



Results of the survey on SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed trainings

Warning: this document is not yet validated by the resource centre, and could be subject to amendments. This version of the document is not complete; it only presents the results of the survey.

INTRODUCTION:

The research involved the 1,396 trainees who attended a training course between 2003 and 2007. This figure leaves out trainees who attended major events, especially conferences. The questionnaire was sent to 847 people, that is the 61% of the total number of trainees registered in the SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed database. The data collection was carried out through the free software « Lime Survey ». This software allows sending invitations and reminders by e-mail. The respondents can fill in the questionnaire on-line. Furthermore this kind of questionnaire allows to collect results through frequency tables and to export data to excel format. The questionnaire was launched on 09/06/2008 and closed one month later.

I) QUESTIONING PROCESS

A- The general issue and the problem

The general issue of our research is focused on the impact of SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed training programs in the long term.

The question is:

Do the training programs organized by SALTO YOUTH EuroMed really favour Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and do they strengthen the skills of the youth sector's professionals?

B- Elaboration of general hypotheses

- The training programs positively affect the socio-professional path of trainees, they favour mobility and professional orientation
- The training programs favour the participation of civil society in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in terms of strategies development, strengthening of networks and creation of projects related to the youth sector
- The training courses allow promoting a dynamic view of inter-cultural dialogue and of people by means of intellectual, cultural exchanges among civil societies.

C- Elaboration of specific hypotheses

○ THEME 1

The impact of training programs on the participants in terms of professional skills and socio-professional path:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Training programs help gaining or strengthening professional skills.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Participants gain new technical and practical skills, in terms of:
 - Methodology (project's methodology, inter-cultural learning);
 - Practice (social working, logistics, communication, improvement)
 - Strategies (knowledge of research and creation of partnerships, and knowledge of European Union procedures and priorities)
- **Hypothesis 3:** The nature of learning is different according to age, the skills gained during the training programs change according to the age and experience of the professional.
- **Hypothesis 4:** The training courses contribute towards an upward development of the professional career of the participants through a change in professional orientation, structures and job positions.

○ THEME 2

The impact of training programs on the participant's structure:

- **Hypothesis 5:** The training courses allow to introduce a new dynamic in the structures in terms of new ideas, directions, strategies and working methods.
- **Hypothesis 6:** The training courses help the creation and/or the strengthening of civil society active networks by means of the exchanges between the participants to the courses.

○ **THEME 3**

The impact of training courses on the structures' projects:

- **Hypothesis 7:** The training programs allow to increase different types of EuroMed youth projects (young people exchanges, voluntary service, trainings...)
- **Hypothesis 8:** The hardening of immigration policies of European Union countries would act as a brake on the development of EuroMed Youth projects.

○ **THEME 4**

The impact of training courses on the inter-cultural dialogue:

- **Hypothesis 9:** The training courses allow to improve the understanding of different cultures and to fight against prejudices through the exchanges between youth professionals (friendly or professional exchanges).
- **Hypothesis 10:** The training programs help magnifying participants' peer groups in terms of consciousness-raising towards cultural differences. As a matter of fact the participants who lived an inter-cultural experience would share this experience with their closest circle (family, friends and colleagues).

I) FINDINGS ANALYSIS

Firstly we are going to identify the sample, secondly we are going to analyse the findings and confirm our hypotheses.

Vocabulary:

Studied population: the whole of the training courses' participants.

Sample: people who filled in the questionnaire; «the respondents»

A- SAMPLE DEFINITION

1) High response rate

454 responses to the questionnaire (246 complete questionnaires, 208 incomplete questionnaires)
1396 persons took part in a training program organized by SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed during 2003-2007. This is the «studied population» of our survey. Moreover, 61%, that is 847 people were invited to take part to the survey, and this is the «sample» of the study we conducted. Finally our analysis is based on the participation of 242 people, which we will call the «respondents population». The latter represents the 17% of the studied population and the 29% of the sample.

The findings are synthesized in the table here below:

	TOTAL NUMBER	% RATE IN RELATION TO THE STUDIED POPULATION	% RATE IN RELATION TO THE SAMPLE
STUDIED POPULATION	1396	100%	/
SAMPLE	847	Sending rate : 61%	100%
RESPONDENTS POPULATION	242	Response rate : 17%	Response rate : 29%

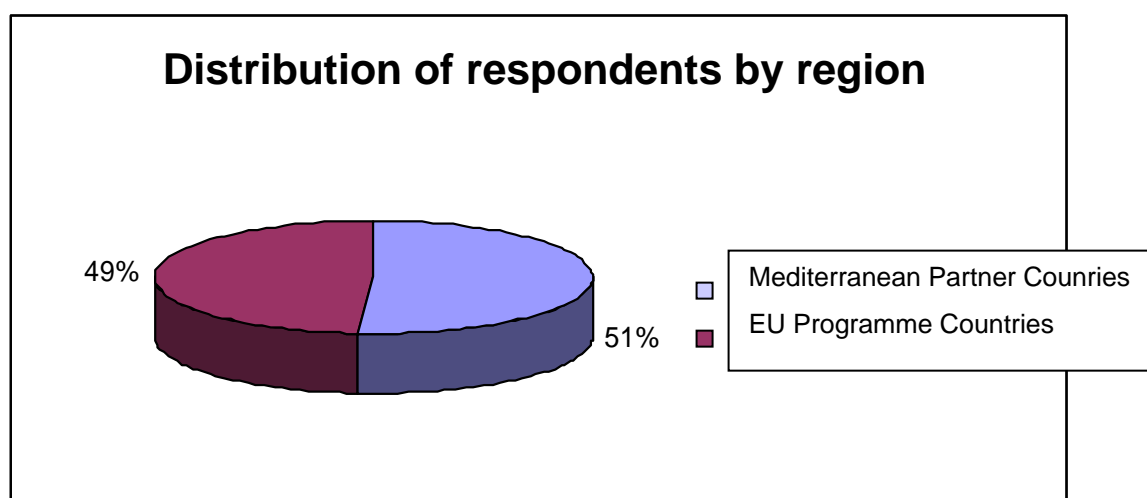
The response rate of nearly 30% exceeded our expectations: around 3 respondents out of 10 completed the questionnaire.

First of all, the **practical and personalized editing method** influenced the respondents who compiled the questionnaire on-line. The trainees were not obliged to fill in immediately the whole questionnaire, but were given the option to buffer answers and to continue survey at a later time within the closing date of the survey.

In addition, **we developed a preliminary communication strategy**, the presentation of the questionnaire was written in English and in French and signed by the head of the structure¹, in order to gain credibility. The trainees were invited to respond to the survey through an accredited e-mail, « Dear Mr... ». **This reduces the anonymous and impersonal idea of the questionnaire, the respondent is personally involved in the survey.** The interlocutors received two reminders by e-mail. The whole of these factors encouraged former trainees to participate in the study.

The high response rate highlights the participants' enthusiasm and satisfaction with regard to their training. A survey must stimulate the interest of the interlocutors and make them feel involved in it. This study, which regards the period 2003-2007, shows that the trainees always feel involved, even years after the training course and are satisfied by it. As a matter of fact, 97% of the respondents replied yes to the question « did your training course have an important influence on the development of your professional skills? ». Please remember that the main goal of a training course is the acquisition of competences that can be transferred in the professional life of trainees. In this case the goal was fully achieved. From here we will try to identify our sample and verify its representativeness.

