

**Regional cooperation  
in education and training:  
the whole is more than the sum of its parts**



**EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT (ETE)** IS AN EU FUNDED INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTED BY THE EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION (ETF). ITS OBJECTIVE IS TO SUPPORT THE MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) POLICIES THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT THROUGH A REGIONAL APPROACH.

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# Regional cooperation in education and training: the whole is more than the sum of its parts

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## What is MEDA-ETE?

MEDA Education and Training for Employment is a pioneering project which aims to boost employment in Mediterranean countries by improving the quality of education and training. To do so, it has adopted a regional approach whereby countries are encouraged to find solutions to local problems by reflecting on how other countries in the region have tackled similar issues. Thus this project aims to harness existing expertise and help it develop, thereby promoting new kinds of south-south cooperation as well as providing input from European Union (EU) experience.

The project is also original in terms of structure. It is built on the idea of a network of networks so that smaller groups of like-minded people from different countries can work on specific areas of technical vocational education and training (TVET) reform such as career guidance, apprenticeship or quality. The aim is to encourage new working relationships between countries – such as the Euromed Observatory Function – and within countries – such as bringing together representatives of different ministries to work with social partners.

The project works with all ten countries of the Mediterranean region – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. It is aimed at an extremely diverse group of entities and organisations – government ministries and state agencies, teacher training organisations, NGOs, employers and trade unionists.

It is hoped that the final beneficiaries will be the young people of the region who will be able to access a better standard of education and training and have more rewarding working lives as a result.

The idea for this initiative was born at a 2002 conference of Euromed foreign ministers in Valencia. It was designed using a highly participative, bottom-up approach involving delegates from the Mediterranean countries and EU Member States. Five years on as the project is entering its final phase, it appears that the set of priorities identified at the time have proved to be very relevant to the challenges in TVET reform facing the region today.

The MEDA-ETE project has a budget of €5 million provided from the MEDA funds of the European Union. It is supervised by the European Commission represented by EuropeAid and is implemented by the European Training Foundation (ETF). The ETF has provided additional funding for certain activities such as field visits of experts, national workshops and technical assistance so as to help achieve maximum impact.

The project began in November 2004 and has consisted of three phases; a preparatory phase lasting until the end of 2005, an implementation phase from the beginning of 2006 until the end of 2008 and a final phase from the beginning of 2009 until the end of 2010 during which all project activities will be completed and technical and financial reports will be submitted to the European Commission.

## What is MEDA-ETE?



## Structure of the project

### Component 1: Annual Forum

The Annual Forum is the key event in the MEDA-EETC calendar. Acting like the hub of a wheel, it brings all the different constituent networks and activities together under one roof for several days of hard work and intense debate. It provides the opportunity to report on progress over the past twelve months and plan activities for the next.

It allows people to exchange good practice, look for synergy with other activities and discuss the follow-up and sustainability of the project. It is also the opportunity to examine the progress of reforms in each country and compare them with developments regionally. Experts from other projects, institutions and networks active in the region are also invited to attend. Above all the Annual Forum provides the chance for face-to-face contact and time for informal discussions that are essential for any project of this kind to be viable.

### Component 2: Euromed network

This component aims to improve the flow of information to decision-makers in Mediterranean countries by providing accurate data and timely analysis. It has three subcomponents. First is the Euromed Observatory Function, a network of people from information-gathering bodies from the ten countries. Since January 2006, the network has been working on a common set of indicators on TVET and the labour market. These indicators allow for regional comparisons based on solid information for the first time, thus giving decision-makers a swift and accurate overview of the situation in their countries and those of their neighbours. In the process, network members get the opportunity to learn about producing internationally comparable indicators and forge new working relationships with their opposite numbers in neighbouring countries. Second, comparative analyses, giving the state of play in each of the ten countries, have been completed on the training of teachers and trainers, career guidance and enterprise-based learning. Finally thematic studies, giving a rigorous overview of current thinking, have been produced on the transition from school to work, the recognition of qualifications and quality and quality assurance in TVET.



