

SALTO-YOUTH
E U R O M E D
RESOURCE CENTRE



Education and Culture

Evaluation Study

SALTO EuroMed Activities 2007

Miguel Angel García López

15th January 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Objectives of this evaluation study	4
Scope of the evaluation study	4
Outcomes	5
Other characteristics.....	5
A general overview	7
The 2007 activities in numbers	7
On the implementation of the activities	7
Cooperation	8
Funding and financial co-responsibility.....	9
Activity by activity.....	10
Seminar: “Let's meet Our Neighbours and the World”	10
Contact Making Seminar: “EVS in Odyssey”.....	12
Training seminar “Place and Role of Minorities within the EuroMed context : Ethnic, Linguistic, Religious”.....	14
Training seminar “Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts”.....	16
International Conference: “EU Neighbourhood policy and migrations. Role of YIA and EuroMed Youth programmes”	18
Training seminar “Let’s meet the three Cultures”	20
Training seminar “Let’s meet the three Cultures”	20
“Tool Fair” 2nd edition	24
The EM GAME: A board game on Euro-Mediterranean countries	26
Final conclusions and recommendations	27

Introduction

The SALTO EuroMed activities 2007 have been marked by two important facts: the first year of implementation of the Youth in Action Programme 2007-2013, and after its interruption, the resumption of the EuroMed Youth Programme 2007-2008. In 2007 the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the Youth field had, in a certain way, to start again.

In this frame, beyond the objectives of each activity, the strategical objectives of SALTO EuroMed Resource were:

- To accompany the launching of the two programmes «Youth in Action » and « EuroMed Youth III »
- To help in the (re)-connection of the different national agencies and EuroMed Youth Units.
- To go further in the quality of training activities and reactivate the network of EuroMed multipliers.
- To improve the visibility and the valorisation of projects

Objectives of this evaluation study

This evaluation study serves to those same objectives. It should contribute to:

- Analyse the relevance, organisation and implementation of the activities
- Provide some guidelines to reach a better use of the results and their potential (in terms of visibility and valorisation)
- By involving the different actors (NAs, organisers, coordinators, trainers and participants), foster their cooperation
- Make proposals to reach a higher optimise them use of resources and the way the courses are run,

This evaluation study is not apart or independent to the ongoing evaluation of the activities done by the different actors. On the contrary, keeping its autonomy, it is based on it and linked to it. It aims to be a complement and a synthesis to the evaluation of each activity.

After going activity by activity, this evaluation study relates the findings and challenges of each actor, of each activity and takes a global perspective for a more consistent and coherent planning and implementation of activities in the future.

Scope of the evaluation study

This evaluation study covers the all the SALTO EuroMed Activities 2007. This means:

- Seminar: “Let’s meet Our Neighbours and the World”
Paris - France-, 30th May - 3rd June 2007
- Contact Making Seminar: “EVS in Odyssey”
Høje Taastrup - Denmark-, 5th - 9th September 2007
- Training seminar “Place and Role of Minorities within the EuroMed context : Ethnic, Linguistic, Religious”
Basque Country -Spain-, 22nd - 30th September 2007
- Training seminar “Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts”
Istanbul -Turkey-, 6th - 14th October 2007

- International Conference : “EU Neighbourhood policy and migrations” Role of YIA and EuroMed Youth programmes
Canary Islands -Spain-, 27th November - 2nd December 2007
- Training seminar “Let’s meet the three Cultures”
Paris - France-, 27th October - 4th November 2007
- Long Term Training course “Dialogue among civilisations” - Networking creation
Three phases. First phase: Nauplion - Greece- 11th - 18th November 2007
- “Tool Fair” 2nd edition
Antalya -Turkey-, 12th - 16th December 2007
- A board game on Euro-Mediterranean countries
January - May: conceptualization
June - September: setting up the board
September -December: data research work
December: first promotion

After taking a general overview to the activities (with some figures), this evaluation study goes through the main findings and conclusions of the different activities. At the end, some general conclusions are drawn and based on them, this evaluation study offers some recommendations for the future.

Sources of information

This evaluation study is based on the following sources of information:

- General information about the SALTO EuroMed activities
- The descriptive reports of the activities
- The evaluation reports of the activities
- The summary of the participants’ evaluation questionnaires
- The NAs and organisers evaluation questionnaires
- The individual evaluation of the different trainers and coordinators
- The discussions and outcomes of the SALTO EuroMed Evaluation Meeting held in Antalya, Turkey, 11th-12th December 2007

For harmonising those tools, and respecting always the autonomy of each team, a “model” of participants’ evaluation questionnaires and of summarising their outcomes was offered to the coordinators. The evaluation questionnaire for organisers and NAs was developed this year to directly involve those actors in the evaluation process.

Outcomes

Some preliminary ideas of this study were offered, shared and discussed in the previously mentioned SALTO EuroMed Evaluation Meeting.

After receiving the feedback from the different actors, this study is going to be presented in the coordinators meeting (29th - 30th January 2007 Paris -France-) and it will be available for all the actors involved in the SALTO EuroMed activities.

Other characteristics

The decision of having such a study was taken after the preparation and in some cases after the implementation of some activities. It would have been counterproductive to the evaluation process of the activities to “impose” at that moment evaluation tools for the only purpose of collecting information for this study. The approach was rather to accompany, support and “harmonise” when possible the evaluation processes and tools of the activities.

Together with that, the fact that the activities were of different nature and format, is an extra challenge when making comparisons, triangulations or when extracting general conclusions.

I hope that despite its limits, this Evaluation Study can contribute to take stock and improve the SALTO EuroMed activities or at least contribute to launch a discussion about them.

Enjoy the reading!!!

Miguel

A general overview

The 2007 activities in numbers

Activities 2007	Hosting country	Participants	Applications
“Let's meet Our Neighbours and the World”	Injep -France-	99	537
“EVS in Odyssey”	Høje Taastrup - Denmark-	24	72
“Place and Role of Minorities within the EuroMed context : Ethnic, Linguistic, Religious”	Basque Country -Spain-	25	127
“Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts”	Istanbul -Turkey-	28	302
“EU Neighbourhood policy and migrations”	Canary Islands -Spain-	78	457
“Let's meet the three Cultures”	Paris -France-	26	237
“Dialogue among civilisations”	Nauplion -Greece-	24	153
« TOOL FAIR »	Antalya -Turkey-	<i>96 Participants and around 20 local observers</i>	252
Total		400	2.227

The number of applications (2.227) is approximately the double if we compare it with the previous year (1074). This higher number of applicants and participants is even more remarkable if we consider that the training courses “Dialogue among civilisations” had to be organised in two months so that still could be implemented before the end of 2007.

