



As the year ends, it is customary to draw an evaluation of events and activities. 2005 has been an unusual, very unusual year...

It could have been a great 'vintage' year, as it was the year of the 10th Anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration, had the political and economic chapters been up to the standard of the human and cultural chapter, in which lies the EuroMed Youth Programme.

It could have also been the year of a serious setback due to the "suspension" of the Programme in Mediterranean partner countries.

Never before was Salto-YOUTH EuroMed as much called upon since its creation in August 2000: 17 actions in 11 different countries were implemented - trainings, seminars, events; new thematic courses requested by our partners: water management, training of trainers, peace education...

We received a total of 1229 applications and welcomed 432 participants. Never before did we have as many, regardless of the suspension. This tends to prove the importance of the Programme, both for our partners and for youth workers from both sides of the Mediterranean.

Publications relating to our field were never so in demand, and so many in their numbers. Salto has contributed towards this with its "Meet'In" Magazine and its newsletters, as well as with the production and distribution of its "EuroMed Training Bag".

But if I had to choose only four of the most striking examples in my eyes of this year's events, I would gladly say:

- The second "TATEM" seminar for EuroMed trainers co-organised with the Council of Europe, which we held at INJEP in Marly le Roi, last September. This training carries the fruits of hope for enhanced cooperation and increased quality for the Programme.
- The training for Palestinian multipliers, held in Bethlehem, which despite the political context, took place in a serene climate, confident in the future, particularly towards the EuroMed Youth Programme.
- The "Euromed Youth Awards" in Cairo last October, to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Barcelona Process. No less than nine projects were rewarded. The jury selected 8 projects as examples of good practice in Euro-Med Youth cooperation. An additional award was given by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures to highlight an original approach to intercultural dialogue in youth cooperation. Some 54 participants from 23 different countries were selected out of 228 applications. Mrs Suzanne Mubarak, 1st Lady of Egypt, delivered the "Euro-Med Youth Awards" to nine project promoters, giving a strong sign of the interest in the politics of Youth in the framework of non-formal education.
- The last training of the year "Let's Meet the Three Cultures", in Jerusalem. It conveyed a fantastic feeling, it tackled emotions, politics and values; exactly what we need to do in EuroMed. While at the same time taking care

of never turning a blind eye to the reality at hand, at existing problems, even if it provoked tensions and sometimes conflicts. We cannot build sustainable cooperation and real partnership on false appearances and on what is left unsaid. Furthermore, participants planned eight projects in addition to the trainings' objectives. In the current context, this was quite unexpected and tends to show the sustained will people have in developing ties between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

All this - partnership, cooperation, understanding others and sharing will be even more present in 2006. Already nine National Agencies have asked to host Salto-YOUTH EuroMed activities, although only three were initially planned. This strong political symbol from European countries is important for all organisations of the South shore, which feared a growing indifference of the Union since the announcement of the 'suspension'.

In addition, a significant change in the management of the Programme for Mediterranean countries is taking place, as a consequence of the decentralisation of the management of external aid towards the MEDA national authorities. The long-term objective is a better ownership of the Programme by the Mediterranean partner countries. The prospects of administrative and financial decentralisation are received as increased motivation and signs of confidence by those for whom they are intended. They mean more autonomy and a greater educational responsibility.

2006 will perhaps be a year of transition for the implementation of these structures, but the strong and shared determination of all actors to push forward and anchor this partnership and cooperation even more deeply, will no doubt yield remarkable results with the new programme: Youth in Action.

BERNARD ABRIGNANI

Coordinator of the Salto-YOUTH EuroMed Resource Centre



From Mölndal to Damascus, a story of Syro-Nordic integration

The National Agencies of Denmark, Estonia, Finland and Sweden co-organised a study visit to Syria. Sara Lesch and Delaram Hajipour, two youth workers from different youth centres in Mölndal, South Western Sweden, spent a week in Damascus. The objective was to give youth workers from participating countries and Syria an opportunity to make contacts, learn about each other's daily lives and plan future co-operation within the area of youth work. Here is the story of their study visit.

Damascus, September 2005

Sara and Delaram went to Syria to find partners and to plan for future youth exchanges. The programme during the week is very busy and during the first few days Sara and Delaram hardly get a chance to see Damascus at all. The group consists of about 40 visitors; Swedes, Finns, Estonians, Danes and Syrians, all getting to learn more about EU's co-operation programme with the Mediterranean region, and what kind of projects are given priority. Syrian television is here, filming an exercise where all the Europeans and Syrians are trying to organise themselves in alphabetically, standing without shoes on chairs placed in a circle. The noise level is escalating. "You have to move forward!" shouts Antti, one of the Finnish delegates who thinks everyone is moving too slowly.

"Rinkeby Swedish"

Finally all the participants manage to find their right place. Everybody then presents their own countries. Sara and Delaram talk about Sweden together with the other Swedes-Harri, Liz and Jonathan. "This is what we look like nowadays. We come from South Africa, Chile, Iran and Finland. Only Liz was actually born in Sweden", says Delaram.

Sara talks about "Rinkeby Swedish", a dialect which has developed in a suburb of Stockholm. Arabic words, such as 'Shoo', 'Yalla Yalla' and 'Len' (hello, hurry up, boy) have come to stay in Swedish. The Syrians giggle.

One day the group visits the Red Crescent – the Muslim counterpart of the Red Cross – in

Damascus. Sara and Delaram talk about young people in Sweden and about their work in front of about fifty Syrian teenagers. During these study visits the participants' roles change from one context to another; suddenly Sara and Delaram represent Sweden as a whole. After the visit it is time for lunch and a sharing of the water pipe – shisha – with the Red Crescent representatives at a restaurant.

Optimistic change

Syria is a country with many political problems and is in a constant state of emergency because of a conflict with Israel which has persisted for many years, amongst other things. Neither freedom of opinion nor free elections exist here. However, some changes have taken place during the last few years, and the Syrians have a positive attitude towards President Bashar Al-Assad, who rules the country since a few years back. "Syria has changed a lot the last five years: people are more open and happier", says Wael Dasouk, who recently returned to Syria after many years in Sweden and who now works for the Red Crescent.

