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Co-development: a fruitful innovation

Master's Programme in
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University of Florence



«Master-Class des 2 rives de la Méditerranée»

Obstacles et opportunités pour la Coopération Territoriale
entre les rives des bassins méditerranéens:
enjeux contemporains, transmissions et nouveaux
instruments d'action

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What is “co-development”?

“Co-development” is an innovative method of international cooperation which aims to promote co-responsibility choices by the cooperation actors (donors and recipients). This can happen firstly through the recognition of the centrality of migrants, their communities and associations as "development actors" in the territories of origin.

The inclusion of diasporas (the migrants' community) within co-development lies in the recent growing attention to the link between migration and development.





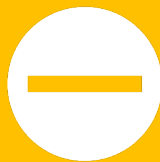
The European Union's migration policy and development cooperation



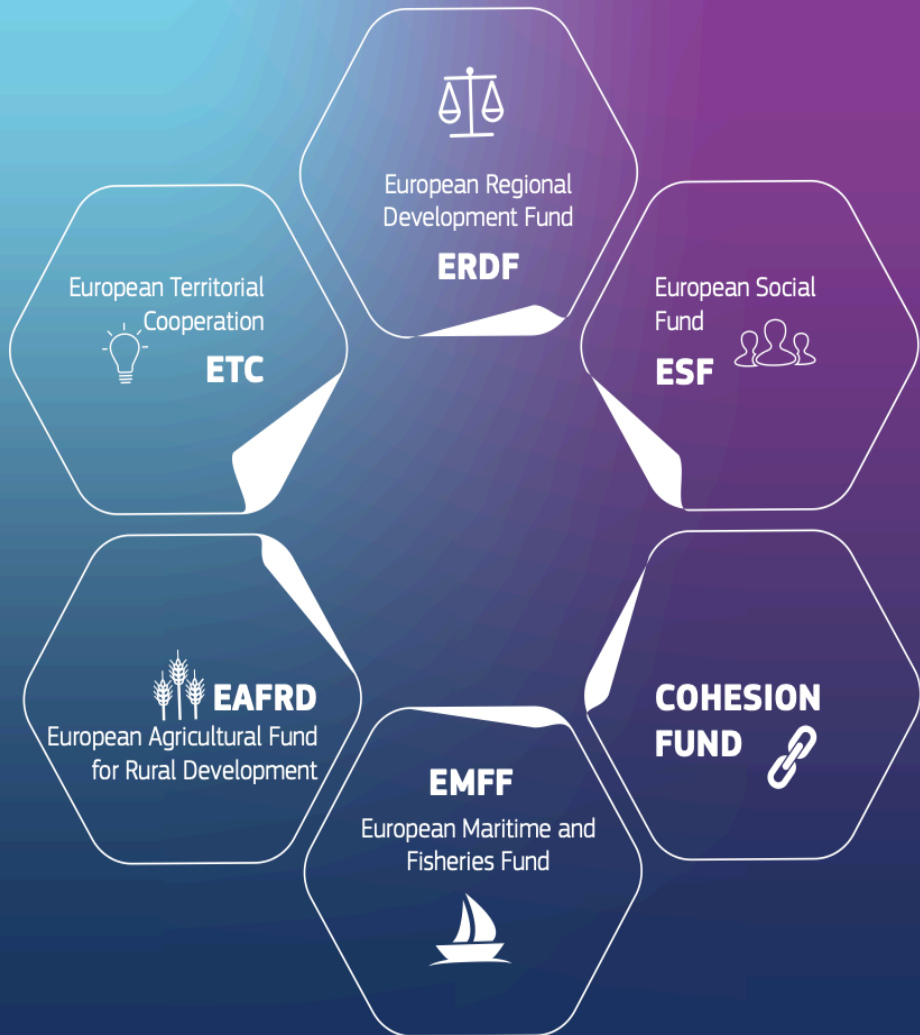
The European Union supports developing countries by promoting their sustainable development, a field in which it is the major global player.



For the current MFF (2014-2020) 82 billion euros have been made available for development, equal to more than half of the global commitment.



Nevertheless, EU's potential is still far to be fully exploited.



Instruments for De-centralized Cooperation and Co-Development in the Mediterranean

The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) are the main financial instruments of the regional policy of the Union, whose aim is to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion by reducing the gap between the most advanced and the least developed regions. The most important are:

- European Social Fund (ESF), which supports employment projects across Europe and invests in the human capital;
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which promotes balanced development in the various regions of the EU and finances European and neighbourhood cooperation programs in the Mediterranean (ENI MED and Italy/Tunisia).

