

meet'in EuroMed

Salto-Youth EuroMed's magazine

Issue 14, June 2011

2010 YEAR IN PREVIEW

SPECIAL INTERVIEW

DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYABILITY

HIGHLIGHTS

ABOUT US



#1



ÉDITO



Dear readers,

This new issue of Meet'In EuroMed is being published at a very crucial moment in the EuroMed area.

Background:

As you know, the political and social framework in EuroMed is moving and changing and the role of young people is increasingly relevant and important. We consider of historical importance the events now taking place in the Euro-Mediterranean region and more particularly the role of young people involved in peaceful actions. We look at the significance of the participation in those events of young women and men from many different social/cultural backgrounds and beliefs, united by their determination to secure a better future for their country and people.

Activities:

In this issue, we share innovative experiences and projects developed in EuroMediterranean countries to empower young people in their social roles, but also to provide opportunities for mutual understanding to both banks of the Mediterranean Sea. We have had many wonderful opportunities to meet young people and learn about a large number of exciting projects that we will be sharing with you in this issue. Over the last year, we have met 476 people from Institutions, NGOs and associations involved in 12 activities. Motivated people and NGOs have developed projects and valuable partnerships for carrying out youth exchanges, training courses and EVS. Despite the inevitable difficulties and misunderstandings, not to mention the limited time available, participants shared their views on the condition of young people in their country, the challenges facing NGOs when helping young people find their role in society and the geopolitical balance of the Region.

Publications:

Two new collections were inaugurated in 2010, namely Practical Guides and Studies and Research. Both collections provide useful information, tools and updated perspectives on the current situation of Youth in Action cooperation with Mediterranean Countries and about sensitive topics in EuroMed. The two collections have different aims and targets. Practical Guides provide concrete tools for the different actions in Youth in Action Action 3.1 and Action 2 and highlights the links with EuroMed Youth Programme IV. The Practical Guides focus on

EuroMediterranean Voluntary Service, Youth Exchanges and Training and Networking Activities.

The goal of these Practical Guides is to provide tips to ensure better developed projects and also to assist first-time applicants with project design. The Practical Guides do not just focus on "technicalities", they also look at the intercultural approach required to guarantee success in any cooperation project. The Studies and Research collection investigates specific topics relevant to the EuroMed area. Social workers, youth leaders and trainers need specific competencies and more in-depth knowledge to develop good projects and reinforce EuroMediterranean cooperation.

This collection is designed to contribute to the overall reflection on Youth in Euro-Med and to provide some new keys for interpreting and understanding the ongoing situation.

Voluntary Year:

Let's not forget that 2011 is the International Year for Voluntary work!

The role of Volunteering as a first step towards not only improving the employability of young people but also a means of facilitating socialisation is examined in the special file dedicated to the topic. Volunteering is a complex concept that has a specific meaning in each country, so the dossier should ensure a better understanding of what Volunteering means... In 2010, we carried out an interesting study on "Volunteering and EVS in EuroMed" to analyse the different approaches to Volunteering within EuroMed and how to face and overcome challenges in International projects. Volunteering provides young people with a unique opportunity to grow, get to know new societies and plan their own future!

Youth is the future for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and mutual understanding is the foundation for the new historical path that young Arabs are starting to build today. ■



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ABOUT US

Publication Director:
Olivier Toche (head of INJEP)

Editorial committee:
B. Abrignani and F. Demicheli

Editorial coordinator:
Ermete Mariani

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mad'line | 02 35 60 04 04 | www.madline.fr | madline@madline.fr

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2010: SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED'S ACTIVITIES

CAPITALISING ON PAST RESULTS AND TAKING ON NEW CHALLENGES

SALTO EuroMed Team

To ensure more efficient and useful support to the National Agencies of the YiA - Youth in Action programme, and by consequence to all its beneficiaries, SALTO EuroMed has developed a two-year strategy focusing on three main fields:

- Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, enhanced by the actions of the new programme EuroMed Youth IV.
- Inter-regional cooperation between three SALTO: EuroMed, Eastern Europe & Caucasus, and South East Europe.
- Dissemination, development and valorisation of the pedagogical tools and good practices developed by our trainers, on behalf of the whole SALTO network. Trainers and would-be trainers are the main target group of all our activities for the next couple of years, while sustainable development has been identified as the main issue to focus on, in line with National Agency requests. Finally, the European Voluntary Service is the most strategic action we want to look at in Long Term Training Courses, a methodology that has already proven its efficacy. We succeeded in completing all the activities planned for 2010 and attaining all the

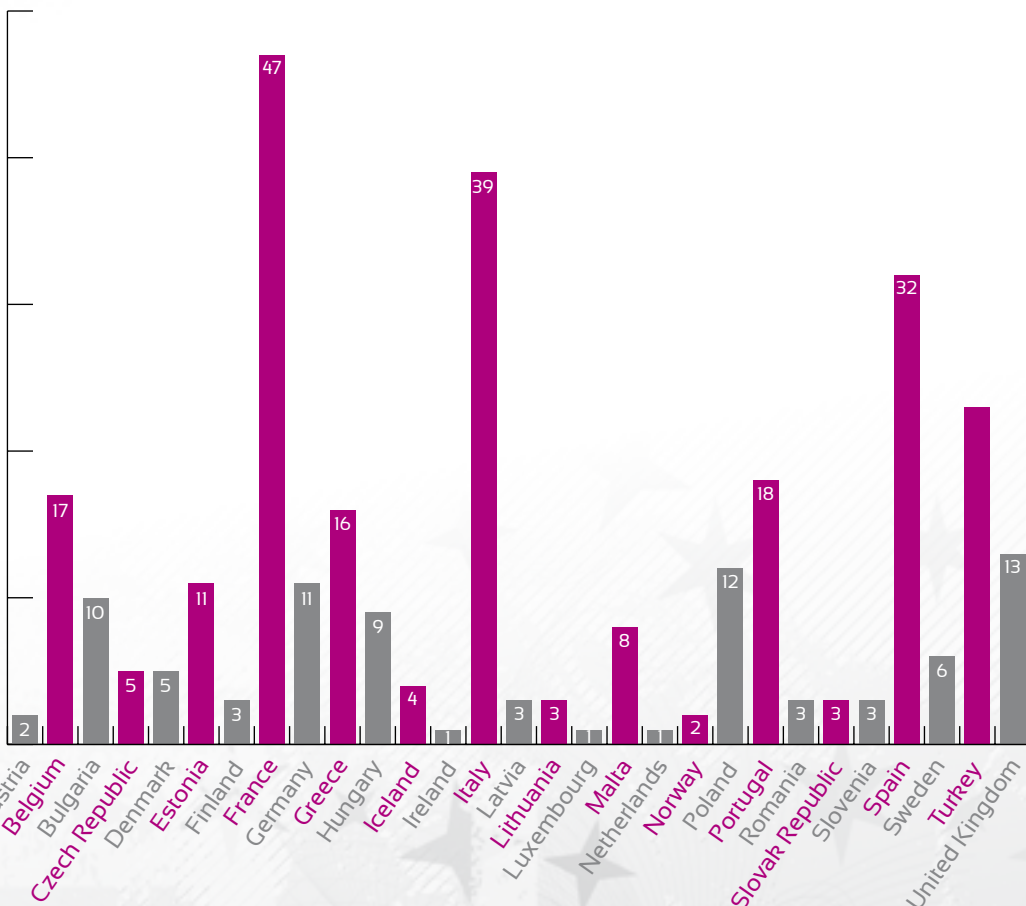
expected results. The preparatory meeting, organised in Groix - France 12-16 January, was attended by all our trainers and National Agencies and reinforced the collaboration and the partnership amongst all of us. Four activities run last year stood out for their innovative approaches and success and they are also the reference point for this issue of the magazine:

- "EVS as tool for active citizenship" took place in Majorca (Spain). On this occasion, the idea of a voluntary service in Tunisia for a Spanish boy with few opportunities took shape (see the article "EVS, a unique experience for all").
- "Volunteering as a step for employability" received 196 applications. Very important subjects were looked at by experts and trainers. Some of those presentations are available in the special dossier of this issue and the National Agencies have decided to re-iterate the training.
- "Empowering women" was a great success (receiving 467 applications) and as a result will be repeated next year.
- "EuroMed Essentials: challenges of cooperation and geopolitical issues" was the first of a three training course cycle.

The next two will focus first on history and secondly on religion in the Mediterranean area.

Two key moments marked the past year: SALTO –YOUTH's 10th anniversary and the Tools Fair. All the NAs and SALTOs gathered together to celebrate 10 years of activity for a unique network of trainers and experts supporting and implementing YiA programme. The Tools Fair, now in its fifth edition and with three more planned, has proved an extraordinary venue for discussing, sharing experiences and good practices on non-formal education. During this event a working group was set up to look at "Tools for Learning" with the task of improving quality in learning processes, as well as exploiting and enhancing all the knowledge and skills available in our network. An innovative educational tool for developing projects in Euro-Mediterranean was finally released in 2010... so play and enjoy the EuroMed Game! ■

<http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/educmat/euromedgame/>



■ GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF PROGRAMME COUNTRIES PARTICIPANTS IN 2010

Source: Salto EuroMed



//////////////////// CAPITALISING ON PAST RESULTS AND TAKING ON NEW CHALLENGES

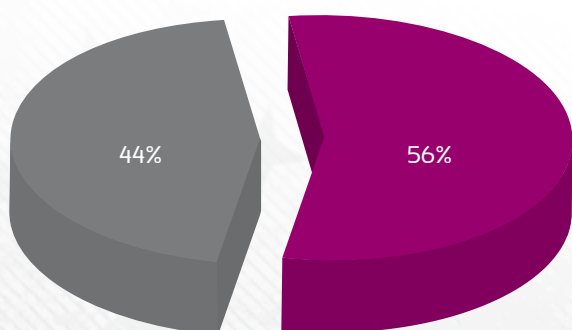
■ **KEY FIGURES** 

- 12 activities
- 1 964 applications received
- 476 participants
- 17 trainers
- 15 experts and researchers involved

| ACTIVITIES 2010 | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|------------------------|
| NAME OF ACTIVITY | KIND OF ACTIVITY | DATES OF ACTIVITY | VENUE/LOCATION | NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS |
| EVS as Tool For Active Citizenship | L TTC | 8-16 May | Spain, Balearic Islands | 30 |
| Fireworks | Event | 25-28 May | France, Paris | 147 |
| EuroMed Essentials: Challenge of EuroMed cooperation and geopolitical issues | Training course | 21-26 June | Greece, Athens | 20 |
| Hand in Hand for a sustainable future! | L TTC | 3-11 July | Portugal, Monsaraz, Alentejo | 24 |
| Traditional sports and games as a tool for Intercultural learning | L TTC | 20-24 September | France, Etcharry, Basque Country | 15 |
| Let's Train with our neighbours: civil society, participation, democracy | L TTC | 4-11 October | France, Franceville Merville (Normandy) | 11 |
| Training Essentials | Training | 18-24 October | Turkey, Adrasan | 24 |
| Our White Sea II | Event | 26-30 October | Malta | 29 |
| Volunteering: a step for employability | Training | 3-7 November | Spain, Mollina | 26 |
| TOOL FAIR V | Event | 16-21 November | Italy, Venice | 101 |
| Protecting the Mediterranean Environment "Youth will make the difference!" | L TTC | 1-5 December | Greece, Athens | 24 |
| Empowering Women | Training Partnership Building | 13-18 December | France, Strasbourg | 25 |
| TOTAL | | | | 476 |

■ **GENDER BALANCE OF 2010 ACTIVITIES**

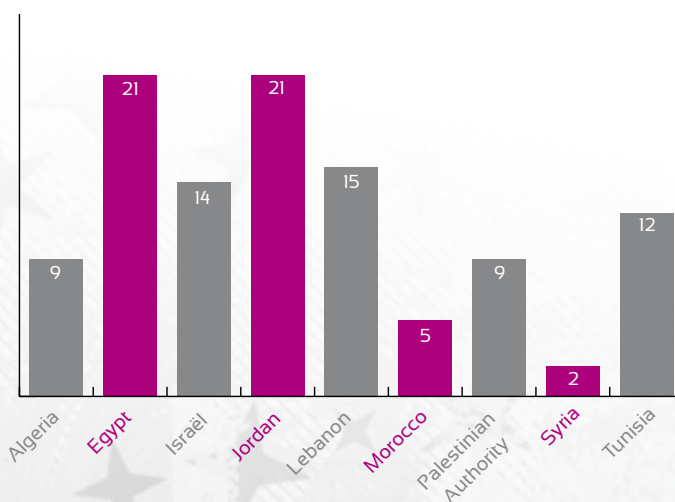
Source: Salto EuroMed



■ Male
■ Female

■ **GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEDA PARTICIPANTS IN 2010**

Source: Salto EuroMed





2010: SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED'S ACTIVITIES

KNOWLEDGE SHARING: TWO NEW COLLECTIONS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF AND FACILITATE WORKING WITH EUROMED YOUTH

SALTO EuroMed Team

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed is pleased to introduce two new collections in English, French and Arabic: Practical Guides and Studies and Research.

