

PRESS RELEASE

The Tunisian Minister of Higher Education visits the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO to know about the e-learning system

Consolidation of a new cultural space between Italy and Tunisia which by 2009 is called to bring to 20% the rate of university courses that will be delivered at distance

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His Excellency Mr. Lazhar Bououni, the Tunisian Minister of the University, Scientific Research and Technology has visited the headquarters of the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO to get to know the distance model experimented by the Rector, Prof. Maria Amata Garito and discuss about an academic agreement between the universities of both countries. The Tunisian Minister of the University, who yesterday morning met his Italian counterpart, M. Fabio Mussi, has been positively impressed by the educational model based on the Internet and on television: "Italy, thanks to UNINETTUNO University, is the pioneer of distance teaching, confirming its traditional cultural openness toward the Mediterranean Countries giving the possibility of studying in four languages with the best European and Arab professors".

An experience recognised also at international level which Tunisia also wishes to benefit from since the Tunisian Minister revealed: "Our Higher Education Plan calls us to transform into distance courses 20% of the university courses by 2009; UNINETTUNO's experience can help us very much. I invited the Rector, Prof. Garito, to come to Tunisia to meet the Rectors the universities interested in experimenting the distance model and conclude new agreements", concluded the Tunisian Minister who in the following months will host also the Minister of the Italian University, Mr. Fabio Mussi, to continue the bilateral cooperation in higher education field. At UNINETTUNO site, the Minister himself recorded a presentation of the progress of higher education in Tunisia that will be broadcast on Rai NETTUNO Sat 1 satellite television channel for all Countries and Universities of the Mediterranean Area. "In Tunisia – explained the Minister during the presentation – over the last twenty years universities having been increasing tenfold getting to 15 ones comprising 180 faculties. It is a very dynamic world that we hope we will be successful in developing and internationalising by means of agreements with the foreign countries and universities, including Italy with which we have close relationships. Currently fees are almost free; they are about 25 euro per semester".

The Minister has already had the opportunity of getting to know and appreciate the distance education didactic model experimented by Prof. Garito. In fact, Tunisia is one of the 11 partners of the Med Net'U Project, supervised by Consorzio NETTUNO, within which the professors of 31 Universities of the Mediterranean Region realised university video courses and vocational training courses in four languages and common curricula in subjects related to Information and Management Engineering. The Catania Declaration of the 29th January 2006, of which H. E. Mr. Lazhar Bououni is one of the signatories together with the 14 Ministers of the University of the Euromediterranean countries, agreed to *strengthen a distance learning system, by expanding the results attained through the "Med Net'U (Mediterranean Network of Universities) Project, order to encourage the widest possible access to education.*

The International Telematic University UNINETTUNO, established with decree of the Ministry of the University of the 15th April 2005 is today the only distance university in the world where teaching is carried out in French, English and Arabic on the Internet on the didactic portal www.uninettunouniversity.net and on television on Rai NETTUNO Sat 1 satellite television channel.