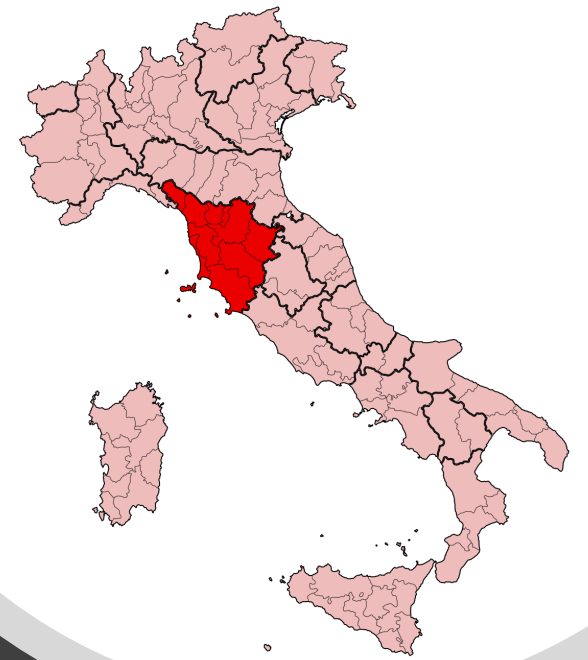
Of particular note, for the support it can offer to decentralized cooperation and co-development is one of the EU's Territorial and Neighborhood Cooperation programs called ENI CBC MED, which concerns precisely the Mediterranean area. The program is aimed at promoting fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development, conducive to cross-border integration and which enhances the territories and values of the regions or sub-regional areas bordering the Mediterranean.



The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) is an important fund managed directly by the European Commission. Through project calls, tenders, direct grants, and delegated agreements, numerous projects on the reception and integration of migrants are implemented in European states in close collaboration with the countries of origin of migratory flows, including all those of the southern shore of the Mediterranean.



The **Region of Tuscany** promotes and supports numerous decentralized cooperation projects in the Mediterranean and encourages participation in the cooperation programs of all subjects of Tuscan society, local authorities, universities, civil society actors and private individuals, in close collaboration with government cooperation and the scope of EU cooperation programs and international organizations and also attaching an important role to co-development as an innovative, albeit still experimental, approach to relations between local actors on both sides.



REGIONE TOSCANA



Study cases: Futur-Proche project and the Global Health Centre of Region of Tuscany

The interviews with Alice Concari and Dr. Maria José Caldes, respectively coordinator for the Project Futur-Proche¹⁴ and manager for the Centro Salute Globale¹⁵ (Global Health Centre) for Tuscany Region, have highlighted how the co-development approach, realized by the Region through the involvement of both local and national actors, have found fertile ground in Tunisia.