<http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/EMlibrary/emeducpub/>

Both collections provide useful information, tools and updated perspectives about the current situation of Youth in Action cooperation with Mediterranean Countries and relevant topics in EuroMed.

The main goal of **Practical Guides** is to provide advice and useful information as well as practical hints to assist youth workers, trainers, and project designers in developing better projects within the framework of Youth in Action and EuroMed Youth IV programmes. The guides are also intended to help first-time applicants and beginners transform their ideas into viable projects. These handy and readable guides look first

at the technical aspects and they also try to shed some light on the intercultural approach needed to develop and run efficiently international co-operation projects.

In particular, readers can find concrete advice and useful information in our Practical Guides about different actions of Youth in Action programme such as: Action 3.1 with specific reference to the opportunities in EuroMed Youth IV; Voluntary Service in Euro-Mediterranean context; Youth Exchanges and Training and Networking Activities.

The **Studies and Research** collection focuses on investigating specific topics and at providing background information on the Euro-Mediterranean area. Youth workers, trainers and social workers are eager to develop specific competences and deepen their understanding of the social, cultural and political contexts in which they are working to foster cooperation.

With this collection, authored by experts from different backgrounds ranging from academics to trainers, we wanted to make our contribution to the overall reflection and debate about Youth in Euro-Mediterranean area. Recent events in a number of Arab countries have shown how young people can be strategic actors in the area and how much their potential has been underestimated or even misunderstood. The Studies and Research collection was determined to avoid the mistake of talking about youth and instead strives to talk with and for young people. The common denominator of this collection is practicality and experience-based reflection.

A first study about Volunteering and EVS in EuroMed has also been published and new studies will be published in coming months: "Geopolitics of EuroMed Youth"; "Supporting Learning through coaching"; "Empowering Youth in EuroMed". ■

PRACTICAL GUIDES:



► HOW TO DEVELOP AN EVS PROJECT IN EUROMED REGION, by Sally Salem

This first Practical Guide provides tips and tools about how to develop a good EVS in the EuroMed framework. It also proposes some thoughts on what voluntary service means in the EVS context and describes the steps to ensure high quality in a Euro-Mediterranean voluntary service project: preparation, implementation and evaluation. A list of useful links and references about Volunteering in EuroMed is also provided.

► TRAINING AND COOPERATION, by Marco Boaria

This Practical Guide provides concrete information and tools about Action 3.1 "Youth in the World" of the Youth in Action Programme and its links with Euro-Med Youth Programme IV. This Guide focusses on Training and Networking Activities. Its goal is to provide tips to improve project development and to provide support mainly for first-time applicants. It does not focus specifically on the technical aspects (already covered in the Programme Guides), but more especially on the strategic and intercultural approach needed for successful cooperation in the Euro-Med area.

► YOUTH EXCHANGE IN EUROMED, by Yael Ohama

This Practical Guide provides concrete information and tools about Action 3.1 "Youth in the World" of the Youth in Action Programme and its links with Euro-Med Youth Programme IV, focussing specifically on Youth Exchanges. Its goal is to provide tips to improve project development and to provide support mainly for first-time applicants. Youth exchanges enable young people to go abroad, to meet peers from different countries and from different social and cultural backgrounds and to learn from each other through active participation in joint activities on themes of common interest. This Practical Guide takes the reader through the main steps of a Youth Exchange in EuroMed.





//////////////////////////////////// KNOWLEDGE SHARING: TWO NEW COLLECTIONS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF AND FACILITATE WORKING WITH EUROMED YOUTH

STUDIES AND RESEARCH:

▶ VOLUNTEERING AND VOLUNTARY SERVICE IN EURO-MED CONTEXT, by Asuman Goksel

Volunteering and Voluntary Service context are very important topics in EuroMed. They are seen as a core aspect of civic participation and democracy as they put values such as solidarity and non-discrimination into action and contribute to the development of societies. This Study aims at presenting the perceptions and realities of Volunteering and EVS within the EuroMed area, together with an update on the current situation in various countries.

Asuman Goksel

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Asuman Goksel worked as the national coordinator of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Action Programme on behalf of Turkey from 1999 to 2003. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in the Institute for International and European Policy at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and a research assistant in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara.



Studies and research

Introduction

Context and Aims of the Study

Millions of people in the world and in both European and Mediterranean countries engage in activities such as distributing food at shelters, helping disabled people, organising workshops on human rights, renovating buildings in the aftermath of a natural disaster, clearing sea coasts or raising awareness about gender-based violence in society. All of those activities are examples of volunteering, when they are done willingly by individuals or by groups of individuals to promote a cause or help others in society without any expectation of financial gain.¹

In general, volunteering is seen as a core aspect of civic participation and democracy, putting values such as solidarity and non-discrimination into action and contributing to the development of societies.² Within the context of youth work, volunteering provides valuable opportunities for young people to participate actively and become responsible citizens in their societies, to avail of informal (i.e. spontaneous and individual) and non-formal (i.e. more planned and structured) educational opportunities, to be included in and integrated into society. When viewed from that angle, volunteering can be seen as "a means to enhance young people's professional skills and competences, employability, sense of solidarity and foster active citizenship"³.

From the angle of **youth organisations**, which usually have limited human and financial resources, volunteering and volunteers provide added-value by bringing new perspectives to the organisations and their activities, as well as representing an important human resource to help them carry out their youth work activities.

The Euro-Mediterranean Voluntary Service is a particular form of volunteering and international voluntary work. Part of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Programme since 1999, Euro-Mediterranean Voluntary Service has been a tool to improve the structural skills and competences of young people and to promote active citizenship and active participation through volunteering in Europe and in the Mediterranean partner countries. A quick look at the numbers of voluntary service projects and volunteers shows, however, that voluntary service action within the context of Euro-Mediterranean youth cooperation has had a lower degree of participation when compared with the other actions in the Programme and its implementation has been hampered by various problems.

1 United Nations Volunteers (2010, p.10) and International Labour Organisation (2008, p. 43); 2 Proposal for a Council Directive on the European Year of Volunteering 2011, quoted in European Commission (2010, p. 2); 3 Council Recommendation of 20 November 2008 on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union, C (2008)195, quoted in European Commission (2009, 16).

Asuman Goksel

What did the "SWOT" analysis mean in and for Euro-Med EVS?

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>STRENGTHS of Euro-Med EVS</p> <p>Internal origin-attributes of the Youth Programmes and helpful to achieving the objectives of Euro-Med EVS action. What is Euro-Med EVS doing well?</p> | <p>WEAKNESSES of Euro-Med EVS</p> <p>Internal origin-attributes of the Youth Programmes and harmful to achieving the objectives of Euro-Med EVS action. What is not working successfully in the Euro-Med EVS?</p> |
| <p>OPPORTUNITIES for Euro-Med EVS</p> <p>External origin-attributes of the environment and helpful to achieving the objectives of Euro-Med EVS action. What potential is there to increase the chances of attaining the objectives of EVS in the Euro-Med context? What favourable external factors exist?</p> | <p>THREATS for Euro-Med EVS</p> <p>External origin-attributes of the environment & harmful to achieving the objectives of Euro-Med EVS action. What external factors could reduce the number and quality of Euro-Med EVS projects?</p> |

Table 2: Adaptation of SWOT analysis for the aims of the research on the Euro-Med Voluntary Service.

In terms of the **"strengths"** of the Euro-Med Voluntary Service, the input from the beneficiary organisations can be categorised in five groups: Contribution of EVS to intercultural learning; contribution of EVS to the personal development of young people; local impact; contribution of EVS to the organisations; and technical aspects.

Studies and research

STRENGTHS of Euro-Med EVS - Contribution to intercultural understanding

- It can contribute to intercultural understanding through the young person's experiences in each country visited; mutual cultural understanding.
- It fosters intercultural dialogue and provides an opportunity to create real images of cultural and socio-political realities in participating countries.
- It contributes to highlighting and enhancing the richness of cultures in the EuroMed region.
- It contributes to changing the negative image of Islam and of "occidental cultures".
- It provides an opportunity for real cultural encounters over a longer period.
- It provides great learning opportunities for all the learning partners mainly about different cultural perspectives, working styles, living styles, time perception, family relations.
- It is a good tool for de-stigmatising Islam.
- It helps break down stereotypes within European cultures.
- It helps bridge the Mediterranean sea.

STRENGTHS of Euro-Med EVS - Contribution to the personal development of young people

- EVS can help young people build their personalities during their stay in the host country. It is also instrumental in consolidating self-sufficiency in young people...etc
- It teaches young people to be more tolerant, open and self-confident.
- It gives an opportunity for young people to easily learn another language.
- It helps the personal and professional development of young people.
- It provides young people (who otherwise would never or hardly ever travel) it with an opportunity to travel (especially young people from Meda countries).

STRENGTHS of Euro-Med EVS - Local impact

- Volunteering is important for our youngsters, they can learn more about other cultures, volunteer work, how to commit to a social cause etc.
- The practical activities are quite useful in this kind of context and are a tool for learning more about local communities
- It gives youngsters (from deprived backgrounds) an opportunity to meet volunteers from their fatherland, to learn about cultures, social involvement etc.
- It provides different activities for local communities.





2010: SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED'S ACTIVITIES

WHEN GEOPOLITICAL FACTORS CHALLENGE COOPERATION, LET'S GET TRAINED!

"EuroMed Essentials: challenges of cooperation and geopolitical issues", Athens 21-26 June 2010. Federica Demicheli (Coordinator) / Ermete Mariani (Trainer/Expert)



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were also asked to elaborate their own interpretational grids, to represent them on maps and to communicate their ideas to the other members of the group.

Our main aim was to work with participants on the geographical representation of immaterial factors that have concrete consequences at local and global levels, such as identities and globalisation. This skill, in fact, is essential for dealing with complex situations such as the globalisation of consequences of local crises, which directly affect even cooperation programmes such as "Youth in Action". This methodology is also an effective tool for criticising dominant interpretation theories, such as Huntington's famous "clash of civilisations", as well as to elaborate new and more personal ones.

APPLYING GEOPOLITICAL METHODOLOGY: DEBATING ISSUES AND PRODUCING INTERPRETATIONS

Since participants came from different educational and cultural backgrounds, and were consequently accustomed to different learning methodologies, we approached these topics using different methods: pre-seminar homework, formal lectures, group working, time for individual reflection, expert interventions, open floor debates and plenary discussions.

Before getting into geopolitics, we wanted to introduce the international institutional framework supporting youth in the Mediterranean area. Bernard Abrignani, coordinator of Resource Centre SALTO - Youth EuroMed, had the difficult task of transforming a complicated web of relations and competencies in a more understandable framework, which he did via an activity called "institutional actors in dialogue".

To ensure participants would begin looking into the topic and the geopolitical methodology before arrival, we assigned the following pre-seminar homework: participants had to create a "multiple identities map" where they had to draw pyramids representing the multiple levels of their identities and "how global are your local traditions", which transformed the usual intercultural dinner into an occasion to think about how the globalization process has affected the production of local food, in some cases making local traditions widespread. We wanted to introduce two key concepts of the training course, namely globalisation and identities, through

TURNING GEOPOLITICS INTO A NON-FORMAL EDUCATIONAL TOOL

Our challenge as trainers was to turn geopolitics, normally only taught in universities and occasionally in secondary and high schools, into a non-formal educational tool. As this has never been done before, we were not surprised that some participants were expecting formal lectures and, at the end of the TC, a small minority was still asking for some. However, almost all agreed that the course was intellectually challenging as it was not simply a critical exercise: they



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While the Mediterranean Sea is the cradle of civilisations, it can also be the area where Huntington's "clash of civilisations" theory becomes true, with Mediterranean cultural and economic wealth turning out to be more of a curse than a blessing.

To tackle this issue, SALTO EuroMed, together with the Greek, Turkish and Maltese National Agencies, has developed a cycle of training seminars called "EuroMed Essentials"¹. The idea behind this cycle is to go back to fundamentals, geopolitical issues, history and religion of Euro-Mediterranean region, as only youth and social workers who are informed and aware of Euro-Mediterranean challenges can develop the new partnerships and cooperation initiatives needed to optimise this critical period.

The "Euromed Essentials" training cycle started last June in Athens with the currently relevant module entitled "Challenges to cooperation and geopolitical issues", as international crises are already seriously affecting cooperation projects and also blocking intercultural learning processes and dialogues. The course's aim was to provide participants with the conceptual tools and information they need, as well as a unique occasion to share experiences and ideas about the geopolitical framework in which they live and work.

SALTO EuroMed will publish a study on geopolitics in EuroMed in coming months, based on the findings of the training session.

¹ "EuroMed Essential" will continue in 2011 with two new training sessions: the first will focus on the History of EuroMed and the second on the role of Religion in the Mediterranean sea basin (<http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/tceuromed/tceuromed2011/>)



//////////////////// WHEN GEOPOLITICAL FACTORS CHALLENGE COOPERATION, LET'S GET TRAINED!

these pre-seminar tasks and to also make participants familiar with the technical and methodological issues involved in the mapping of immaterial data and factors. Instead of doing the usual name game as an ice-breaker activity, we instead asked participants to introduce their mate (that even they hadn't met before!) using just a few keywords such as: name, nationality, religious beliefs, etc...This exercise was also meant to make people see the extent to which it is possible to elaborate someone's identity from just a few clues, while also highlighting that making too many assumptions based on a minimum of data can easily lead to misrepresentations and stereotypes.

