



Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo
Mediterranean Universities Union
Union des Universités de la Méditerranée
إتحاد الجامعات المتوسطية

UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union, founded in October 1991, is an association of Universities from Mediterranean basin countries (www.uni-med.net). It counts 124 associated Universities coming from 23 countries of both shores of Mediterranean (data updated to July 2019).

Contributing Libyan Universities



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LIBYA RESTART: A JOURNEY ANALYSIS

PAVING THE WAY FOR COOPERATION AND INNOVATION IN NORTH AFRICA

Libya Restart is the result of UNIMED's research activity on the Libyan Higher Education System, a collaborative work done with our Libyan colleagues and friends. The report wants to be the first brick to build on for more cooperation between Libyan Universities and the Higher Education Institutions in Europe and beyond, to allow Libyan academics, administrative and students to benefit from international training and mobility, gaining new skills for a new country. We are ready. Hope you are too.

WHY LIBYA RESTART?

Since 2014 UNIMED has committed its work to support Higher Education Institutions in crisis emergencies, promoting cooperation as a priority, through capacity building, mobility, exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge. In this long journey, we learnt that Universities can play a decisive role in easing the crises, in rebuilding competencies and shaping the future of countries. This is particularly true in the case of Libya. UNIMED has firstly approached Libya in 2015 through an Erasmus+ funded project, while now our engagement in the country absorbs a great share of activities and initiatives. In our opinion and due to our experience, Universities in Libya can really make the difference through empowerment and collaboration, being the University considered as a key player for stability by the local population. In 2018 UNIMED decided to launch the Libya Restart project, an institutional initiative aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the Libyan Higher Education System, through a research activity performed jointly by UNIMED staff and Libyan colleagues. We spent one year collecting and analyzing data and documentation, discussing results with our friends in Libya, sharing ideas, making mistakes, finding alternative sources and interpretations. Libya Restart is the concrete result of our work

METHODOLOGY

The objective of the Libya Restart report is to generate an overview over the Higher Education System in Libya. The research has been structured along three phases: a quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis and a validation process by Libyan partners. UNIMED submitted a survey to 18 Libyan Universities, 16 responded. Universities were selected for their size and relevance at national level; their geographical distribution; to generate a balance between partners involved and not involved in EU funded projects; to involve universities already in contact with UNIMED.

LIST OF PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES

- ✓ University of Zawia
- ✓ Misurata University
- ✓ Sirte University
- ✓ University of El Mergib
- ✓ Sabratha University
- ✓ Sebha University
- ✓ Libyan International Medical University
- ✓ University of Benghazi
- ✓ The University of Ajdabiya
- ✓ Omar Al-Mukhtar University
- ✓ Bani Waleed University
- ✓ University of Gharyan
- ✓ University of Tripoli
- ✓ University of Aljufra
- ✓ Libyan Academy
- ✓ Al Asmarya Islamic University



1 Students statistics at national level (Data from Ministry of Education)



Students in public universities:
graduate level **450.883**

Students in public universities:
post-graduate level **9.299**

2 University mission and strategy

✓ The university mission in Libyan HEIs is not formally defined at the national level. The real challenge is allowing universities to benefit from a national policy and a comprehensive strategy, on which they can define their own strategic institutional plans.

✓ With regards to the selection of decision-makers in the university bodies, the current system for assignment of responsibility positions is the nomination.

University autonomy

✓ University's academic autonomy in Libyan HEIs is relatively low: programmes and curricula are developed and approved by departments and faculties at first, but all the decisions in academic matters must be later approved by the Ministry of Education.

✓ University's financial autonomy is limited in managing and allocating the financial resources available.

3 Quality system

✓ The HE system in Libya has seen rapid developments. To avoid institutional fragmentation and a declining quality in research and teaching, the process of improvement and expansion of the capacity of Libyan Universities must include a well-functioning quality assurance system as a key component.

✓ According to the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions (NCQAA) all Universities in the country should have a Quality Office, to develop a culture of quality assurance at the institution. Despite that, in some Universities it has not been established yet, or it is not fully operative.

✓ Quality Assurance is mostly applied in regards to administrative and financial matters, rather than to teaching/learning practices and methodologies.

4 Libyan universities international dimension

166 international agreements

Mainly with HEIs in Egypt, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Turkey, Jordan.