This new optimism is obvious among those we meet. Everybody seems eager to participate and to express their opinion. "It would really be good for the teenagers I work with to meet some of these young people. They need to broaden their views", Sara says.

There are more than 400,000 registered Palestinian refugees living in camps in Syria. One day the group visits a Palestinian school financed by the UN in the Khan-el-Shih refugee camp. We are taken into a classroom full of young girls.



Delaram is given a rose by a girl who is about 12-years-old, and the pupils start asking the Europeans questions in English:

"What will you do when you grow up?" a girl asks. "I'll move to Syria", Delaram answers. "What does your Daddy do for a living?" another girl asks. "He works at a factory", Delaram answers. "How old are you?" And Delaram, who so far has managed to keep her age a secret, has to reveal it.

On the last day in Damascus, Sara and Delaram have met the President's wife; they have been at a mass wedding, attended concerts and eaten at restaurants. They have been interviewed by Syrian television, visited Mosques and made many new friends, both from Syria and the other European countries. But they have also worked hard. They spent a whole day in groups brainstorming project ideas. The room was buzzing with discussions and creative energy. Delaram initiated a seminar on honour-related violence together with Ula and Basel from the recently founded organisation Nesa Syria.

Sara and Delaram will also start cooperating with the town of Mikkeli in Finland and UNRWA (United Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees) in Syria with the aim of organising youth exchanges. They feel really pleased with their week. "Well, we have actually managed to combine two things: integration in Mölndal and integration between Europe and the Middle East", says Sara.

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Euro-Med Youth

Euro-Med Youth projects were under the spotlight in October 2005 in Cairo during the "Euro-Med Youth Awards". No less than nine projects were rewarded. The jury selected eight projects as examples of good practice in Euro-Med Youth cooperation. An additional award was given by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures to highlight an original approach to intercultural dialogue in youth cooperation. Some 54 participants from 23 different countries were selected out of 228 applications.



AWARDED PROJECT TITLE	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
"Identity through Celebration"	Young people invited to reflect on the impact of globalizations on their own cultural identity through their celebrations customs. (SEE ARTICLE P. 7)
"Meda Euro Tales"	Tales as tool to build up a common multicultural artistically performance and to reflect about the moral behind.
"Integration of women into the society"	This study visit aimed to contribute to eliminate all discriminations towards the women and to promote equal chance for them. (SEE ARTICLE IN MEET'IN # 3 P.15)
"Meet the history - understand the present improve the future"	Young people reflected on how to combat xenophobia on the background of the cultures and religions: Islam, Judaism and Christianity; their history, the present situation and improving the living together. (SEE ARTICLE P. 8)
"Double Swords of the Arts"	Volunteers from different cultures were helping youth with great difficulties: mentally and physically disabled. (SEE ARTICLE IN MEET'IN # 5 P.14)
"History and Religion"	It aimed to show the coexistence between different religions and illustrate that religion is a factor in building people's lives through History. (SEE ARTICLE P. 10)
"Two Shores for a common ground"	Training together youth workers from the both side of the Mediterranean sea to improve their skills for promoting youth exchanges. (SEE ARTICLE IN MEET'IN # 2 P.14)
"QuRR" (Qualitative Rural Reality")	The role that communities, individuals and Young people play in enhancing the quality of life in rural area. (SEE ARTICLE P. 6)
"Sails of Peace" (Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation Award)	Sailing used as a tool for intercultural learning. 25 people from 7 different countries crossed the Mediterranean in 7 days, from Marseille (France) to Bizerte (Tunisia). (SEE ARTICLE IN MEET'IN # 1 P.14)

The week was organised around formal and non-formal activities. The European Commission exposed its perspectives on future Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and partnership. It outlined its position on the global approach and the role of non formal education and youth.



Awards Winners



The Euro-Med Platform also gave a review of its activities and plans for the future.

Participants were able to present their projects, share good practices, propose new projects and find partners during the numerous workshops, debriefing sessions and partner's market. These were very fruitful as from 62 new pro-

jects ideas, **39 concrete proposals** were formulated amongst participants, based on the following themes: Active citizenship, place of women in society, fight against racism and xenophobia, environment and heritage protection, minority rights and other themes.

An event like the "Euro-Med Youth Awards" is more than just conferences

and project evaluations. It's also about getting to know each other's cultures, countries and heritage.

After the hard days' work, participants and organisers gathered for intercultural events. Participants wore traditional costumes during the **Intercultural Learning** evening. Tables were dressed with national delicacies from both sides of the Mediterranean. During the **"Euro-Med Artistic Night"**, participants shared artistic testimonies from their country. Rui, from Portugal, sang a bossanova song by Astrud Gilberto, while Miguel Angel read some of his own poetry. The crowd joined in when Haythem, from Alexandria, played a traditional Egyptian song. It was indeed an intercultural experience to see two Austrians, Leo and Jurgen, dancing in full Tyrolian apparel in Cairo.

This international event was the high point of a week of intercultural exchange and debate organised to mark the celebration of the **10th Anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration** and the achievements of the Euro-Med Youth Programme.



Mrs Suzanne Mubarak (above) 1st Lady of Egypt, presented the Euro-Med Youth Awards and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation Award.



AWARDED PROJECT : ACTION I

"Qualitative Rural Reality"

or magic of harmony, cultural diversity and fruitful discussions during youth exchange in Eksjö, Sweden.



Looking back at the conflicted history of the Mediterranean basin, it's clear that it's still not easy to find ways to accept differences and to live peacefully as economic interests and politics differ greatly while splitting people and raising conflicts. During several projects we have organised in the last three years, the wish to learn more about Mediterranean cultures, which we face daily while living in our multicultural society, has always been there. How much do we actually know about Mediterranean life-styles and realities? Could we dare address cultural diversity and bring youth from European and Mediterranean countries together? There are in fact, several key aspects that spurred us on to initiate this project. The starting point is from our own municipality where it has become apparent to us that our own youth are contributing in several ways: they are willing to be introduced into different cultures, to discover others and their own identities as well as lead new initiatives to improve their own community. So, step by step, the idea to organise "QuRR" (Qualitative Rural Reality) was born.