# Structure of the project

## Component 3: Entrepreneurship

Youth unemployment is high in many Mediterranean countries and for many young people, setting up their own businesses can be the best employment option. This component aims to improve the quality of entrepreneurship training available by giving local training organisations access to best practices from their EU and Mediterranean opposite numbers. Extensive stocktaking of current training provision in the EU and Mediterranean countries has been used to produce a catalogue of best practices in entrepreneurship training. Two databases have been produced; a directory of training service providers and a collection of best practices. This information has also been used to match up one MEDA-ETE training organisation per country with a best practice provider (either in the EU or another Mediterranean country) for intensive advice and training on how to adapt and adopt a new way of working. In the case of Syria and Morocco, this has given rise to an interesting example of south-south cooperation. Once trained in the new method, trainers have since gone on to provide pilot training courses to almost 200 would-be entrepreneurs in the region.

## Component 4: E-learning

This component aims to boost the use of e-learning in TVET by upgrading the skills of teachers and trainers. A core group, typically comprising an educationalist, an information technology specialist and a manager from ten teacher training organisations in the region, has helped design an e-learning course for trainers in tourism and information technology. In 2008, this course has been used to upgrade the capacity of a pilot group of trainers in



each country to use e-learning in their daily work. It has also been the basis for a methodology which can be applied to other areas or trades. In the process, the core group has become proficient in the art of designing, managing and delivering e-learning. Some, such as the Jordanians, have now become the catalyst for much more far-reaching change.

## Overall achievements of the project

The MEDA-ETE project has worked hard to establish real regional cooperation on improving TVET and its links to the labour market over the last four years. The following achievements are to be found across the region and across the different project components.

### Sharing information and know-how

The MEDA-ETE project is all about sharing information and know-how, both through timely inputs from EU experts and the ETF and by harnessing the expertise that is already present in the region and encouraging neighbours to share their experiences and learning with each other. The exchange of information and best practice has been a constant, defining feature of the project through workshops, training days and other events and through virtual networks and communities. The Annual Forums have taken this a step further by bringing all the participants in the different components and networks together once a year for several days of hard work and intense debate.

### Reviewing TVET reform

The horizontal, decentralised structure of the project is such that it has also grown into a mechanism for looking at developments in TVET reform across the region and for discussing the challenges facing education, training and employment. This work is facilitated by the comparable indicators on TVET and the labour market produced by the Euromed Observatory Function.

### Developing communities of practice

Another added value of the project is the development of communities of practice by the network members,

policymakers, social partners and practitioners from participating countries. Over 450 people have attended regional or national MEDA-ETE events. The MEDA-ETE team has facilitated this ongoing dialogue and sharing of knowledge by organising activities such as workshops, study visits and peer reviews.

### High-quality publications

The project has produced a significant body of knowledge and analysis on developments in TVET and the labour market via its high quality publications. They provide policymakers and other interested parties with new insights on some of the most topical issues in TVET and the labour market as well as mapping best practices. The process of preparing these publications was participative and practically all network members have made a contribution or helped finalise the content. The reports have also been discussed and approved by national stakeholders. They have been publicised regionally and nationally and are freely available via the project and ETF websites.

### Introducing common methodologies

The project has also managed to introduce network members to some common methodologies for use when analysing issues of TVET reform. Where this was not possible, it has at least helped develop a common language and understanding of the building blocks of TVET systems. These methodologies will allow people to identify common issues when dealing with very different contexts and situations in terms of institutional settings, the role of social partners and governance of TVET.