2) Geographical origins



¹ Monsieur Bernard ABRIGNANI, Coordinateur du Centre de Ressources SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed

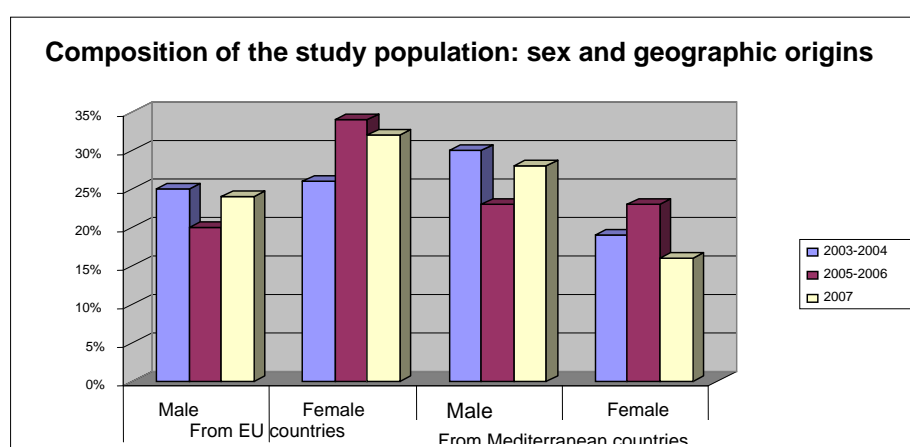
The distribution of training beneficiaries is well balanced; the number of respondents from the South Mediterranean area is as many as the respondents from the European Union. This can be explained by the organization of SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed trainings, which are usually formed by participants living in the two regions. Moreover new technologies, especially the access to the Internet in the Mediterranean countries, are less developed than in the European Union. Despite this technical gap, Mediterranean participants took part in the survey.

3) Gender

Gender	Female rate	Male rate
Studied population	44 %	56 %
Respondent population	47 %	53 %

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed training courses follow the priorities of the Youth in Action program that aims at fighting for sex equality. *The Youth in Action program aims at reaching an equal number of men and women, at the level of active structures, that means that we have to take suitable measures, in order to stimulate the interest and the participation of the less represented sex into every action².* Generally speaking we notice a balance between sexes both in the studied population and the sample. We also notice that the dynamic remains the same; less women take part into the trainings and less women respond to the survey. Do they come from European countries or from the Mediterranean region?

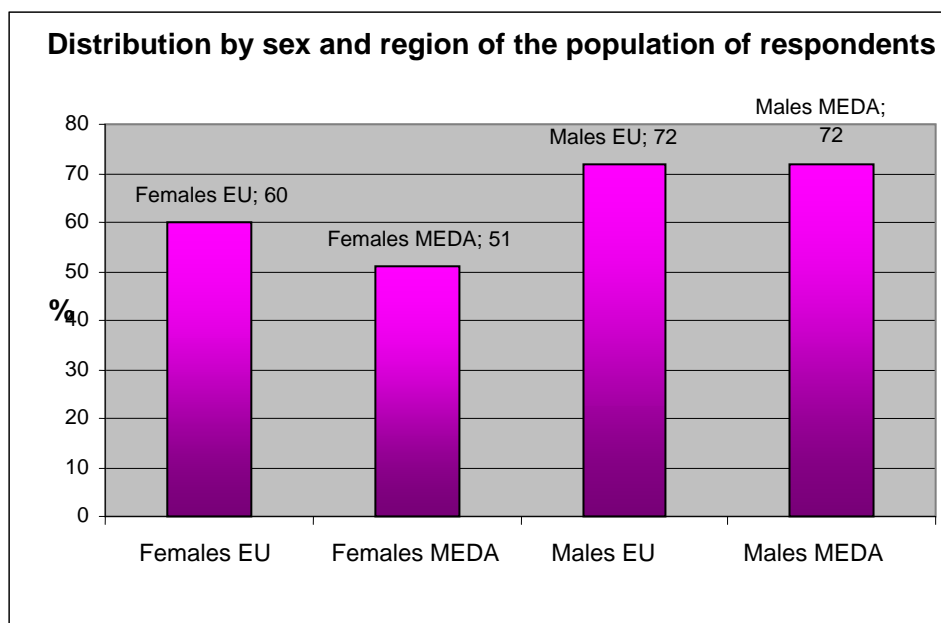
4) Geographical origin and sex



² Excerpt from «Youth in Action, Program Guide» Equality men-women.

This graph points out that the composition of trainees' groups is typically stable. We notice that the participation of women coming from Mediterranean countries increased of around 5% in 3 years, but lowered in 2007.

We can also notice a reverse phenomenon with the men coming from the South shore of the Mediterranean. We also state that the main beneficiaries of training programs are women coming from the European Union.



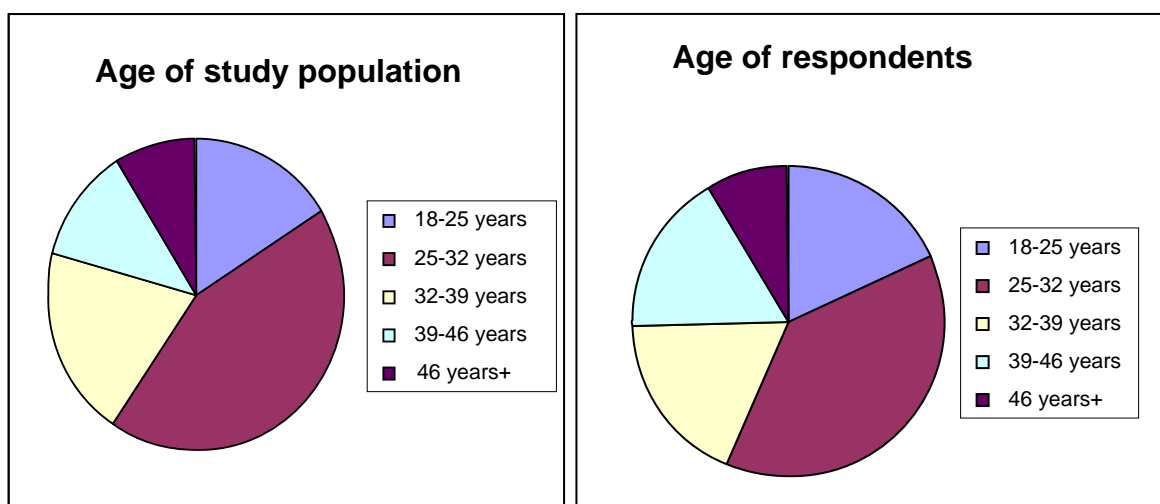
Legend: EU means European Union and MEDA, means Mediterranean Countries

The trend is the same within the studied population and the respondents: we have fewer women from the Mediterranean nations that benefited from the trainings and consequently that responded to the survey.