Eksjö is a small town in the south-eastern part of Sweden and it represents a part of the Highlands of Småland. Thus, a concept of rural youth was put in focus. With this unifying theme, the idea was both to discuss rural youth in a changing world and also provide a "safe" environment in order to share differences and similarities, to break stereotypes and talk about how youth from both European and Mediterranean countries look at their future.

"When I arrived to Sweden I was full of energy and enthusiasm to know that I will exchange my thoughts and experience with foreigners from many countries. QuRR exchange helped me grow as a person," said Ziad Jihan from Palestine. By providing opportunities for intercultural learning as well as getting to know the distinctive features of Europeans & Mediterraneans, we tried to actively contribute to the thinking process and link the essence of discoveries to ever-widening circles of thoughts. The atmosphere throughout the whole exchange was open and relaxed, thus helping participants to feel free and comfortable to ask any kinds of questions. A mul-

ticultural evening which focused on music, apparel, dances as well as organisation's work was a nice moment when Italian pizza mixed with typical food from Palestine and Jordan, as well as the "hubbly bubbly" pipes for nargile.

The most direct impact on our community was the "Open Space" organised during the exchange, with the working theme: "How can we work together to improve our lives in our local communities?" Both the participants and the local and regional communities benefited from this direct contact, exchanged ideas and discussed about current youth issues under their different perspectives. Local young people being involved gained a better understanding of young people from a foreign background which they can convey to their schoolmates, friends, family and the rest of the community. Likewise, it stimulated their curiosity about youth issues and the different perspectives when working with them from an international point of view.

European and Mediterranean rural areas show the big diversity in their countryside and the quality of the rural environment combining different perspectives. Remarks like: "...if I want to make something of myself...I have to leave this community..." or "I would prefer to raise my kids in a





small town, but if it would involve a really long commute every day, would it work? The job I want to do is only available in a really big city...". These comments are something we heard a lot during "QuRR" exchange. The question is: where does one choose to live? Does it depend on the stage of life he/she is at or does it depend on quality of life countryside can offer? When does the countryside start looking 'attractive'? Is it safe environment and the support young people need? The value of countryside is increasingly being demonstrated and young people are generally encouraged to return to their local careers after they have finished their education. While learning about the rural reality of Sweden and each others home communities, participants got a chance to explore the specific challenges facing young people more profoundly.

Rural young people both from European and Mediterranean countries play an important role in enhancing the quality of life in rural and remote areas. They are keen on opportunities, challenges and priorities, as well as on learning more about other cultures, experiences and good examples that positively influence the development of their home communities and them as individuals.

Activities as these help young people to identify their goals and assets in order to control their own future. What is being done is very meaningful and it should be continued. It's important for each individual to do their own bit for both personal development and intercultural learning. Youth exchanges of this kind are one of the simplest and most natural ways to encounter it. For some youngsters, QuRR was an experience

like no other, where they learned to be "themselves" while learning to be a vital part of a team at the same time. The friendships, which were born, were numerous and genuine and will no doubt last for a long time. QuRR was not only a meeting between youngsters from European and Mediterranean countries. It was a lesson in life, a motivation to work harder and actually dream at a higher level.



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AWARDED PROJECT : ACTION I

Identity Through Celebration

Haythem Kamal and his organisation, Sustainable Development Association based in Alexandria, Egypt, led a youth exchange where young people were invited to reflect on the impact of globalisation on their own cultural identity through their celebratory customs.

Our project took place in February 2005 in the coastal city of Alexandria and in Siwa, close to the Libyan border. Organised in cooperation with European and Mediterranean youth organisations (Bureau Régional des Anciens et des Amateurs des Colonies de Vacances -Tunisia; Villa Elba - Finland; A-net Youth Forum - Sweden; Progressive Youth Organization - Lebanon.), the project explored identity as expressed by customs, traditions, arts and celebrations and how they reflect the civilisations and the cultures of each country. Furthermore, we looked at the effects increased global communications could have on such celebratory customs. We wanted to find the real impact of globalisation on identity of nations. Participants created a self-knowledge base about cultural differences in the same country but in different geographic areas or different demographic situations.

Interaction in the project was great, although we found cultural differences between the participants. We found that Europeans reacted more calmly with low voices and few words, while Mediterraneans are known to be more interactive and talkative, using body language to deliver messages. From the beginning this challenge appeared between the Swedish and Finnish on one side and Lebanese, Tunisian and Egyptian participants on the other.

Then, something unexpected happened, something which seriously affected participants and changed the group dynamic, something which we did not plan - the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. The Lebanese participants were greatly troubled by the news, which came through the radio on the way to Siwa. Other participants were touched to see their friends in such despair. We were in the middle of the

desert and our Lebanese participants asked me to go back to Beirut on the first flight available. It was a real shock to everybody. It greatly affected the team spirit.

Amazingly, the Lebanese participants came back to the mood and focussed on the project even though they were suffering. They danced to the music but with tears in they eyes. They overcame their sadness and together, we celebrated the future and our hopes for peace.



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AWARDED PROJECT : ACTION I

"Meet the history"

– understand the present – improve the future

A youth meeting for building bridges among the three cultures

Karl Luster-Haggeney, a youth worker from the Casino Youth Centre in Hamm, Northwest Germany, organised a youth exchange between 16 young people from different Euro-Mediterraneans countries. The purpose was to bring together young people from different countries where the three cultures - Islam, Judaism and Christianity - are present. Aged from 15 to 22-years-old, participants from Egypt, Israel, Palestine and Spain, spent a fortnight together tackling racism, xenophobia and discussing intercultural learning and how to improve mutual respect in intercultural discourse.

The idea was born after participant in the Salto-Youth EuroMed training course "Let's meet the three cultures!" held in Cordoba in 2004. Intercultural exchange, learning and respect are than gastronomy and folklore. It is one of the focal points of our work in the Youth Centre in Hamm-Pelkum. I felt certain, that this training course would offer us not only possibilities in the international youth exchange, but also in the intercultural work in our district.

It was a very deep moving experience to meet in Cordoba so many people from other cultures being engaged in various fields of working for a enhancing the coexistence of the three cultures - Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Contact-making was easy and highly motivated by the "Spirit of Cordoba" as I returned to Hamm. I got support from our municipality and with Khalid Bhihi, I found a pupil from the high school who helped me in planning and realising the youth meeting.

Together with our partners (Lucy Talgieh, Wi'am Center for Conflict Resolution



Bethlehem, Palestine; Dganit Schreiber, Department of Youth and Social Activities Jerusalem, Israel; Menatallah Shafer Tawfik and Mohamed Maher Fawzi, Orouba Youth Center Cairo, Egypt; and Ouafa Kyali,

Asociación Columbares Beniaján, Spain) I agreed on the topic: "Meet the history – understand the present – improve the future, a youth meeting for building bridges among the three cultures".



The core objective was to explore the idea that, whether in the past or present, the same religions and cultures have always been practices in different ways and in different places without inevitably betraying the basic values of their culture.

We decided to organise the meeting in the form of a tent camp. This way, we would enhance the feeling of equality and connection, relatedness and solidarity among the participants and add a very special atmosphere to the whole meeting. Although August 2005, was by far the coldest and rainiest August since many years, most participants said the tent camp idea was one of the best moments of this meeting. After the first night we got a lot of blankets from local people and could enjoy the life in the fresh air to the fullest.

The centre of all activities was the heated communal tent and the kitchen trailer of the youth centre. Group work took place in several pavilions. We had breakfast and lunch in a youth hostel in the neighbourhood. A local bakery offered us cakes, which we enjoyed with hot cappuccino and chocolate in the kitchen trailer during our coffee breaks. So to some extent, we lived as a small village, admittedly not completely self-sufficient: the head of the near day-care-centre did our complete laundry everyday! – washing and during rainy days, also drying. Furthermore, a nearby parenting support centre granted us free access to their wireless LAN, so that we were still connected to the "world" and to everyone's home countries.

Support from the local population and organisations were strong. More than 30 of them helped us. We cooperated with Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities to learn about their work and present situation. Local experts went out to find traces of the cultures. We were invited by farmers to get to know how farming is in Germany today. The local hunters association took us on a stake out at four o'clock in the morning so we could experience the awakening of the nature. Other persons provided

us with cars or took over shuttle services. My colleague in the youth centre invited all of us to a barbecue at her private house. Participants appreciated this unwarranted support and it created a feeling of being welcomed and integrated in Hamm – much more than a feeling, to be part of a meeting with young people from other countries.

All this formed a personal basis, on which the discussion of more difficult and sensitive questions has been possible, although in every way it was not easy. A focal point of the meeting was the examination of national stereotypes and the Holocaust as a part of the hosting country's history.

It shall not be kept secret that the discussion of the Holocaust for some participants and team members was not without controversy. For them, until our meeting, the Holocaust was an event exaggerated in the interest of Israel. It was part of history and therefore not worth dealing with. We could not clear out these concerns for everyone. In order to avoid further conflict and a stalemate in the discussion amongst participants, we decided to change our angle to tackle this subject. According to the notion "Who is not willing to remember also the bad parts of history is inevitably condemned to repeat them one day", we treated it as an insistent example of German history and the consequences of racist ideologies and uncritically transported stereotypes. We learned the importance and necessity to become aware of basic values in order not to be seduced by ideologies that disrespect humanity. A moving moment was a ceremony for all victims of racial hate and political persecution, prepared by youths during the meeting and performed in the concentration camp in Bergen-Belsen. This was a particularly emotional and peace-building moment.

Despite the closeness created in our "global village", the camp was not free from conflicts, but we overcame them together. By living and working together, we learned that we are never allowed to lose hope for

a better life together and dream of mutual peace. Last but not least, the "Spirit of Cordoba" got a sibling in the "Spirit of Hamm". With this spirit it was easy not only to work effectively, but also to celebrate the event of being together and to arrange the common leisure time. For this we appreciated the contributions of all participants, no matter whether youngster or team members. Especially from those who gave everything they could and a little bit more to keep the common dream of a peaceful living together of the three cultures alive

Our efforts were rewarded when we received a "EuroMed Youth Award" on 15 October in Cairo. We were happy about it and take it as a symbol for it is the only important Award we received. Very gratifying as well, were the statements from two of our participants during the meeting:

"For me this youth meeting means, that never again I will think about Palestinians as I had thought of them in the past." (An Israeli youth in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Hamm during the official reception of the city of Hamm)

"For the first time in my life I have the hope, that a peace still one day can be possible." (A Palestinian youth in the final evaluation)

This youth meeting should be the first step into a lasting partnership among the participating organisations



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History & Religion

Samer G. Zabaneh was project coordinator of "History & Religion", a youth Exchange project, implemented in Amman, Jordan from 14 to 22 July 2005 by the Young Women Christian Association of Amman (Y.W.C.A). This project comes under the thematic priority 'Combating Racism and Xenophobia "Religion". He gives us a full report of this project, which gathered 56 participants from ten countries from both shores of the Mediterranean.

We realised the importance of living together in spite of our differences in a respectful atmosphere. History proves our idea, as well as archaeological sites which have evidences of peaceful coexistence where there were different religions mixed in a homogeneous way. Thus, we explored how religions coexisted peacefully throughout the world, from past to present.

There is much evidence of religions through historical and archaeological sites in Jordan. Some of these sites have evidence of old religions such as Nabatiens in Petra to Romans in Jarash to Judaism, Christianity and Islam. We visited Petra, Madaba, Mount Nebo, Baptism site, Umayyad Islamic desert castles, Wadi Rum and the Dead Sea.

No less than 56 participants from different cultures, religions and backgrounds from 10 countries: Italy, Germany, UK, Spain, France, Poland, Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, and Palestine. They were between 16 and 25-years-old, apart from the team leaders. There was at least one Muslim and one Christian from each country, except Poland whose participants were all Christian and Turkey whose were all Muslim. We had three main aims: to show the coexistence between the different religions; to point out the similarities of historical and theological context of different religions; to illustrate



that religion is a factor in building people's lives through history.

There were many activities, both theoretical and practical during the project. Participants listened to lectures from a priest and an Iman (Islamic Sheikh) on Christianity and Islam in Jordan. Participants presented their opinions and the stereotypes they may have had on other religions and used different types of art to break down the barriers between them. Each country presented the situation of religions in their countries and discussed their similarities. They also held 'religion stories' workshops, where they presented different stories from the Bible and the Quran. Finally, we visited some of the archaeological sites, holding religious evidence, to connect what the participants knew about religion with the place to make the idea clearer through making them live inside the evidence of the history.

To conclude, we can say that our youth exchange has produced several concrete and productive outcomes. It is fair to say that a very strong relationships between the partici-

pants emerged and stronger contacts with their organisations were made for future work. Thanks to the numerous visits we made, the participants saw the reality of local life in Jordan and how different religions lived together in peace. They went to a street where the Mosque and the Church are only a few metres apart. Participants and leaders decided to do a follow up with the same participants next year on the same project in another country.

Last but certainly not least, two participants from different countries (Jordan and France) who met during the exchange got engaged a few months afterwards.



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Conference at INJEP on EuroMed cooperation

The French National Agency (NA) for the European Youth Programme and the Salto-Youth EuroMed Resource Centre held a conference at INJEP on 23 November 2005 to mark the 10th anniversary of the EuroMed Partnership. The event was organised with the support of the French Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Education.

On the agenda – an assessment of the French NA's implication in the EuroMed Youth Programme, a presentation of Salto-Youth EuroMed's good practices, perspectives for the future EuroMed Youth Programme III, along with a more general overview of the political framework of the Barcelona Process.

The Head of the French NA, Jean Chiris, and Project Officer, Isabelle Olivier, gave an assessment of the Agency's five-year implication in the Programme. From 2001 to mid-2005, the Agency financed 135 projects (contact seminars, training courses, European Voluntary Services), involving more than 3000 young people from both sides of the Mediterranean.

Salto-Youth EuroMed Coordinator, Bernard Abrignani, presented the Resource Centre's good practices in training. In 2003-2004, Salto-Youth EuroMed held nearly 30 courses which benefited around 700 trainers, participants and leaders of youth organisations from the EuroMed region.

A comprehensive, specialised EuroMed Training Bag in French and English, with documents in Arabic, was created for trainers



to use in their own courses. This pedagogical instrument contains thousands of referenced documents, specially organised into case studies, in order to assist EuroMed trainers in their work.

Silvia Mora, from the European Commission, presented the main lines of the future EuroMed Youth Programme III, whose budget could near the 10 million euros mark. She also discussed the Commission's plan, already in motion, to decentralise the Programme to Mediterranean countries, in an effort to bring it closer to its beneficiaries and create a more transparent mode of selection of participants. Esther Gelabert, an EU consultant who conducted the Programmes' midterm evalua-

tion in 2004, discussed the Programmes' role within the more general context of the EuroMed Partnership. Dorothee Schmid, researcher at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), analysed the geopolitical place and role of the EU in the Mediterranean relative to other actors, particularly the United States.

In the audience, a group of around 50 young people from Europe and the Mediterranean, who were at INJEP for two simultaneous Salto-Youth EuroMed training courses (Step To and TATEM) engaged the panel of experts in a vivid discussion, particularly regarding to the future of Programme and their "uncertainties" on the decentralisation process.





EuroMed and you - Q&A with participants of the "EuroMed Youth Awards"

We asked several participants at the "EuroMed Youth Awards" in Cairo last October what EuroMed meant for them, on a personal level. What it meant to be young actors in EuroMed. Most of them do this out of passion. Some have other jobs, some are students, most are volunteers and do not earn a living through their activities. However, all strongly believe in the idea of EuroMed as being an essential binding element between peoples, cultures and ideas.



▼ **VITO LA FATA**
- 29 - ITALY
Director
of CESIE (Youth
organisation in
Sicily), involved in
EuroMed for the
past five years

EuroMed in one word or idea?

"The future".

Why EuroMed?

"There are a lot of Tunisians and Moroccans in my region, with cultures so different than mine. It's a personal enrichment for me."

What does it bring you on a personal level?

"People from different origins in my region are discriminated against and I don't like it. If my work can help change this, then I'll be satisfied."

Bringing cultures closer together?

"People change their stereotypes. We make a change for them. We have hosted more than 600 people through our organisation. It makes a change for them even if they don't realise it. There are problems, yes, but it's worth it. After September 11th, I've seen racism growing. EuroMed has now taken a much stronger political dimension. Our job is more important now."



▼ **MAISA MOHAMED**
- 20 - EGYPT
Student in
dentistry, involved
in EuroMed for
one year

EuroMed in one word or idea?

"Intercultural learning."

What does it bring you on a personal level?

"I wanted to learn from all these cultures which are different than mine. There are some topics (Israel) which you can only talk about when working in a EuroMed context."



▼ **ARES MONTARDIT**
- 29 - SPAIN
International
Department of
General
Secretariat for
Youth,

Government of Catalonia, involved in EuroMed for nearly two years

EuroMed in one word or idea?

"Learning."

Why EuroMed?

"There is a strong Mediterranean identi-

ty in Spain. I wanted to help build bridges, for more closeness, more proximity.

What does it bring you on a personal level?

"EuroMed opens your mind. Even if there are problems in the Barcelona Process, EuroMed helps young people to know each other, and this is extremely important in the current international context."

Bringing cultures closer together?

"It definitely brings people closer together by breaking stereotypes. More specifically, the EuroMed Youth Programme one of the rare places where young Euro-Mediterranean people can voice their opinions."



▼ **JALEL LABIDI**
- 41 - TUNISIA
Youth Worker,
involved in
EuroMed for two
years

EuroMed in one word or idea?

"A bird - to fly from one civilisation to another. It transcends geographical and cultural borders."

Why EuroMed?



"EuroMed is the only possibility to live out this dynamism. As Tunisians, we feel very close to Europe. In my region, EuroMed is a complete revolution. This summer, for 40 euros per person, we sent ten young people from 16 to 22-years-old to Algeria for 10 days! It was extraordinary. Some were taking a plane for the first time in their lives.

The EuroMed Youth Programme is also a necessity for Tunisia, with regards to its demography. For political and economic matters to work, we must reach out to young people. In Tunisia, 55% of the population is under 25."

What does it bring you on a personal level?

With this kind of exchange, you question yourself. One must live with 'the other' to get to know him or her."

Bringing cultures closer together?

"Through the programme, I participated in the 'Let's meet the Three Cultures' seminar in Cordoba. At 40-years-old, I discovered the heritage of Andalusia and the harmonious coexistence of Muslims and Jews; and it worked! By studying our common pasts and working together in courses like these, we find that we share the same values, needs and desires. We realize that we are not so different."



▼ **NADIA EL GOHARY**
- 29 - EGYPT
Youth Worker and freelance trainer, involved in EuroMed for the past three years

EuroMed in one word or idea?

"Discovery of people, cultures. A world beyond the world we live in."

Why EuroMed?

"It's the only available option where we live."

What does it bring you on a personal level?

"I've gained more skills and knowledge and achieved more during my three years in EuroMed than in seven years of

professional life. It cannot be compared."

Bringing cultures closer together?

"I do believe it really makes a difference. It produced a shift in me and I want people to experience it as well. It's up to us to make it happen. The chance is there. It has produced a significant change that otherwise would have been unthinkable. It's a bottom-up approach and we hope this dynamic will continue. EuroMed defies stereotypes. It has also changed my perception of other MEDA countries and I hope it will lead towards more South-South cooperation."



▼ **KARL LUSTER-HAGGENEV**
- 46 - GERMANY
Youth Worker, involved in EuroMed for nearly two years

EuroMed in one word or idea?

"Cooperation, development, peace."

Why EuroMed?

"Our youth centre is in a multicultural environment. EuroMed appealed to us. We wanted to show our participants, many of them German Muslims, how other people lived their faiths in others countries."

What does it bring you on a personal level?

"It shows that living together in peace is possible. We can bring people together and discover that we are the same. During our project we visited the Nazi concentration camp of Bergen Belsen. Palestinian participants made a commemorative ceremony as a mark of respect to their Jewish friends in the group. It was an extremely moving moment. It's great that children, who have not even finished school yet, can understand and develop such ideas of cooperation. They are all between 15 and 22-years-old."

Bringing cultures closer together?

EuroMed breaks stereotypes. People all look for a good life, but respect stops in their own cultures. Being aware of others brings tolerance and tolerance brings respect. Without absolute respect, the idea of EuroMed can be shallow.





THE TOTEM PARTNERSHIP

The National Agencies of Italy and Poland, the National Coordinator of Egypt and the Salto-EuroMed Resource Centre describe the benefits and positive impact of their cooperation in the field of EuroMed. Together, they designed and implemented TOTEM, a long-term trainer courses, specialised in the training of trainers.



Thanks to its historical and geographical ties with the Mediterranean basin, Italy has been closely linked to the region over the centuries. Therefore one of the major issues of the Italian National Agency concerning Euro-Mediterranean cooperation was and still is the increase of the number of projects and contacts within the EuroMed Youth Programme. At the same time, there is a strong need to increase the training activities in order to offer project organisers an adequate support for their work.

From a Polish perspective, wider cooperation with Meda countries was a completely new possibility in international youth work. Partner countries in Euromed are not well known by young people in Poland, that is why bringing together young people from Poland and the Euro Mediterranean area can be a new enriching experience. According to this, the Polish National Agency puts quality first, to be prepared for the new phase of the EuroMed Programme and future promotion of this cooperation on the national level.

From the beginning, Egypt was and will

always be an active partner in the Euro-Med framework. The actual fulfilment of the Euro-Med projects is possible thanks to the Egyptian capacity building, who strongly believe in their country and who know how to use their capabilities in serving their country.

On this basis, it was quite obvious to welcome and respond to the proposal of the Salto-Youth Euromed RC to cooperate and be actively involved in the long term training course "TOTEM" (Training Of Trainers in EuroMed): TOTEM (see the previous issue of Meet'in Euromed and the web-site <http://www.salto-youth.net/totemdescription/?SID>) is a very ambitious concept which requires resources, and a very close cooperation among many actors in order to be successful and have a positive impact.

TOTEM is a complementary training course to TATEM (Training for active trainers in Euro-Med). It goes through four main phases: the first phase was in Italy from 16 to 26 March 2005 (Seminar One); the second phase was implemented by the participants who acted as observers of training courses realised in their own countries; at the same time they could submit action 5 projects to the national agencies; the third phase (Seminar two) was in Egypt from 18 to 26 November 2005. Last but not the least the fourth phase (Seminar three) will be implemented in Poland in May 2006.

Seminar One

During "Seminar One" in **Acireale** (Italy), the course focused on the trainer as conceiver/designer of educational projects. Participants grouped themselves in teams and elaborated training concepts they will further develop in the form of EuroMed projects. Another important feature of the TOTEM foresaw that each of the trainees would observe a professional trainer during a training course, analysing the overall process and reporting to the TOTEM team. Trainees had to choose a training accordin-





gly to their own personal learning goals and in agreement with their mentor. According to Giuseppe: "it was a unique experience to meet other colleagues and cooperate in a long term perspective, deepening human relations, knowing more deeply other realities. It was amazing to host so many people from the European Union and the Mediterranean area who stayed together for seven days in the beautiful framework of Sicily and Mediterranean Sea."

Seminar Two

Throughout "Seminar Two" in **El-Mynia** (Upper Egypt), trainees had the opportunity to know more about the culture of Upper Egypt. They visited different temples and tombs like the necropolis of Bani Hawaas, composed of 39 tombs. The participants were able to have face to face discussions, to have direct contact between one ano-



ther and to discover their own cultures (immersion phase), which was very helpful and beneficial and which is considered one of the main aims of any intercultural event. To acquire a better taste of the local realities, they spent time with different non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with different interests and different local development programmes.