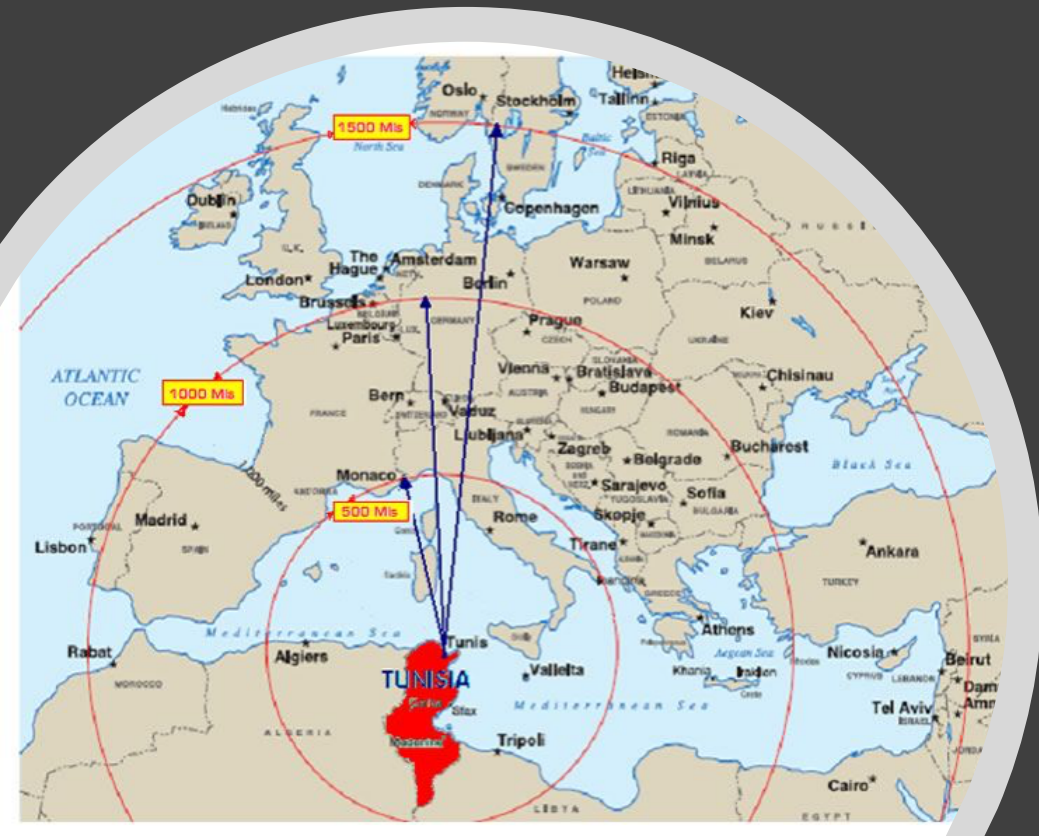


DÉVELOPPEMENT LOCAL ET SERVICES DÉCENTRALISÉS
POUR LA DURABILITÉ ET LA CITOYENNETÉ ACTIVE EN TUNISIE





Tunisia has always been a strategic partner for Italy and the EU, given its geographic proximity and its importance as a partner in migration management. Given its political stability if compared to neighbouring countries, Tunisia is also an important economic partner for Italy, indeed it hosts an Italian community composed of entrepreneurs, intellectuals and co-development actors. Both the interviewees agree on the fact that the successful implementation of their respective projects has been possible given the Tunisian level of development in economic and social terms.



Futur-Proche

The Futur-Proche project, financed by the Tuscany Region and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, was launched in 2017 with the aim to promote the administrative decentralization, strengthening of governance and of local Tunisian institutions. The project focuses on the development of a sustainable local economy and on facilitating the participation of entrepreneurs in the market.



ZERO WASTE SYSTEM



The cooperation between ANCI Toscana and ANCI Tunisia is the most efficient way to achieve the objectives of support for decentralization with reference to the issues of waste disposal, urban development and citizen participation. The relevant elements of the project from the point of view of co-development understood as peer cooperation, are given by the fact that:

- Tunisia now appears to have a very advanced and, in some respects, more innovative law on decentralization than the Italian one;
- Tunisian municipal territories, in listing their development programs and the political agenda of the local leaders, have strongly focused on the 17 Sustainable and Development Goals set out by the United Nations;
- The common interest in the circular economy as an innovative engine for local development and the fight against climate change (Municipality of Capannori).

Centro Salute Globale

A project realized in 2007 by the region, which main aim is to strengthen citizens healthcare, in particular for women and children, in the countries in which the region operates.

The CSG works on international healthcare cooperation through the network of Tuscany's healthcare companies. Among the tasks of the Centre there's also granting healthcare for migrants passing through Tuscany, those who came from the Southern shore of Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Africa.



During the realization of co-development projects, a crucial part is the involvement of migrants residing in Italy whose native regions is affected by specific projects of cooperation. This involvement is crucial as it allows to establish a direct bridge between the two countries involved, indeed, knowing the culture and the language of a given places plays in favour to such approach.

- In the healthcare sector the CSG, in the behalf of the Futur-Proche project, took care of co-training actions and of the training of nurses and doctors in the peripheral Kasserine Governorate. A specific attention has been also reserved to an encouragement of decentralization and to the management of health facilities and structures.
- Another great opportunity concerns the exchange of information and knowledge about tropical diseases and unusual illnesses, not widespread in Italy but epidemiologically important in Tunisia.

Conclusions

Considering the mentioned examples, the co-development practices and the related elements seem to be the right path to be followed for what concerns both the practice of forms of cooperation between equals and the valorisation of the active role of migrant communities. Although perceived as a positive practice, however, it presents some limits, as previously stated. A challenge for the future cooperation between the two sides of the Mediterranean is to multiply the experiences in this field while working on criticalities in order to contain and prevent them.



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