5) L'âge

AGE RANGE	STUDIED POPULATION		REPPONDENTS' POPULATION	
	Total number	Rate %	Total number	Rate %
18 to 25	36	16,00	43	18,38
25 to 32	98	43,56	89	38,03
32 to 39	44	19,56	42	17,95
39 to 46	27	12,00	40	17,09
46 years and +	20	8,89	20	8,55
Total respondents	225³	100,00	234	100,00

³ We could identify the age of only the 30% of the studied population



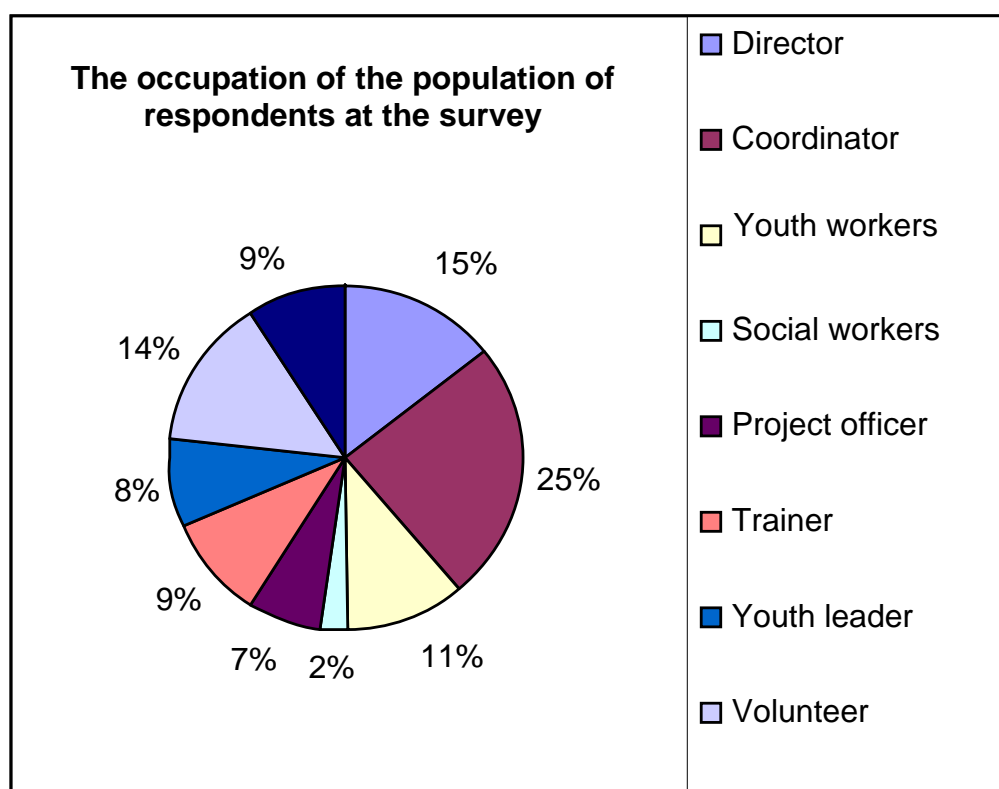
The numbers:

Average age	33,33 years
The youngest participant	18 years
The oldest participant	76 years

We can notice that the trends correspond. As a matter of fact the two graphs outline a balanced distribution and suggest that participants aged 25 to 32 years old form the main age group.

6) The socio-professional position

a) The respondents population occupation



Here below a table that categorizes and groups families of occupations in order to analyse the findings:

OCCUPATION	Values on the social ladder	Socio-professional category	Number: 237 respondents ⁴	Rate %
Coordinator and director	++++	Senior executives	100	42%
Youth and social worker and project manager	+++	Executives	57	24%
Youth leader and trainer	++	Employees	45	19%
Volunteers	+	Students, without professional activity	35	15%

We notice that at the moment the survey was carried out, 42% of the respondents hold **directors or coordinators positions**. Throughout the study we are going to attach importance to the over-representativeness of executives in the sample. This is not surprising as this population is the typical target of training programs.

⁴ A total of 242 people took part into the survey, nevertheless 237 respondents replied to this question

Coordinators and directors are the more relevant target in the case of training programs whose goal is the development and realisation of projects. Their position is involved in the coordination of projects, so that they can have the visibility on the totality of projects. However the training courses don't only include coordinators/directors because the diversity of profiles enriches the trainings.

b) The job position of the respondents' population

This point stems from an open question of the survey: « **which are your responsibilities and the tasks you carry out?** »⁵. Here following we will focus on the content and the profile of the respondents' job. The study covers an area of nations⁶, the socio-professional context are highly heterogeneous, however we will try to bring out the main trends.

Directors and coordinators: 54% of them run the general coordination of activities in their structure (administration, financial and human resources management). Roughly 30% works in the youth sector.

Youth, social workers and project managers: Nearly 90% work in the coordination and implementation of projects, 56% of which are youth related projects. 32% have a European or international job profile.

Youth leaders and trainers: generally speaking youth leaders/trainers are less involved in the coordination of projects and are more involved in youth projects (27%). 38% of trainers specialise in projects methodology. We can as well notice that these professionals work in the inter-cultural field, human rights and youth employment.

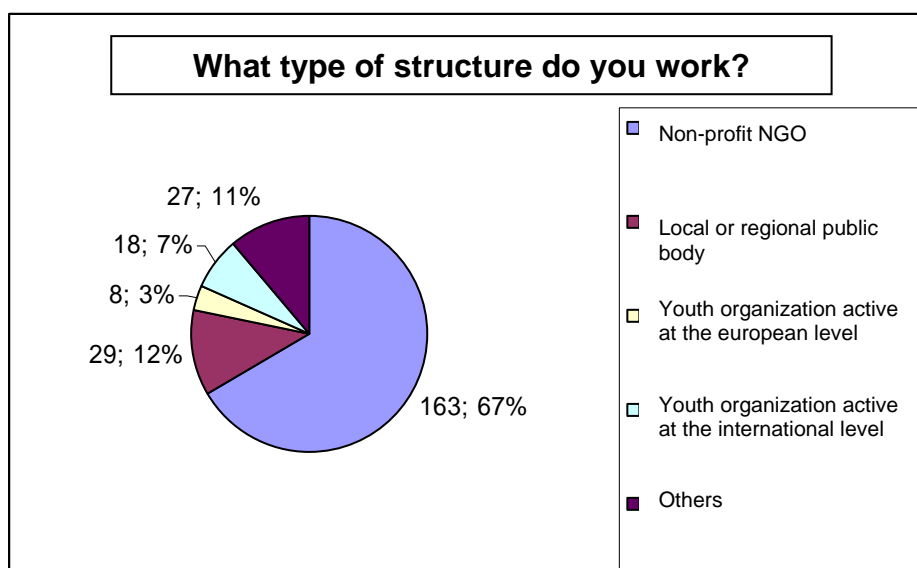
Volunteers: they work for nothing during their spare time. It seems that there are more volunteers in the Mediterranean nations, as the Youth sector is less institutionalized than in Europe. Public aids dedicated to this sector are fewer and, therefore, private donations are prevalent⁷. More than half of the volunteers are committed in managing the organization of the projects: events, summer volunteer camps, workshops, educational activities (homework help). 20% work as Youth Leaders and are members of their association office: president, secretary-general, and members. They share the fact that they take part into the decision-making process of their structure.

⁵ The respondents have developed their answer with accuracy, while only 2 of them did not reply, this shows the motivation and interest of the participants of the survey and trainings

⁶ 37 countries: 27 EU countries and 10 Mediterranean countries

⁷ Source: Interview with a Youth worker from Morocco

8) The type of structure where the respondents work



According to results, 67% of the respondents work within a non profit-making and non-governmental organization. It should be noted that the European Youth in Action program is addressed to this kind of organizations. Its goal is to strengthen the organizations' competences and to create synergies between the civil society players based in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Among these organizations, 20% have European and/or international scope, and operate in the Youth sector. However, the responses included in the «*other*» item are related to private organizations (8 cases) and governmental organizations (9 cases).

Conclusion:

When compiling the data we are able to bring out the average respondent profile.

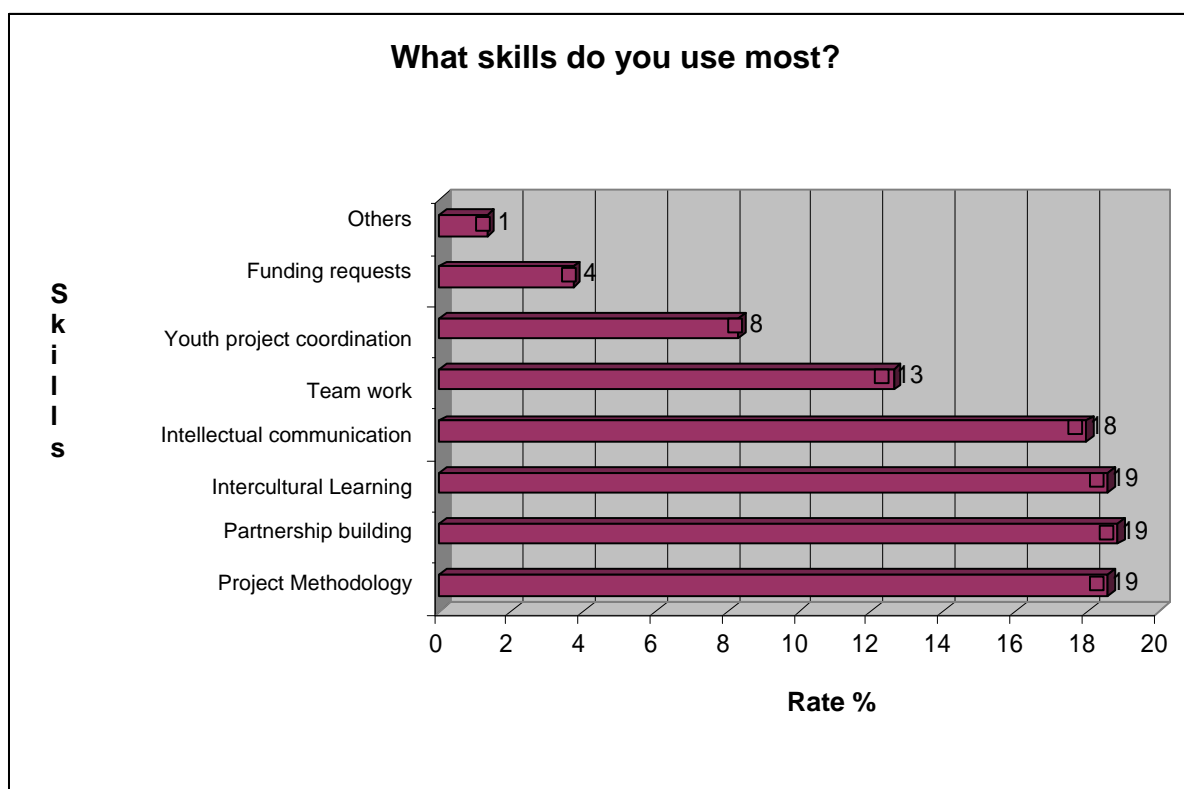
It is a woman or man from the European Union or the Mediterranean countries, aged 33 (or included in the range 25-32 years old).

In addition the « average » respondent works in a non-governmental organization (67%) and holds senior executive position as 42% of the respondents are directors or coordinators.

B- THEMATIC ANALYSIS

THEME 1

The impact of training programs on the participant in terms of professional skills and socio-professional paths



According to the above graph 50% of the respondents were able to reuse different skills afterwards: methodological (project's methodology, inter-cultural learning), practical (inter-cultural communication) and strategic (partnership creation).

Moreover at the question: «what was the role of the training program in your professional development?»; the results are convincing: 97% of the respondents are sure of that. This high rate shows that the respondents are satisfied with their training.

The survey allows replying partially to the first two hypotheses: the training programs help acquire or strengthen professional skills in terms of methodology, practice and elaboration of strategies.

Hypothesis 3: The nature of learning is different according to age, the skills gained during training programs change according to the age and the experience of the professional.

In order to reply to this hypothesis we crossed two variables: the age and the main skills reused by the respondents.

Skills Respondents aged:	Methodology Projects' methodology, inter-cultural learning	Practice: Inter-cultural communication	Strategies: partnerships creation	TOTAL
18 to 25	15%	47%	38%	100%
25 to 32	19%	40%	41%	100%
32 to 39	22%	39%	38%	100%
39 to 46	20%	20%	59%	100%
46 years old and+	15%	15%	70%	100%

Legend: the highest rates are in grey

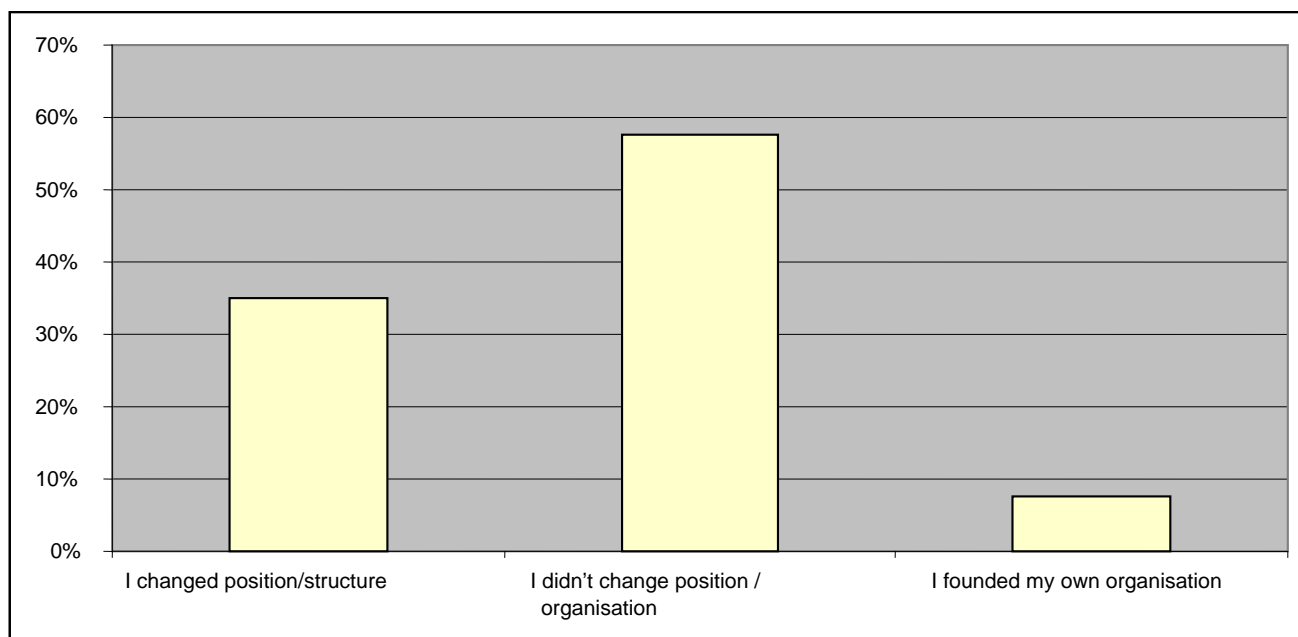
According to this table, the youngest respondents first favour inter-cultural communication, while respondents included in the age group 25-39 favour both inter-cultural communication and partnership creation. The older respondents are more focused on the creation of partnerships.

Broadly speaking the youngest respondents are at the beginning of their professional career, they are starting their career. They are acquiring basic skills that will allow them to develop their projects. In this way they will focus more on the « *inter-cultural communication* », which is the essential factor in the creation of new projects.

The older respondents have more seniority, experience, and they already had the chance to acquire the methodology and to integrate the competencies into professional life; so that they focus more on more technical skills. At this stage they dedicate themselves to the « *creation of partnerships* » in order to enrich a network, which is a crucial aspect in the development of projects.

Hypothesis 4: The training programs contribute towards an upward development of the professional career of the participants in terms of professional orientation, structures and job positions.

We believe that the change of job position and structure identify two indicators that allow to measure the professional development of trainees.



According to the results, **58% of respondents (183 persons) didn't change position nor structure** while **35% (111 persons) changed position and/or structure**; lastly **8% of respondents (24 persons) founded their own organization**. By adding the respondents that founded their own structure to those that changed position and/or structure, we can say that **63% of respondents experienced a professional development after the training course**.

Thanks to this high rate we can partially reply to our hypothesis: the training programs contribute towards career development. In order to illustrate this point we can quote this account from a female Tunisian coordinator, aged 26:

« The training encouraged me to apply for a managing position within my association, while before it I wouldn't even think of it, this made me more confident of my own skills and gave me the courage to dare to be in charge of something »

ZOOM on the professional path of participants to the long term training programs TATEM and TOTEM

Long-term training programs are typically developed over a period of at least two years. TATEM (2004) and TOTEM (2005) are aimed at trainers specialising into Euro-Mediterranean Youth co-operation.

When returning to their countries, these trainers have the skills to organize training programs dedicated to Youth sector's professionals, TATEM and TOTEM included 61 participants⁸. **Around 1/3, that is 22 participants, are now part of the EuroMed Youth co-operation network**, which means that they are always active, but they aren't directly working with the resource centre.

13 participants, that is 13%, were recruited following their training as trainers within the SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed activities.

8 participants worked as trainers and specialists and 3 worked as trainers and training coordinators. Finally, **2 participants accepted the challenge of training programs and became trainers, coordinators and then specialists.**

Among the trainees group, **13 participants that is the 21%, didn't continue their activities within the EuroMed Youth co-operation**, and they decided to work in other sectors.

These two long-term training programs had a strong impact on these participants' careers; around 21% of them are still active in the network, 42% were recruited by the structure. Lastly one third of the participants are not active in the domain of the EuroMed Youth co-operation.

Hypothesis 5: The Mediterranean nations are emerging countries, the impact of training programs in favour of the creation of new organisation is stronger in these countries than within the European Union.

Among the respondents' population that created their own organisation, 59% are from Mediterranean countries and 41% are from the European Union.

Hypothesis 6: Men have more tendencies to found their own organisation than women are.

Among the respondents that founded their own organisation, **82% are men and 18% are women.** The gap is very clear; **the sex would thus be a determining factor in favour of the creation of an organisation.**

Hypothesis 7: Taking into account the Mediterranean countries social environment, men have more tendencies to found their own organisation.

In the Mediterranean countries, among the respondents that founded their own organisation, 92% are men and 8% are women. While in the European Union, among the respondents that founded their own organisation, 67% are men and 33% are women.

⁸ These information were collected through a conversation with M. Abrignani, coordinateur du Centre de Ressources, SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed

According to the survey the disparity in relation to the creation of new organisations is higher in the Mediterranean countries, because women are in a disadvantaged position.

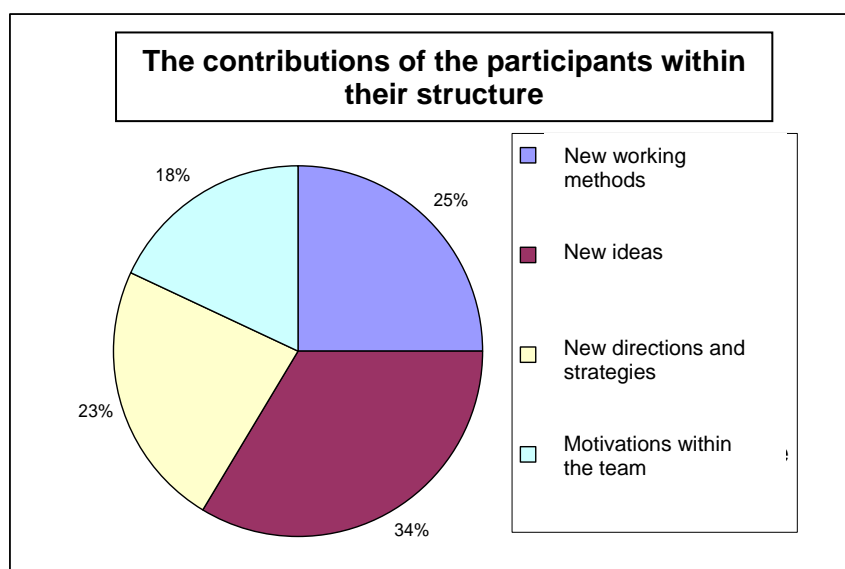
Conclusion concerning hypotheses 5/6/7:

According to the findings, sex is a determining factor in favour of the creation of organizations, especially in the Mediterranean countries. We notice the prevalence of men in this sector, especially in the Mediterranean countries.

o THEME 2

The impact of the training on the participants' structures:

Hypothesis 8: Training courses are a driver : they allow to introduce a new dynamic through skills and knowledge transfer within their structure.



According to this graph, following their training, the respondents have introduced **new ideas, working methods, directions and strategies** within their structures. As we previously noted the main skills reused after training programs pertained to project's methodology, learning and intercultural communication as well as partnership creation. This allows identifying the correlation between the acquired and reused skills following the training programs.

We can illustrate the impact of the trainings on the direction of organisations, which go beyond the Euro-Mediterranean environment through the account of a French participant, coordinator, aged 49.

« The training brought to my structure new ideas that helped develop Youth projects focusing on inter-cultural dialogue with European, Mediterranean and Caucasian partners. We try to diversify in terms of strategy through international co-operation projects. »

An Austrian participant, youth worker, gives us his commentary:

« The training means new ideas and contacts that help to organize projects in the Mediterranean environment, moreover it provided me with a better knowledge of the inter-cultural work with young people.»

Conclusion:

We can confirm our hypothesis: we notice a new dynamic within structures realised through a skill transfer of the participants to their structure. In addition there is a real added value for the structures, as only 2 respondents stated that they didn't bring anything to their structures following the training courses.

Hypothesis 9: The trainings contribute towards the creation and/or the strengthening of civil society players' active networks by means of exchanges between training participants.

In order to reply to this hypothesis, we have to check whether the structures co-operate by every possible means: through the connection/creation of partnerships (« Networking »), but also through the development of projects and information exchange...

1- **60%** of the respondents maintain that they have contacted other training participants after the trainings in order **to find new partners.**

2- **59%** of the respondents maintain that they got in touch with other participants with the intention of **developing new projects.**

3- **41%** of the respondents maintain that they got in touch with other participants after the training program in order **to obtain some information.**

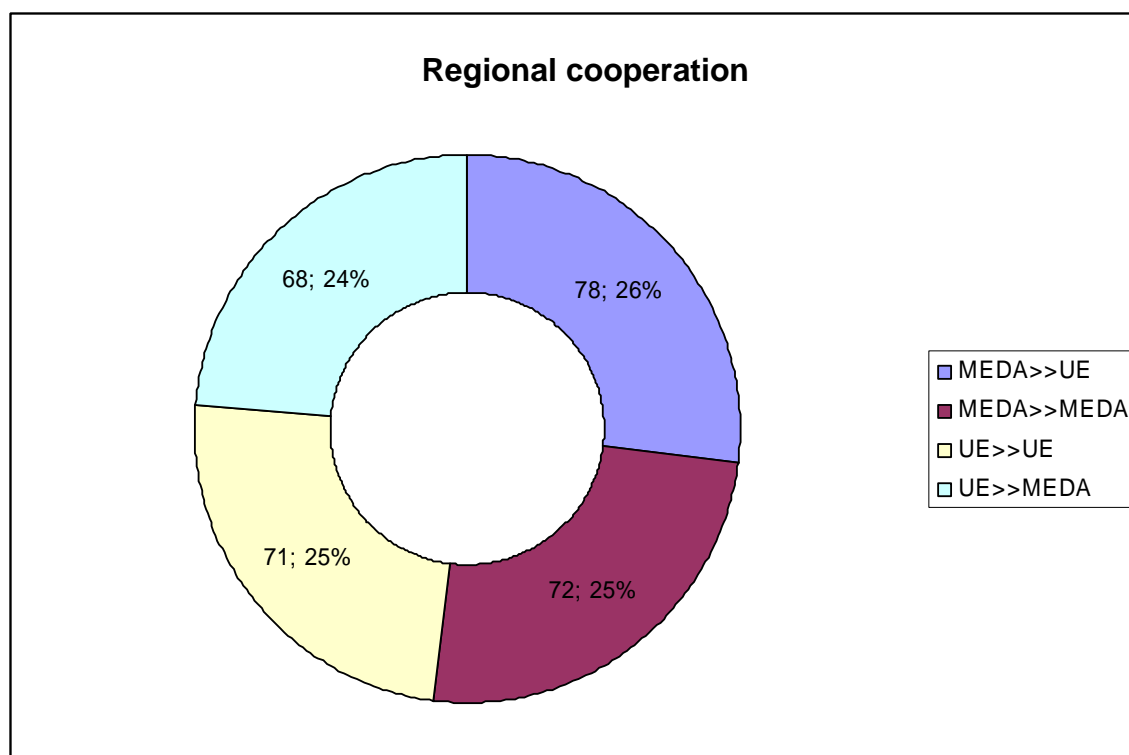
4- Only the **4%** of the respondents claimed that they have never contacted other **participants who took part into the training program.**

Working out the average, the 40% of the respondents had the opportunity of contacting again other training course's participants for professional reasons.

So we can qualify the reply to the hypothesis, we can witness the development or/and strengthening of active networks thanks to the professional exchange in the order of 40%. We will see later through the analysis whether these partnerships have an impact on the realisation of projects and on the inter-cultural dialogue.

Here is the account of a Greek female participant, coordinator, aged 22: « the training programs allow to create a relationship among active players in the EuroMed Youth programs and allow to strengthen the skills of everybody, we co-operate and communicate with tolerance, and it is a real challenge for the Youth sector.»

Hypothesis 10: The training programs would contribute towards a regional co-operation, including Euro-Mediterranean partners



Legend : **EU** : European Union based organisations, **MEDA** : Mediterranean countries based organisations.

According to the results, **there is a genuine reciprocity in the development or the strengthening of networks**, since organisations' networks turn both towards Mediterranean countries and European Union. The Euro-Mediterranean Youth co-operation established a regional co-operation, which implies a « South-South⁹ » co-operation that should not be taken for granted, taking into account the political environment.

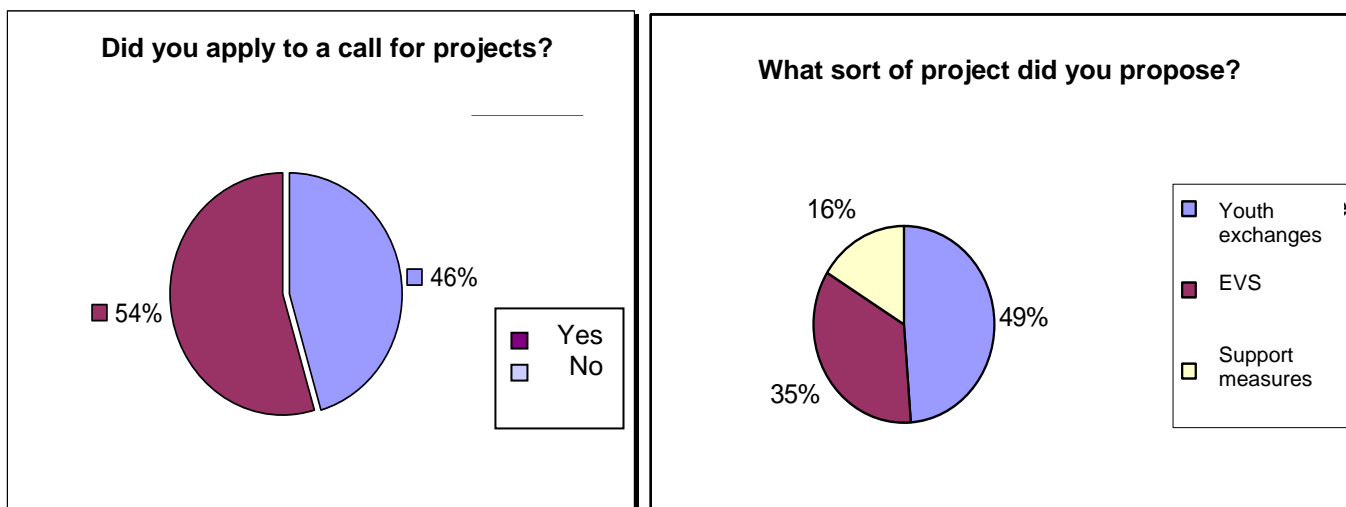
⁹ « South-South » cooperation groups at least two countries of the Mediterranean area

We can highlight the importance of this data, confirming that SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed trainings contribute towards dialogue between warring nations.

