MLUMSE NEWSLETTER #4

November – December 2025

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear readers of the MLUMSE newsletter,

In this fourth issue, we report on a milestone moment for our project: the Agadir stakeholder round table and curriculum presentation, hosted by **Ibn Zohr University**.

This meeting translated MLUMSE's analytical work into direct dialogue with stakeholders, while also showcasing how our curricula modernization is taking shape through concrete courses and modules.

We invite you to follow us on our social media channels, where you will be regularly updated about all project-related activities.

We also encourage you to share your news

and announcements with us. Our newsletter already reaches more than 185 recipients, and the number continues to grow each day.

You can send your contributions to: mlumse@geof.hr.

Kind regards,

Adnane Labbaci
Professor
Editor in chief MLUMSE Newsletter

FROM CHALLENGES TO CURRICULUM: WHAT WE HEARD IN AGADIR

The round table was grounded in a shared diagnosis: planning systems are under pressure, not only because cities and regions are changing faster, but because decision-making increasingly depends on data, integration, and advanced spatial capabilities.

The presentation on "Geospatial challenges of modern society" organized these pressures into four categories previously highlighted in MLUMSE WP2:

- Environmental challenges
- Socio-economic challenges
- Urban challenges
- Governance and local administration challenges

It also emphasized cross-cutting geospatial issues that affect both public institutions and universities, including:

- Data quality and accuracy and the problem of inconsistency/outdated data
- Interoperability and integration across siloed systems and formats
- Real-time processing and big geospatial data requirements
- Privacy, ethics, cybersecurity, and data sovereignty
- Accessibility/democratization of geodata and the persistent digital divide
- A widening geospatial skills gap and slow-evolving legal/governance structures

These challenges were not discussed as abstract "tech issues," but as direct constraints on plan implementation, service delivery, risk management, and public trust.

A SKILLS-BASED RESPONSE: URBAN POLICY, LEGISLATION & INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

A key contribution of the day was the presentation of the course concept **"Urban Policy, Legislation, and Institutional Reform"**, which frames modernization as more than technology adoption. The course targets competence development across:

- **Conceptual understanding** of governance, actors, and urban policy processes
- **Legal and institutional literacy** (laws, planning regulations, land governance frameworks, tenure, zoning, decentralization dynamics)
- **Analytical and research skills** for evaluating policy effectiveness, equity, and reform opportunities
- **Policy design and implementation**, including participatory planning and M&E frameworks aligned with SDGs and resilience agendas
- **Ethical and professional communication skills** for working across stakeholders

MLUMSE "IDEA AND INTENTIONS": WHERE THE PROJECT IS HEADING

The session also revisited MLUMSE's strategic direction: strengthening partner HEIs so they can deliver **modernized education with visible societal impact**. The presentation highlighted the project's timeline and its ambition to equip students, teachers, and professionals to respond to 21st-century pressures (urbanization, climate impacts, land pressures, and accelerated digitalization)

The proposed pathway is clear: build capacity through **new/modernized courses**, **training activities**, stronger **stakeholder cooperation**, and applied formats such as an **international student hackathon**, while ensuring long-term visibility through dissemination outputs.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION: PRIORITIES VOICED BY STAKEHOLDERS

The moderated discussion focused on four guiding questions:
- How stakeholders see **modernization** of urban and land-use planning and management
- What the **needs for modernization** are
- Which **technologies** are necessary
- What **academia should do** to provide skilled professionals

Across the dialogue, the strongest convergence was on the need for:
- stronger **data-to-decision workflows** (reliable data, integration, and operational use),
- more applied competence in **contemporary tools and methods**, and
- graduates who can work at the intersection of **governance, technology, and implementation realities**.

MLUMSE Team: Euro-Mediterranean University of Fes (UEMF)

Located in **Fez, Morocco**, the Euro-Mediterranean University of Fes (UEMF) is a higher-education institution launched in the **early 2010s** with the ambition of strengthening **Euro-Mediterranean academic and scientific cooperation**. Over the years, UEMF has positioned itself as a platform for **interdisciplinary education, applied research, and innovation**, connecting universities, public institutions, and socio-economic actors across the Mediterranean region. In line with its strategic mission, UEMF is committed to reinforcing its role in society by supporting **evidence-based territorial and urban development**, encouraging the **co-production of knowledge**, and helping design innovative solutions to complex challenges such as **climate resilience, sustainable land management, and smart city transitions**. Through its internationalization and sustainable development vision, UEMF promotes **mobility, joint learning experiences, and collaborative projects** that contribute to regional priorities and Morocco's broader development and modernization agendas.

Participation in Relevant Projects / Initiatives (to align with your newsletter format)

- Erasmus+ actions in higher education
- Euro-Mediterranean networks and joint academic cooperation initiatives
- Applied research and innovation partnerships on smart and sustainable cities, digital transformation, and climate resilience
- Collaborative initiatives supporting skills development