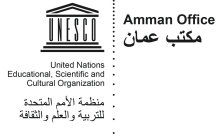




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## Press Release

Amman  
13 November 2017  
FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE

**Amman, 13 November, 2017** – A dynamic event entitled “Transforming Access to Education” was held in cooperation with the UNESCO Amman Office and organized by FORSA, the Middle East and North Africa’s largest platform for educational and training opportunities, operating under Leaders of Tomorrow. The invitation-only event at the Landmark Hotel attracted high-level representation, including H.E. Dr. Omar Al Razzaz, Jordan’s Minister of Education, and H.E. Andrea Matteo Fontana, EU ambassador to Jordan, whose delegation provided funding for the event through the UNESCO-led “Networks of Mediterranean Youth” Project.

Special guest H.E. Dr. Razzaz explored his broad-based vision for formal and informal education in Jordan, in a live interview with FORSA’s founder and CEO, Dr. Sami Hourani. The Minister acknowledged that technology is changing the way we access information and discussed the impact of such advances on access to quality education. “We have two options,” Dr. Razzaz said. “Either we hold on to the traditional forms of education, or we follow technology’s lead to the most modern methods of continuous education.” The lively discussion went on to address FORSA’s role in connecting opportunity-seeking young people with institutions providing opportunities. Through the use of technology, FORSA connects educational institutions in a nontraditional way, which provides more learning opportunities to young people more effectively.

The audience, which included representatives from leading universities, NGOs, Jordanian companies, media practitioners, government and civil society organizations as well as representatives from the international community, had the opportunity to enjoy the discussion with H.E. Dr. Razzaz as well as an address from H.E. EU Ambassador Fontana.

In his speech, Ambassador Fontana spoke of the EU’s strong support for youth initiatives in Jordan. H.E. expressed that, “It is evident that technology, education and employability of youth take a prominent place in the EU policies in Jordan.” H.E. spoke about the success of the EU programs to engage with youth under the Erasmus+ and the youth employment programs.

Ms. Costanza Farina, UNESCO Representative to Jordan, discussed the positive impact of the EU-funded “Networks of Mediterranean Youth” Project (NET-MED Youth), a three-year (2014-2017) regional project implemented by UNESCO in partnership with youth organizations, institutions and partners. She noted, “The EU-funded NET MED Youth initiative strives to develop inclusive societies and to facilitate platforms for dialogue.” In achieving that goal, it strives to reduce the fragmentation of efforts and harness the collective potential of youth in affecting democratic transition towards active citizenship, political participation, economic development, and social inclusion.

Ms. Farina touched as well on the importance of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Jordan and around the world. “Youth engagement is central to the success of the entire 2030 Agenda, but in particular to realizing Goal 10, focused on reducing inequalities within and among countries and Goal 16, focused on promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies.”



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The event also explored how FORSA is working to help organizations increase their positive impact on youth communities and striving to transform access to informal and nonformal opportunities. The FORSA team was on hand to promote their message of free and open access to education. “FORSA can be a central platform for all types of education, including opportunities outside of traditional schooling,” said Dr. Hourani, FORSA’s founder.

Two FORSA users also shared their success stories during the event. Ms. Sophie Bel, Director of the French Institute in Amman, explained how FORSA helped her organization find great young applicants for their SafirLab program. Mr. Abdullah Jbour, a FORSA user, told the audience how his career accelerated through opportunities he found on FORSA. “I would like to thank the team behind FORSA; if it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t be here today.”

This first-of-its-kind event inspired dialogue surrounding important challenges facing young people. By connecting with institutions that can provide key learning and training opportunities for young people, the event encouraged organizations throughout Jordan to provide more opportunities to the youth that need them most.

For more information on the NET-MED Youth project, please visit: [netmedyouth@unesco.org](mailto:netmedyouth@unesco.org) or [www.facebook.com/netmedyouth/](https://www.facebook.com/netmedyouth/)

For more information on FORSA, please visit: [www.for9a.com](http://www.for9a.com) or [www.facebook.com/for9a](https://www.facebook.com/for9a)

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#### **Background information:**

**UNESCO** is known as the “intellectual” agency of the United Nations. At a time when the world is looking for new ways to build peace and sustainable development, people must rely on the power of intelligence to innovate, expand their horizons and sustain the hope of a new humanism. UNESCO exists to bring this creative intelligence to life; for it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace and the conditions for sustainable development must be built. UNESCO’s mission in Jordan is to work with the government of Jordan and other stakeholders to provide effective high quality educational, scientific, cultural and communication programmes

For more information about the work of the UNESCO Amman office, please visit: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/amman/home/>

**FORSA** ([www.for9a.com](http://www.for9a.com)) is the Middle East and North Africa’s largest platform for youth opportunities, created by the Amman-based youth organization Leaders of Tomorrow in 2011. Using this website, young people in Jordan and across the region find information about high-quality formal and informal educational and capacity-building opportunities, like scholarships, trainings, fellowships, internships, contests, and entry-level jobs. In the past two years, over 200,000 young users have registered on FORSA, and each month millions of people access its content to discover new ways to learn and develop themselves. In 2016, FORSA launched its new website and is currently developing mobile applications for iOS and Android. Young people can use FORSA to connect with new opportunities from Jordan and all over the world.

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