○ **THEME 3**

The impact of training programs on the structures' projects:

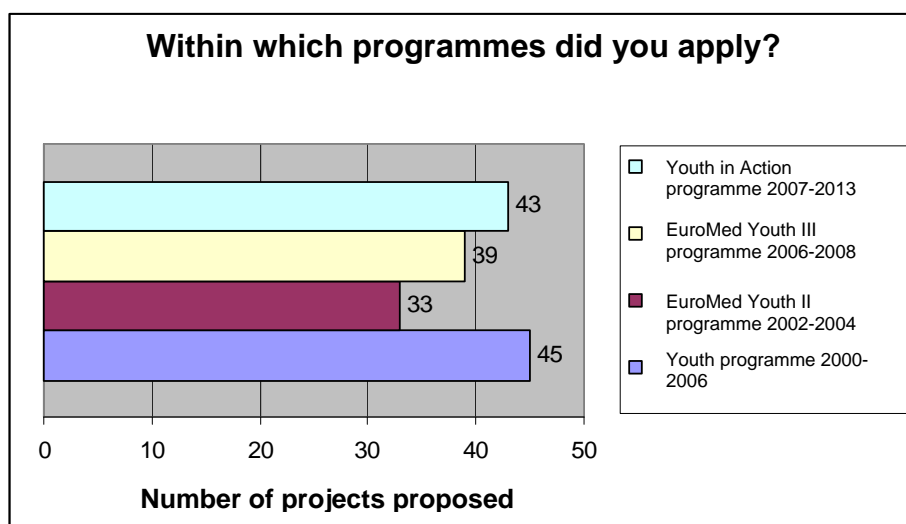
Hypothesis 11: The training programs allow increasing the number of the EuroMed Youth projects (youth exchanges, voluntary service, support measures...)



1- Inventory on the creation of projects:

In order to reply to our hypothesis, we are going to draw up an inventory of projects; which is the proportion of respondents who proposed a project, which kind of projects were developed and within which type of program?

According to the results, less than a half of our sample did propose projects. The proposed projects are mainly related to **youth exchanges (49% - 81 projects)**, followed by **European Voluntary Service projects (35% - 58 projects)** and **support measures (16% - 27 projects)**.



Broadly speaking the distribution of projects according to programs is balanced enough: the results change between 21% (EuroMed Youth II) and 28% (Youth in Action).

We underline that Youth in Action and EuroMed Youth programs are complementary¹⁰. We remark that Youth in Action starts out strongly: since 2007, over one year period, 32 projects were registered, as compared to the period 2000-2006 when 45 projects were registered. Regarding the two EuroMed Youth program, we remark a slight evolution: 33 projects registered between 2002 and 2004 versus 39 projects between 2006 and 2008.

By multiplying the number of projects by the number of potential beneficiaries, we are able to identify the magnifying effect of training programs:

***Youth exchanges:** the participants' number being between 16 et 60, we could have between 1296 and 4860 participants.

***Support measures:** the participants' number being between 20 and 50, we could have between 540 and 1350 participants who are youth professionals.

***European Voluntary Service:** 214 young people have had the opportunity of becoming volunteers within the framework of EVS. Among these young persons, we know that 63 came from the European Union and 12 came from the Mediterranean countries. So we are able to remark that Mediterranean young people benefit less by this program. This can be explained by the fact that some countries, going through a political or economic crisis, are not able to receive volunteers (Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanese conflict...). In addition some young Mediterranean people may have difficulties in obtaining a visa for Schengen countries (European Union legislation).

¹⁰ The development of the program is explained at page...

Key data:

At least 166 projects were created following the 59 training programs including 1,396 participants; the number of direct beneficiaries (young people or youth professionals) would be between 836 (at least) and 6210 (maximum).

2- Identity of projects holders

SEX AND GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN OF PROJECT HOLDERS	Nr holders	Rate %
Women project holders from EU	27	25%
Men project holders from EU	22	21%
Women project holders from MEDA countries	19	18%
Men project holders from MEDA countries	38	36%
<i>Total number of project holders</i>	106	100%

Legend: EU : project holders from European Union, MEDA : project holders from the Mediterranean Basin

According to the results, in the Mediterranean area, the number of men registering new projects is higher (36%), while the number of women is lower (18%). In the European Union countries, there is an opposite trend: women registering new projects are more than men.

Hypothesis 8: The hardening of immigration policies of European Union countries would act as a brake on the development of EuroMed Youth projects. Obtaining the visa would be a decisive problem.

Which are the main difficulties?		
Financial Problems	45	21%
Political problems	17	8%
Problems in obtaining visa	56	26%
Cultural differences	18	8%
Problems with EU procedures	25	12%
Finding participants	7	3%
Finding reliable partners	33	15%
Other	16	7%
Total	217	100%

The main difficulties met by project holders who applied for a grant are related to obtaining the visa (26%) and to financial problems (21%).

At the time of the Youth event¹¹, the 150 young participants highlighted that visa are a real problem in developing Youth projects, many projects don't see the light or are cancelled because participants do not obtain the visa.

The procedure for obtaining visas should be clear and transparent: the socio-economic conditions of potential participants shouldn't be a discriminating factor. In the framework of international Youth events, obtaining visas should be made easier as governments already do for trade, sports or cultural events. **We believe that in the long term the use of visa should disappear in the EuroMed region¹².**

Reasons why participants didn't propose a project	Nr	%
Your organisation didn't support the project	17	11%
Your organisation didn't have the financial resources	34	23%
The political climate was unfavourable	23	15%
Your organisation didn't have the logistic resources	28	19%
You didn't find reliable partners	20	13%
EU procedures were too complex	22	15%
Egypt special status	6	4%
TOTAL	150	100%

We remark that **67% of organisations included in the sample are non profit-making and non-governmental organisations. The majority of these structures depend on public funding in order to create new projects.** Sometimes these grants are cut suddenly, sometimes they are delayed, and the structures are often at risk. However, in general **project holders' work within small structures that have little capital.** Now, before filing a project, you have to plan it with your partners; this phase has costs that have to be guaranteed by the structure. **So you have to consider the financial aspect among the difficulties that can hamper the program.**

Let's go back to the « *Egypt's special Status* » issue, even though this country is active in the first two programs, it refused to sign the adhesion contract to « EuroMed Youth III ». Egyptian based structures cannot organise projects within their territory, but can be partners in other projects. 6 Egyptian participants mentioned this point as a reason for not filing a project. **This highlights the political dimension of the program.**

¹¹ Between 6 and 9 July, in Marseille took place « the Youth Event » organised within the framework of the French Presidency of the European Commission. It was attended by 150 young representatives from EU and the European Free Trade Association, the Balkans and other countries around the Mediterranean

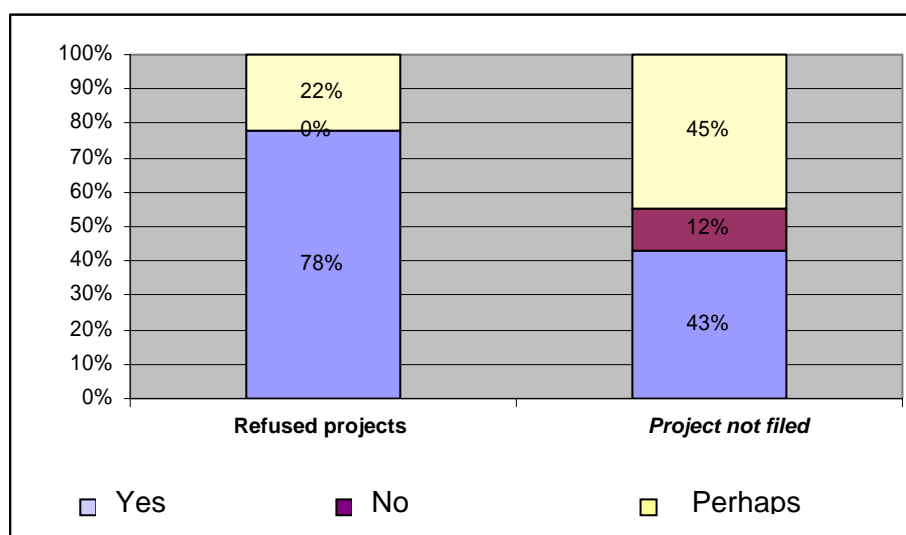
¹² French Presidency of the European Commission, « Conclusions of the Youth Event working groups »

Conclusion:

These findings allow replying to hypotheses 7 and 8: the training courses contribute towards the development of projects included in the Euro-Mediterranean co-operation introduced by the European Commission. However the hardening of immigration policies of European Union countries that make more difficult obtaining visas, along with the lack of financial resources, tend to weaken this cooperation.