# Overall achievements of the project



### MEDA-ETE main publications

<b>Coulon, A.</b>	E-learning initiatives for teachers and trainers in the Mediterranean region – Comparative Analyses, ETF, 2009
<b>Homs, O.</b>	Euromed Observatory Function: Indicators for the governance of vocational training systems – Methodological Notes, ETF, 2007
<b>Homs, O.</b>	Euromed Observatory Function: Objectives, results, instruments and evolutions – Methodological Notes, ETF, 2008
<b>Leney, T.</b>	Qualifications that count: Strengthening the recognition of qualifications in the Mediterranean region – Thematic Studies, ETF, 2009
<b>Sauvageot, C.</b>	Euromed Observatory Function: Guidelines for developing indicators on technical and vocational education and training – Methodological Notes, ETF, 2007
<b>Seyfried, E.</b>	Quality and quality assurance in technical and vocational education and training – Thematic Studies, ETF, 2008
<b>Sultana, R. G. &amp; Watts, A. G.</b>	Career guidance in the Mediterranean region – Comparative Analyses, ETF, 2007
<b>Sweet, R.</b>	Work-based learning programmes for young people in the Mediterranean region – Comparative Analyses, ETF, 2009
<b>Van Trier, W.</b>	Transition from education to work: What relevance for MEDA partners? – Thematic Studies, ETF, 2007

## Forging links with EU programmes and policies

Developing these links and facilitating synergy has been an explicit aim of the project from the start and this has happened in two ways. First, innovative EU developments in the field of TVET and lifelong learning, such as the European Qualifications Framework or the Lisbon objectives and Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQFA), have been presented and discussed at MEDA-ETE events. Second, network members have had the chance to find out how EU policy is being put into practice on the ground through study visits to various EU Member States. These have included visits to Finland for teacher and trainer training, Ireland and Hungary for national qualification frameworks, Italy for CQFA and Portugal, Estonia and France for observatory functions.

Finally, a number of experts participating in EU programmes have also worked for MEDA-ETE.

## Encouraging south-south cooperation

Common challenges, cultural backgrounds, geographical proximity and, in some cases, a shared language mean that encouraging south-south cooperation in this region is an obvious way of delivering relevant ideas. When combined with methods such as exchanges of best practice, comparative analysis, peer reviews and peer learning, this can become a rich source of policy inspiration. In this way, over the past four years, MEDA-ETE has acted as a unique platform for south-south cooperation and has developed into a way of influencing policy which is not perceived as interference or pressure from a foreign culture.

In operational terms, we have evidence of how south-south socialisation has inspired domestic policy or has led to the creation of similar institutions, schemes and information systems.

## Moving from policy to practice

The project's components on entrepreneurship and e-learning are examples of this. Both components have evolved from the initial phase involving reflection on the experiences of different countries and establishing networks to having a real impact on the ground. In the case of entrepreneurship, this has included the transfer and adaptation of best practices in entrepreneurship skills development and conducting pilot training schemes for would-be entrepreneurs. More than 140 trainers have undertaken entrepreneurship training for trainers using new, improved courses. With e-learning, pilot courses have been developed for the information technology and tourism sectors, a methodology for online teacher training has been developed which can be applied to other sectors and around 130 teachers has been trained.

What is more, these interventions on the ground have helped embed these pilot interventions into the mainstream of the work of participating institutions. Many, such as e-learning in Jordan or new entrepreneurship training in Syria, have become part of the regular curriculum or portfolio of services offered to young people.



## Success stories – How MEDA-ETE is entering the mainstream

The proof of the success or failure of a project only becomes clear years down the line, when you can see whether it has managed to have a lasting impact in the countries concerned. For this to happen, project participants must feel that the project is their own and take responsibility for continuing the work once the project is over. Pilots must move beyond their isolated, tentative status into the mainstream, best practices need to be adopted throughout institutions and policy suggestions need to become the staple ingredients of the national policy agenda.

While it is still far too early to say whether people will still be talking about MEDA-ETE in years to come, there are encouraging signs that some of its initiatives are entering the mainstream.



## Egypt takes the initiative in career guidance

Egypt is making real progress in introducing a new strategy for career guidance for its young people and the starting point for this has been MEDA-ETE.

In 2006, the project conducted a policy review of the state-of-play of career guidance in the Mediterranean region and set up a regional network of policymakers to take it forward. Egyptian ministers responded in 2007 by forming a voluntary task force composed of high ranking officials from the ministries of education and manpower. This was the first time these two ministries had worked together on this topic.