"Multiple identities maps", done as pre-seminar homework, were used during the training course as a starting point for the activity "Mapping geopolitical factors and localizing threats". The effort made individually at home to categorise the multiple levels of their identities and then represent them on maps was an occasion to work with the new methodology directly. Even though all the participants sent their homework a week before the course, they kept on revising and correcting it even after the course began as they were not completely satisfied with the results. For the activity "Mapping geopolitical factors and localising threats", we asked participants to work in small groups to identify and categorise factors that could

have international relevance, such as national identities, religion or civilisation. Once the maps were ready, they had to present them in plenary session. They explained the factors they had chosen, gave an interpretation of the overlapping areas, assessed if those crossings were positive or negative and under which conditions they could constitute a threat to collective security. This was, in fact, a way of criticising Huntington's theory, previously presented in a formal lecture, while producing their own interpretational grids of macro-trends at the same time.

The activity entitled "Geopolitics between space and time: localising resources, means of transportation and communication technologies", on the other hand, was designed to analyse how the globalisation process is affecting everybody's daily life. In the first phase, participants worked individually on their mobility and communication patterns, before representing them on maps. They then worked in four subgroups to look at the daily life of youth in Europe, in Meda countries today and in the 1950s, i.e. just after the Second World War. Afterwards, we discussed the similarities and differences between the four profiles in plenary sessions, focussing on how globalisation is proceeding at different paces on the two shores of the Mediterranean basin.

The training course learning process was enriched by presentations from two experts.

Mokhtar El-Harras, professor of sociology at the University Muhammad V of Rabat (Morocco), presented the main features of a detailed survey made at national level about youth and political participation in Morocco. Sepideh Farkhondeh, journalist and writer, spoke about "The tweet or green revolution in Iran. New media and youth mobilisation". She presented the main aims and needs of Iranian youth and showed how the new media have provided them with an unprecedented capacity to express their ideas and be heard even by the international community and, finally, to organise their civil movement more effectively. ■

LET'S GET TRAINED FOR NEW CHALLENGES

This training course, as does the whole cycle of "EuroMed essentials", stems from our unfaltering belief that when international cooperation gets blocked by external factors, making working with young people more and more difficult, it is time to find the right training to deal with these new challenges.

We also believe that introducing geopolitics as a non-formal educational tool in a training course has several positive effects. Amongst them we would highlight the fact that this discipline stimulates people to have a wider view of events; to manage and analyse several variables simultaneously; and to learn that the geographical representation of power relations and resources is both a creative and intellectually challenging exercise.

The very positive reaction we had from youth and social workers, with more than 160 applications for 25 places, confirmed that this kind of training is highly appreciated in our milieu and more occasions to discuss and analyse such issues should be planned. The two planned follow-up modules of EuroMed Essentials on history (where and when) and religion (where and when) will clearly not be enough, but even if they force us to do better and more frequently, we already consider them a success!



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2010: SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED'S ACTIVITIES

TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES AS A TOOL FOR INTERCULTURAL LEARNING



By Zuriñe Arruza



"TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES AS A TOOL FOR INTERCULTURAL LEARNING"

LTTT - Long Term Training Course:
2 years process, 3 phases, four regions involved.

Co-organized by SALTO Youth – EuroMed Resource Centre, French National Agency and SALTP Youth South East Europe, and East Europe and Caucasus

- **Phase I:**
Training Course, 28th June – 5th July 2009, Etxarri, France. Thematic inputs and building partnership. 23 participants from Eastern Europe and Caucasus (Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine); South Eastern Europe (Albania, Macedonia, Serbia); Mediterranean Countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority) and Programme Countries (EU: Belgium - FL, France, Hungary, Malta, Spain, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia).
- **Phase II:**
Planning and development of projects, August 2009 - August 2010. 6 youth projects were carried out: 4 youth exchanges, 1 networking activity (training course), 1 short term European Voluntary Service and the international organisation NISE Aquitaine was established.
- **Phase III:**
Evaluation Seminar, 20-24 September 2010, Etxarri, France. All the participants involved in projects from the first phase, together with new ones that could be involved in projects. For 2011 – 2012 we have planned a few projects: 2 Training and Networking activities «Street performance around traditions» and «Practise traditions»; 1 Study visit «Pelota in Jordan and Palestine»; 1 partnership building activity «N.I.S.E»; 5 youth exchanges: «The Onion of traditions», «Climbing from Culture to Culture», «Hallal Xmas», «Failing out Sports and Games», «Pelota in the World» and 1 group EVS.

EuroMed magazine #1 /// June 2011

Have you ever seen a woman or a man lifting a 320 kg stone? Two men competing at chopping trees with axes to see who finishes quicker while others are betting money? Have you ever tried to play Pelota? No? Well, I'm sure that in the future you will have the opportunity to do so or at least to watch it, because all the above are traditional Basque Sports. Some of them originated in the country while others have been adapted, which is the case for pelota, which has become a "universal game".

The Basque Country or Euskal Herria and more specifically Etxarri (Etcharry) in the French Pyrénées-Atlantiques department, was chosen for this training session because of its ancient traditions that are still alive, including traditional sports and games. All traditional Basque sports have the following in common: they give considerable importance to gambling and to challenging other players and also members of the audience and (in general) they require significant physical strength and resistance. All of them were inspired by the work done in rural areas, and they were transformed into a sport to show who was better and quicker in doing this or that, such as chopping trees, cutting grass, lifting heavy stones and so on.

In case you are still wondering whether I am Basque or not, well, I am, and this is one of the reasons why I was one of the trainers for the course. This was a great challenge for me from the outset. First of all because

it took place in my home country, to which I am very attached. Secondly because the topic was "Traditional sports and games as tools for intercultural learning", something that I have been working on for years with grass root organisations participating in youth exchanges. And finally, because it was a long-term training course: two seminars and a coaching phase in between.

The 2007 Youth in Action Programme emphasises the importance of promoting cross regional cooperation with neighbouring countries, so our training course had participants from the four regions: EU, SEEC, EEC and MEDA countries. This transnational dimension made the training richer, more challenging and a big learning curve for all the actors involved: starting with myself, the whole team, the participants, the French National Agency and the SALTO EuroMed Resource Centre (the two last institutions were also responsible for organising the course).

One of the strong points of the first seminar was discovering (through participant-led exhibitions and workshops) the richness and the wide variety of traditional, historical, and regional sports and games played in the different countries involved in the training (along with some from countries that were not involved). The sports and games presented were fascinating not only because of their differences but also because of their similarities and finally because of the way they were presented.





This first phase was also designed as a partnership building activity. By the end of it, participants had come up with 13 projects, of which 7 were done, 3 postponed, 1 rejected and 2 cancelled.

Following the project implementation phase, the last seminar focused on three main points: evaluating participants' projects (implemented, rejected or postponed); working on the creation of tools to be transferred to different countries and realities; and strengthening the network. It was done, which I admit gives me considerable personal satisfaction, but makes me especially proud of the group of participants we had the good fortune to work with, because they were the ones who had to reach the objectives, not just of this last phase but of the whole long term training course.

To come back to the link with the Basque country, I would like to mention two of the projects carried out by participants during these two years that can be considered "good practices", although not directly linked to Youth in Action.

The first was the setting up of an international organisation called NISE Aquitaine: an idea that involved the whole group of participants and aimed at strengthening the partnerships and the network by involving more organisations in future projects. The General Assembly will be held before the end of 2011.

The second one concerns the transferability of tools. Pelota was used during our two training courses as a tool to connect the group, to show how a sport can bring people together, and how it can be used in different realities and environments. Jordanian and Palestinian participants immediately expressed their interest in transferring the game of pelota to their countries and French and Basque participants were ready to help them with that, in collaboration with the International Federation of pelota. Next summer, inshallah, young people will be playing pelota in Jordan and Palestine, which is a sort of amazing idea! I promise you that for a humble Basque youth worker it is a dream to be part of such a training course with such outcomes. ■

PELOTA AS A UNIVERSAL GAME AND AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL

There are at least 14 official ways of playing Pelota and the most regulated forms are found in South America, Middle East and Western Europe. The Jeu de Paume, the "tambour" game and the sieve game are living variations of the ancient Pelota games, with Basque Pelota and tennis as direct follow-ons from those games. We only used Basque Pelota in developing our educational tool with the participants. Participants made their own variation of Pelota in order to play individually against a wall, in pairs or in teams, either with balls (of different weights and sizes) and hands or with pala. They also had to develop safety measures, as this sport can be quite dangerous! Participants were challenged by playing a virtually unknown sport and we realised that it was a very good way of making people interact in a positive way, as pelota favours positive attitudes and values (fair play) and gender equality (you need skills more than strength!). Participants developed a sense of belonging to a group that went beyond their differences and highlighted their similarities! While some were competing in teams, non-playing participants were actively supporting them and shouting, just like fans at a real match. This activity also helped them to analyse and reflect upon different aspects of intercultural learning. For more details look up SALTO's Tool Box!

EUSKAL HERRIA THE BASQUE COUNTRY

The Basques have lived uninterruptedly in a region across Spain and France (particularly in the autonomous communities of Euskadi and Navarra in Spain and the Pyrénées-Atlantiques in France) since the beginning of recorded time and this is what they see as their "country". They have doggedly maintained and defended their age-old cultural heritage and also kept their historical identity and unique language alive. The Basque language is considered the oldest surviving language in Europe, even though it is non-Indo-European and its origins are still unknown.

People considering themselves Basques are: 53% of the population in the Autonomous Community of Basque Country, 23% in Navarra and around 12% in the Pyrenees Atlantiques, spread over 20.700 km². In the Basque Autonomous Community and in a part of Navarra, Basque is the co-official language together with the Spanish, although it is not recognised in France.



kilimiliklik@euskalnet.net
Youth leaders' trainer and coordinator of international projects, cultural association Kilimiliklik.



2010: SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED'S ACTIVITIES

CHANGE YOUR LIFE TODAY. DON'T GAMBLE ON THE FUTURE, ACT NOW, WITHOUT DELAY¹.



Lucia Barbieri, freelance trainer on gender equality and identity, coordinator of social projects addressing the roles of women and life balance, member of the Commission of Equal Opportunities of the Province of Prato (Italy). luciabarbieri@hotmail.com

EMPOWERING WOMEN – a partnership building seminar.

Last year I was offered the opportunity to coordinate a partnership building seminar on the empowerment of women, proposed by the French National Agency (NA). I have to admit that I was quite surprised as I had almost lost hope that NAs would ever take a serious interest in gender equality – or at least as more than just a interdisciplinary topic to be considered in the selection process - notwithstanding the clear priorities of the European Commission and the Youth in Action Programme itself (gender equality is set out in Europe 2020 as an essential means for reaching inclusive growth and will therefore also be central to the Youth on the Move Programme).

As both a practitioner and an activist on the topic, I have experienced similar frustration at national and local level: we talk a lot about gender equality but all too often get lost in concepts and forget that easy and concrete pragmatism needed to make it a desirable and convincing topic to be shared with everybody (both men and women, who surprisingly are often the hardest to convince) in order to develop a comprehensive approach.

Thousands of projects exist on the topic, but it is very hard to think of them as relevant actions for the betterment of society and the economy, as the Europe 2020 strategy proclaims they should be. You can therefore imagine my absolute joy in hearing that such a seminar was being planned: not just an ordinary one, but a PARTNERSHIP BUILDING SEMINAR, meaning addressed to organisations active on the issue. My joy grew when I was told the regions the selection was open to: Programme countries and Mediterranean ones, which was predictable, but amazingly also South East Europe and Eastern Europe and Caucasus. A new target in my experience, mainly based on European and Mediterranean countries...

Yesssss!...my cup completely overfloweth... this would be an extremely interesting springboard for exchanges and future common actions!

It was almost too much when I was told the theme: not merely "gender equality" but EMPOWERMENT of women.



Absolutely great!

Finally things are moving in the right direction, I thought!

My enthusiasm for the seminar found an equally enthusiastic response from the applicants: we received a total of 467 applications, scattered among the planned regions, but also from central African countries and the United States... a clear hint for future plans?

We figured initially that male participation would be limited – as in every activity dealing with the topic – so we were quite surprised to see that almost 20% of the applications had been submitted by men. The selection process then ran its course (our profile was in fact quite precise and qualified) and we ended up with 28 participants, including one man. One basic priority for the profile was to belong to an organisation active in the field of gender equality to facilitate experience sharing and the creation of future partnerships and we were quite satisfied with the results of the selection process. Participants came not only from a variety of cultural backgrounds but above all represented a wide-ranging offer of activities and projects dealing with women and gender equality.

Talking about empowerment with such a variety of participants was very challenging and difficult from the outset. "Empowerment" is a strange word – for which there is

no direct translation in most languages, only paraphrases – that derives from the concept of power; but goes further thanks to the prefix EM which highlights the strong participation and responsibility required of individuals to gain it², which in turn transforms it from simplistic claims of power TO women.