The number of participants 400 is as well considerably bigger (292 in 2006). This is due to the organisation of two bigger events: The seminar “Let's meet Our Neighbours and the World” and the Conference “EU Neighbourhood policy and migrations”.

On the implementation of the activities

Despite the difficulties after the interruption of the programme, all the planned activities - except for one- could take place. The planned Training seminar “Democracy within the EuroMed context: illusion or reality?” had to be postponed for 2008 due to the late signature of the contract to the Italian National Agency and some institutional changes.

For the first time, each activity has been coordinated by a « coordinator » chosen after a selection and recruitment procedure. The coordinators met to compose their team. The activities were run by 7 coordinators, 22 trainers and 5 rapporteurs. They developed and prepare new concepts and themes.

The following activities explored with new and sensitive issues:

- Training seminar “Place and Role of Minorities within the EuroMed context : Ethnic, Linguistic, Religious”
- Training seminar “Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts”
- Long Term Training course “Dialogue among civilisations”

Consequently, the educational reports and publications of SALTO EuroMed have been qualitatively enriched in their diversity.

The « Tool fair » was the space for sharing, exploration and valorisation of educational methods and tools. The fact of being a big activity contributed to foster the visibility of the work done.

If necessary, additional financial support has been provided to Meda participants in order to guarantee a balanced participation.

Cooperation

The cooperation between the National Agencies and EuroMed Units was promoted through training activities articulated around the European Neighbouring Policy and around the programmes “Youth in Action” and “EuroMed Youth III”. Those activities were addressed to the responsible staff of Action 3 of the Programme Youth in Action and of the TCP.

The internal cooperation between the different SALTO resources centres was as well fostered in 2007. SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed has worked together with two regional centres: SALTO-YOUTH East Europe and Caucasus and SALTO - YOUTH South-East Europe. They developed together the brochure “Paths to international Cooperation in Youth field” focused on the European Neighbouring Policy and the Action 3 of the Youth in Action Programme. They participated in the conference “Let's meet Our Neighbours and the World” and as well in the Conference “The European Neighbouring Policy: the role of the Youth in Action and EuroMed Youth programmes”.

The training seminar “Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts” gathered those two regions and the SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre. In 2008 (European year of Intercultural Dialogue) the educational report “Faith, religion and dialogue” will be the visible expression of this cooperation.

Funding and financial co-responsibility

Activities 2007	Who paid what	
<p>“Let’s meet Our Neighbours and the World” Injep -France-</p>	<p>French NA Injep Sending NAs Salto EuroMed</p> <p>Salto EECA Salto SEE</p>	<p>Hosting costs, some travel costs for EU and Meda pax. Provided working rooms and translation material for free. Most of travel costs of own participants. Prep meeting hosting costs + Coordinator & one trainer fees & travel costs + Meda pax travel costs 2 trainers fees & travel costs + EECA pax travel costs, 2 trainers fees & travel costs + SEE pax travel costs</p>
<p>“EVS in Odyssey” Høje Taastrup - Denmark-</p>	<p>Salto EuroMed Danish, Finnish & Swedish NAs</p>	<p>Coordinator & one trainer fees & travel costs All the rest</p>
<p>“Place and Role of Minorities within the EuroMed context : Ethnic, Linguistic, Religious” Basque Country -Spain-</p>	<p>Basque govt Salto EuroMed</p>	<p>Hosting costs + EU pax travel costs, Coordinator & 2 trainer fees + 1 reporter + editing of the report & travel costs, travel costs of Meda pax</p>
<p>“Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts” Istanbul -Turkey-</p>	<p>Turkish NA Salto EM</p> <p>Salto EECA</p> <p>Salto Cultural Diversity</p>	<p>hosting costs, Salto EM Coordinator & 2 trainer fees + partly 1 reporter + partly editing of the report & travel costs + travel costs of Meda pax 1 trainer + travel costs of EECA pax + partly 1 reporter + partly report editing partly 1 reporter + partly editing of the report</p>
<p>“EU Neighbourhood policy and migrations” Canary Islands -Spain-</p>	<p>Spanish NA Canaries government Salto EuroMed</p>	<p>partly hosting costs + travel costs of EECA & SEE pax partly hosting costs + 2 experts, Coordinator & 3 trainer fees & travel costs + 2 experts + Meda pax travel costs</p>
<p>“Let’s meet the three Cultures” Paris -France-</p>	<p>French NA Salto EuroMed</p>	<p>hosting costs + 1 expert Coordinator & 3 trainer fees & travel costs + Meda pax travel costs</p>
<p>“Dialogue among civilisations” Nauplion -Greece-</p>	<p>Greek NA Salto EuroMed</p>	<p>hosting costs + some EU pax travel costs, Coordinator & 2 trainer fees & travel costs + Meda pax travel costs</p>
<p>« TOOL FAIR » Antalya -Turkey-</p>	<p>Turkish NA Salto EuroMed</p>	<p>hosting costs + some EU pax travel costs Coordinator & 2 trainer fees & travel costs + Meda pax travel costs + travel costs of Saltos’ 2007 trainers</p>

Activity by activity

Seminar: “Let’s meet Our Neighbours and the World”

Paris - France-, 30th May - 3rd June 2007

The objectives of the seminar were

- To gain information about the political framework of the European Neighbouring Policy
- To explore new features of the YiA Programme and possibilities for cooperation
- To get to know neighbours (regions, youth work realities, good practices ...)
- To get familiar with support structures (regional SALTO RCs, EACEA, European Youth Forum, Youth pass, ...)
- To facilitate partner finding

In their evaluation -almost unanimously- participants express that those objectives were achieved. The team came to the same conclusion.

On the different parts of the programme, participants were satisfied but in their evaluation they expressed that they would have liked more workshops and “practical” work and less speeches. This unbalance to their eyes might -at least partly- justified by the characteristic of such a big event where the institutional presence - visibility and the methods are not the same as in a training course. For example in its evaluation the French N.A. say that its visibility was one of the expected outcomes and they are not fully satisfied with it. It remains, nevertheless the challenge of articulating in those big events the institutional presence and visibility and the “learning and training spaces” in stead of the mere transmission of information.

The overall level of achievement of the expectations of participants is clearly positive. But at the same time it shows their diversity, the different level of knowledge and experience on the contents of the seminar. Some needed basic information, others would have liked to go deeper in one or the other aspect... some enjoyed simply the sharing while others were more targeted when looking for partners.