Over the next year, the taskforce produced a concept paper and held a series of events to publicise it. In 2008, the group became a formal national taskforce, based at the ministry of education and supported by a small secretariat. It began involving officials from other ministries in its work as well as relevant stakeholders. The original concept paper became a fullblown set of guidelines for a career guidance strategy in Egypt. Since 2008, activities including workshops, peer learning and policy roundtables have been organised with the help of the ETF to increase the expertise of taskforce members and stakeholders. The ETF is also working with donors to look into joint approaches to funding for future interventions in career guidance.

## A warm welcome for e-learning in Jordan

MEDA-ETE's e-learning initiative has found fertile ground in Jordan. Not only is the online course it developed now

on offer to Jordanian teacher trainers, but it has triggered a host of other developments which are putting e-learning at the heart of teacher training reform in the country.

The Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), the Jordanian partner, has set up an e-training division to show teachers and trainers how to produce and use innovative teaching material in their daily work. The emphasis is on building communities of practice and makes use of the methodology developed by MEDA-ETE. The new unit is actively developing continuing training for the VTC. So far 265 VTC employees have been trained.

One of the first actions of the e-training division was to adapt and enrich the MEDA-ETE e-learning pilot courses for the tourism and information technology sectors. More than 60 e-enrichments have been developed and the course has been translated into Arabic. It is now available online via a new portal set up by the VTC to allow roll-out to a wider community. It has also been offered to trainers in neighbouring Syria and the Occupied Palestinian Territory – precisely the kind of regional cooperation MEDA-ETE aims to promote. The 21 Jordanian trainers who completed the original MEDA-ETE course now form the core group for training their colleagues.

Spurred on by this success, the VTC has drafted a strategic plan for the 2008–12 period which aims to encourage VTC trainers to use e-learning in their everyday teaching. The strategy has now been approved by Jordan's Minister of Labour and plans are afoot to train the first 900 teachers. The VTC has also shared these results with the Ministry of Education which has expressed interest in offering the e-learning course to its own teachers.

## All change for entrepreneurship training in Syria

Syria's Public Corporation for Employment and Enterprise Development (PCEED) has recently changed its entire mandate, function and even its name.

The former Agency for Combating Unemployment has changed from merely providing funding for business start-ups into an organisation which can guide would-be entrepreneurs through every stage of setting up a business.

The Syrians chose to adopt Moukawalati, a best practice developed by the Moroccan employment and training agency, ANAPEC. It uses the CEFE (Competency based Economies through Formation of Enterprise) methodology which promotes learning by doing and self-assessment. The Moroccans helped train representatives from all 14 PCEED offices including counsellors, trainers and finance specialists. People were not only trained in the new method, they also produced a series of manuals on how to conduct an interview, select candidates for training or draw up a business plan tailored to the Syrian economy. Other changes include a new system for tracking the progress of the new entrepreneurs and plans for a national group of trainers to take the methodology to all corners of the PCEED.

The PCEED was the only organisation to choose a best practice from another Mediterranean country. This has been one of the keys to its success as it brought many practical advantages. While all other service providers needed to work through an interpreter, in Syria,

everything was in Arabic and the training was completed in record time. This is an important example of south-south cooperation.

Syrian-Moroccan cooperation looks set to continue. ANAPEC has since signed a contract to provide the PCEED with more training. This initiative is being funded independently of MEDA-ETE.

## **How to use an NQF as a lever for TVET reform**

A question that arose time and time again in the MEDA-ETE project was that of the link between qualifications and TVET reform agendas. Asking this first question automatically raises a whole series of others including how to develop progression routes, improve access to learning opportunities, boost skills recognition, make a system both flexible and transparent, introduce quality assurance and ensure qualifications are relevant, especially to the labour market. The MEDA-ETE team held a workshop in Cairo in December 2006 to find out which countries were interested in taking these issues further. It was looking for candidates where the government was committed to using national qualification frameworks (NQFs) as policy tools and was interested in looking into the rationale for developing an NQF.

While NQFs are always a proposition for the long term, significant progress has since been made in four countries and the work is continuing. It is being supported with ETF funds.