The concept of empowerment is founded on three basic pillars: power and liberty, the knowledge and capacity to decide by oneself and then take action consciously and the basic opportunities needed to carry out one's self determination. We wanted to focus on the necessary and irreplaceable concept of empowerment coming from individuals and not merely relying on external actions. To highlight this point, we adopted a quote from Luisa May Alcott that – in our opinion – sums up our approach to the topic: "I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning to sail my ship".

We began by an overview of the basic instruments – such as the international agreements and the concept of empowerment and its corollaries – before moving on to an analysis of empowerment in different areas of our lives, from politics to the economy and social and private spheres. The seminar took place in cold and snowy Strasbourg (see my picture) during the frenetic Christmas market period: our surroundings were absolutely

¹ Simone de Beauvoir: ² To empower: [with object] make (someone) stronger and more confident, especially in controlling their life and claiming their rights (Oxford dictionary).



////////////////////// TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES AS A TOOL FOR INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

stunning, although the weather conditions sometimes made the implementation of the activities – such as outdoor visits to local organisations involved in the topic – more challenging, but the participants never lost heart. They reminded me of a quote from Horace: *Frangar, non flectar*³ (I am broken, not deflected), which fully embodies the approach required to dealing with prevarication and reflects the true spirit of women empowering themselves.

The greatest difficulty we encountered – often mentioned by participants - was the tyranny of having such a short time for such a wide and complex theme. However, this is a regular issue for every seminar or training session on almost every topic...

The dominant idea was – for the participants – to create a springboard for future cooperation and – for the stakeholders – to lay the foundations for a process of analysis on the topic of the empowerment.

The second step of the process has already been confirmed and will be implemented in France at the beginning of 2012, still based on the partnership-building seminar open to the four regions model, which proved so attractive to participants. It will continue to deal with the concept by focussing on more restricted areas of intervention. Next year we plan to deal with the third world and its contradictions in terms of gender equality and female empowerment with an overview of the different approaches in

the third sector (community and voluntary sectors, not-for-personal profit social firms..). We also intend to look more closely at the role of NGOs and their contribution to the realisation of real female empowerment. We would like to launch a thought-provoking investigation of the two sides to the equation and probe deeper into the loud proclamations of equality on all sides that do not always find an echo in reality. "Never let the hand you hold hold you down"⁴ is going to be our motto. Is there real gender equality inside NGOs?

Don't miss EMPOWERING WOMEN II where you'll find out! ■

| TITLE | UNROLLING THE THREAD BALL: Empowering women in PRIVATE LIFE |
|---|---|
| <p>Description of the activity [170 min]</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Energizer: THE WINKING GAME (usage of facial expression) [10 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 chairs in circle • 13 persons are sitting, the other 14 stand behind the chairs (one person has no sitting partner) • This person is the winker and has to attract one sitting-person by winking • The sitting person has to try to join the winker, while the standing person tries to catch him/her • The standing person who loses the sitting partner is the new winker and so on ■ Group exercise: THE FROZEN STATUES OF GE (usage of body expression) [10 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator should model first image. Enter the circle, stand in the middle and strike a pose. Ask a participant to join you. Ask for interpretations. Point out how the meaning of the image has been altered. ■ Group division: THE PERFUMES (usage of smell) [10 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are given one piece of perfumed paper. They have to find the partners with the same scent (3 groups of 9) ■ IMAGE THEATRE [120 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups have to prepare 3 different statues representing the concepts assigned (1 sculpture for every concept). It is important that EVERY member of the group has an meaningful part in the statue. • Concepts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. violence, motherhood, stress 2. submission, prince charming, envy 3. abuse, power, freedom • Back in plenary representation of the statues. It is vital that participants don't speak and don't move while representing. The other groups have to guess the concept. ■ DEBRIEFING [120 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the activities, on the difficulties - due to personal and cultural perceptions - and the solutions found. |
| <p>Material needed</p> | <p>Papers, pens, flipcharts, coloured pencils, 3 types of perfumes</p> |

³ Horace, Odes III, 3. ⁴ Author unknown.





2010: SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED'S ACTIVITIES

THE EUROMED GAME: WAS IT REALLY NEEDED?

Lucia Barbieri, Project Coordinator of the EuroMed Game



While either working in the EuroMediterranean field of training or at least having come to know and deal with SALTO EuroMed, you will almost certainly have come into contact with the EuroMedGame (EMG) or at least have heard of it.

You may have also tested it in some SALTO EuroMed training course or seminar and possibly seen how it has changed over time, but notwithstanding the improvements you may sometimes have had the impression that this project was a chimera, always talked about but never being finalized as a product ready to be used.

The idea started some years ago and was not intended to be either presumptuous or risky, simply to create an easy tool for introducing various areas of knowledge in the EuroMediterranean youth context (although perhaps that was a little risky!). Based on the needs analysis, our idea was to provide a basic/middle knowledge of the realities in this context, to ensure better implemented projects (as members of organizations) and from a personal point of view to have a certain active awareness about the context in terms of relationships with foreign colleagues and the dynamics of other countries' social systems¹.

The question of its usefulness arose immediately after the first click of the mouse: there are already so many documents, reports and tools dealing with the topics on ICL in the EM context. Why a new one?

Well, we felt, perhaps presumptuously, that something was missing. Something that was easy to use, attractive, adaptable to both situations and trainers/youth workers' personalities, with lots of data and quirky info that could be assimilated effortlessly without having to suffer through pages of aseptic information.

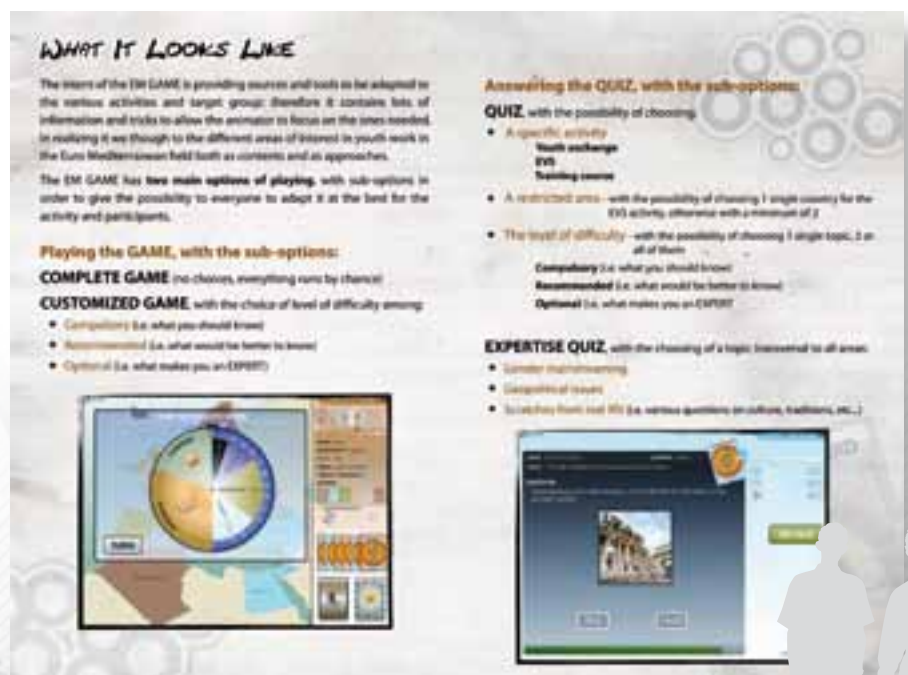
What else than a game, then? Being convinced advocates of the precious and effective educational impact of games as tools, we decided to take on the challenge and create a game for the EM youth work context that would combine knowledge gained with fun in a balanced way.

So we started to create a software game (after having discarded the idea of a board game, for logistical reasons) relying on experts for the technical and educational aspects, while drawing on the knowledge and cooperation of trainers and participants of the SALTO EM world for the contents.

We also decided to enrich the game with a quiz - for quicker rounds of knowledge testing and acquisition- and above all to satisfy trainer and youth worker needs by allowing them to choose between various options (levels of difficulty, activities, countries involved), to better adapt the game to the working context and target groups².

The end result is a flexible tool, which is a mix of information, methods and sources for trainers working in this specific youth work context. Their experience and considerations will be used to improve it more and more, since our idea is to make the EMG a living project and not a statically finalized one: through the SALTO EM platform we are aiming to bring future adaptations by setting up a sort of blog with suggestions for and from trainers, tips and tricks of the trade, thus making our handbook a richer and more complete one - not to mention the value of contributions to update the questions or provide intriguing or generally unknown facts under the heading of: "what would you like others to know about your country in order to fight prejudices?" - so that we can offer constant updates of the content. The EMG will be easily downloadable from the SALTO EM site. Another possible enhancement could also be new languages, new regions... but this is another chapter and perhaps a rather ambitious one... or maybe not...

The EMG is finally finished - for the moment - and we believe it was really needed. We hope it will be well received by those working in the field and above all that it will become a work in progress nourished by real cooperation and an interest in spreading knowledge of the EM context. ■



¹ For a clearer explanation of the whole idea and steps see the article "The EMG recipe" published on Meet'in Euro-Med, n.12, July 2009.

² See the EMG booklet for a more in-depth and precise explanation.



SPECIAL INTERVIEW

ARAB YOUTH CHALLENGES THE STATUS QUO BY CLAMOURING FOR FREEDOM AND PARTICIPATION

Ermete Mariani talks with Taoufik Louzari, Director « Maison des Jeunes », Assilah, Morocco.



EM - Arab governments have been stable for decades and the common perception of youth and Arab populations in general was that they learned to live with the status quo and only looked for individual solutions and strategies to get around political, social and economic obstacles: migration or simply putting up with the regimes. Since December 2010, most Arab countries have been living through a deep and painful transition phase. What do you think is the most important signal, message or lesson to be learnt from these events?

TL - I think the Arab population as a whole and more particularly Arab youth have finally taken back their future. They have publicly demonstrated that they want a better life in their home countries and that they are ready to risk their lives for it. At the same time they have also shown a high level of civil responsibility as most of the protests and manifestations have been civil and peaceful. I think that this has had a very positive impact on quite a lot of stereotypes in the West and in the Arab world as well, about "blocked societies" or weak and disoriented youth... Our societies are lively and our people are clamouring for a better life here and now!

EM - Since last December the Arab world has been shaken by a wide-scale movement of protests that has led to a civil war in Libya, ousted Tunisian and Egyptian leaders and is seriously threatening the status quo in Syria, Yemen, Bahrain and even Oman. What do you think is happening? Why do you think the wave of protests is spreading so quickly and so widely? Is there a common core to the discontent of Arab populations?

TL - The Arab world is indeed experiencing unprecedented turmoil, characterised by many informal youth movements demanding political and social changes and making extensive use of the new communication and information technologies that are quite banal and ordinary for many of them but which cannot be controlled by political authorities. This paradox clearly reflects one aspect of the huge gap between generations: traditional adult authority firmly controlling traditional mass media (such as television, radio and press) and young people who can easily avail of new technologies to send and share very effective and strong messages to mobilise their peers to act against the official authorities and regimes.

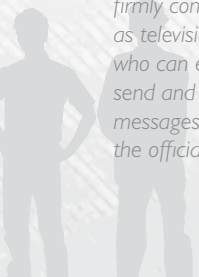


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This new « General Arab Intifada » began after the auto-immolation of the young Mohammed Bouazizi in Sidi Bouzid, a small but touristic Tunisian town, as an extreme reaction to years of frustration and vexations perpetrated by local and national authorities. His death immediately sparked many popular revolts and demands for reform, culminating in the unexpected collapse of a dictatorial regime headed by a selfish President who wasn't prepared to meet those demands. Former President Ben Ali probably thought he would be protected by his allies among western governments as he

was effectively acting as the "policeman" to stem the sub-Saharan immigration flow, as well as controlling the threat of radical Islamic movements.

Bertrand Russell used to say that "all movements go too far" and the success of the Tunisian revolution in forcing the President to flee the country provoked a domino effect in the whole region: first Egypt, then Jordan, Yemen, Bahrain, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Syria, Iraq. They are now all facing critical political, economic and social situations.



SPECIAL INTERVIEW

ARAB YOUTH CHALLENGES THE STATUS QUO BY CLAMOURING FOR FREEDOM AND PARTICIPATION //

This shows that, notwithstanding the many differences in Arab societies, there are also plenty of common features, although many of them are unfortunately negative, such as the lack of democracy, the non-respect of Human Rights and dignity, unemployment... However, in my opinion, four other important factors have contributed to creating this huge social tsunami:

1. Young people between 15 and 35 years old, who represent the largest group in Arab countries, share the same problems: unemployment and frustration coupled with a high level of uncertainty with regard to the future;
2. The common "Arabic" language and cultural background facilitated communication (i.e. the same slogans were used in different countries), support for each other and the sharing of a sense of challenge to political authorities;
3. The important role played by the international media news channels, specially Aljazeera TV, in covering the revolts in an unprecedented way and supporting the youth opposition movements;
4. Facebook and Twitter, finally, were extensively used by young people as the most effective tools to inform the external world about the events, organise protests and share common values and expectations.

EM - Young people have always been at the forefront of revolutions and/or revolts, although sometimes they lead and sometimes they are led. What do you think is their role in this particular historic moment for the Arab world? Have young people initiated the revolt, are they leading it or are they simply being manipulated?

TL - Young Arab people were mainly considered as outsiders with regard to political matters, and almost nobody believed in their power to challenge political authorities. Youth participation up to this point has been reduced to patriotic, nationalistic or religious demands against others (mainly Israel and the Occident), or in election campaigns, where even if they rarely voted, they were used as "barbecue fuel".

We should not forget that during the last decade, many international cooperation programmes, within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and other regional programmes, have targeted young

people and focussed on empowering their capacities in many fields such as active citizenship, political and social participation, ICTs, life skills, human rights, etc. This has significantly contributed to the creation of a new young elite with the potential and skills to plan and develop advocacy strategies and believe in the famous Adidas slogan "**Impossible is nothing**".

It would be simplistic and unjust to say that these young people are simply being manipulated by others. I think this is the argument used by local political authorities to defend themselves against this young "Intifada". In Arab countries we are used to the official excuse of the "a conspiracy of foreign enemies against our homeland". However, as always happens in popular and social revolutions, there are many actors (political and/or economic) who want to fish in troubled waters and exploit the results of these revolutions and impose their own agendas. The recent cowardly terrorist attack on the Café Argana in Marrakech (Morocco, 28th April) is one example of this, as it seems to have been perpetuated in order to abort the political and constitutional reforms initiated in Morocco in response to the demands of the "20th February movement".

EM - Who are these dissatisfied and frustrated young people? Do they belong to organised movements or parties (Islamist or secular) or they are loosely joining forces since they share common problems and hopes? What are they asking for?

TL - The young people who led the protests are politically mature and have integrated Jean Jacques Rousseau's message: "**As soon as any man says of the affairs of the State 'What does it matter to me?' the State may be given up for lost**". They believe in themselves and that they can make change happen, but don't belong to any specific or organised movement. It's like when the national football team plays against another national team, everyone forgets about existing rivalries in the national league and supports the national team. However, they are now creating their own new movements such as "25th January in Egypt" or "20th February in Morocco", where we can find young people from different political backgrounds, ranging from radical to moderate, Islamist to secular, etc....

Some of them were already political militants, while others were only sympathizers of this or that ideology, and others are still looking for

a political identity. The common ground for all of them is the nature of their problems and the rights they are demanding: democracy, employment, free medical care, housing, respect for human rights, free and independent justice, a place in the media, equal distribution of national economic resources, separation of business and politics, etc... We are now at a crucial stage: as demands and expectations increase, they need to set their priorities and define a common strategy to ensure the movement does not descend into chaos.

EM - The wave has finally arrived in Morocco: what has it been like?

TL - Well, as Morocco is part of the region it is normal that the wave eventually arrived here too! However, there are some differences in the nature of the demands. In Morocco, young people of the "20th February" movement were protesting against corruption, while still respectful of the authority of the King. They didn't want to change or overthrow the regime, just to clean it up. Amongst other demands, they also sought the King's support to change the Government and dissolve Parliament, to ensure a fair trial for those accused of corruption and to protect the public purse from them.

The King, Mohammed VI, reacted positively to these demands and nominated (one day after the protests) the **National Economic and Social Council** on 21st February, followed on 9th March by a **commission to review and prepare a new Constitution**, which he ordered to consult with all the components of Moroccan society, including civil society and youth associations. He also announced many revolutionary changes, such as renouncing many of his royal prerogatives and empowering the institution of the Prime Minister and the Parliament. I think this was an intelligent reaction on his part, and it shows that is possible to make the revolution as one and to correct things slowly but surely. I have always believed in the famous saying from Confucius: "**It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop**".

A new era was started, beginning with the King's speech and which will culminate with the delivery in June of the report from the commission in charge of the new constitution. During this time, young people need to remain very active, discussing and proposing changes to the Constitution's articles, and at the same time motivating their peers to participate in and vote for the Referendum. **The 20th February** movement and other entities are planning



////////// ARAB YOUTH CHALLENGES THE STATUS QUO BY CLAMOURING FOR FREEDOM AND PARTICIPATION

many demonstrations and activities to keep people's attention on the issues and not let them feel that the war has been won. We need to remember that what has happened so far is just the appetiser, the big battle will be to ensure the new Constitution is respected and not simply a dead letter that changes nothing.

EM - You are member of the town council of Asilah, a village in the North west of Morocco close to Tangiers, and since 2000 you have been managing a youth centre. As a result, you know both youth issues and the Moroccan political system very well. What do you think would be an effective youth policy to meet youth demands and to facilitate their lives? What has been done so far?

TL - I agree with those young people who are demanding the creation of a national youth council with official status, which should be clearly recognised in the national constitution, in the same way as Parliament and other institutions. Young people should elect the members of this council and there should be a specific quota of young people in Parliament too. At the same time the government should develop and implement an integrated strategy for young people, which could satisfy youth demands and give them the opportunity and right to take part in the decision making process.

To give credit where credit is due, we should also recognize that over the last decade the treatment of youth issues has become a state priority. Many official initiatives have been adopted to facilitate life for young people, such as the reduction of the voting age, facilities to create young businesses, the creation of the national Human development initiative and of some health centres for youth and many youth cultural and sport centres. In addition, the Minister of Youth recently announced that an important event will take place next June to officialise the integrated youth strategy. Let's wait and see.

EM - Going back again to the regional level, do you think that Arab policy makers, even the new ones, have understood that a sustainable government can only be based on a sound and effective youth policy? Have all these revolts taught them that they should take young people needs and demands into account?

TL - Recent events in the Arab world, especially



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all these protest movements led by young people, have demonstrated that neglecting youth issues and putting them on the back burner can be very dangerous for the integrity and stability of any political regime. Arab uprisings have finally obliged policy makers to seriously rethink how they manage youth issues, and it is now clear that implementing an effective youth policy is a priority. However, promises are no longer enough because all Arab national constitutions are already full of texts promoting these rights, but the reality is different... I think that if there's no serious governance that respects the rights and the duties of all the components in society, we will remain at level zero or even worse.

The current situation reminded me of a funny and very meaningful Moroccan proverb: **"If you see that they are shaving your brother's head, go ahead and wet your hair"**. It means that every country in the region should learn from this lesson, otherwise they will suffer the same consequences. I feel optimistic because I think that nowadays policy makers are all aware of the urgent need to change their political mindsets and the way they tackle the issue of youth: legislations need to be more flexible and guarantee permanent revisions with the participation of formal representatives from youth bodies (institutions, NGOs... etc), to take into account young people's evolving needs and demands. Without this change in behaviour, we are likely to see a worsening of the situation we are living through now. ■



DOSSIER : VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

YOUTH VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

Mapping the concept and its implementations

Jean-Claude RICHEZ, INJEP, richez@injep.fr

United Kingdom

In England 57% of young people aged 16-24 are a regular or occasional volunteer. In Scotland 33 % aged 16-24 volunteer each year in voluntary youth organisations. Data are not available for Wales. There is a volunteer service running since 1999, the Millennium Volunteers, in which around 45 000 people are volunteering. This programme provides recognition for young people completing 100 or 200 hours volunteering. The Department oversees the program for Education and Skills. In April 2008 V Programme had replaced the Millennium Volunteers programme in England.

Sweden

41% of young people are volunteering in Sweden (43 percent for women) and 39 % for men aged from 16 to 29 years. There is no volunteer service. The policy of volunteering is under the responsibility of Ministry of integration and gender equality. The Swedish National Board of Youth Affairs is the government agency responsible for the follow up of the program.

Eastern Europe

In the former communist countries, now member states of the European Union, there was a negative image of the voluntary activities. Indeed there is an historical link to communist ideology where citizen were expected to be involved in community movement. This negative image, although many people were involved in NGO activity through the struggle for democracy. Today involvement is slow to restart in the new democracies but there is significant progress of volunteering by young peoples.

Southern Europe

Civil society as a whole and in particular volunteering grew during the 1990s in southern Europe, in particular Italy and Spain. For Italy, Spain and France these voluntary activities were not longer linked to the traditional organisers of volunteering, such as political institutions and/or religious ones. Thus it was the informal and new forms of volunteering in which the number grew. Spectacular growth is given for Italy. Around 6,3 percent in 2006, around 10% today. There is since 2006 a volunteer service, «servizio civile» in which between 30 000 and 45 000 young people are involved. Range of activities/ 50% welfare, 26% education and culture, 11% arts, 7% environment, 5% civic protection, 1% civic service abroad.

DEFINITION

As defined by International Labour Organisation (ILO) informal volunteerism refers to the voluntary activities performed on an individual basis: for example, teaching children in an orphanage how to play music as individual. On the contrary, formal voluntarism refers to volunteering activities formally structured by non-profit or other types of organisations such as a local, national or international non-governmental organisation, a school or religious organisation, governmental programmes or the private sector (for example, providing similar help through an organisation activity).

In this framework, we can describe the voluntary service with following aspects.

EUROPEAN PRIORITIES

The priorities of the European Commission are the result of a decision (Resolution on 15 November 2004) of the Council of youth Ministers, which defines voluntary activities as one of and proposes to:

- develop voluntary activities of young people
- remove obstacles to their voluntary activities
- promote those activities
- support the recognition of non formal learning/experiences

In these documents, there are two special objectives:

- To make easier for young people to carry out voluntary activities by removing obstacles and specially for young people with fewer opportunities
- To promote voluntary activities for reinforcing young people's solidarity and engagement as citizens.

The European Commission and the National Youth Agencies are implementing the strategy for inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Youth programme, "Youth in Action". At the same time the Council of Europe recommendation highlights the need to reduce obstacles for people with less opportunities. One very important barrier for the active participation in volunteering is the lack of financial resources for young people. It is impossible for these young people to take unpaid work when they need support themselves and / or their families.

A solution proposed and discussed is to pay money for volunteering, but isn't the contrary of volunteering? It depend how the payment is defined, in fact we can describe it as:

- Pocket money
- Compensation toward the loss of social protection. ■

A BRIEF HISTORY OF YOUTH VOLUNTEERING POLICY IN EUROPE

The Council of Europe has been promoting the importance of voluntary activities since the Sixties, and it has recently developed a recommendation (1997) and a convention on trans-national and long-term volunteering (2003).

The convention sets a legal framework for trans-national volunteering providing details of the roles and procedures for all actors involved in sending and hosting volunteers.

In the same years, the European Commission puts the issue of volunteering forward in the political agenda developing the following documents:

- "Teaching and learning White Paper" (1995) that wants to fight social exclusion introducing the tool of European Voluntary Service (EVS) in 1996 and fully established in 1998
- "White paper on Youth" (2001) identifies voluntary activities as one of four key plans for the development of Youth Policy in Europe.

In 2005 the Commission proposed the development and extension of EVS in the context of the "Youth in Action" programme (2007-2013).

Germany

36 % of young people between 12 and 25 engage regularly in volunteering activities and 4 percent from time to time. There are two voluntary services in Germany:

- The voluntary social service (Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr) and the voluntary ecological service (Freiwilliges Ökologisches Jahr): young volunteer must have under 27 years, 24 300 young people were concerned in 2006, the service is normally 12 months, can be reduced to 6 months and extended to 18 month,
- Development volunteers service (Weltwärts), started in 2008, 1530 young people were engaged since.

And the statutory voluntary service offered by German NGOs. In 2008 12300 young people carried out such a voluntary service.

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DOSSIER : VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

HEY, YOUTH FIELD! WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?

Ülly Enn, Estonian National Agency of the Youth in Action programme, <http://euroopa.noored.ee>, rapporteur of the "SALTO-YOUTH Firework 2010"

EuroMed magazine #1 /// June 2011

Yes, youth field, where are you headed? One could say that this was the focus of the SALTO-YOUTH Firework event that took place on 25-28.05.2010 in Paris and brought together 132 representatives of all the main stakeholders in the European youth field. The aim of the event was to explore how European youth policy objectives could best be put into practice in the areas of education, training, employability and entrepreneurship, especially in light of the opportunities of the European Youth In Action programme.

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

The European youth field... As comprehensive as it sounds and is, first and foremost it is all about young people - about 96 million young people, between the ages of 15-29, representing almost 20% of the total European Union population¹. Significant progress has been made in recent years in learning more about the youth population in Europe. In terms of statistics, first the EU Youth and then "Youth in Europe – A Statistical Portrait"² reports were important benchmarks at pan-European level, complementing other, more specific from a thematic and/or geographic scope point of view, research initiatives. However, mere statistics is only one step towards a better understanding of youth. Who are these young people? What challenges do they face? What do they think and dream about? Where do they stand from all these angles not only today but also in years to come in a constantly changing society?

In the words of some researchers, young people today are "living on a shoestring"³. While the expression may sound rather harsh, it is borne out by some of the most worrying data: approximately 20 % of young people aged between 18-24 are currently at risk of poverty, 14.8% leave school after only completing a lower secondary education and more than one third aged between 15-24 are not involved in either education, training or employment (ibid). Paradoxically, young Europeans are also more educated and mobile than ever before. They also tend to be more optimistic than their elders when picturing their life in 20 years' time: 47% of 15-24-year-olds expect their life to get better and young people especially believe that work opportunities for men and women will be more equal and that access to education will

be easier in the future (ibid). Thus, against the background of all we know about the youth population, including the challenging trends showing how vulnerable young people in Europe are today, it is also their expectations of a positive future that require a responsible reaction and forward-looking response from policy-makers and practitioners.

