture of Barcelona, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya  Dina K. Shehayeb, Professor and Director of the Architecture & Urban Design Program, School of Engineering & Applied Sciences, Nile University, Egypt |
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| 11:10 – 11:20 | [*Erasmus+ project card | Erasmus+ (europa.eu)*](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/2020-1-FR01-KA203-080575)*,* [*MELIMED*](https://www.melimed.eu/home) *project- Ecole nationale supérieure d'architecture de Marseille, Universite Libre de Bruxelles, Universita IUAV di Venezia, Nationale d'Architecture de Rabat*  Laurent Hodebert, Ecole nationale supérieure d'architecture de Marseille, France |
| 11:20 – 11:30 | *Giulio Verdini, Associate Professor in Urban Planning, University of Westminster (United Kingdom), vice-president of the* [*International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design*](https://www.ilaud.org/) *(ILAUD) and visiting professor at Mohammed VI Polytechnic in Ben Guerir, Morocco.* |
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| 11:30 – 11:55 | Q&A |
| 11:55 – 12:00 | Conclusion |