In Egypt, a wide range of stakeholders is working on the road map for an NQF. Within this, a taskforce representing ministries and stakeholders including employers is developing a framework into which all existing qualifications can fit. It is currently deciding the number of levels and the broad descriptors for learning outcomes. Three general descriptors – knowledge, skills and competences – have already been road tested. The major challenge is to co-ordinate the different initiatives so that the same criteria are used across all sectors of the education system.

In Jordan, building an NQF is part of a national strategy and forms part of broader government plans for social and economic development. Moves to develop an NQF began in 2006 when a technical team representing the education and training sector and the private sector was set up. As there is limited direct experience of qualification frameworks, a step-by-step approach has been adopted. This involves developing a qualifications framework for the TVET system first, using tourism as a pilot sector. The team has developed a provisional seven-level NQF using three broad descriptors. Once this new framework for one sub sector is endorsed, it will be a major step towards the development of a national framework.

In Morocco, a working group led by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training began work in 2007. Using mainly occupational and skills profiles developed by other projects, the working group has designed a framework with seven levels of qualification using six broad descriptors. This is still very much a work in progress and much has to be done in terms of securing

political agreement, consultation and publicising the benefits of NQFs.

In Tunisia, an NQF is being planned and developed for the whole education system. A new VET law in 2008 gave the NQF its place in the institutional landscape.

A working party representing key stakeholders has developed a design for an NQF of seven levels and a set of descriptors known as CARA. These stand for complexity, autonomy, responsibility and adaptability. Existing qualifications have been fitted into the levels of the grid and tested for coherence.



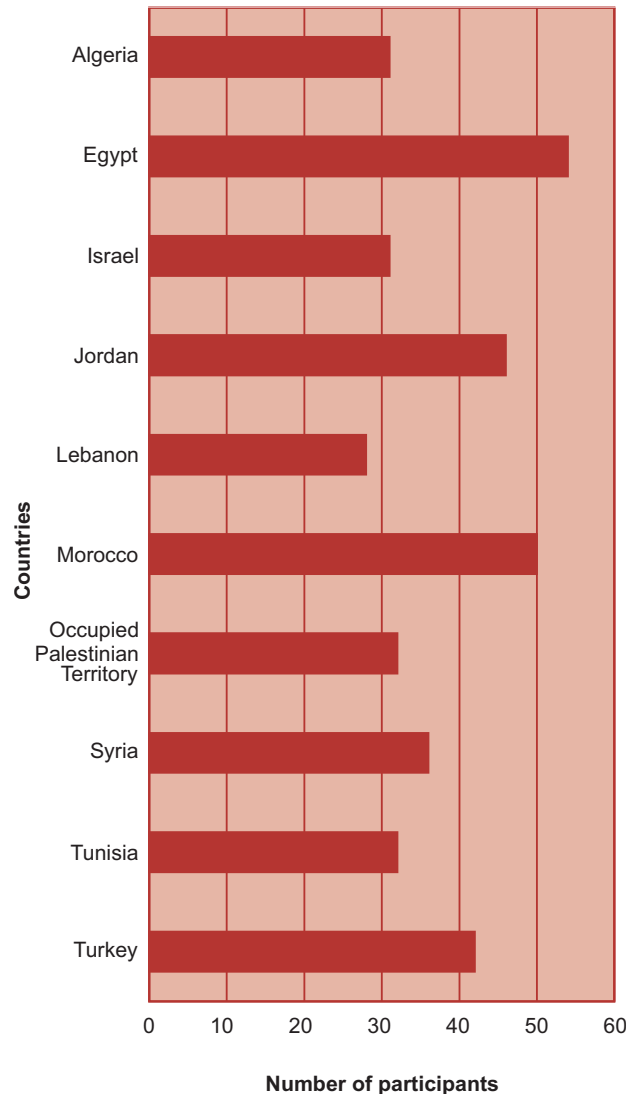
## Project achievements in numbers

### Component 1: Annual Forum

Three Annual Forums have been organised every spring from 2006 to 2008. Around 350 experts from Mediterranean countries have participated in these events.



Annual Forum participants by country





# Project achievements in numbers

## Component 2: Euromed network

This component has produced a wealth of information and analysis on topical issues of TVET reform.