It is a big challenge in such a short time, to have a programme answering to so different expectations and at the same time guaranteeing a common learning process. The differentiation of spaces according to different expectations and needs has its limits. It can be contra productive in terms of group dynamics and of the overall coherence of the seminar. It is probably in the preparation phase when more can be done to bring all participants to a minimum common level of knowledge and awareness. This would be the bases for achieving more ambitious results. In that sense, without anticipating contents of the seminar, the preparation could have included basic and “adapted” information about the contents of the seminar (Neighbouring Policy, YiA, support structures...). The preparation done consisted on participants “providing information” to be shared during the seminar for the general knowledge of their organisation, country, culture... for the partners finding, and for the good practices.

For the preparation work to be possible, productive and more consistent, the selection process should considerably improve (more coherence between the different actors involved, be done on time...). Otherwise, the preparation of participants will be unmanageable and their levels and expectations in the seminar too disperse to be able to respond to them in such a short time.

Regarding the outcome of the seminar, the different actors (participants, team and organisers) are more than satisfied with the finding of partners and the project ideas.

The French N.A. express its doubts regarding the follow-up of the activity:

“As from today (30th of November) we had 3 projects proposed after this Event and one is planned for 2008- R1. We do not know the outcomes in the other NAs and in the EMYU’s. One project with “mixed” regions in 2007, 1 forecasted in 2008, which is quite few.”

This is true but the Seminar was not just a pure contact making seminar, in other words, not just for producing projects. It had as well the political value and the value of starting a new cooperation. The other partners (European Commission, 3 SALTOs, EMYUs, NAs and participants showed their satisfaction at that long term and political level. This is, once again, expression of the different interest and expectations on the Seminar.

The most important lesson in this case might be that if a follow-up in terms of projects was implicitly expected, it should have been part of the objectives, consequently worked out in the programme of the seminar and supported and monitored afterwards.

On the logistical and organisational part the work and cooperation with the French NA was good. But such a big event implied a lot of work, which according to the French NA is very difficult to assume by any NA during the first part of the year, when the amount of work is too big. This is something to be considered in the future.

Epecially remarkable:

- The exemplary cooperation between the three regional SALTOs ; a perfect balance in terms of tasks, responsibilities and financial contribution.

Contact Making Seminar: “EVS in Odyssey”

Høje Taastrup - Denmark-, 5th - 9th September 2007

The objectives of the seminar were:

- To receive information about the political background for cooperation between MEDA and EU countries (Barcelona process etc.)
- To get a common understanding of the voluntary work, of the responsibilities and of the various educational perspectives.
- To get acquainted with the future Programme “Youth in Action “and the developments of EuroMed Youth III, especially within EVS.
- To experience non formal learning methods and exchange experiences and good practices.
- To facilitate the contact making between youth organisations active in EVS (or willing to become so) in Northern Europe and in Meda countries.
- To create a space of EuroMed cooperation and projects’ start in the field of European Voluntary Service.

In the evaluation questionnaires participants were not asked about the fulfilment or not of those objectives. Even if the evaluation by objectives is not the only possible one, it would be good to include it in future occasions. In any case, from the fulfilment or / not of their expectations we can deduce that the objectives were in general terms achieved.

We can distinguish within the objectives the four first ones (mainly educational) and two last ones; future oriented towards the implementation of common projects.

The articulation of the programme, the positive comments on the methods used and other comments from participants indicate that the educational objectives in terms of receiving information, getting acquainted, experience, understand... were satisfactorily achieved.

It is clear as well that there was the space for developing the two last objectives in terms of contact making, cooperation and common projects. At the same time, as it happens in other activities, the “implicit” follow up of those objectives in terms of “real projects” can not be measured and it was weakly monitored.

One of the difficulties, mentioned by some participants and by the trainers in the evaluation meeting, was the “cultural gap” or the “too big cultural differences”. The experience in international youth work tell us that more time and an specific educational strategy are needed for experiencing, identifying, reflecting and generalising -to be able to apply the lessons in another context- the intercultural differences. In other words it is necessary more time and a methodology to go through all the steps of the experiential learning cycle on cultural differences.

If those difficulties are detected during the seminar it is always a big learning opportunity to use the experience of the group as a source of learning. On another hand when the time is limited and when “intercultural learning” is not a clear educational objective, this might not be realistic. There is probably no perfect balance in this tension but it is good to be aware and to consider it when implementing the programme. And it shows as well the limitations of such an activity; a contact making seminar is not a training course on Inter-cultural learning.

Another one, at least for the NA, was the real profile of participants. The expected profile was of participants “project ready” and in reality some of them hardly knew the programme. Even if the selection processes would be “perfect” there are always those discrepancies. And once in the course, the trainers’ team is “limited” and “forced” to adapt to the real participants. Here comes again the importance of the content preparation to guarantee a “common minimum level” so that the learning during the seminar can be bigger. The preparation consisted on the preparation of mutual learning sessions focused on the exchange projects ideas and of info about the organisations.

The cooperation with the Danish national agency was good. Strategically just the visibility of the seminar was not so much worked out. Educationally the agency just missed more clarity in some parts of the programme so that they could most efficiently contribute with materials which could help participants to learn more and overcome more easily their difficulties with EVS.

Epecially remarkable:

- This activity was as well a good cooperation between the Danish, Finnish and Swedish National Agencies. They shared all: willingness, work and funding
- The concept of the activity was developed in 2006 following the request of the Greek National Agency. In 2007 it was adapted to a new demand.

Training seminar “Place and Role of Minorities within the EuroMed context : Ethnic, Linguistic, Religious”

Basque Country -Spain-, 22nd - 30th September 2007

The objectives of the training seminar were:

- To increase participants knowledge about the situation of minorities in the EuroMed context: history, law, existing and persecuted minorities, etc
- Facilitating the sharing of experiences and realities about minorities in the countries involved
- Offering a special focus on ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities, having as a starting point the reality of the hosting region
- Providing participants with a better knowledge about the new Youth in Action programme and the EuroMed Youth Programme III
- Acquire competences and learning new methods that will help participants to develop projects in the EuroMed frame focus on the topic of minorities

The participants in their evaluation expressed very clearly that all the objectives were largely achieved. All the training sessions were positively or very positively evaluated and the methodology and methods, apart from being appreciated, were one of the most relevant learning points for participants.

The group of participants was heterogeneous in terms of knowledge and experience on minority issues. This provoked that for some of them the information and training received was too much (for a certain session or during the seminar in general) and for others not enough.

The preparation of participants consisted on the preparation of their contribution to the seminar (their project idea, their organisation, the session they should facilitate). This is very adequate to have the input of participants in the programme but could be complemented with some basic information on the topic so that the differences of knowledge and experiences could have been harmonised a bit.

