

'Middle East Research and Innovation Dialogue' - Final Conference

Piran, Slovenia, 21 June 2018

Concept Note

The Middle East Research and Innovation Dialogue (MERID) project funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 Programme proposes a **comprehensive action to intensify and encourage EU-Middle East Research & Innovation cooperation** through building on previous international cooperation experiences in R&I with the Mediterranean and Middle East regions. As such, MERID was the very first attempt to systematise **support to the policy dialogue and involvement of research communities of Iran and Iraq** in the H2020 programme.

MERID sets science diplomacy into practice with the aim of fostering **intercultural dialogue, understanding and reconciliation through R&I**. A wide range of different online and face-to-face activities were successfully implemented with active participation of researchers, experts, NCPs and other relevant stakeholders from both regions (EU and Middle East): info-days, training and awareness raising activities, brokerage events, coaching sessions, webinars, brainstorming workshops and bilateral meetings took place throughout the Mediterranean during the period 2015-2018.

MERID represents an important step towards the **consolidation of preconditions for enhanced EU-Middle East R&I cooperation** by laying down foundations for future joint research projects and initiatives, as well as establishing optimal framework conditions for international cooperation whilst increasing coordination between policies and programmes.

The Middle East Research and Innovation Dialogue Conference brings together EU and Middle East researchers, academics, policy-makers, NCPs and other stakeholders to discuss the project's outcomes and recommendations, as well as to **exchange experiences and ideas on the future of EU-Middle East cooperation**.

Towards an increased EU-Middle East STI Cooperation

MERID achieved its set of interrelated objectives, resulting in strategically as well as operationally important outcomes:

- Recommendations for an enhanced EU– Middle East STI cooperation
- A comprehensive STI policy dialogue framework
- Bilateral policy dialogue meetings held with policy officials and decision makers in Brussels and selected countries in the Middle East
- Horizon 2020 info days and training events in Cairo, Naples, Tehran, Barcelona, Beirut and Gaza
- Assistance and coaching one-to-one sessions provided to Middle East researchers and experts on ongoing applications for the Horizon 2020 programme

- Brokerage-venturing events for innovation to create partnerships and critical mass for implementing innovative ideas and strengthen EU-Middle East research networking
- Webinars to present opportunities for research and innovation cooperation under the H2020 Programm

The 13 partner institutions, forming the MERID consortium, from different EU and Middle East countries will present the project's main achievements and discuss on future prospects together with high-level policy makers and external experts representing both regions.

Side events

Brokerage event (20 June)

The brokerage event has the objective to bring together EU and Middle East National Contact Points (NCPs) with the aim of facilitating networking of researchers on [H2020 \(WP2018-2020\)](#) and [PRIMA topics](#) of common interest.

Coaching sessions (20-21 June)

30-minute one-to-one session between researchers, NCPs and the MERID project EU expert where research ideas and proposals will be analysed more in detail in order to provide individual assistance to possible project ideas to be submitted under the upcoming Horizon 2020 or PRIMA calls.

Registration

Participation in the conference and side events is open to anyone registering **before 16 May at the following link:**

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Organisation and logistics

Overall logistics: Ms Kinga Kónya, Euro-Mediterranean University (kinga.konya@emuni.si)

Brokerage event: Ms Virginia Belsanti, Centre International Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Mediterraneennes (belsanti@iamb.it)

Coaching sessions: Mr Leonardo Piccinetti, Europe for Business (l.piccinetti@gmail.com)

MERID on Social Media

[@MeridProject](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/agoramerid/>

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 East Research and Innovation Dialogue’ - Final Conference**

Draft Agenda

8h00-08h30	Registration
8h30-9h30	Opening speeches - Abdelhamid El-Zoheiry, president of the Euro-Mediterranean University, MERID Coordinator - Representative of the European Commission
9h30-10h30	Overview of project achievements and results - Project Partners
10h30-11h00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11h00-12h00	Presentation and discussion on the final report “Future EU-ME cooperation opportunities Recommendations for an enhanced EU – Middle East STI cooperation” - George Bonas, CERISS
12h00-12h30	Interventions by the MERID Advisory Board members - Lucila Candela, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Spain - Refaat Chaabouni, Former Minister for Higher Education, Tunisia
12h30-13h00	Final recommendations of the MERID project
13h00-14h00	<i>Lunch</i>
14h00-15h30	Round-table with high-level policy makers and academics on the future of EU-Middle East cooperation 6 panellists/discussants: - 3 from EU - 3 from ME <u>Background paper:</u> Future EU-ME cooperation opportunities Recommendations for an enhanced EU – Middle East STI cooperation”