### Component 2 themes and networks

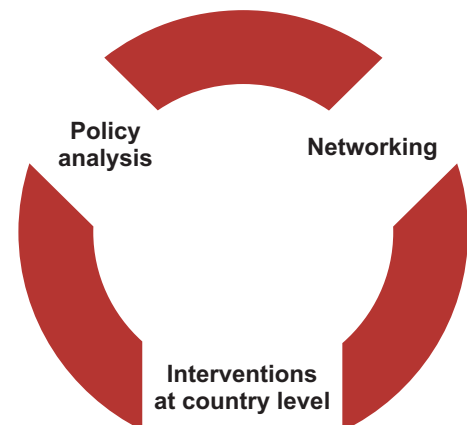
Themes and networks	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
	Activities/ subjects	Number of participants	Activities/ subjects	Number of participants	Activities/ subjects	Number of participants
<b>Observatory function</b>	Defining indicators	28	Data collection	30	Data analysis	30
<b>Comparative analysis</b>	E-learning for teachers and trainers	15	Career guidance	16	Enterprise-based learning	18
<b>Thematic study</b>	Transition from education to work	18	National qualification systems and recognition of qualifications	25	Quality and quality assurance in TVET	17

The methodological framework for implementing the different components was based on three major and closely interlinked pillars: analysis, networking and interventions in each country.

The process consists of three strands:

1. an analytical strand based on gathering data and information on national and EU policy developments in the relevant field and on dissemination and discussion of this information with national policymakers;
2. a peer-learning process (workshops and study visits) aimed at enabling the different countries and stakeholders involved in the process to learn how best to make sustainable policy decisions that can contribute to education and training reforms;
3. in some cases, intervention at national level to facilitate reform processes and actions.

### Policy learning diagram



### Component 3: Entrepreneurship

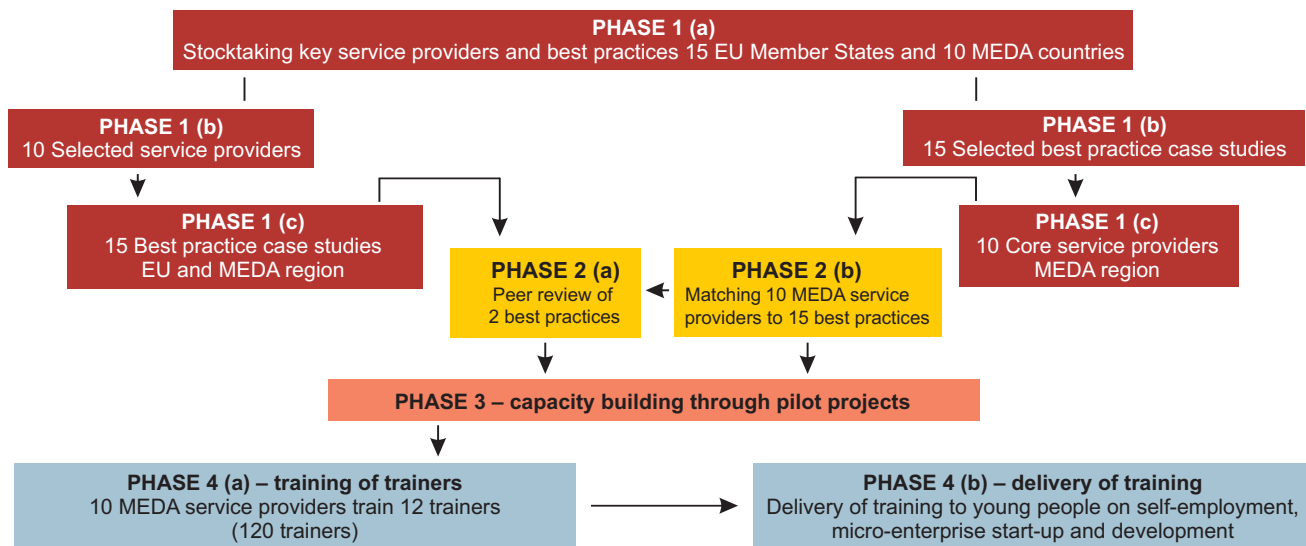
This component started in 2006 with an extensive stocktaking of entrepreneurship programmes in the Mediterranean region and the EU. A searchable database available via the MEDA-ETE website ([www.meda-ete.net](http://www.meda-ete.net)) lists the 62 main providers of entrepreneurship training in Mediterranean countries together with information on their aims, target groups and methods. A directory providing information on 15 best practices offered by training organisations in both EU and Mediterranean countries is also available on the website.

