
Leading House MENA

Luna Iacopini

Head of international affairs, HES-SO



Overview

- Newly established Leading House for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
- 17 countries: Algeria, Bahrein, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
- At present, no bilateral programme exists between Switzerland and any country of the MENA region
- Cooperation between Switzerland and the MENA region remains modest and current bilateral cooperation uses for example the EU framework programmes instruments

MENA region: key features

- The MENA is a diverse region both from an economic and social point of view. Two areas can be identified:
 - Mediterranean countries
 - Gulf countries
- **HE in Mediterranean countries:** challenges related to the massification of higher education such as the increase in the number of university students and the pressure on public budgets available.
- **HE in the Gulf countries:** impressive transformation of the HE system. Three crucial elements: i) the influence of the Western research university model, ii) the emergence of private universities and iii) the encouragement of study abroad programs

Identification of priority countries

- Given the diversity and the great number of countries included in the MENA region, the first activity of the LHMENA has been to identify its priority countries.
- A survey among the Swiss scientific community has been implemented in order to map the existing scientific collaborations.
- Two set of questionnaires: 1) survey for university administrators; 2) survey for professors and researchers.
- The survey is still ongoing and the results will be available at the beginning of March 2018.

Funding instruments

Instrument	Aim	Description	Timing
Seed money for cooperation with Mediterranean countries	To assess the interest of developing a Mediterranean approach; To initiate larger joint activities or consolidating existing partnerships between Switzerland and the MENA region; To identify key research themes for future activities of the LHMENA.	Mediterranean countries will be the target of this call. The call will be open to any research theme that tackles challenges in the Mediterranean region	The call will be launched in March 2018
Mobility grants for young scientists	To develop collaborations between Swiss HE institutions and partners in the MENA region.	Mobility grants for bachelor, master, PhD students and teaching staff. The mobility must be inscribed in a logic of consolidation of existing scientific collaborations and/or of development of future collaborations between the two institutions involved in the exchange.	The call will be launched in March 2018
Innovation projects	To foster collaboration between academia and professional sectors.	Innovation projects must involve at least a Swiss higher education institution, an academic partner from the MENA region and an actor of the socio-economic sector. Projects eligible for this call may be positioned at various levels along the innovation chain and range from used oriented research to implementation.	The call will be launched at the beginning of 2019

Kick-off workshop

When: Tuesday 6th of March, from 12.30 to 5 pm

Where: HES-SO campus in Delémont

Target: scientists collaborating with the MENA region, international office staff

Registrations: <https://www.hes-so.ch/fr/mena-event-11179.html>

Thank you for your attention

luna.iacopini@hes-so.ch