Given the complexity of the minorities' issues in the EuroMed context it was necessary to provide participants with some basic information, with some concrete examples... This transmission of information did not play against engaging the group and using the group of participants as one of the most important learning sources. Part of the TC programme has consisted on workshops managed by pax; they were actors of their own learning process. It is not always the case in other Training Courses on minorities. This approach was very much appreciated and shows the efforts for developing a specific methodology and tools for each EuroMed TC. The use of the local reality -in this case of the Basque country- as a learning feature was positive as well even if with some sessions there were logistical difficulties. The fact that the TC was run during Ramadan and that the team members had a “minority” background were as well of an extra value in terms of learning.

On the technical and institutional level the miscommunication and lack of cooperation between the Basque Government and the Spanish NA and the weak institutional presence of this last one provoked clear deficits in the learning opportunities. This was partially compensated with the extra efforts of the team. But, what is more important, it affects to the credibility of the seminar; it is a contradiction to organise a seminar where participants should learn to cooperate without being able to do it at the institutional level. The mix of political, personal, institutional and logistical dysfunctions and differences should be addressed for a better cooperation in the future.

There are not conclusive data on the follow-up of the seminar. But according to the information and impressions of trainers, some months later, the results have been mostly in terms of “awareness raising”, work at local level and within the organisations; just some international projects have been articulated.

Especially remarkable:

- The many methods and exercises created specifically for this training seminar
- The exploration of the reality of the bask country

Training seminar “Inter-religious Dialogue within the EuroMed and Eastern Europe and Caucasus contexts”

Istanbul -Turkey-, 6th - 14th October 2007

The aim and objectives of the training seminar were:

Aim:

- to prepare youth workers to deal with religious issues in their job and to promote dialogue among the different religions, spiritual and humanistic traditions mainly in the Mediterranean, Caucasian and European contexts where conflicts are increasingly associated with religious belonging

Objectives:

- To provide educational support and time for the participants to share and reflect about their own experiences and knowledge in the field of inter-religious dialogue
- To disseminate the principles of inter-religious dialogue using different means.
- To identify common elements in relation with the other religions that help participants built common understanding
- To help and support participants in improving their competence (Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes and Values) in the field of inter-religious dialogue.
- To allocate space for the participants to develop project ideas in the field of inter-religious dialogue in the Mediterranean, Caucasian and European areas.
- To develop specific methods and necessary tools for better cooperation in the future.

The evaluation questionnaire of participants did not explicitly tackle the evaluation by objectives. For educational and “practical” reasons this would be something to include. Other comments and the evaluation of the trainers show that the objectives were largely achieved.

The preparation of participants consisted on their project ideas, their organization and the reality in their country on Inter-religious dialogue. This was a good way of approaching the subject starting by the reality of participants. At the same time, it might have been interesting as well to start to explore, conceptually, some basic principles and ideas on Inter-religious dialogue.

Conceptually there was a big effort of approaching inter-religious dialogue from different perspectives and schools.

The different programme elements were positively or very positively evaluated by participants.

Due to unforeseen circumstances Judaism was not visible. Due to a last moment cancellation there was no Israeli participant and the planned meeting with a Rabbi in a Synagogue cancelled too. The dialogue was more around Islam and Christianity. There was as well a -in principle- not planed workshop on Laicité. The participants asked for it and even being an optional workshop, most of them attended it.

Due to the cooperation with SALTO EEAC the participants came from a high number of different countries. This was also a big challenge that the team managed with a diverse and creative methodology. The participants appreciated that very much; particularly some new methods and the use of the reality of Istanbul as a learning feature for inter religious dialogue. The fact that the seminar took place during Ramadan was an extra learning for the group.

The option of not doing formally inter-religious dialogue among participants during the course -as part of the programme-, of not using in that way the group as a source for learning has advantages and disadvantages. For that another approach would have been necessary and as a result, other kind of competencies would have been developed. But this is a possibility that the team thinks that it is important to be considered in future occasions when dealing with this issue. This dialogue and mutual curiosity took place in the informal moments.

The seminar was not “project oriented” but “contents and tools oriented”. Some “technical mistakes” in the articulation of projects show that this was indeed not the most important. There were nevertheless enough spaces and opportunities for participants to start to work in that direction.

The cooperation with the Turkish Youth Unit was good and at the same time not unproblematic. There were problems with the budget, sometimes with the logistics and in some occasions a more permanent presence of the Youth Unit would have been beneficial. But it seems that the flexibility and a good team spirit helped to overcome those problems and at the end they did not affect very much to the seminar.

There is not conclusive evidence on the follow-up and future use of the results of the seminar. According to the evaluation of participants, to the information gathered by the team on the project ideas and to the e-mail communication, the follow-up of this seminar will go in different directions: To do some research to learn about IRD, Potential projects, to learn about Islam, to conduct some training and presentations, to use the used tools in the training, to find initiative for IRD in the context they live in... This is from my point of view a quite reasonable result for this “new, sensitive and complex” issue which could be further developed in the following years using the accumulated experience of this seminar.

Especially remarkable:

- The edition of the booklet on “Faith, religion & dialogue”. It was co-edited by three Saltos (EM, CD, EECA) and based on the two training courses done; one in Belfast and one in Istanbul.
- The use of Istanbul as a learning source; for example having the “iftar” (breaking the fast and eat) in Turkish families.

International Conference: “EU Neighbourhood policy and migrations. Role of YIA and EuroMed Youth programmes”

Canary Islands -Spain-, 27th November - 2nd December 2007

The objectives of the conference were:

- To acknowledge the main achievements occurred since the EU creation, its active role through its EuroMed policies and the new challenges EU has to face.
- To promote an active, efficient and authentic neighbourhood policy in terms of migrations, involving and committing young people in this process.
- To use the new programmes (YIA and EuroMed Youth III) to face the current challenges within the Neighbourhood Policy.
- To share tools, methods and strategies related with good practices which emerged in the previous EU funding period.

For the reasons already mentioned in previous activities, it would have been positive that participants and trainers would have explicitly evaluated the achievement -or not- of the objectives but from their evaluation it seems that they we basically achieved.

The structure of the Conference in four blocks: information, experience, practice and opinion-discussion allowed combining in the programme the necessary background information, the different approaches and positions on this complex topic, the practical examples and what could be the role and contribution of the new programmes and of young people.

The evaluation by the different actors tells us that the lectures were much appreciated, the workshop managed by participants very interesting and the organisation good.

The critical remarks of participants and trainers have to do with the “inherent challenges” of such an activity format; a Conference: too few time for the workshops, lack of direct contact with immigrant, practices and open space highly appreciated, the SALTO workshops should have been for everybody and not just in parallel... And indicator of this generalised wish to attend some workshops is that, for example, 46 pax took part in the Salto EM workshop.

