EU signs financing agreements with Algeria for € 58 million of European grants

The European Union and Algeria have signed three financing agreements – for grants worth a total € 58 million – on the protection of cultural heritage, support for reform in the transport sector and support for youth employment. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the Commission, signed the agreements on behalf of the European Union in Algiers on Tuesday, 6 November.

High Representative/Vice President Catherine Ashton said: "Our relationship with Algeria is extremely important to the EU. The three agreements we have just signed are also a manifestation of just how important this relationship is: it is so crucial to support young people seeking employment and we cannot underestimate the importance of protecting our cultural heritage, while supporting a transport strategy is crucial for developing the economy with the infrastructure it needs."

The agreements, signed on the Algerian side by Foreign Minister Mourad Medelci, are the following:

**CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Support programme for the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage in Algeria (€ 21.5 million). This programme supports priority actions for heritage identification through the creation of site inventories in twelve pilot Wilayas (administrative provinces). It will help heritage become a tool for economic and human development in Algeria. It will use tools for the protection and development of cultural heritage, notably by restoring three historical heritage sites. Through an inclusive approach, the project aims to develop employment opportunities for unskilled young people, especially through apprenticeships and on-site learning projects.
TRANSPORT

The 2nd Support programme in the transport sector (€ 13 million) will contribute to the implementation of the new transport strategy in Algeria. It will support the updating of relevant legislation and regulations, as well as the modernisation of the Ministry of Transport. Special attention will be given to the improvement of transport security and regulation, and to the improvement of the skills of all professionals involved. This new programme will support the strengthening of the country's sector strategy, the implementation of the National Transport Plan, the integration with EU safety regulations and the improvement of the Meteorological Service on behalf of the aviation and maritime sectors.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Youth Employment Support Programme (€ 23.5 million): This programme was developed as part of the EU response to regional social and political events. Through this programme, the EU aims at supporting government and civil society efforts to fight youth unemployment and reinforce the role of young people in society. It will reinforce central and local institutional capacities and will finance NGO projects in support of the professional integration of young people. The programme will promote activities in four pilot Wilayas, integrating the efforts locally of institutions and NGOs. It will create local one-stop shops for young job-seekers and will also support projects in the area of Social, Innovative and Solidarity Economy, to be implemented by institutions and civil society, to reinforce local action on social cohesion.

For more information: