



Support key areas of reform through expertise, training and peer-to-peer networking

Together with the partner countries the Council of Europe has identified and targeted key Programme intervention areas³, also based on the Organisation's unique experience in the support of democratic transformations that took place in Central and Eastern Europe, after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Strengthening the independence and efficiency of the judicial system, promoting good governance through fight against corruption, money laundering and terrorism and promoting regional cooperation and exchange of best practices between the Southern Mediterranean countries in the field of human rights, Rule of law and democracy are among the priorities of the South Programme II.

Beyond targeted legislative expertise, the South Programme II provides opportunities for training, and exchanges on a peer-to-peer basis through the various Council of Europe networks (intergovernmental and conventional committees, partial and enlarged partial agreements etc).

These formal networks of the Council of Europe aim to boost regional exchanges so as to expand the impact and sustainability of the programme.

3. The Council of Europe concluded Neighbourhood Partnerships (2015-2017) with Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan, whose activities are funded by the South Programme, other Joint Programmes and voluntary contributions from CoE member states. The Neighbourhood Partnerships were adopted by the CoE Committee of Ministers, February 4, 2015. http://www.coe.int/t/cm/News/1218Deputies_en.asp

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TOWARDS STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN

South Programme II (2015-2017)

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

Legislative expertise
Institution building
Peer-to-peer networks

Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean



Funded
by the European Union



Implemented
by the Council of Europe



TOWARDS STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN

Programme	European Union-Council of Europe joint programme "Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean", South Programme II
Budget	EUR 7,370 Million
Funding	European Union (EU) EUR 7 M Council of Europe (CoE) EUR 370 000
Duration	2015 – 2017 (36 months)
Beneficiary countries	Southern Mediterranean Region ¹
Programme Implementation	Council of Europe (CoE)

Supporting human rights, the Rule of law and democracy in the countries of the Southern Mediterranean: a priority for the South Programme

Following the events in the Southern Mediterranean since 2011, the question of strengthening democratic governance has become central to the region. Several countries in the Southern Mediterranean have, thus, initiated major structural reform projects aimed at establishing new constitutional and legislative frameworks, supporting new democratic governance bodies and protecting and promoting human rights, the Rule of law and democratic values.

1. Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian National Authority, Tunisia (the bilateral cooperation between the European Union and the Syrian authorities is suspended since 2011)

Since 2012, the partnership established between the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Southern Mediterranean countries in the frame of the South Programme has enabled to support the process of democratic reform in Europe's Southern Neighbourhood, whilst meeting the demand of partner countries in the region. This support is built around legislative expertise in the areas of competence of the Council of Europe, institutional capacity building and strengthened regional cooperation around the universal values of human rights, Rule of law and democracy, which are at the heart of the mandate of the Council of Europe, the oldest international organisation in Europe. The South Programme is also underpinned by the European Neighbourhood Policy of the European Union as well as by the Council of Europe's Policy towards its neighbouring regions². The latter provides, at one hand, a framework for political dialogue between the countries concerned and the Council of Europe, and on the other, a framework for cooperation activities between partner countries from the region and the Council of Europe, also aligned with other partners and international donors' activities.

A renewed commitment to democratic governance in the frame of the South Programme II

Based on the results of the South Programme I (2012-2014) and the requests from partner countries, the Council of Europe and the European Union have renewed, in 2014, their commitment to support the process of democratic consolidation in the countries of the Southern Mediterranean.

The second edition of the South Programme (2015-2017) aims specifically to:

- ▶ support the **constitutional processes** in the Southern Mediterranean countries and the development of new **legislative frameworks**. Besides, this support covers the establishment and the functioning of **democratic governance structures and independent institutions that protect and promote human rights**;
- ▶ promote the creation and consolidation of a **common legal space** between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean based on the conventions of the Council of Europe and other European and international standards;

2. [https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=SG/Inf\(2011\)7&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=rev2&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogg ed=FDC864](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=SG/Inf(2011)7&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=rev2&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogg ed=FDC864)

- ▶ **promote regional cooperation in the areas of human rights, the Rule of law and democracy**, through the creation and support of formal and informal networks between Europe and southern countries of the Mediterranean, as well as within the region.

A flexible and dynamic cooperation framework, based on the demand, priorities and characteristics of partner countries

South Programme II is built around long-term strategic objectives. Its flexibility allows it to respond effectively to new challenges and support new lines of reform in the Southern Mediterranean. Furthermore, the Council of Europe focuses on developing synergies with other programmes of the European Union and other international organisations working in the field of democratic governance in the region.

The operational offices established by the Council of Europe in Rabat and Tunis have played a key role in the implementation of programme's activities in both countries since their opening. The offices contribute in particular to a better coordination of cooperation activities with national authorities, the Delegations of the European Union and other international donors in the field.

The ownership by national stakeholders of programme's activities is at the heart of South Programme II. Bilateral and regional **Steering Committees**, bringing together representatives of partner countries, the Council of Europe and the European Union, assess and guide the implementation of the Programme.

A regional programme for the Southern Mediterranean

The South Programme II works specifically with **Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan**, as well as in other Southern Mediterranean countries, bringing specific Council of Europe expertise based on their demand and supporting a greater regional cooperation on topics related to human rights, the Rule of law and democracy. In addition, the programme aims at a progressive involvement of other countries in the region in the formal and informal networks of the Council of Europe.