Under those arguments we can clearly identify the potentialities and limitations of a Conference: a lot of participants, few time, difficulty of fixing priorities in the programme ... Those “difficult balances” were even more difficult to achieve to probably wrong expectations of some participants (a Conference is not a Training Course) and by the selection of participants (clearly criticised by the coordinator since some participants seemed to be there for other purposes). Without being the solution, for those kinds of “not so common” activities in youth work it is convenient to explicitly include in its presentation (by written and at the beginning of it) “what a Conference is not”.

On the institutional, logistical and organisational part the cooperation with INJUVE and Spanish NA was unsatisfactory for the team already during the preparation; for the two prep meetings different persons from the Spanish NA participated. The cooperation was as well weak during the conference; regarding the pre info, the coordination meetings, the work with the media... The extra work of the team and the very efficient support of the local organisers made possible, at the end, a reasonable management of the event.

The preparation work of the Conference did not include any anticipation or appetiser of contents. It demands from participants the habitual background info about their organisation, background, country... together with the list of things to bring.

The follow-up of the conference is difficult to assess but the general impression is that with its positive and not so positive aspects, it did have a strong impact on participants and therefore in their daily work. This because, it tackles a very serious and relevant topic for EuroMed and particularly for young people. The general feeling is that the positive work on this issue done in the conference should continue in the future.

Epecially remarkable:

- The topic of the Conference (migrations) and the venue were completely interconnected. This gave to the activity an extra value
- The fantastic support and commitment of the local and regional authorities
- The method used for the preparation of participants: the selected ones were divided in 4 groups. Each trainer-facilitator, before arriving, was in charge of the preparation of one group. During the event the same groups worked together to give continuity to the process: reflecting, preparing, in the open space, in the sharing of good practices... This group work was an innovative and efficient tool which contributed to the success of the event and has continued afterwards.
- The supportive presence of the Commission

Training seminar “Let’s meet the three Cultures”

Paris - France-, 27th October - 4th November 2007

The objectives of the training seminar were:

- To know EuroMed cultures and their relation with the Christianity, Islam and Judaism.
- To reflect on the participants' own cultural identity.
- To identify the common elements in relation with the other cultures.
- To reflect on the place of secularism in EuroMed societies.
- To be able to create together using the past to prepare a better future.
- To prepare the framework and coach the participants in the realisation of concrete partnerships within the EuroMed YOUTH Programme.

The evaluation of participants and of the team shows that those objectives were achieved.

Just as a punctual but important remark, I guess that there might be confusion between “secularism” (mentioned in the objectives) and “laïcité” (what it was explored during the training seminar). They are very different concepts.

The methodology was evaluated as very adequate. It included the Research and Development of activities made by participants using the city and its institutions as a tool; the discovering of the three different cultures and “laïcité” by having community meals, visit to worship places, and meeting relevant representatives; the Discovering of the Louvre (a museum-based game created for the TC)... It contributed a lot to the achievement of the objectives.

The place and the venue of the course, as we said, were a good source of learning but on another hand the “temptation of Paris by night” influenced the level of energy and concentration of some participants.

The preparatory process was difficult and at the same time “interesting”. Difficult because of the circumstances and “absences” for the Prep Meeting, the French NA officer in charge of the project changed between the preparation and the seminar... But those difficulties could be overcome thanks to the references of previous years, to a good coordination and an intensive work via e-mail.

The selection of participants was, according to the coordinator and to the French N.A., not very successful. Several participants were too inexperienced in the topic but as well in youth work. Participants should be selected based also on a personal assignment according to the theme of the TC.

On the follow-up, as the French National Agency says in its evaluation, it is too early to evaluate if projects will come out from this seminar. But the workshop taking place on last day, partnership matching, was very interesting and numerous future projects were presented.

All the actors appreciated very much the organisational work done by the “Avicenne” organisation. On the logistical and institutional side, the cooperation and coordination between NA, SALTO and coordinator was, in general, satisfactory. At the same time, it seems that there were some mutual expectations not fulfilled and some roles confusion: the coordinator missed at times to have a “real partner” in the N.A., the N.A. would like to be more present in the educational team, it felt as well some mixing up between SALTO and N.A....

Apart from the good work of the team, it is clear that we are in front of a “consolidated activity”. This is the fourth consecutive edition of this activity. The accumulated good practices and the innovation and new richness matched for the benefit of the seminar. This time, in terms of contents the innovative element was “la laïcité” which was very well introduced by the expert and very much appreciated by the participants. Other related topics, other focuses and other venues should in the future contribute to give new taste to this “classical” activity in EuroMed.

Especially remarkable:

- The topic of “Laïcité à la française” was very successful due also to the high quality of the expert.
- The Louvre exercise for the use of the local environment and because it showed how to use art to tackle the different religions.

Long Term Training course “Dialogue among civilisations” - Networking creation

Three phases. First phase: Nauplion - Greece- 11th - 18th November 2007

The Long-Term Training Course (LTTTC) on the theme of ‘*Dialogue among Civilizations*’ aims at building on the long-term strategy agreed between the Greek National Agency (NA) for the Youth in Action (YiA) Programme and the SALTO EuroMed Resource Centre, to further strengthen and expand the network of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) projects as well as to improve the quality of such projects.

In the preparation phase there were some difficulties of coordination between SALTO and the Greek NA: different visions of the TC, of the resources required, communication, roles... That’s why the TC was postponed. After that, there was a dialogue between the Salto Coordinator and the head of the Greek NA. Its project officer in charge of it changed and after a one day meeting, the whole concept of the TC was clarified. Overcoming those difficulties was a success and made possible to start the first phase with a coherent and “adaptable” educational proposal for the course.

The objectives of the first phase, held in Nauplion - Greece- 11th - 18th November 2007, were:

- to explore the concept of cross-fertilized civilizations and define what makes the cultural identity of the EuroMed region;
- to understand the challenges of dialogue among civilizations within the EuroMed Youth III Programme;
- to get acquainted with the procedures of the new Youth in Action Programme and of the new EuroMed Youth III Programme and structures;
- to gain competences and skills in managing networks and cooperation strategies;
- to develop, organize, run and evaluate networking projects reinforcing dialogue among civilizations within the EuroMed Youth III Programme.

This first phase is included in a wider strategy of the Greek NA on EuroMed EVS. The pax will be invited in November to a big conference on the topic: EVS networking in EuroMed. The III Phase (evaluation and follow up seminar) is already confirmed in Cyprus in December 2008.

Before the LTTTC, participants had been asked to submit a ‘home work’ to know their expectations as well as what they thought they could contribute to, and share with the other participants during the training. They were also asked to prepare inputs on their organizations and civilizations. This preparatory work was rich and quite complete.

