



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

THE PAM ACADEMIC PLATFORM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

ORIGIN AND OBJECTIVES

PAM, as part of its role as the leading international parliamentary organization in the Mediterranean region, promoting cooperation and dialogue among Member States, has established an Academic Platform with the aim to facilitate interaction among key actors in the fields of higher education and research. These include national parliaments, universities, research centres and the productive sector.

Early in 2008, PAM adopted the “Fez Programme”, which builds on a series of activities in the field of higher education aimed at fostering mutual cooperation and understanding amongst PAM Member States as a whole region. It envisages, inter alia, the organization of meetings between PAM MPs, the productive sector, professors, researchers and students.

The PAM Academic Platform is a mechanism, which gathers, around the same table, stakeholders of different sectors, who can benefit from each other’s expertise in a goal-oriented manner, with the purpose of providing MPs with the state of the art information on key issues and, on the other hand, provide Academia and the productive sector with direct access to decision makers.

The PAM Academic Platform promotes knowledge transfer within the region with the following objectives:

- Creation of a regional knowledge exchange mechanism;
- Stimulation of regional cooperation among parliamentarians, Academia, and productive sector representatives;
- Facilitate mobility for professors and students in the Mediterranean region;
- Offer a hub enabling stakeholders to draw upon top expertise for activities on specific topics;
- Identify stakeholders’ areas of excellence

DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

On 12 December 2014, the PAM Platform was launched on the occasion of an International Conference hosted by the Rector of the University of Catania (Italy). This meeting was intended to define the basics of the mechanism; to establish first contacts; propose projects and schedule future steps of the Platform; draw up a preliminary list of participants and partners, and specify their availability for future collaboration; build a working group focused on the issues of students’ mobility; set up a list of priorities for the future work-plan; delegate a focal point for each stakeholder, to simplify the communication and coordination of the project.

After the inaugural event in Catania, the Platform is serving as a basic structure, which simplifies and speeds up the process of networking for stakeholders by providing them with the required information through a continuously updated database comprising all participants, existing networks, their projects and mutual agreements. Stakeholders therefore quickly and easily find out who and how to approach in order to find the best possible partner for their activities.

As part of their mandate, PAM MPs and the Secretariat are contributing to the academic sector by offering their knowledge to researchers, PhD and Master students, who gain practical information for their studies. This allows access to the decision makers' wealth of knowledge.

Furthermore, thanks to the Platform's mapping of the regional centres of excellence, PAM and MPs are drawing upon the academic world, in order to strengthen the scientific background of their activities at a National and regional level. Moreover, since the launch the Platform, a number of its members have been actively contributing to various events organized/attended by PAM.

PAM has also successfully signed a number of agreement protocols granting university students internship programs at PAM HQ with the following universities:

- Bocconi University;
- University of Catania;
- University of Florence;
- University of Ljubljana;
- University of Malta;
- University of Naples 'Federico II';
- University of Salerno / Project Evaluation Laboratory
- University of Siena;
- University of Sorbonne, Paris/Villefranche-sur-Mere;
- GID – Inter-academic Group for Development;
- MISTRALS – Mediterranean Integrated Studies at Regional and Local Scales

Furthermore, PAM has facilitated the granting of scholarships by the Republic of Slovenia to the nationals of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Tunisian Republic. The awarded scholarships cover master or doctoral programs offered by higher education institutions in the Slovenian Republic. The total value of these scholarships amounts to EUR 200,000¹.

On the occasion of the Workshop on the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), organized under the auspices of PAM by Project Evaluation Laboratory of the University of Salerno and the University of Shanghai, and with contributions of other universities and international institutions, on 27-29 March 2018 in Salerno, participants agreed to establish a program bringing together individuals and academic centres around the Mediterranean region to carry out research, education and business on the BRI Initiative, within the PAM Academic Platform.

This project is to link universities, organisations and companies interested in BRI in Southern Europe and the MENA region, serving as a platform to carry out research and offer postgraduate education on economics and related fields. PAM entrusted PEL/University of Salerno with the task of implementing the relevant academic and educational actions concerning the BRI initiative. The University of Salerno and the University of Shanghai signed an MoU on 26 October 2018 to implement such project.

¹ More information on these scholarships can be obtained from the following link: <http://www.skladkadri.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/Razpisi/129-javni-razpis/129-razpis-Egipt-Tunizija-EN.pdf>