The main characteristics of Seminar Two were the emphasis on the trainer as "implementer" (fr: animateur) and the emphasis on self-directed and individual learning. While Seminar One focused on the trainer

as "designer", during seminar two the focus was on the acquisition of those competences the trainers need when planning, delivering and evaluating sessions. According to Gehad, it is important to refer to such events as: "very good opportunities for better understanding and better cooperation, where different people come together from different regions regardless of the borders, to send a message of love, peace and coexistence. These participants are really the best ambassadors for each country and their existence gives a light of optimism to humanity."

Seminar Three

The final seminar, to be held in **Wroclaw** (Poland), will aim at analysing the outcome of participants' projects, assessing their learning, working on training quality criteria. As Pawel points out: "hosting the final

part of the training is a chance to increase understanding and interest of all future trainers in Central and Eastern Europe and particular in Poland. Important issue, which is also covered by the TOTEM programme, is experience and knowledge of realities of youth organizations – this is a strong potential of the training, rarely

offered by training courses, but very important in wide Euro Med cooperation."

Finally, we would like to underline that from the point of view of the National Agencies of Poland, Italy and the National Coordinator of Egypt, the Totem partnership is proving to be a very enriching experience for us. Namely, because we are acting in a spirit of solidarity, understanding and faith in the values of brotherhood, support and friendship. Furthermore, we strongly believe in the European Youth Programme.



Before the beginning of the two seminars in Italy and Egypt, we decided to have a pre-meeting with the team of trainers and the course director Bernard Abrignani. In an atmosphere of friendship and respect for the tasks and the competencies of each other, we worked together, proving that cooperation is really possible! We could experience that the National Agencies and National Coordinators role is not only to support financially well described applications, but also to encourage qualitative work on projects, offer support and proper information on the national level and international level.

We are deeply convinced that with new "Youth in Action Programme" and the new phase of EuroMed cooperation, after overcoming this year's difficulties, there will be a number of people who will bring a strong and qualitative impact on further developments of EuroMed cooperation.

It is important to stress the role of cooperation and partnership as the key-factor for a better implementation of the objectives of the Youth Programme, for the benefit of young people and the beneficiaries of the programme and the new Youth in Action Programme!!!

GIUSEPPE GUALTIERI

(TCP officer of the Italian National Agency)

GEHAD AMER

(National Coordinator of Egypt)

PAWEŁ ALEKSANDROWICZ

(Responsible of Action 1 in the Polish National Agency of the Youth Programme)

TOTEM BLOG :

Learning community, trainers' and participants' blog: <http://totem.f2l.org>

■ TOTEM Participant's perspective



Participants of the Second TOTEM seminar in El Minya, Egypt, describe their impressions of the 'immersion day'— an activity of the training course where they spend an entire day, in groups of three, with a local non-governmental organisations, experiencing local realities, learning from the field and sharing their own skills. The aim is to put participants in direct contact with the local community through NGOs, who often act as the direct channels to the local population.



Adva, from Israel, spent a day with an NGO called 'Egyptian Future Youth Foundation' (EFYF).

"The participants in the organization are volunteers and they do that because of a much bigger gain than money, they get organizational experience, they get to meet different people, cultures and traditions and of course a lot of knowledge.

We spend time with the organisation members at their offices, visited the city market, had a traditional lunch followed by a sail on a Felucca We had the chance to talk to our one-day colleagues, formally and informally, to let the barriers down and really immerse.

This doesn't describe everything we have learned, and I am not sure that our feelings can be described well enough in few words but I can say that we had an amazing learning experience. It was particularly interesting to learn about the organisation's unique way of looking at youth work."

Barbara, from Austria, spent her 'immersion day' with the 'Good-shepard Association', which runs seve-

ral community centres all over El Minya, one of which is located in the village of Ibouna.



"My immersion day overcame my expectations. The Association is. The Association is working in many fields. I was especially touched by the contact with the local community. The kids at the school were so curious to talk with us. I have been also lucky to get



the opportunity to visit one of the families of the village. After sharing photos and chatting with arms and legs, it was very surprising how open they were during our visit. It was a very emotional and touching experience for me."



Menna, from Egypt, visited a project aimed at combating woman illiteracy in rural areas.

"In my group, Ann from Belgium, Isabelle from Sweden, and me, spent the day with an NGO working mainly on local development and promotion of the role of women in the society, running several long-term projects."

"Even as an Egyptian, I felt like a foreigner as this was my first time to visit such a local community in the rural areas of Egypt."

"We met the NGOs manager and staff and had an overview of their objectives, activities, and management system. For us the real experience started when we went to a field visit in an area called "Kafr El-Kady" in the Western part of El Minya. We visited a class specialised in combating women illiteracy. It was particularly interesting to talk to these women about their motivation to continue their education to face the challenges in their community."

"They wanted to know about our culture and traditions and asked Ann and Isabelle about the condition of women in their respective countries. With all the rich cultural diversity in our discussions, we agreed on how rich and spicy this meal was in our long learning experience in the TOTEM Seminar Two."

Ali Oktay Koç, from Turkey, spent a day with the Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services, an NGO working to improve the quality of life in Egyptians villages. Through its activities, it has created some 200 jobs.



"This NGO gets financial support from local and international organisations. Their mission statement can be described as two-fold: Production and education. They help local communities in various micro-projects, insisting on inclusion of local people. They also carry out a training programme so as to multiply this dynamic, so the local community can bring back new skills to their villages and help other project develop. For example, we visited a furniture factory as well as a plant and flower farm. I had the chance to take part in a workshop aimed at training volunteers from

other NGOs in nearby villages. They were all so motivated that they did not have any break for three hours."



Rasa, from Lithuania, visited the Good Shepard Association for Development in El Minya, heavily involved in community work, with a strong accent on inclusion of marginalised populations.

"I was really impressed by what this organisation is doing. They work with the poor, marginalised and neediest amongst the community to give them back their human dignity by empowering them, reinforcing their participation and local resources in order to create a long-lasting impact."

Zita, from Latvia, describes another central activity of the TOTEM: leading workshops as a trainer.