"The new youth policy strategy is not at all a purely reactive approach to the current crisis and related challenges. We could have continued with the core of the youth sector based in leisure time activities... but the thinking behind the political choice was also about what the pre-conditions for being an active citizen are - to have a job, decent living conditions etc. So, with its focus on employability, participation and citizenship, it is very anticipative, future-oriented approach."

Pierre Mairesse, former director of Youth, Sport and Relations with the Citizens, current director of Life-long Learning at European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture.

There is no doubt that youth workers and other stakeholders in the youth field are facing very exciting times, full of opportunities to support the realisation of policy objectives as well as to contribute actively to further developments in the field. A significant part of the SALTO Firework event reflected that by looking at learning from existing good practices as well as identifying the potential for future actions.

The following pages sum up some of the key messages from the event, as thrown up by the wide-ranging discussions and workshops held during the conference and reflecting on the implications of European Union Youth Strategy "Investing and Empowering"⁴.

SOME MAIN ROADS TO TAKE...

I. Further reflection on youth policy and the consolidation of competences at all levels

"Before (the event) I didn't think I was really involved in youth policy – I was just doing my job! But I now realise that yes, I am actually actively working on and contributing to policy. It is important to ask yourself: what is my area of influence and impact? It depends a lot on one's position and one's own awareness and interests. That is why we need more meetings to discuss all this."

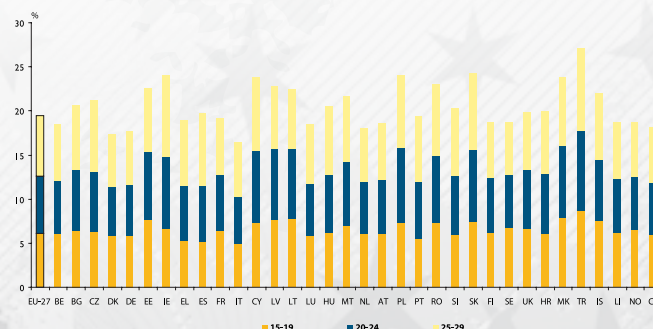
Mieke Neven McMahon, a youth worker and trainer from Ireland

As this quote illustrates, practitioners do not always see the links between their everyday work and youth policy. We therefore need to continue to present and promote youth policy and its latest developments to help bring about a better understanding of the content and terminology of some key policy documents and to inspire initiatives to facilitate their transfer into practice, especially given the diverse realities of youth work in Europe. For example, actions such as youth seminars, youth democracy projects and youth initiatives are relevant tools to do so but not the only possibilities available. Why not develop some host projects within the European Voluntary Service to bring together volunteers working in the area of youth policy and other young people or to take this as a specific focus for training courses, seminars, job-shadowing and other projects aimed at consolidating the competence of youth workers and organisations?

Whatever the path chosen, the involvement of young people as central actors of youth policy and practice is of the utmost importance.

ACTIVITY RATES OF YOUNG PEOPLE, BY AGE GROUP, 2007 (%)

Source: "Youth in Europe: a statistical portrait", Eurostat 2009, pag 104



"One of the critical factors is how to make sure that participation is not only possible for the 'elite of young politicians' but to any young person willing to contribute to their local community."

From the presentation of good practices: Conference "Participation in the EuroMed contexts." Federica Demicheli and Fatima Laanan, SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres network.

¹ EU Youth Report (2009). European Commission. ²Youth in Europe – A Statistical Portrait (2009). European Commission. http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/news/news_129.html. ³Youth in Europe - Statistics explained (2009). European Commission, Eurostat. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Youth_in_Europe. ⁴Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018).

2. Further reflection on the essence of youth work

In the light of changes in society, youth population and youth policy, it is exciting as well as necessary to take time for some critical reflection on the objectives, content and role of youth work.

It is now crucially important to re-define and strengthen the identity of youth work, which is changing from a leisure-oriented sector to a new identity as a well-recognised resource, contributing to dealing with some of the key challenges facing young people in today's societies. Having said that, the focus should not be exclusively economically driven, as highlighted by the reflections of SALTO Firework delegates, and youth work should continue to focus on the potential and need for young people to develop their human and social capital.

In the light of the economic crisis currently gripping Europe, it is no wonder that employability has become "the priority of priorities", but that should not mean that some other issues which have been at the core of youth work over the years – human rights, equal opportunities, social inclusion, youth participation, citizenship etc – are neglected or forgotten. Practitioners expect European youth programmes to continue to cover these issues in the future.

3. Support to develop innovative areas and approaches

The EU Youth strategy includes innovative ideas that present an exciting challenge for the youth field, especially regarding employability and entrepreneurship as well as the cross-sectorial approach. The latter would require the youth field to take a proactive role to explore and establish more links and promote dialogue and strategic co-operation with other sectors (formal education, business sector etc.), since the desire of the youth sector alone to establish a truly cross-sectorial approach is not enough to ensure it actually happens. Thus it is also important to work towards better visibility and dissemination of (already existing) valuable practices and results of youth work, leading to greater social and political recognition of youth work and its inclusion as a valid partner by other sectors.

When we consider where the most urgent need for launching new support

measures lies, (social) entrepreneurship immediately comes to mind, especially when we take into account that despite all the other changes in both the youth population and the economic scene in Europe, the percentage of young entrepreneurs has stayed approximately the same over the past ten years, at less than 5% in the 15-24 age

group and less than 10% in the 25-28 age group (Miriam Teuma, 2010)⁵. The role of youth work could be seen as mainly a support for developing an entrepreneurial mindset, pro-activeness and other related skills in young people and could include establishing micro funds, laboratories for social entrepreneurship, supporting job-shadowing, career guidance, apprenticeships and internships etc.

The discussions during the SALTO-YOUTH Firework event emphasised the desire and need for the youth sector to respond dynamically to societal changes by introducing new approaches, along the lines of the following example from France:

"We implemented a vast national consultation on youth that resulted in a green paper where the question of young people's access to employment was a central issue. Based on that, the French ministry launched several actions: for example, a fund for innovative actions directed at youth was created, serving as a kind of laboratory for public policies. Another example was a civil voluntary service for 16-25 year olds to enable them to get involved in community projects and gain new competences for better employability."

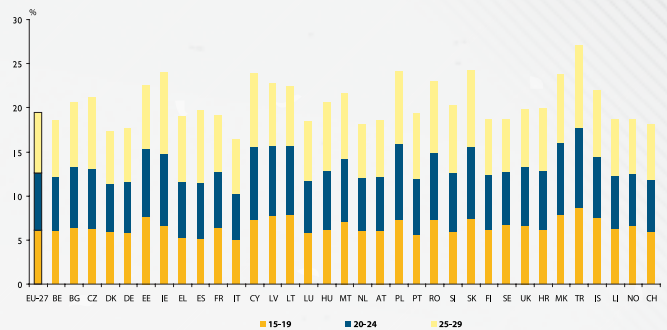
Yann Dyèvre, head of the youth department in the Ministry for Youth in France

Concern was expressed, however, about the lack of coherence between political ambitions and budgetary allocations to the youth field. At a time when expectations are rising, the youth field has been hamstrung by significant budgetary cuts at different levels in many European countries.

Given the new ambitions in terms of policy, it is clear that the corresponding financial implications will need to be addressed.

DISTRIBUTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AS A SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (15-29), 01/01/2007 (%)

Source: "Youth in Europe: a statistical portrait", Eurostat 2009, pag 21



SIGNPOSTS FOR THE FUTURE?

"To illustrate Youth In Action as an instrument to implement the revised European youth policy, I could use an old Estonian proverb which translates as 'Don't spit in the old well until you have built a new one'. I think this old saying fits the current situation well, since we are in the middle of the programme and investigating its benefits for society and young people in particular. For sure, there are quite a lot of outcomes that fit the new youth policy framework perfectly. There is obviously still a lot to do and strategies will need to be built to make full use of the programme's potential and take it even further."

Reet Kost, director of the Estonian National Agency

In conclusion, there is clearly still a lot of room for improvement in the European youth field in order to bring change to the areas where it is most needed. While some tools to do so already exist both in the framework of Youth In Action programme – which was the main focus of the Firework event – and beyond, hopefully we will also see the launch of some new support mechanisms, especially in the areas of innovation and new ambitions.

So, in a nutshell, we need to devote time and energy to answering the question we asked at the outset - where indeed are you headed, youth field? And how are you planning to get there? We hope that you have found some inspiration from the ideas generated by the SALTO-YOUTH Firework event and wish you good luck in finding your own role in all that! ■

⁵ Presentation by Miriam Teuma (Malta University, Department of Youth and Community Studies) in SALTO-YOUTH Firework conference.





DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

NO MORE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT!

Tony Geudens, Coordinator SALTO Inclusion & Bridges to Work, bridges@salto-youth.net

The current economic crisis hits young people hard, especially young people with fewer opportunities. That is why the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre took action and dedicated three years of its work to improving young people's chances on the job market. You are invited to join our efforts and use the practical resources we have developed or participate in the Bridges to Work conference in October 2011. Because (only) together we can make a difference!

SOME HARD FACTS

- The youth unemployment rate (amongst 15-24 year olds) in the EU is approximately three times higher than the unemployment rate in the older adult population.
- About one third of unemployed young people are long term unemployed (more than one year) and at risk of social exclusion.

This is indeed 'hard' for many young people, especially those that already are at a disadvantage compared to their peers, e.g. because of educational level, ethnic origin, disability, social issues, ...

A 3 YEAR STRATEGY TO COMBAT UNEMPLOYMENT



Concrete action is needed to counter this negative spiral of unemployment and exclusion. That is why SALTO Inclusion decided to combat youth unemployment, particularly amongst groups already prone to exclusion. For three consecutive years (2009-2011), SALTO Inclusion set up different activities to improve employment chances of young people with fewer opportunities.

www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/
[InclusionUnemploymentStrategy/](#)

The SALTO Inclusion **strategy combating youth unemployment** focuses on three objectives:

- 1 - Gain a better understanding of the factors leading to unemployment
- 2 - Use the Youth in Action programme to raise young people's employability
- 3 - Develop resources and tools for others to help combat unemployment

WHAT WORKS WHEN ADDRESSING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT?

Youth organisations all over Europe have carried out great projects to give young people better chances on the labour market. The problem is that other youth organisations are hardly aware of the results of these activities. SALTO Inclusion thus decided to hire a researcher to make an **inventory** of the types of employment projects that exist across Europe. Experts from different employment initiatives were invited to a round table meeting to share their experiences (October 2010).

Based on a wide variety of employment projects from the youth work field, the researcher analysed which underlying approaches were effective and which were not. This led to a better understanding of

the success factors of such employment initiatives.

Let yourself be inspired by the results of the study, available in the SALTO publication 'Inclusion through employability: youth work approaches to unemployment'.
www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/
[InclusionThroughEmployability/](#)

The **success factors of employment projects** from the study are:

- Involvement of young people in the design of the actions
- Holistic long-term approach across different sectors of life
- Tailor-made non-formal learning methods
- Development of entrepreneurship skills



HOW TO USE THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR EMPLOYMENT?



You can use the European Youth in Action programme to help young people find their way to a (better) job. Youth in Action is the framework in which SALTO Inclusion supports European priorities such as youth employment. SALTO Inclusion has therefore trained youth workers and National Agencies to use Youth in Action opportunities to create better employment perspectives for unemployed youth:

- TC Employment** (June 2009) - a training course on how Youth in Action projects can be used as a tool to improve the access of young people with fewer opportunities to the job market
- Youthpass & Inclusion Seminar** (May 2009) - a reflection seminar on the use of Youthpass to recognise the skills of young people with fewer opportunities gained in Youth in Action
- Inclusion Colleague Support Groups** (2009-2011) – working meetings for inclusion officers of YIA National Agencies about youth unemployment and cooperating with employment agencies

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR YOUR EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS

You can make use of the tools developed by SALTO Inclusion for your own work-related projects. SALTO Inclusion does not just organise a training course for 25 participants. It systematically extracts all the contents of such a course and turns it into an educational manual, which you can freely download or order. That way the training reaches many more youth workers, in electronic or paper format.

Download the following **practical publications** to inspire your youth work from: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForAll/



Working on Work (2009) - ideas and approaches to use Youth in Action projects to get young people with fewer opportunities onto the labour market



Youthpass for ALL (2009) - tips and tricks to implement Youthpass and competence based youth work to develop and recognise the skills of young people with fewer opportunities



Inclusion through Employability (2010) - results of the research into the success factors of youth projects combating youth unemployment

Good Practice Examples of Employment Projects (2010) - a collection of project formats and methods that worked particularly well: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionGoodPractice/

Inclusion Colleague Support Groups (2009-2011) - inspiration for YIA National Agencies on employment and inclusion related topics: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionGroupReports/

CONNECTING TO OTHER EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

SALTO Inclusion is not the only organisation working on employment. There are many other work-related projects in Europe, from YIA National Agencies, youth organisations and social institutions. Where possible, SALTO Inclusion cooperates with these initiatives or contributes its expertise.