The programme explored the notions of civilisation, dialogue, information about the ‘*European Neighbourhood Policy*’ (ENP) as well as on the *Youth in Action* (YiA) Programme, EuroMed Youth III Programme, introduction of their youth work and organisations, exchange of experiences, team building, networking strategies... At the end of this first seminar participants developed, defined and finalised (“filling the application forms”) their own strategies focusing on EVS.

The methodology included interactive methods, visits, use of the local environment as a source of learning, team work... Each activity was followed by a brief debriefing session. The activities were adapted to the participants’ needs, on basis of the outcomes resulting from an analysis of the previously mentioned home works.

The evaluation of participants and of the team was positive. The objectives were fulfilled and the expectations were met. The team of trainers felt as well that the learning process had been as important to them as to the participants.

Indeed, the quality of the teamwork, the level and adequacy of participants (in terms of diversity, curiosity...), the methodology and specific tools created for this TC, the coordination with the NA, the coaching of the 3 big network created, the follow-up... All indicates that this first phase was very successful.

However, it is clear that the real success and the impact or not of the training course would be measured on basis of the approval of the projects developed by participants and their implementation during phase II of the LTTC, the outcomes of which would be evaluated during phase III.

Especially remarkable:

- It is the first phase of a long Training Course, which is an activity of big importance in educational and organisational terms.
- There is a clear and real commitment of all the partners.
- Many exercises and methods were specially created for this first phase
- The use of the place and local environment as a learning tool
- There are an important number of potential networks (5) which could be set at the end of this course.

“Tool Fair” 2nd edition

Antalya -Turkey-, 12th - 16th December 2007

The objectives of the tool fair were:

- To gather and to valorise tools created and implemented within the framework of youth work in general and Youth in Action programme more specifically
- To test tools
- To analyse and to reflect on the transferability of these tools

In their evaluation, participants express that those objectives were achieved. Moreover, a big majority expressed not just that they could experience good tools and practices but as well reflect about them, foreseen their transferability and get confidence to adapt and develop new tools. The learning of participants was rich and intense. This is something not easy; to have good learning outcomes in such a big event. With the achievement of the objectives, we can conclude that it was a successful activity.

There were 29 Workshops running during 3 days (21 different tools presented in workshops, 3 workshops on technical tools, 5 workshops on Tools for cooperation). Around 40 tools presented in the exhibition. There were 3 lectures from experts. Around 50 project ideas discussed in the partnership building activity. There were 110 pax and 20 visitors (Erasmus students from the University).

It was one of the unique events in Youth in Action Programme as it gathers Non - Formal Education and Formal Education together. The Life Long Learning Programme was presented in a workshop for the participants to improve their skills and use the funding possibilities for their activities in the youth work field.

The critical remarks coming probably from the most experienced participants were:

- Some tools were not “new”, not of big quality, not well prepared, without providing basic materials for its further use...
- Some experts were not inspiring and not focused on the purpose of the session
- Participants did not profit as much as they could have of the stands/exhibition. It should have been better organized, better connected with the partnership building...

The measures for improving those points have to do mostly with the preparation process: a better and clearer preparation with participants presenting tools, with the experts, a careful planning of the exhibition... But at the same time, they put some questions on the general format of the activity: is the focus of the “tool” the innovation? not the tools as such but the reflection on them? the visibility? Where is the added value of the tools: in their innovation and/or relevance in a certain context and/or issues tackled?. As many times the answer is probably a mix of all those factors and certainly something to carefully consider for the next edition when “a cycle of 3 tool fairs” will come to an end.

Everybody considered that the team did a great job on. The circumstances of their work were very hard: they were one less than they supposed to be and the technical team during the first days was not the adequate one for this kind of activity. Their work had at least four levels/dimensions: Facilitate the sessions, Brief and coach the participants who presented a tool, Taking care of the visibility of the event, session in University and supporting the rapporteur. In normal circumstances the human resources should be more and the tasks more balanced distributed.

The participation and contribution of the Salto - EuroMed trainers was very positive.

The cooperation with the organizing Turkish N.A. was at times not easy. The roles and responsibilities distribution agreed on the Prep Meeting were not always respected and the change of the venue provoked further organisational tensions.

On the not explicitly mentioned “strategical” objectives of reinforcing the partnership with the other SALTOs, NAs, with the Commission, EMYUs the Tool Fair was as well positive: an example is the development of a partnership within French NA, Turkish NA and Akdeniz University for the future of EuroMed. At the same time, there is still a big room for improvement in this direction.

There are few indicators but the last sessions, the evaluations and the e-mail communication invite us to be optimistic on the follow-up by participants. A face book group has been created. There is a feeling of community among participants. Numerous partnerships have been developed and others have been proposed for the 1st of February deadline.

On the institutional-organisational follow up, the documentation, its distribution and the planned future overall “documentation” of the 3 Tool fairs should allow, indeed to valorise at that level the very relevant educational work done in the different activities. An extra effort will probably be necessary to do “the best” out of it without losing any richness.

Epecially remarkable:

- The already general “good quality” of the activity. This was, in principle, something expected for its 3rd and not already for its 2nd edition.
- The big number of tools presented
- The big number of NAs and EMYUs participating
- The supportive presence of the Commission
- The cooperation with the University of Antalya and the Turkish NA
- The facilities and working conditions of the venue

The EM GAME: A board game on Euro-Mediterranean countries

January - May: conceptualization

June - September: setting up the board

September -December: data research work

December: first promotion

The aim of the Euro-Med game (still under construction) is to improve the knowledge among young people and youth workers on the cultural and socio-political settings of the Euro-Med countries and on youth projecting by recreating the steps of the implementation of a project (fund raising, partnership building, getting the project approved...).

The objectives:

- Improving the knowledge on culture and society of the countries partners of the Euro-Med partnerships;
- Combating prejudices and phobias based on ignorance and thus leading to changes of awareness, attitudes or behaviours;
- Improving mutual understanding and cohesion between young people across the Euro-Mediterranean region based on and committed to mutual respect, tolerance and dialogue between the various cultures.
- Inciting young people and youth workers to get an active role in the process of intercultural dialogue;
- Testing the skills on project management, through creating the basic steps for the approval and implementation of a project;
- Improving the knowledge on the Youth in action Programme and Euro-Med Youth Programme III;
- Motivating young people and youth workers in getting actively involved in the Euro-Med Programme;
- Enhancing the role of multipliers of young people and youth workers in their working and living realities;
- Stimulating the cooperative attitude of participants;
- Providing an educational tool with the added value of game playing to be used in non-formal and formal education;
- Providing an active tool for group building and group dynamic activities;
- Providing a game for entertainment and leisure time

Until now the rules, format and presentation of the game have been finalised. It was introduced in the Trainers and Coordinators Evaluation Meeting and in the Tool Fair. It was very much appreciated and its development is being done according to what is planned. Now is being tested, trying to find out eventual problems or dysfunctions. In 2008 all the questions on the different countries will be developed. Trainers and coordinators are very specially invited to contribute to them. The final version will be presented in the Tool Fair 2008.

