

EUSEEDS Partners Meet in Beirut to Boost Youth Employability and Digital Skills

On 26-27 November 2025, the 'Agence universitaire de la Francophonie' Middle East gathered all EUSEEDS partners in Beirut for the project's official launch under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme. The hybrid meeting clarified the project's objectives, management procedures and tools, and brought together institutions from six participating countries.



On 26 and 27 November 2025, the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) in the Middle East brought together all partners of the EUSEEDS project - *Enable, Upgrade and Spread Employability, Entrepreneurship and Digital Skills* - at the Francophone Employability Center in Beirut. This meeting, organised as part of the official launch of the project co-funded by the European Union through the Interreg NEXT MED Programme, aimed to strengthen partners' ownership of the project and its management procedures.

This two-day hybrid gathering enabled partners to deepen their shared understanding of the objectives, management procedures and operational tools of the project. Participating institutions included: the Center for Social Innovation (Cyprus), Enroot (Egypt), Aix-Marseille University (France), Jordan Youth Innovation Forum (Jordan), Forward Digital MENA

(Lebanon), and the Palestine Information and Communications Technology Incubator - PICTI (Palestine).



The first day opened with remarks by Jean-Noël Baléo, Regional Director of AUF Middle East; Alessandra Viezzer, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon; Pascale Assaad, Project Management and Monitoring Expert at the Joint Secretariat of the Interreg NEXT MED Programme; and Mohamad Itani, National Contact Point for the programme in Lebanon. Their speeches reiterated the ambition of EUSEEDS: to enhance youth employability, as well as digital and entrepreneurial skills, by creating or strengthening twenty university centres across five Eastern Mediterranean countries.

Facilitated by AUF, the discussions combined a roundtable between partners, a general presentation of the project, and a session dedicated to financial aspects, including eligible costs and procurement rules. Participants also worked on communication-related components, such as EU visibility requirements, programme guidelines, the communication plan, the project's website, visual identity, social media, and green communication principles.

The work sessions then focused on project reporting, expenditure verification and monitoring indicators. Partners were introduced to several key implementation tools, including the Jems platform, SharePoint and various collaborative systems. A presentation of Forward MENA's Nammiskills platform showcased the digital resources that will support the project's activities, while a focus on the Interreg Volunteer Youth (IVY) initiative highlighted opportunities for engaging young volunteers.



Lead Partner



Partners

Finally, the first Steering Committee, held in an extended format, helped detail the working groups, clarify the partners' respective roles, review ongoing and upcoming short-term activities, and adjust the overall action plan, including communication and budget components.

This two-day meeting laid the foundations for strong and coherent collaboration among partners. EUSEEDS is now entering its operational phase, which will see the deployment of university centres, the launch of training activities, and the gradual implementation of actions designed to strengthen young people's skills and opportunities across five countries in the region.

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