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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Cooperation in Erasmus+ International Mobility**

The means of promoting cooperation in terms of international mobility of students and staff of university establishments, through the ERASMUS+ program (2021-2027), was discussed during a meeting, held in Benguérir between 4th and 7th March, upon the initiative of the Erasmus+ national agencies of the MedNet network countries.

The meeting, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation, and the Erasmus+ Morocco Office, took place at the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P). The discussions aimed to promote opportunities for international mobility and cooperation between African countries and those forming part of the MedNet network (Cyprus, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Macedonia and Turkey). It also involved developing new project proposals linked to international mobility and exchanging good practices with the 33 member countries of the Erasmus+ program. The President of UM6P, Hicham El Habti, indicated that the meeting was an important step towards the development of university and research partnerships within the framework of Erasmus+.

The event provided an opportunity to explore networking opportunities, meet potential partners, share best practices and generate ideas for new projects of mutual interest, emphasized the importance of training programs and student exchange as a valuable opportunity for personal development and academic success.

Hicham El Habti said that these programs enable beneficiaries not only to acquire new skills, but also to contribute to the development of future global leaders, calling for belief in the richness of diversity and fostering an environment that transcends borders.



The director of the Erasmus+ Moroccan National Office, Latifa Daadaoui, explained that the Erasmus+ Europe-Africa meeting, the first event of its kind organized outside Europe, aimed to bring European universities closer to their African counterparts and strengthen partnerships with Mednet countries, while also constituting a suitable opportunity to consolidate cooperation between African countries. Latifa Daadaoui also explained that the Erasmus+ Moroccan National Office, offers grants dedicated specifically for training and studies to students and staff of Moroccan higher education institutions.

Like every year, the Erasmus+ Moroccan National Office, launched the excellence scholarship associated with the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters, funded by the EU to promote excellence in training and research.

Leonidas Papastergiou, director of the Greek National Erasmus+ Agency, coordinator of the event, noted that strengthening the international dimension of higher education is of crucial importance, particularly in a constantly changing world. He also pleaded in favour of better exploitation of the potential for collaboration between European and African universities, noting that the event made it possible to establish partnerships, share experiences and project towards a future of excellence and innovation in higher education.

The director of the Erasmus+ French Education Training Agency, Delphine Gassiot-Casalas, noted that the event was an opportunity to consolidate links with African partners in order to create a new dynamic in this dimension. She also argued

that the choice of Morocco to host this event is relevant given the quality of the infrastructure put in place by the Kingdom for the development of education and training.

Joseph Schembri Kamm, CEO & National Coordinator Erasmus+ & European Solidarity Corps Programmes (Malta), and Christopher Schembri, Finance and Administration Manager, attended the meeting on behalf of EUPA, the National Agency for Erasmus+ in Malta. Joseph Schembri Kamm remarked that the cooperation activity, the first of its kind, served all participants including the Maltese delegation to strengthen its ties with other European Erasmus+ programme countries but also to make new contacts with African Universities, Conservatories, and other stakeholders in the field of higher education. EUPA will look forward to assist higher education institutions in Malta to partnering with equivalent institutions in Europe and African countries in the context of Erasmus+ partnership projects.

Erasmus+ (2021-2027) places strong emphasis on social inclusion, ecological and digital transitions and the promotion of young people's participation in democratic life. Its budget is estimated at 26.2 billion euros, and funding has almost doubled compared to the previous program (2014-2020).