Showing through the questions the cultural, religious and social diversity within each country covering different contents areas: basic knowledge, history, culture, reality of young people, politics... seems to be an adequate approach to it.

Apart from contributing to its development with the formulation of questions, I recommend to “systematically offer” the EuroMed game as an evening activity in all the EuroMed activities 2008. Those would be excellent opportunities for testing and for involving people in its development and promotion.

Final conclusions and recommendations

A difficult, demanding and good year

2007 due to the new starting of the YiA programme and EuroMed Youth was a difficult year: activities accumulated in the second semester and time for preparation in various activities.

It was as well a demanding year because new activity formats and new topics were introduced.

From all the evaluations done by the different actors (participants, organisers, team members, NAs, SALTO coordination...) we can affirm that all the activities in 2007 were successful. Together with all the details previously analysed, several indicators lead us to this conclusion: growing number of applications, no black spot (something strongly negative) in any activity, objectives fulfilled -when measured- around 75% ...

As the participants underlined in their evaluations, the work of the teams was a key factor for this success. We did not analyse this in detail but their composition was very adequate in terms of balance, complementarity and potentialities; combining Meda and Europe, men-women, experienced-new...

The involvement of youth leaders and trainers in EuroMed activities, as team members, is as such a tool for further development and for the promotion of the overall EuroMed objectives. The team composition was, in that sense, well planned and "used".

It is clear that "what happens during the activities" (programme, contents, methodology, group dynamics...) is positive and a good learning opportunity. Different actors have expressed the need of improving the preparation and follow-up.

Profile of participants, selection and preparation

In almost all the activities there have been some inadequacies between the expected profile of participants and the real one. Some times this inadequacy has to do with the responsibilities of the different actors in charge of the selection process.

Without necessarily changing the procedures a more careful selection of participants would be convenient.

But the referred inadequacy concerns as well a minimum level of knowledge and experience of participants for them to be able to fully profit from the activity. The coordinators and trainers in their evaluation meeting identified two fields in which participants should have a "minimum level": project management and knowledge of the Youth EuroMed and Youth in Action programmes.

It would be good to elaborate some standard materials and/or "didactical units", presentations... which could be used as background documentation for the preparation of participants and/or as workshops -for the ones who needed- during the first days of the activities.

Just in three TCs, (“let’s meet the 3 Cultures, Place and role of Minorities and “Dialogue among civilisations”) the team provided for the preparation of participants relevant background information or challenging task on the topic of the activity. This good practice should be generalised to all the activities. For the rest of them the preparation consisted just on “information, experiences, materials” that participants should prepare to bring and share to the activity.

Especially for the “new” and challenging topics, it would be good to provide participants with some basic information (e.g. from the training bag) so that they could come to the activity with a higher level of knowledge and awareness on the topic. This without “anticipating” the contents of the activity.

Follow-up

In 2007 the follow-up of the activities is something prepared, planned during the activities but afterwards not systematically supported or monitored.

The systematic support and monitoring of the projects of participants would require another format of activity: a project based long term activity. In other kind of activities it is unrealistic to expect that from the team neither from the participants. Without neglecting other multiplier effects and multiplier effects the N.A.s -specially the hosting one- expect, as a result of an activity , more and better projects in the frame of YiA.

With the “means” available it is difficult to find a “receipt” to solve this tension which exists in every activity since the youth work is mostly project based supported.

For each activity I would suggest to be clear and explicit about it since the preparation. Starting by the formulation of objectives where it would be good to distinguish between educational objectives (what participants should learn during the activity) and the strategical ones (what is expected to happen as a consequence of it: networks, projects, partnerships...). Then to be clear in the preparation and communication with participants before the seminar: how important is “the project” for a certain activity?. Then be clear during the seminar when working on the follow-up: saying to participants what kind of support it is planned and where they can find complementary one in their follow-up...

In this line of being explicit and work on it, the trainers and coordinators developed some concrete methods for preparing the follow-up during the activities.

Cooperation with NAs and organisers

Each activity of EuroMed implies a big effort in terms of cooperation. This year there were numerous difficulties when cooperating with NAs and organisers. The reasons were different and complex: confusion or roles, lack of respect to the decisions commonly taken, workload, political - institutional tensions...

Each case was different and the lessons, therefore difficult to generalise.

But as a general strategy I would suggest to encourage and reinforce the implication of NAs and organisers in the whole process of the activities and not just during the implementation or immediately before. Salto EuroMed has expressed its readiness to do so, as much as the NAs want.

Without being the solution, their implication in the first coordinators meeting, in the prep meeting, in the activity and in their evaluation should give the spaces to process and learn from the difficulties. Their involvement this year in the evaluation has been appreciated and has provided an additional richness to the discussion. And in a long term this involvement during the whole process of an activity would promote the feeling of ownership and would facilitate the setting of stable partnership relations.

I would suggest as well the reinforcement of the role of the “activity coordinator”.

The legal and financial responsibilities are located in the organisers and in SALTO EuroMed but those in normal circumstances be at the service of the educational process that (s)he coordinates.

On a practical level, the Handbook for the hosting of activities, elaborated for 2007, seem to be a very useful tool. It was sent or given to every national agency organising an activity. It was much appreciated specially by the NAs hosting for the first time a EuroMed activity. Trainers and coordinators have the feeling that in some cases it was not always “consulted”.

I recommend and invite the NAs to make use of the Handbook. At the same time, as the trainers and coordinators proposed, it should be revised and further developed.

Visibility

Visibility is becoming more and more important in youth work. Linked with the follow-up of the activities in 2007 there were important efforts in that direction:

- At the end of each activity a CD was given to all the participants with all the relevant documents including the tools used, the photos and the video of the activity.
- For each activity the report elaborated by the coordinator and some photos are on line: <http://www.salto-youth.net/tceuromed2007>
- Additionally for some activities the teams elaborated informative brochures, web sites and they worked with local and national media.

I can just recommend continuing with those efforts. The trainers and coordinators proposed in their evaluation meeting to have a more standardised and detailed report “model”. This, based on the experience, should be possible. They proposed as well a visibility plan. This might be for the moment too ambitious but it is at least necessary to better plan and to “diversify” the tools for visibility for each activity.

