



MSCAdvocacy

Promotion plan 1

MSCA promotion landscape

Key promotion players and potential: Egypt



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This promotion plan (as of February 2023) includes country- and region-specific information, as well as a description of MSCA promotion actors, the type of activities they implement, and an overview of facts and figures regarding participation in the European Union's Horizon2020 (2014–2020) and Horizon Europe (2021–2027) Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation. Gaps and challenges in promoting MSCA are identified.

The information provided is based on desk research carried out by the responsible country liaison officers, as well as on information obtained through direct contacts with key stakeholders such as MSCA National Contact Points, ministry officials in charge of research and innovation, international offices at universities or information relays (EURAXESS Worldwide, MSCA Alumni, etc.) and desk officers at the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture.

An update of this promotion plan as well as more information on Egypt and 19 other countries and 6 other regions are also available on the MSCAdvocacy website.

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MSCA Promotion Plan – Egypt

Country-specific information

S&T cooperation between Egypt and the European Union (EU) has been consolidated with the Science and Technology (S&T) Agreement signed by both parties in 2005. From the first meeting of the Joint European Commission (EC)-Egypt Committee that took place in July 2006, until the most recent one that has taken place in November 2021, cooperation has been focused and promoted in areas strategic to the EU as well as Egypt and the entire Mediterranean Region:

- food and agriculture
- biotechnology
- energy
- environment
- health
- blue economy

In the last S&T joint committee meeting Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) was not explicitly addressed whereas participation in opportunities under ERC was encouraged.

The EU and Egypt are engaged in Research and Innovation (R&I) cooperation at different levels: European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) and BLUEMED initiative. The country is actively engaged in the policy dialogue in the framework of EU-Africa High level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) R&I regional platform. R&I cooperation between Egypt and the EU will receive a further impulse under the Partnership Priorities¹, endorsed during the EU-Egypt Association Council meeting on 19 June 2022. Particularly interesting is the number of priority areas whose development would rely on increased research and innovation collaboration, where MSCA could contribute:

- smart mobility
- automated and electronic mobility
- digitalisation
- artificial intelligence
- cybersecurity
- green economy, including sustainable development of the agricultural and water sectors

Since the 7th EU-Egypt Association Committee meeting on 5 October 2021 in Cairo, there has been an expression of interest of Egypt to start informal exchanges in relation to a potential association to Horizon Europe (HEU), which would potentially increase the participation opportunities in all the programme parts, including MSCA. Egypt is making progress in cooperation under the Partnership for Research and Innovation

¹ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-2803-2022-ADD-1/en/pdf> [31.01.2023]



in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA), as well as cooperation prospects under HEU, particularly under the Africa Initiative and Mediterranean Initiative.

Egypt's Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) strategy 2030² has a clear emphasis on international collaboration and especially EU collaboration. It participated in a number of co-fund initiatives to consolidate this collaboration (i.e Germany).

To increase researchers' participation, incentives were created by introducing a set of legislative measures to support an enabling environment for R&I. This seems to be working as the number of peer-reviewed publications and citations has significantly increased.

MSCA promotion actors in Egypt

- Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research: It is the entity that appoints NCPs in the country, which, therefore, could foster and help them to promote MSCA, and be a major point of reference for MSCA promotion
- MSCA National Contact Point (NCP): recently appointed, Mr. Arm Radwan
- EU Delegation in Egypt: The Delegation supported the organisation of events to raise awareness on H2020 and is now committed to support HEU, as the event held in Cairo for the Mediterranean Initiative, jointly with the UfM, has shown³.
- Science and Technology development fund (STDF): created by the Ministry of Scientific Research, the STDF has funded outstanding research paper, formed scientific partnerships with researchers from advanced countries and has already organised a workshop and info session on PRIMA proposal writing. Against this background, the STDF's participation in MSCA promotion could represent an important added value.
- EURAXESS AFRICA: it organises MSCA targeted webinars.
- MSCA-Net: provides support material for NCPs.

Promotion of MSCA in Egypt

Between 2019 and 2022, no specific events targeting MSCA have been organised in Egypt. Promotion has mainly relied on EURAXESS Africa webinars organisation and no data on the number of participants from Egypt or the type of participating organisations has been obtained at this stage (although requested several times).

An important event "International Cooperation in Research and Innovation (R&I) for Mediterranean resilience – Launch of Mediterranean Initiative: HEU WP 2023-2024" took place in Cairo on 30 January 2023, where the Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) held a specific promotion session on MSCA, with a focus on Researchers Mobility and Career development. This represented an occasion for networking with stakeholders attending (research, business, policy makers, info relays) and for further discussing related initiatives.

