

## 6<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean university on youth and global citizenship (MedUni)

### Workshop “youth participation in local governance”

8-10 may 2018, Gammarth, Tunisia



In the framework of the 6th Mediterranean University on Youth and Citizenship (MedUni) which took place in Tunis from 7 to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018, the OECD organised a 3-days capacity-building workshop on “youth participation in local governance”. In partnership with the Tunisian observatory of youth (ONJ) and the Tunisian Institute for Democracy and Development (ITDD). The workshop gathered young participants from Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Slovenia, Spain and Portugal, as well as experts from OECD and a peer from UK.



The workshop was opened by Mr. Habib Koubaa, Director General for Governance and newly elected municipal councillor, and Ms. Imen Belhedi, director of the Tunisian Observatory of Youth.

Featuring dynamic and interactive sessions, the workshop allowed participants to learn more about

mechanisms and tools to foster their participation at the local level. Representatives from national and local councils of Slovenia, Spain and Portugal shared their experiences, and highlighted success stories as well as challenges. The OECD team presented the findings from the 2018 *Youth Stocktaking Report: Engaging and empowering youth in OECD countries – How to bridge the “governance gap”*, and the 5 pillars of **governance arrangements for youth engagement and empowerment**: integrated national youth strategies, strong and coordinated institutions, relevant legal frameworks, mainstreaming a youth perspective in policy-making, and youth engagement.

*“Beyond the casting of a ballot, local youth councils offer a channel for youth participation in decision making” M. Matjasic – President of the Slovenian Youth Council, 9/05/2018*

With a presentation of the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government, Young participants were sensitised to the key principles of Open Government and the tools that can foster youth participation such as participatory decision-making, representation, transparency, responsibility, accountability. They could apply these concepts through practical exercises and group simulations (e.g. setting up of an annual planning of a municipal youth council, mock elections).

*“There are innovative forms of youth participation, and thanks to the interconnectedness of today’s world, we can get inspired by these new means of engagement.” A young participant from Tunisia, 8/05/2018*



In connection with the theme of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the MEDUNI and UN SDG 16: “Peace, Justice and strong institutions”, the workshop highlighted the importance of youth participation at the local level to ensure public services that fully meet the needs of young people and citizens in general.

### **Next steps**

Comparative evidence on youth engagement and empowerment in MENA will be presented at the upcoming regional conference on “youth in Public Life” in autumn 2018 in Tunisia, a project funded by the MENA Transition Fund of the G7 Deauville Partnership.