A strategy for visibility is the organisation of big events. This has its limits. It was not the case for 2007 but at times the numbers play against the quality and a short term visibility can lead to a loose of prestige and credibility in the long term.

Without excluding each other the P.R. plans and of the butterfly effect (a simple flap of a butterfly in Brazil can provoke a hurricane in Florida) are both to be considered in terms of visibility.

Accent on quality and evaluation

The accent on evaluation and quality of 2007 had good results. During the facilitation of the evaluation and in the evaluation meeting all the potentialities of evaluation were visible: improvement of the activities, a more intensive sharing and mutual support

between trainers and coordinators, improving the cooperation by involving the NAs and organisers in it, rich “learning outcomes”... The potentialities were all there but they could not be fully used.

The same with the involvement of NAs in the evaluation process: there was a weak reactivity to the evaluation questionnaire. But we can clearly see its potentialities in the ones who used it: it helps to reinforce the cooperation and it brings extremely valuable information for the improvement of the activities. Their involvement from the beginning in the future evaluation of activities should increase implication.

As a logical continuation of those efforts, for 2008 it would be convenient to elaborate and agree on an evaluation plan which “accompanies” the programme. This means to have a list of features to evaluate -for each activity and for the whole programme- and to generalise the use of common tools for the evaluation of the activities and to develop some specific ones when necessary (e.g. other format of activities such as conferences). Without being too demanding those tools should try to embrace the different focuses of evaluation: by objectives, by process, by outcomes, by performance... A short intro material and/or brief training session on evaluation could complement the design of those tools.

Linked with it, the reflection on quality should lead to the identification of “specific” -non exclusive- quality criteria for EuroMed activities. Those specific quality criteria would respond to the challenge of integrating and approaching the so called “EuroMed specificities” in the activities.

An e-learning platform?

In the trainers and coordinators evaluation meeting it was introduced and briefly discussed the idea of creating an e-learning platform as a support to the EuroMed activities.

Experience teaches us that a tool (the e-learning platform would be “just” a tool) is never “the solution”. This is a quite personal analyse but based on existing experiences and looking at the tendencies in non-formal education, I think that this tool could efficiently support the preparation, follow-up and evaluation of the activities, the contents production and sharing, the creativity, the dissemination of results and the networking of participants and trainers. Additionally it would be as such an additional personal learning and certainly a strategical investment in the field of non-formal education.

A patient and progressive introduction seems to be the most reasonable approach to it.

Tacking stock of results: key elements of an EuroMed activity

One of the purposes of the evaluation is always to take stock of results. The EuroMed “tradition”, the accumulated experience and the good practices -which continued in 2007- make possible identifying some “key elements” of a EuroMed activity.

Without being exclusive of EuroMed, those elements are especially important when aiming quality and they constitute the “contribution” of EuroMed to the development of training and non formal education.

- Relevance of global situation, policies and tendencies in defining the setting

As a general, long-lasting trend, it's to be said that economical globalisation have different, almost opposite effects on the two benches of the Mediterranean sea, generating wealth in the north and unequal distribution of richness and poverty in the south. The facts occurred after the 11th of September 2001 contribute massively to a

general increase of the distress between EU and Med participants, and at the same time constitute one of the major reasons for participants to undergo into a EuroMed experience. Migration from Meda countries to EU ones also contribute profusely to form the imagination of participants onto countries and people “on the other side”. It seems superfluous to mention the crisis in the ME as an additional factor of influence on the general setting of EuroMed trainings.

The EuroMed activities are -implicitly or explicitly- always influenced by this context which should not be “over present” neither ignored. Experience tells us that a constructive, motivating and sensitive approach to it is the most adequate.

- Backgrounds and traditions to be considered

The role of languages, the importance of religion, the gender issue, and the differences when dealing with conflicts, the different notions of leadership, the different role and tradition of non-formal education... are some of the factors to be considered when organising an activity particularly in EuroMed.

And this not just when planning the discussions or contents but very concretely in a lot of very concrete situations like concerning the food, the week time-table or calendar dates, the roles in a simulation...

- Contents preparation

It seems to be obvious but the Preparation of EuroMed activities does not only consist on “getting ready” for them in terms of presenting the country, the organisation, the local or national experiences on the topic. It goes beyond that. The teams advance and start to explore the basic contents of the activity with the participants. So that, coming from very different backgrounds, they can quickly find a “common language”, a basis and get the maximum learning outcomes during the activity.

- Cooperation

Cooperation as such is one of the key ideas in the philosophy of the EuroMed programme. In concrete terms this implies that most of the activities and even many of the sessions within each activity has to be planned, implemented and evaluated in cooperation with other partners (SALTO centres, local authorities, NAs, pax and trainers from different countries...). This happens in other activities but in EuroMed this is “daily bread”. Cooperation is not always easy. The empathy and team work competences are permanently challenged and required to overcome the social, cultural and organisational differences.

- Flexibility and adaptation

This is needed in every training situation but particularly in EuroMed. The nature of the EuroMed activities (they rarely are “purely” a training course or “purely” an exchange...), the different actors involved, the cultural differences, the different standards and role distribution when organising an activity and at times the unforeseen circumstances due to the political or social context are all factors which make even more necessary the openness and readiness to change and adapt.

For this it is needed not just a consistent ongoing evaluation but even more a “responsive practice” for quickly responding to changing circumstances

- Venues as learning tools

Venues of training activities provide loads of information on the country and the culture hosting the event: from the analysis of the environment it is possible to derive knowledge on wealth, lifestyle, role of media, religions, beliefs, phenomena of structural violence, integration of minorities, etc... in a culture/country.

Given the huge variety of cultures around the Mediterranean basin, the venues are extremely valuable learning tool in EuroMed training activities.

- Practice oriented

EuroMed activities are strongly practice oriented. The follow-up in terms of projects in the frame of the Youth in Action and Youth EuroMed programmes is always explored or at least proposed. But apart from it, the different sessions, tools and contents are though to be relevant and transferable to the reality of participants. This does not mean to give “recipes” to be reproduced without reflection. On the contrary, especially in the EuroMed context it is very necessary to critically reflect the different practices and traditions in youth work.

- Focus on valorisation and visibility

The “production” of reports, publications, videos... and other means for valorisation and visibility has a long tradition in EuroMed and is something to consider from the beginning. Beyond the necessary promotion of the programme, those tools are excellent opportunities for consolidating the learning and for bringing the constructive and critical voice of young people to other scenarios. The positive message of the EuroMed activities shows, beyond the youth field, that it is possible to build “another and a better way” of being together and of sharing the future.