² http://mohesr.gov.eg/en-us/Documents/sr_strategy.pdf [27.02.2023]

³ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/egypt/launch-mediterranean-initiative-under-horizon-europe_en [27.02.2023]



Participation of Egypt – Facts and Figures

In the frame of H2020, Egypt participated in twelve MSCA funded projects, all Research & Innovation Staff Exchange Actions. In H2020, ten research organisations participated in MSCA, with Cairo University, The Agricultural Research Centre, Zewail City of Science & Technology recording two participations each.

As for scientific fields, the majority of MSCA projects are in agriculture, climate change, energy, health, information, communication and space technology, sustainable mobility.

Only three organisations participating in MSCA are included in the top 20 entities reported in the SCImago ranking, an indicator of excellence for participating entities. 85% of Egypt's top 20 research entities have not participations in MSCA (17 organisations), making them targets for a strategic MSCA promotion campaign: National Research Centre, Ain Shams University, Mansoura University, Alexandria University, Suez Canal University, Minia University, Suez University, Menoufia University, Egyptian Petroleum Research Institute, Zagazig University, Assiut University, Beni Suef University, Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology, Al-Azhar University, Tanta University, Fayoum University, Future University In Egypt.

The private sector is missing, although, according to the Strategy 2030, there are over 4,000 full-time researchers in the private sector. However, the Industrial Council for Technology and Innovation, the operating arm of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, governs twelve technology and innovation centres specialized in different industrial sectors, which could have a strong interest in participating in MSCA. Hence, this entity's governing position could be ideal for guaranteeing the MSCA promotion in all of these centres.

Concerning Erasmus+ Capacity Building of Higher Education (CBHE), between 2015 and 2019 Egypt has been involved in 38 selected projects while eight had an Egyptian organisation as a coordinator. It should be noted that Egypt's research cooperation performs in Erasmus+ at levels similar to MSCA and some entities participating in it have not participated in MSCA, representing promotion targets: Helwan University, The American University in Cairo, Alexandria University.

Concerning near neighbour country participation in running COST actions, Egypt appears in 43 actions running and concluded¹⁰. An in-depth review of the institutions participating in those networks could help to highlight more research entities to involve in a more capillary MSCA promotion campaign.

Gaps and challenges

- A more active role of MSCA NCP: Egypt only recently appointed a MSCA NCP, which is part of the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology. In the previous three years no country specific MSCA promotion events had been carried out. Making sure that the MSCA NCP receives the necessary network support from EURAXESS Africa, MSCA-Net and MCAA Middle East chapter is significant for progress in promotion.
- Targeting excellent research players: the top 20 entities in the SCImago ranking are suitable targets for future promotion, as well as Erasmus+ and COST participants with no participations in MSCA. Also, considering the thematic priorities of bilateral cooperation, identification of poles of excellence in some of those scientific areas should also drive the organisation of future events (technology, digitalization, engineering, pharmaceuticals, energy, etc.)
- A shift from a prevailing choice of Staff Exchange actions to other actions like the DN should be considered, with more Action-targeted events and also the involvement of MCAA Middle East chapter for sharing the experience of previous MSCA doctoral networks participants



- Joint promotion events: MSCA NCPs, Erasmus+ national focal point and COST focal point could cooperate in a more coordinated way and organize joint promotion events with specific sessions of MSCA during Erasmus+ and COST events, due to the role those 2 programmes play in terms of scientific networks establishment and higher education scientific cooperation.
- Private sector needs targeted promotion to be involved: MSCA NCP can cooperate with SME NCP, for targeting poles of innovation, technological parks and involve young entrepreneurs and private sector researchers.



Useful Links

For more information & learn how to get involved in the [EU-Egypt R&I cooperation](#)

Visit the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions website](#) to explore all the opportunities offered by the programme

[Contact of Egyptian MSCA NCP](#) who can provide information on the programme and help applicants develop their projects

[EURAXESS Africa](#) provides support services for professional researchers, including hosting offers, PhD and postdoctoral vacancies funded by the MSCA

Join the [Africa Chapter of the Marie Curie Alumni Association](#) and the [Middle East Chapter of the Marie Curie Alumni Association](#) to communicate, to share, to help, and to get help

[Support](#) for existing and future MSCA National Contact Points



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