At the 2007 Annual Forum, Mediterranean entrepreneurship service providers had the chance to choose from a wide range of best practices on offer from other Mediterranean and EU training institutions in a kind of entrepreneurship training marketplace.

During the first half of 2008 the transfer process was implemented. Recipient organisations received training in the new method with pilot programmes for putting it into practice by providing training to young people taking place during the rest of the year. Several solid partnerships between recipients and transferring institutions have been established.



## Transfer process methodology



## Partnerships established through the project

Country	Recipient organisation	Type of organisation	Best practice chosen	Target groups
Egypt	EI Mobadra	NGO	GLEAM (United Kingdom)	Young graduates/potential entrepreneurs
Israel	MATI Jerusalem	NGO	Open for Business (Sweden)	Students/demobilised soldiers
Jordan	JOHUD	NGO	Open for Business (Sweden)	Young people/would-be entrepreneurs
Lebanon	INJAZ	NGO	GLEAM (United Kingdom)	Secondary school and higher education students
Morocco	ANAPEC	State agency	COMECAR (Portugal)	Potential and current young entrepreneurs
Occupied Palestinian Territory	PYU	NGO	JOBS (Bulgaria)	Potential entrepreneurs
Syria	PCEED	State agency	Moukawalati (Morocco)	Potential entrepreneurs
Turkey	KOSGEB	State agency	Open for Business (Sweden)	Higher education students

### Trainer training seminars and pilot workshops conducted in 2008

Best practices	Recipient organisations	Date of training	Location	Number of participants		Date of pilot	Location	Number of trainers		Number of entrepreneurs	
				men	women			men	women	men	women
Open for Business	JOHUD, Jordan	9–14 Feb.	Amman	6	11	23–27 Feb.	Jerash, Madaba	2 3	3 1	– 17	21 6
	MATI-Jerus, Israel	17–21 Feb.	Jerusalem	10	12	1–4 July	Jerusalem	2 3	5 2	8 10	11 6
	KOSGEB, Turkey	5–9 May	Ankara	7	8	25–29 June	Ankara	1	2	6	6
GLEAM	INJAZ, Lebanon	26–30 March	Amman	7	9	30–31 Oct.	Beirut	6	6	11	10
	Mobadara, Egypt	6–10 April	Abu Sultan	9	11	26–29 May	Qena	6	1	22	9
JOBS	PYU, Occupied Palestinian Territory	11–15 May	Ramallah	8	4	20–22 July	Ramallah	5	2	–	18
ADRAL	ANAPEC, Morocco	5–9 May	Casablanca	7	8	19–23 May	Casablanca, Rabat, Tanger	3	4	5	6
ANAPEC	PCEED, Syria	19–24 April	Damascus	16	8	22 Oct.–4 Nov.	Tartous	4	2	22	–
<b>Total</b>				<b>70</b>	<b>71</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>93</b>