From 18-20 October 2011, SALTO Inclusion will bring together representatives and the expertise of all these employability projects in a large scale European conference entitled **Bridges to Work.** ■ www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/BridgesToWork/

By Tony Geudens
Coordinator SALTO Inclusion & Bridges to Work
bridges@salto-youth.net



DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

VOLUNTEERING AS A STEP TOWARDS EMPLOYABILITY

Gilles Baccala (Training and Cooperation Plan Officer / AFPEJA www.jeunesseenaction.fr), on behalf of the French National Agency and the Spanish National Agency (www.juventudenaccion.injuve.es)



The National Agencies of France and Spain for the Youth in Action programme jointly organised the seminar **Volunteering: a step for employability** from 3rd to 7th November 2010, in the Euro-Latin American youth centre (CEULA) in Molina (Spain), in cooperation with the SALTO Youth Resource Centre for Euromed cooperation (hosted by the French National Agency).

This seminar was dedicated to Spanish, French and Mediterranean participants and was organised to create a real opportunity for European and Mediterranean volunteering organisations to share their experiences and discuss the role of youth in both society and the economic world and to build reliable partnerships.

The programme for this three-day seminar was designed to allow the twenty five participants (eight from France, eight from Spain and nine from Mediterranean partner countries - Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan) to both provide information on the situation of young people in France, Spain and Mediterranean partner countries and also to exchange, share and create sustainable partnerships.

Given the theme of the seminar, priority was given to bringing together a wide variety of participants working with different target groups. Most were paid professional or volunteer youth workers or representatives of youth organisations, while the French delegation included representatives of the State administration in charge of Youth at regional level, representatives from a local authority, including an elected member of a Municipal Council in charge of Youth issues in her town. The Spanish delegation included a free-lance consultant working for a local authority and a partner of the French local authority in a transnational project involving young people.

Several participants from France and Spain were more specifically involved with young people with fewer opportunities (for example, representatives of the "Union Romani",

an organisation working with the Roma community in Andalusia, and "Eurocircle", an organisation based in Marseille and working mainly with young people from deprived urban areas in the Provence region).

The seminar was opened by Ana Martinez, Deputy Director of Injuve, and Gilles Baccala, training and cooperation officer for the French National Agency. They both stressed the importance given to youth employability in the Youth in action programme, especially during "2011, European year of volunteering".

They also emphasised that this topic should be at the core of cooperation between Europe and the Southern Bank of Mediterranean Sea, since all these countries are currently confronting an unacceptable rate of unemployment among young people aged between 15-30, whatever their level of education or qualifications.

Interestingly, this seminar took place just a few weeks before the beginning of the "Jasmine Revolution" in Tunisia ...

They invited the participants to explore, based on their experience and practices as youth workers, what involvement as a volunteer in their local community or abroad can bring to young people in terms of improved employability and to see how such involvement can be encouraged and organised by youth workers and recognised by policy makers – and more generally by society, employers, families - as an efficient way of advancing youth employability.

The questions of the identification and recognition of the competences gained by volunteers through their involvement and activities were seen as priorities.

As with every seminar organised within the framework of the YiA training and cooperation plan by National Agencies, the programme was divided between inputs from experts in plenary sessions, workshops in smaller groups to share participant practices and experiences, followed by a debriefing of workshops in plenary sessions: it also included some opportunities for

sharing in the form of general sessions such as the "organisation market".

To be recognised as a key player in the field of youth employment and employability, youth work has to demonstrate its relevance and efficiency: in other words, to establish an "evidence-based" youth policy, to use the term employed by the European Commission for several years now in all the official political documents about youth issues.

Such evidence will come from a better knowledge of youth, through the work of youth researchers, evaluation of youth policies at national and European level, studies, surveys, reports...

With this objective in mind, three experts from the different region or countries concerned presented facts, relevant statistics and some theoretical inputs on youth and employability:

- Taoufik Louzari (Moroccan expert) talked about the «Youth situation in Morocco»
- Angelica Trindade-Chadeau (youth specialist from the French National Institute for Youth and Community Education (INJEP) presented a paper entitled «Youth and employment in France»
- Almudena Moreno Minguez (Universidad de Valladolid) spoke on «The values of non-formal education and volunteering in the transition of youth to the labour market in Spain»

Salto-Youth EuroMed representatives provided additional information:

- Bernard Abrignani spoke on «Youth in Europe»
- Federica Demicheli (on behalf of Asuman Goksel) presented a paper entitled «Volunteering in EuroMed»

and Gilles Baccala from the French National Agency, as the Youthpass contact person of the NA and member of the European Advisory Group for Youthpass, gave an input on the European policy for recognition of non-formal learning in the youth field.

All these presentations can be downloaded from the webpage of Euromed SALTO Youth Resource Centre:

<http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/tceuromed/tceuromed2010/tceuromed2010TC/emsveemploymentrp/>

They provided a wealth of facts and elements of reflection for the participants and their main outcomes can be summarised as follows:

A COMPLEX SITUATION

Young people in all the countries represented are facing an extremely complex socio-economic context (globalisation, fast changes, flexibility, and cycles of crisis...) for which most of them are ill prepared.

The context of education and training is also changing from the old paradigm of an accumulation of knowledge – the basis of the formal education system - , to a new one of acquisition of competences and skills, within the framework of a "lifelong education", in which non-formal and informal learning can and must play a significant role.

DEFINING VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering can be defined as the involvement of citizens in non-profit activities, on a voluntary basis, leading to a benefit not only for the volunteer him/herself and his/her family, but also for a more or less larger community, at local, regional, national or international level; the

main impact and benefit of this involvement for the volunteer him/herself is to gain new skills and competences through learning by doing, learning from others (peer learning), becoming aware of his/her own learning style...

On the other hand, one of the main characteristics of non-formal learning is that it is also functions on a voluntary basis, particularly with regard to the choice of learning objectives, its programme and educational methods.

Other characteristics are also shared: active participation, learning from the others, self-evaluation of the results...

Consequently, volunteering can be considered as one of the main activities in non formal learning that a young person can include in his/her "life long learning process".

THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

We also need to identify what volunteering, as a non formal learning activity, can bring in terms of employability for young people: one of the experts proposed an interesting "mapping" of what volunteering offers : team work, communication skills, confidence and self-esteem building, proof of motivation, acquisition of specific skills depending on the nature of the activity...

These skills can be very concrete, practical or technical, or more abstract, such as planning, time or budget management, respect of deadlines...

Anyone responsible for human resources in any company will recognise all the qualities he/she is looking for when recruiting from this shortlist... and all job seekers, even with a high level degree, know that having these skills and attitudes is the most difficult thing to prove to an employer during a job interview...

SOCIAL RECOGNITION...

The most challenging aspect of our theme of "volunteering, a step for employability" is the recognition of the skills and attitudes acquired by volunteers through their activities: in other words, how to identify them and to find the words to positively describe things which can be experiences, feelings, expectations or fears... this process being mainly a self-evaluation by the volunteer him/herself, sometimes with the help and the feedback of a peer, a youth leader or a person with responsibilities in a youth organisation.

This process is not simple and needs social recognition: in recent years, various actors in the youth field have created tools and methods to follow the learning process and evaluate its results and outcomes for their participants, members and volunteers. Most of these tools have been created at national level or by youth organisations exclusively for the use of their members, with the consequent proliferation of different initiatives, a lack of visibility of each tool... and a lack of transparency at international level since there is no common framework.

... AT EUROPEAN LEVEL?

Following an experiment during the final years of the previous Youth programme (in 2005/2006), the decision was made to implement Youthpass, a strategy for the recognition of the competences acquired by participants in the different activities of this programme (youth exchanges, youth initiatives, European voluntary service, training courses for youth workers and leaders), when the European Commission launched the new Youth in Action 2007/2013 programme.





DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

VOLUNTEERING AS A STEP TOWARDS EMPLOYABILITY //////////////////////////////////////

This strategy was based on the implementation of a follow-up of the learning process for participants, both individually and collectively, and a self-evaluation of competences gained in dialogue with peers (other participants of a youth exchange), with the coach for a youth initiative, with their mentor for EVS volunteers or with trainers during a training course.

The European dimension of Youthpass as a tool for the recognition of non formal learning outcomes is the use of a common framework proposed by European Commission and adopted in 2005 by European Parliament and European Council.

It is called the 8 Key competences for lifelong learning in the knowledge society and consists of:

- a common definition of what a competence is i.e. a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes,
- a common framework of 8 key competences: communication in mother tongue, communication in foreign language(s), mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competence, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression.

At the end of the project, each participant is individually entitled to receive - if he/she asks for it - a Youthpass certificate that consists of two parts: the first is a description of the promoters of the activity, its main objectives and its programme, while the second is a self-evaluation by the participant of the competences the participant thinks that he/she has gained during this non formal learning activity, based on the 8 competences framework described above.

The organisation hosting the activity and receiving the European co-funding is responsible for the implementation of this process and for the edition of a printed

INFORMATION, COACHING AND GUIDANCE

These are the three main complementary areas of work that a local, national or international network of partners in the Youth work must implement in order to develop volunteering as a step towards greater employability:

■ *information*, to convince both young people and potential employers that volunteering can provide a wide scope of knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are the elements of the key competences we all need to enhance our employability; part of this information is the promotion of the existing tools of recognition of these competences, such as the European Youthpass certificate and the European framework for the 8 key competences for lifelong learning

■ *coaching* of the volunteers to make them aware of how they learn: convincing them that volunteering or mobility are in themselves both a learning process and a social competence, helping them to define their learning objectives, to understand their learning styles, to assess their learning outcomes, to use the existing tools. This role can be filled by any person holding a position of responsibility in any organisation (Youth NGO or NGO working in another field but dealing with young volunteers, the youth service of a local or regional authority, State civil

servant or other staff) as soon as he/she works with young volunteers (as youth leaders or workers, mentors for volunteers, facilitators of training courses or seminars...). However, coaching or mentorship requires specific skills and attitudes, and mentors or coaches have to be trained to play this role properly. The Action 4.3 of Youth in action programme is a possibility to co-fund such training courses, run either by organisations or by the National Agencies of the programme themselves as part of their training and cooperation plan

■ *guidance* of volunteers towards the further enhancement of their achievements, mainly through the use of existing tools for the recognition of their acquired competences. This guidance can be, for example, to help a volunteer prepare a "portfolio" of the different certificates or attestations he has received for his volunteer activities. National networks of volunteer organisations can also set up, at a larger scale, agreements with employer organisations for an "automatic" recognition of the outcomes of their involvement. This guidance is not limited to advice on finding a job, it can also cover finding a further formal training: for example, one of the French organisations represented

in the seminar signed an agreement with several French universities, so that the students volunteering in this organisation could receive ECTS credits (European credit transfer system) for their achievements as volunteers, which will count towards their degree. In France also, the experience as volunteer can be part of the process of "validation of the acquired experience" (VAE) for a diploma or a vocational training certificate.

From the wealth of experiences and practices presented by the participants, complemented by the inputs of the guest experts and facilitators, this seminar clearly proved that, among all the characteristics that the European year of volunteering wants to promote, what volunteering offers young people is a means of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes, through a wide range of non formal learning activities, which can be considered as a valuable asset with regard to employability. As a multinational and multicultural seminar organised at Euromed youth cooperation level, the seminar also showed that intercultural learning and educational mobility in programmes such as Youth in action, is definitively a "plus" in this field, both North and South of the Mediterranean sea.

certificate, via a website which is also a data base. Each certificate edited has an identification number to guarantee the authenticity of the document.

In this way, the individual Youthpass certificate is both a proof of participation and a recognition of acquired competences, through a European framework, with the hosting organisation of the non formal activity adding its signature, logo and stamp to the logo of European Youth in action Programme. It is also an official recognition of the educational role of a specific youth organisation or a youth service of a local authority.

SHARING EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES

As explained above, the programme of the seminar provided participating organisations with a space to share their experiences and practices, which was called the «Youth organisations market» and the «Good practices» workshop.

From these two sessions, it was possible to draw a few conclusions with regard to the experiences and practices shared by the participants:

■ "youth" is not unique and is in fact represented by a wide scope of different target groups with their specificities (age, social and economic, geographical, cultural, educational backgrounds...) and their different needs, which in turn means that working with young people requires the networking and coordination of different partners organisations, at all levels (local, regional, national and international), a youth policy run by relevant decision makers and involving the young people themselves actively,

■ this is particularly true for the topic of our seminar: to order to be aware that volunteering for an organisation in a useful activity for the benefit of a community, can lead to the acquisition of competences and foster his/her employability, a young person needs to be informed, and sometimes to receive individual coaching and guidance.

NETWORKING

The 25 participants from 22 different organisations taking part in this seminar were a perfect illustration of the necessity



for a wide variety of actors in the youth work: volunteers themselves or paid staff, representing organisations of third level education students or social workers dealing with different target groups of young people with fewer opportunities, representatives of a cultural minority, State civil servants applying and monitoring youth policy in a region, a freelance consultant for a local authority, an elected member of a Municipal Council...