"Leading workshops as a tool for learning is one of the best tools for shaping new trainers. This necessitates us, trainers, to present new skills learned in front of others and to work intensively on developing and drawing new projects through cooperation. The benefits of these workshops were more than valuable; in addition to my own experience of leading workshops, I also learned from observing my colleagues, and giving them feedback and guidelines for improvement. In one sentence, it was an unforgettable experience."

TOTEM Trainer's perspective



Two trainers of the TOTEM training course, Miguel Angel Garcia from Spain and Roy About Habib from Lebanon, give us their impression of the Second TOTEM Seminar, which took place in El Minya, Upper Egypt, in November 2005.



Roy About Habib

"After a long trip THAT LASTED 8 months, the five Indians were very happy to meet again in Egypt, El Minia to work on the building of their second TOTEM Training."

"This time, there was a new situation and it is the participation of the wise man (chief of the tribe) during the whole construction. Each Indian has his own Character and his own way of doing and the five Indians plus the chief were working so hard, spending lots of time trying to find the best shape of the TOTEM; sometimes it was easy, sometimes it was harder. Each Indian lived this experience differently. As a Junior Indian, I went through many levels: sometimes I was confused, sometimes I was happy, there were moments of anger, stress and also frustration, other moments where full of joy and fun. All Indians, along with the chief, were working for the sake of the TOTEM Training. When the final product was accomplished, some of them were happy, some not. Personally, I am satisfied and I think that this experience was helpful for the future TOTEM construction in Poland."

Miguel Angel Garcia

"The TOTEM 2nd Seminar lead me further... My trip to El Minya could be a metaphor of the phases and feelings I got during the Seminar. Train - regular speed and stability: reconnecting the community, introduction, ... Plane: looking at things from above, with a certain perspective: Evaluation of the previous phase, EuroMed today, Socio political developments in Egypt... Four hours in the middle of the night waiting alone in the platform of the train station: "discomfort", discovery and challenges: immersion, gender, conflict, religion, participants workshops... And taking the train again to look ahead: follow-up, evaluation and introduction of the next phase."

"The difference between a tourist and a traveler, among other things, is that the traveler does not plan the way back home. It is probably the same in terms of learning: a certain risk, challenge and adventure is needed. Back home I am somehow somewhere else and certainly richer."





"Gender Issues" Mission: Impossible?

Some 20 youth leaders and youth workers from nine countries of both sides of the Mediterranean met for a six-day training course on gender issues from 4 to 11 November in Portugalete, in the Basque Country in Spain.

The courses' main aims were to increase the awareness of participants in the Euromed framework: gender issues, religion, cultural background, as well as to increase their knowledge and skills, encourage their creativity and to know more about the Euromed Youth Programme. The participants, from Italy, Lebanon, France, Syria, Austria, Egypt, UK, Tunisia and the Basque Country (Spain) used either English or French as their working language.



Focusing on a better understanding of action 1 Youth Exchanges, participants have had the possibility to share their experience and cultural background. They discovered the elements of a project, communicated in a group and within an international team, as well as risk assessment, and began to build some common project ideas.

In their evaluations, participants said that this training has "changed their lives". Some of them are already applying for EVS

and Youth Exchanges in their countries. The group was extremely creative, always surprising the trainers in a very positive way. The last day, participants prepared a treasure hunt for the team of trainers, which led us to find four T-shirts that they had made, with a photo of the group and a printed sentence: 'Mission Accomplished' printed on them.

The team enjoyed this Training course: it was not just a training experience, it was a real team-learning experience both during

the preparation and the implementation. Another training course on Gender Issues is going to take part in Marmande, France from the 11 to 19 March 2006. It will be run by the same team of TOTEM trainers. The long-term Training Course was designed by SALTO Euromed Resource Center and organised in cooperation with the Italian, Egyptian and Polish National Agencies.

This training for trainers in Euromed has been very helpful for the four trainers of "Mission Impossible" in terms of support, acquiring knowledge, improving skills, working methods and experiences of the TOTEm.

Trainers: Mouloud Salhi, Cathy Baccamo, Giuseppe Marletta, Zurine Arruza
 Hosting Organisation:
 KILUMILIKLIK KULTUR ELKARTEA



SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED RESOURCE CENTRE TRAINING CALENDAR 2006

WHAT / WHERE	IN PARTNERSHIP WITH	WHEN
"STEP IN" IN SLOVAKIA	with Slovakian NA	27 Feb-5 Mar 2006
"TOTEM" IN POLAND	with Polish NA	13-22 May 2006
CMS "PROMOTING EUROMED CO-OPERATION" IN GREECE	with Greek NA	31 May-4 June 2006
"EDUCATION AND CIVILISATION" IN ITALY	with Italian NA	June 2006
"LET'S MEET THE 3 CULTURES" IN BELGIUM FLANDERS	with Belgian Flemish NA	3-11 October 2006
CMS IN EUROMED IN HUNGARY	with Hungarian NA	19-24 September 2006
"TOOLS FAIR" (PROVISIONAL TITLE) IN FRANCE	with French NA	1-5 November 2006
"TATEM" IN MOROCCO	with Council of Europe	6-14 November 2006
"ROLE AND PLACE OF WOMEN" IN THE EUROMED FRAMEWORK IN SPAIN	with Spanish NA	27 Nov-3 Dec 2006

In January 2004, after three years of intensive work - having allowed more than 1000 trainees of thirty-five different countries to profit from forty trainings - Salto-YOUTH EuroMed decided it was time to capitalise, valorise and distribute the vast number of tools, which had been used or created.

The "EuroMed Training Bag" was born - A comprehensive, specialised tool in French and English, with documents in Arabic, was created for trainers to use in their own courses. This pedagogical instrument contains thousands of referenced documents, specially organised into case studies, in order to assist EuroMed trainers in their work.

From September 2005, it was distributed to all National Agencies and National Coordinators, partners such as the European Commission, the EuroMed Youth Platform, the European Youth Forum, the Anna Lindh Foundation for the dialogue of cultures and to all other members of the monitoring group involved in its creation. It was also offered to all TOTEM and TATEM EuroMed trainers.



SALTO-YOUTH
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