3- Project holders' prospects

Results related to the question « Are you considering proposing new projects in the future? »



The item « *Refused project* » refers to participants who proposed a project that has been refused; while the item « *Project not filed* » refers to participants who did not file any project after their training course.

The graph shows that 78% of participants whose project was refused are ready to retry and file a new project, while 22% of them are not sure of trying again. Among participants who did not file a project less than a half (43%) is considering filing a project and a grant request.

Broadly speaking the figures are encouraging as only 12% of participants didn't propose a project and do not consider doing it in the future. The participants who experienced a failure are quite enthusiastic about filing a new project (78%). We can thus highlight that developing a EuroMed project strategy is a strong desire for respondents.

o THEME 4

The impact of training courses on inter-cultural dialogue:

The notion of « **inter-cultural Dialogue** » is a relatively abstract concept, which is difficult to measure, especially through the type of survey we carried out: the questionnaire. The inter-cultural learning holds a central role within the Euro-Mediterranean co-operation, the EuroMed projects and the SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed trainings. The training participants grow in very different socio-economic and political environments according to the country they live in. As a matter of fact, the Euro-Mediterranean area has a large development gap. Some countries are included among the richest of the World, while others are included among the poorest. The trainings include people who are used to different social, cultural, religious, linguistic and culinary habits, that must be considered throughout the training courses: by the inter-cultural teaching methods, the catering and the planned program. For instance the program has to consider the praying days, so that observant participants can be given some free time during those days.

Inter-cultural teaching methods mainly aim at developing:

- *a better understanding of contemporary cultures and societies ;
- *a better communication between people with different cultures ;
- *a more open attitude towards different cultural and social environments ;
- *the connections, social exchanges and acknowledgement of Humanity common heritage¹³.

There are specific methods within the framework of inter-cultural education: « Energisers », individual exercise, discussions, debates, role playing, etc. The trainers take care of combining participants from different countries, so that they are able to cooperate by means of working sessions and exercises. But it is during informal time that participants exchange their experience, their culture and develop friendly relationships.

Hypothesis 9: the training programs allow improving the understanding of different cultures and allow to fight against prejudices through the exchanges between youth professionals (friendly or professional exchanges).

This hypothesis is very ambitious; we are going to reply to it using two indicators.

¹³ Source: « inter-cultural Learning » TKIT n°4, Training-Youth, Partnership Council of Europe and European Commission

40% of participants got in contact with other participants with the goal of cooperating within a professional framework (asking for information, partnerships, development of new projects...) and 60% claimed to have contacted other participants on a friendly level. Only 4% of respondents claimed that they never tried to contact any of the other participants met during the training program. By cooperating, the participants are led to exchange and discover, understand the reality of different countries. These new information lead the participants to think in a different way. This process contributes towards the fight against prejudices. The answers of participants (to open questions) are deeply enthusiastic and often mention the contribution on the inter-cultural level.

Here below some of the answers given by the respondents:

« Following the training, I had a better understanding of cooperation with the MEDA countries, as I realised many things about life, social systems and about the place for young people in society. I come from a former Soviet Union country and I found some common points with the MEDA countries»¹⁴.

« Learning from others a new perspective on countries which are not part of European Union »

« Build bridges between the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea :-) »

« North South dialogue »

« During all the training course, we have learnt about different cultures, languages, traditions, way of living and I realised that some prejudices were false »

« A big opportunity to discover by being surrounded by different cultures, languages and challenges.»

« the most important thing is to meet people from the MEDA countries, in order to understand their daily reality. »

« These training courses make people change their point of view.»

Hypothesis 10: The training programs help magnifying participants peer groups in terms of consciousness-raising towards cultural differences. As a matter of fact the participants who lived an inter-cultural experience during the training share this experience with their closest circle (family, friends and colleagues).

68% of respondents claimed that they have tried even today to share with their closest circle, families, friends and colleagues their inter-cultural experience. We can see here the long-term impact of trainings on the participating peer groups. According to the results the inter-cultural environment represent contribution to the training courses, 61 participants mentioned this aspect in their answer to the question: *«which are the main contributions that you brought to your structure?»*.

¹⁴ Account of a Lithuanian participant, director, aged 32

We can quote a reply a Spanish female participant aged 32, volunteer of a NGO: « my experience with this training brought a great contribution about cultural differences and a new challenge to work with these countries to the structure I work with; **I noticed that my colleagues became more open**».

However, the inter-cultural dimension is strongly represented in the open question: «**Which are the main characteristics of SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed trainings?**»; 60% of the sample mention this idea in their reply. The most recurring words to describe this idea of the inter-cultural dialogue are: « **opening** », « **exchanges** », « **diversity** », « inter-cultural experience », « **tolerance** », « **sharing** », and « **dialogue** ». According to the results, the trainings would have a real impact on the consciousness-raising about cultural diversity.

According to the survey, the trainings have a magnifying effect on the peer groups of participants in terms of consciousness-raising about cultural diversity. The participants live an inter-cultural experience more or less strong, which produces an impact on their individual values. 87% of our sample claims that the trainings have had an impact on their values

General conclusion

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed organised 59 training courses between 2003 and 2007 in a very difficult and complicated political environment. The trainings have grouped together participants of countries having conflicts or even at war. However trainings took place in an authoritative and very sensitive environment, even with attacks taking place during the trainings' stays.

We cannot do anything but welcome SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed work, which allowed gathering these 1,396 people in this particular environment. In addition, the geographical, cultural, social and professional origin of the participants creates a strong inter-cultural dimension. Through their answers the participants mentioned this very often. However the questionnaire **returning rate is** encouraging: it shows that the participants have been involved in their trainings and are able to evaluate the contributions towards their professional and personal lives. **According to the survey the participants got in touch again, created partnerships and at least 166 projects took place involving between 836 and 6,210 young people.** There are fewer women from Mediterranean countries taking part into the training courses, bringing out projects and creating an organisation after the trainings. SALTO YOUTH EuroMed is aware of this disparity and put in action a training program focusing on the theme « the role and the place of women in the EuroMed area». **Favour this kind of initiative would contribute towards the fight for equal opportunities.** Moreover the problem concerning visas is serious and puts at risk the Youth Euro-Mediterranean co-operation, we encourage political dialogue with institutional players in order to favour administrative procedures. We can as well highlight that through training courses; the beneficiaries form regional partnerships' networks involving North-North and South-South co-operation.

We have to consider the role of training courses in the progress of political dialogue between countries at war through the exchange between youth program players. We can finally quote some account of participants:

« These are open trainings that imply long term results and that involve participants and encourage them to follow new projects »

« This is a tremendous tool and a driver to implement a balanced co-operation and help peoples and their young members to aim to common objectives »

« Opening towards the world and aid and support to disadvantaged countries with an eye to new projects, towards a new horizon »

« Be able to work together, Responsibility, tolerance, create projects in favour of the community, improve our skills in each field and have more self-confidence »