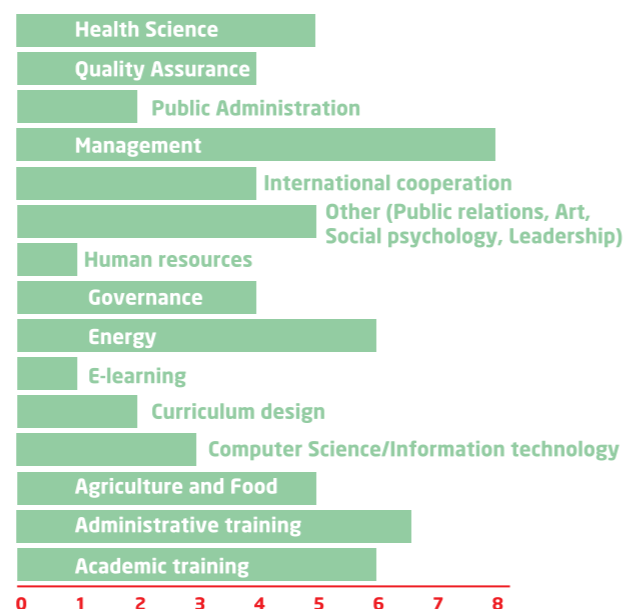
6204 students abroad

Travelling to other Arab countries (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan), to Europe (Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal), to USA and Canada, to Asia (specifically to Malaysia).

Increasing international participation

In 2015-2016 six Erasmus projects running involving Libya, with 32 planned mobilities.

5 Most relevant skills in need of Capacity Building actions



6 Future research lines for Higher Education



MEDICINE AND MEDICAL SCIENCES



ENGINEERING



ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES



HUMANITIES

7 Number of BA, MA, PhD offered in Libya (Data from Ministry of Education)

Academic programmes in public universities: graduate level **1.263**

Academic programmes in public universities: post-graduate **354**

Academic programmes in private universities: graduate level **53**

Universities with post-graduate programmes **12**

Faculties with post-graduate programmes **71**

Departments with post-graduate programmes (M.Sc.) **367**

Departments with post-graduate programmes (Ph.D.) **43**

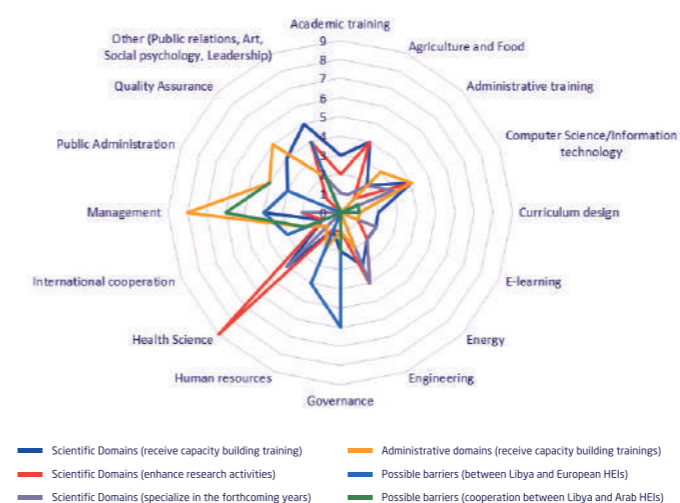
Departments with post-graduate programmes in Humanities **206**

Departments with post-graduate programmes in Applied Sciences **158**

Departments with post-graduate programmes in Medical Sciences **46**

8 Future Strategies for the development of Higher Education

On a scale of priority from 0 to 10



9 Research and cooperation with industry and civil society

✓ Research quality and quantity of the Libyan universities are less competitive compared to international universities, but also compared to other North African countries.

✓ One of the main needs for Libyan HEIs in the area of research is establishing research priorities, by promoting specialization strategies within universities and supporting the existing research centres.

✓ Respondents pointed out the lack of expertise and qualified human resources (academic and administrative staff), calling for training programs for staff members.

✓ Our findings show a certain inability of Libyan Universities to provide data on the unemployment rate of their graduates, as it varies between 4% to 90%. The employability issue is not yet a priority for HE, mainly due to a lack of strategy and tools.

✓ The relationship between university and industry should be strengthened through by a win/win approach, with the support of the Ministry of Education.

✓ The third mission of universities should be enhanced, as the University has a crucial role in serving the community.

10 Crisis as opportunity for change: the role of Libyan Universities

Libyan Universities appear to be among the main reliable actors in the country after the civil war, and one of the few, if not the only, able to survive the political division between East and West. Citizens perception of Higher Education Institutions is that Universities are hubs for development and innovation, sources of employment, peace contributors.

Interestingly enough, the ongoing crisis is perceived by local Universities as an opportunity rather than a limitation: the perception of an increased autonomy, new possibilities provided in the framework of EU funded projects, new relations created after years of isolation, all represent an added value with respect to the past dictatorship.

Libyan academics have proved to be proactive and problem-solving oriented, willing to access the new opportunities available in and for the country, with particular attention to international cooperation activities.