

PRESS RELEASE



Brussels, 18/02/2010

Mediterranean Civil Society mobilised to create opportunities for human development through valorising Cultural Heritage: Regional Conference of Euromed Heritage 4 programme - Palermo, Italy, 24-25 February 2010

The Mediterranean region is extremely rich in cultural heritage, a large venue for the implementation of social and economic activities leading to the improvement of living conditions within local communities. Some 100 actors from civil society entities, national authorities and professionals in the field of cultural heritage, youth, education and tourism will gather in Palermo to create opportunities for human development through revitalising cultural heritage in the region.

Examples of actions undertaken within Euromed Heritage 4 and other initiatives in the Mediterranean region will animate the conference. Among them:

- re-appropriation of the Slaughter Houses in Casablanca, Morocco;
- museums as centres for the production of educational activities involving young people and local groups in Jordan and Lebanon;
- development of cultural trails based on local communities' needs in Algeria, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Spain, Syria, Tunisia;
- women as protagonists in transforming cultural heritage opportunities into lucrative activities (Egypt, Morocco, Syria).

As Jean Louis Ville, in charge of Centralised Operations for Europe, Mediterranean and Middle East at the European Commission, states: *"Cultural Heritage is a powerful drive for the Mediterranean region. To strengthen human development through culture, sustainable tourism, and environment related activities is feasible and the European Union is strongly committed to involving civil societies in this process"*.

The conference, funded by the European Union, is organised by the Euromed Heritage IV programme in partnership with CERISDI-Centro Ricerche e Studi Direzionali in Palermo.

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A programme implemented by the RMSU for the EH 4 programme

This project is funded by the European Union

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".