

After long months of waiting, the EuroMed Youth Programme goes back gently on the way! This impatience testifies to the great interest originated by this programme in the youth field. The current phase of setting up and its new operating mode are the fruit on the one hand of the evaluation and on the other hand of a feasibility study. Once this phase had been approved by the Commission, it had been necessary to compile the documents necessary to the transfer of the responsibilities since, in accordance with the European programme, the EuroMed Youth Programme is decentralised and entrusted to the national authorities of the Mediterranean partner countries. In addition, the programme managed up to now according to directives' applied by DG EAC, answers henceforth the rules and procedures in force for the management of the external Assistance.

This major change of setting is a long-term process. It is initially necessary to obtain the signature of the authorities concerned in each country. The installation of the national Euro-Med Youth Units (EMYU) can then begin. Those will be in charge of the proposal selection, of the making of contracts, of the financial management and of the projects follow-up carried out by the national promoters. The calls for proposal will be thus open in each Meda partner country. More targeted sets of themes will be developed in these calls for proposal. It is essential to accompany and form these units so they can include/understand the rules and procedures to be respected and to be able to launch the calls for proposal.

For this purpose, we selected a technical aid in order to ensure this transfer of responsibilities (Unit of reinforcement of the capacities). The National Institute of Youth and Community Education (INJEP) will thus ensure this role as well as the communication, the visibility and the regional coherence of the programme.

Today, Lebanon and Egypt signed the Financial Agreement and named the responsible person for the national Euro-Med Youth Units and received the visit of the INJEP. We hope that at least these two countries will be ready to launch the calls for proposal as of

November 2006. It also should be specified that the dates of the calls for proposal correspond to the dates of the European programme. As for the possible actions, they exclusively target youth exchanges, voluntary service and the support measures: formations, seminars and other activities. Each meda country will consequently have the possibility of accommodating European exchanges, volunteers and activities of support.

Taking into consideration the discussions we had during our previous meetings, we remarked the concern of some, both on the European side and on the Mediterranean side, about transparency and equal treatment in the process of projects selection. This concern is also ours: our procedures supported by the Unit of Reinforcement of Capacity and by the support of the EC Delegations will be the guarantors of this transparency.

Another problem was pointed out and it concerned the question of young people mobility. This real obstacle - sharpened by the unclear status of young volunteers/ beneficiaries (neither workers, nor students) requires that we work in cooperation with the national Authorities (sending and hosting

countries) and EC Delegations. It is consequently necessary to take into account of the "time" factor and to well anticipate the activities.

Lastly, I insist on the added value of decentralisation process which will bring the national authorities in the Meda partner countries closer to the aspirations of the young people and more and better implied in the youth sector. In the long term that should lead to policies adapted to the youth needs. For young people, this bringing together should encourage them to be more "structured" and become real interlocutors.

Thus young people of two banks of the Mediterranean will be able, slowly but surely, to better know each other, to share their values and to become full citizens in this area of the world, rich in unique history, endowed of a very dynamic present made by its youth and especially carrying many promises for the future.

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