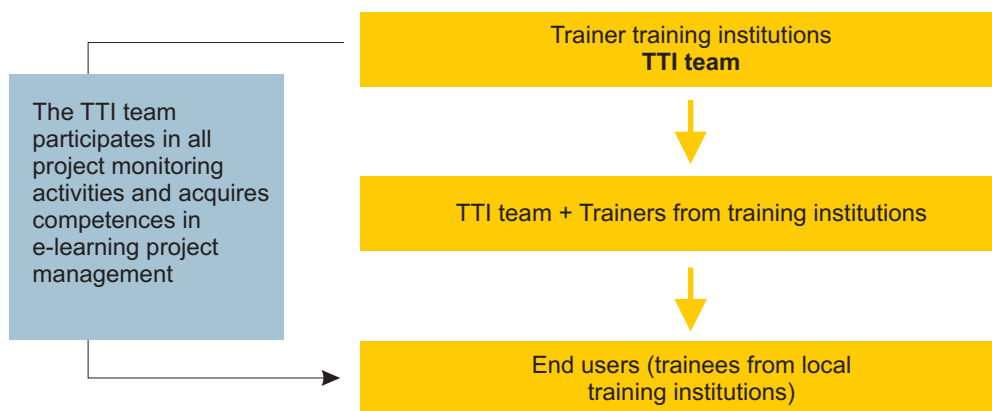
## Component 4: E-learning

A total of 134 trainers completed the pilot e-learning course for the information technology and tourism sectors.

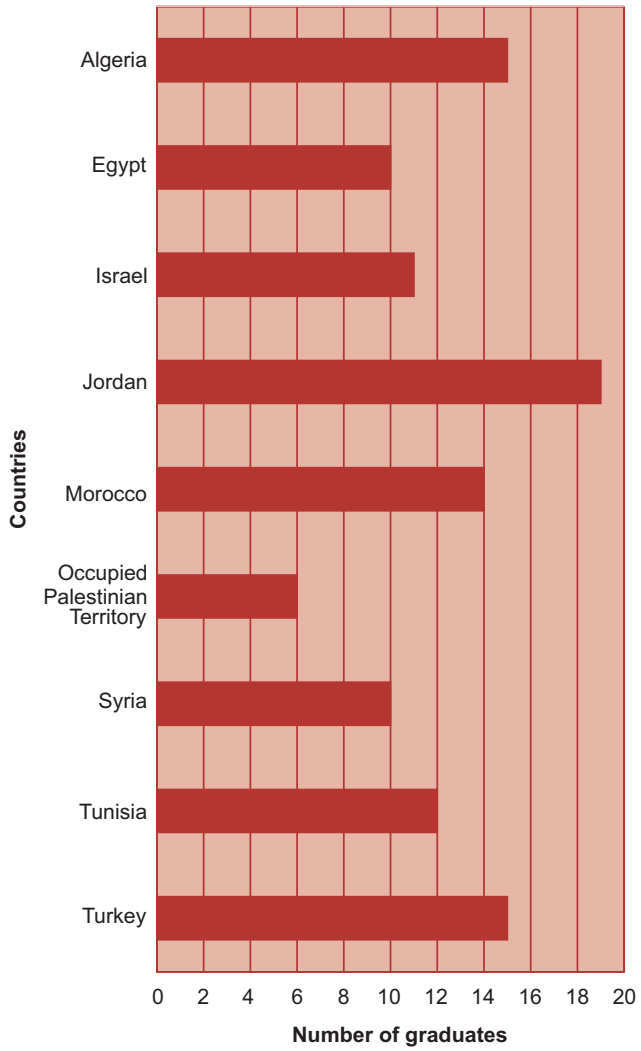
### Partner institutions and participation rates

Country	Institution	Number of participants
Algeria	Ministry of Vocational Education and Training (MFEP)	16
Egypt	National Human Resources Centre Investors Association	14
Israel	ORT Braude College	13
Jordan	Vocational Training Corporation	19
Morocco	Department for Vocational Training (DFP)	14
Occupied Palestinian Territory	General Directorate of Colleges and Vocational Education and Training Ministry of Education and Higher Education	9
Syria	TVET Directorate Ministry of Education	14
Tunisia	National Centre for Training Trainers and Training Development (Cenafiff)	17
Turkey	Haydarpasa Anatolian Technical School Ministry of National Education	15

### Target groups and their involvement in the project



### E-learning graduates by country



EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the  
European Communities

2009 – 20 pp. – 21.0 x 21.0 cm

ISBN: 978-92-9157-572-5



*This project is funded by  
the European Union*



TA-80-09-642-EN-C



Publications Office

*Publications.europa.eu*

ISBN 978-92-9157-572-5