They all agreed on the necessity of networks of partners working with the same objectives and strategy, while each enriches the collaboration with their specific approach, practice and methods: information, guidance, follow-up of learning, assessment of competences, coaching for job seekers, preparation for job interviews, sometimes more social follow-up about housing, health, budget management, private life...

These networks can be organised to develop a youth policy that promotes volunteering at local or regional level, which is the best way to reconcile the needs of both the young person (finding a job) and potential employers (finding the right person for the job on offer). wFor this reason, these local networks must also involve employers in order to convince them of the added value of volunteering in terms of the employability of young people.

Some theme-based networks can also be set up at national level, in order to develop specific sorts of volunteering: for example,

student volunteers to fight illiteracy, to help with school homework; any other social work; volunteering in the field of civil protection, emergency rescues, fire brigade, or in the field of protection of nature and environment...

Finally, if we want to combine the added value of volunteering with the benefits of international mobility, within the framework of programmes such as Youth in Action or in the field of international solidarity, cooperation in development or relief work, the building of strong networks of partners organisations sharing the same objectives, methods, work and management processes, and also the same values or ideas to encourage trust between the partners, is a vital necessity. ■





DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

YOUTH AND VOLUNTEERING IN SPAIN FROM A COMPARATIVE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Professor Almudena Moreno Mínguez / Valladolid University Sociology Department. Spain
almudena@soc.uva.es

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH YOUNG SPANISH PEOPLE LIVE

A young adult's transitional path is currently characterised by the reversibility and non-linearity of the training and work programmes that have traditionally been seen as the track to follow. Age is no longer a visible differentiator, but rather it is the fragmented condition of the young adult that defines them as a young person. In fact, the transition processes are heterogeneous and characterised by discontinuities and fractures (Machado, 2007). Jones (1995) has likened the concept of «transition» to «life course». Therefore «transitions» can be understood to be a long term process, reversible and non-linear. Transition is distinguished by the fragmentation of their life plans and by the importance of individual action in the new fluid and fragmented social structures. The question is how can young adults make the decisions which will direct and author their own personal biography in a social and economic environment that influences and affects their decision-making? Sociological thinking in regard to young people has returned to the «yo-yo»¹ metaphor in order to provide an answer to this question.

According to various investigators, young adults respond to ever more fluid, heterogeneous and insecure social structures with strategies defined by increasing fluctuations, discontinuities and reversible «yo-yo»-like toing and froing trajectories. For example, they leave the family home only to return at a later date following a divorce, relationship break-up or career difficulty. Qualifications are increasingly seen as worthless, which leads them to abandon their studies only to return to them at a later point in time. The job-market is uncertain, insecure and subject to numerous fluctuations. They are, therefore, aware that finding and losing a job is all part of the same game.

Additionally, the transition from education to the job market is much more complex than before. Job insecurity amongst young men and women is manifest in the difficulty they encounter entering the job market. This has forced many youths to develop very different strategies to the traditional rites of passage to adult life. The traditional pattern of finding a job for life in a workshop or company

after vocational studies or university is being replaced by a work biography understood to be a continual process of changing jobs and employment recycling. «Job flexibility» increases competition and geographical mobility amongst young men and women, but it makes economic independence much harder, limits the possibility of carrying out long-term projects and generates a type of emotional instability. This leads to the emotional and economic situation that distinguishes the so-called «milleuristas». These are qualified young adults who earn around one thousand euros per month and are supposed to consider themselves fortunate in spite of not being able to progress any further. In this insecure and changeable situation, voluntary work becomes an opportunity for training and enhancing a young person's employability

VOLUNTEERING, INFORMAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY

Volunteerism is defined by three characteristics: it is a non-profit activity carried out voluntarily and for the benefit of someone other than the volunteer or his/her family. It is also generally accepted that volunteering is a type of civic participation for a young person which can improve the democratic process. Additionally, civic participation as a volunteer will improve and update a young person's abilities and skills. It will contribute to their personal development by boosting their education and professional experience.

According to McCloughan (2010 et al.) the importance of volunteering to contributing to inclusive growth – one of the key objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy – means that reliable information at European level is needed. In order to find adequate policy responses to the challenges Member States are facing – demographic change, the sustainability of public services and globalisation, among others – a better understanding is required of the role of volunteering within the context of the welfare regimes applied in the individual countries, and the relationship of volunteering to public services.

Many studies have shown that volunteering is a powerful, informal education educational tool which enhances employability by

promoting the acquisition of skills and abilities in a young person. In the context of increasing social changes, formal education is in many cases questioned and even supplemented by an approach known as continuous education throughout life. This is when informal education becomes more relevant. In fact, skills and abilities are being substituted for knowledge that can be described as accumulated or acquired by rote. As Bauman (2007) indicated, education has been diluted and is regarded as a tool to be used at a given moment in time and not necessarily as an accumulative knowledge tool. Its usefulness depends on whether that form of education has the capacity to transform itself to provide individual training in skills to resolve current problems. In short, the purpose of education is to give young people the tools, skills and abilities to adequately manage the huge amount of information available. They can then transform this information into useful policies for their life and own society.

In this educational and social context, volunteering is not only of educational value but also of economic value when it comes to the employability of young people during a period of economic crisis.

Volunteering as a good social policy provides the opportunity to develop collaborative, communication strategies that strengthen the capacity to work in teams, something which is in high demand amongst employers.



¹The «yo-yo» path is a concept created by the EGRIS investigation group in 1999 to refer to the endless «toing and froing» of young men and women in the transition to adulthood.

As an additional benefit to their professional career it also increases employee motivation and provides work experience. We must not forget that non-profit volunteering as a collaborative policy promotes the development of skills and abilities related to conflict resolution, develops self-confidence, enables self-management, develops positive attitudes and encourages team work. All the above make it a powerful training and career tool.

VOLUNTEERING IN SPAIN FROM A COMPARATIVE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Data from both Eurostat's Standard Eurobarometer 2010 and Eurofound's European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS, 2007) cast more light on the phenomenon of volunteering. Results from the 2010 Eurobarometer indicate that, altogether, about three in ten adults are involved in volunteering (which equates to 100 million Europeans).

The GHK (2010) study delineates the extent of volunteering among Member States using a five-point scale as follows:

- Very high in Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK with over 40% of adults involved in voluntary activities
- High in Denmark, Finland, Germany and Luxembourg where 30%–39% of adults volunteer
- Medium high in Estonia, France and Latvia where 20%–29% of adults are engaged in voluntary activities
- Relatively low in Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia and Spain where 10%–19% of adults carry out voluntary activities
- Low in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Lithuania where less than 10% of adults are involved in voluntary activities.

The Youth Report of 2008 carried out by the Spanish Youth Institute (INJUVE) interviewed a sample of 2000 young people between 15 and 29 years of age. According to the report, only 10% of those interviewed said that they were currently collaborating with a volunteering body; 72% had never collaborated and 18% had volunteered in the past although they were not currently doing so. The profile of the young volunteer in

Spain is as follows: 49% of young volunteers are male and 61.5% are female. It is an activity practised mainly amongst those over 25 years of age. Out of the young people interviewed, 46% said that they do not volunteer due to a lack of time; 27% because they had never been asked; 8% because no organization had asked them, and 8% out of convenience. Some 39% of volunteers participate in charitable actions in their own surroundings, 34% help out occasionally and 10% collaborate as volunteers within an organisation.

However, as we have seen, volunteering is an emerging reality in Spain and the general consensus is that it is beneficial to promote it and for it to continue. Around 44% of young people believe that volunteers should receive some kind of compensation for their efforts. In some cases this is because they themselves are volunteering, others because they have previously volunteered and almost all because they know someone who volunteers. In fact, more than 40% of young people say that they themselves, people close to them and friends or family members act as volunteers. The majority have direct or indirect knowledge of these organisations and their members.

To sum up this section, it should be noted that according to this information, there is strong support for solidarity amongst Spanish youth and a positive attitude towards volunteering. However, the overwhelming opinion is that State Administration should assume the role of caring for social needs. Additionally, there is not a very high direct or personal involvement on behalf of young people in terms of assistance or cooperation related work experience.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis shows that the extent of volunteering differs widely across the Member States (McCloughan, 2010; Moreno Mínguez, 2006). Welfare states and social policies have had a key role in promoting volunteering amongst youths as a social practice which develops educational and professional skills that enhance a young person's employability. Northern European countries have advocated the development of social policies to promote the rights of social citizenship. This strategy has focused

on and encouraged volunteering as a social policy. In other countries in southern Europe, such as Spain, poorly developed welfare state structures together with other historical and cultural factors have restricted the development and growth of volunteering as a good social policy.

It should be emphasised that initiatives such as the 2009 publication by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) of European guidelines (Cedefop, 2009) on the validity of non-formal and informal learning is an important first step in terms of the highlighting the development of educational and job skills that the practice of voluntary work can provide in countries like Spain, where volunteering has a limited tradition and repercussion. ■

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DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT IN FRANCE

Angélica Trindade-Chadeau, Chargée d'études et de recherche Insertion professionnelle des jeunes, Directrice des Cahiers de l'action, Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Populaire INJEP, www.injep.fr



Can you tell me where the jobs are?" is one of the questions parents most frequently ask

career counsellors when discussing the future of their children. The youth unemployment rate is 24%, but one should take into account that if the French youth activity rate seems low (10%), it is mainly because most young people between the ages of 16 and 25 are students.

The most recent official document framing public policy with respect to French youth is a Livre vert published in July 2009 and the fact that its main theme is the interplay between "education and employment" is not really a surprise. In a country where only 37.8% of individuals aged 16-25 are employed, the employability of French youth is an overriding concern. 66% of active young people who come from underprivileged areas have no qualifications and only 24% of them are employed. What are the reasons?

FRENCH PECULIARITIES

Admittedly, France is the country of "diplomania". Getting the best degree, the one that will pave the way to a good job is the main concern for both parents and young people themselves. As a result, the first diploma earned is accorded a determining role, almost as if, once obtained, a diploma were a life investment with no way back. Underpinning this phenomenon is the drive for social integration, which is conditioned by strong parent pressure. This explains why the French system is described as "elitist and non-egalitarian": universities and "grandes écoles" coexist, although the latter are only open to an intellectual elite. The crucial importance of academic qualifications is an essential element to take into account in order to understand what a job search is like for a young French person. It is at the origin of the increasing school inequalities that have a negative impact on youth morale.

However; nowadays, although qualifications still condition access to employment, they do not guarantee it any more. It is nevertheless best to have several diplomas, and high level ones too, rather than not have any. The CEREQ still considers that it takes 3 years after graduation to find a stable job.

For a long time, research posited a longer youth to explain, at least in part, a later entry into the job market. Today the most defended thesis views professional integration as a process, the beginning and end of which can no longer be determined with precision. An individual's path is no longer linear; young people alternate periods of training, employment, and unemployment.

Professional transition (=access to jobs after university/school training ?-> "transition from studies to employment" OR "youth access to employment")

Two main elements must be taken into account during that transition: academic qualifications and the structure of the internal job market (the idea of a single employer for a whole life). However, the 1990s and 2000s have been characterised by a crisis in these markets, which led to increased mobility of candidates and workers. Young people's access to work life has become increasingly institutionalised, with up to 80 youth employment subvention programmes in the last 35 years, as underlined by socio-economist Florence Lefresne. Although 25% of the jobs held by young people are state-funded, the work policies deployed in the last 35 years cannot be considered successful. Among them, the 1982 creation of a national network of local employment bureaus was an important innovation. This network is composed of local agencies called « missions locales », which offer social as well as professional assistance, using a comprehensive approach to young people (employment, health, leisure, housing).

In a nutshell, the impact of work policies since their creation has been very limited. They have not reduced the initial inequalities in terms of qualifications or socio-economic level and the youth unemployment rate is still higher than that of adults. This phenomenon sums up their place on the job market. Temporary jobs are the main source of work for French youth, as well as the reason why their unemployment rate is so high. Young people account for half of the temporary positions. In this fragile context, the current youth employment policies most often focus on the notion of autonomy.

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO GAIN AUTONOMY

French sociology equates becoming an adult with the notion of autonomy. The proliferation of incentives and actors to help young individuals better enter and integrate themselves in the professional world was a characteristic of the 1980s. Progressively, corresponding measures were developed for the various stages of the individual's path. Career preparation, however, still kicks in rather late, generally at a time when young people have already had their first professional experience (a summer job for instance). Some of them have experience in associations in their home communities.

Although policy makers agree that this type of involvement is a very valuable asset in honing professional and non formal skills, a lot remains to be done for the recognition of other experiences by the job market.

Hopefully, the law of 10 March 2010 pertaining to civic service will contribute to finally changing attitudes in the country of qualifications. ■

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DOSSIER: VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

YOUTHPASS AND VOLUNTEERS' EMPLOYABILITY FREQUENTLY DISCUSSED QUESTIONS

Kristiina Pernits & Mark Taylor



Kristiina works in the SALTO T&C in Bonn and is now responsible for Youthpass developments having previously worked at the Estonian National Agency. Mark is a freelance trainer and writer who has assisted in the elaboration of training strategies as a member of both the Youthpass advisory and trainers groups since the beginning. This article has been written via e-mail as a kind of mutual interview which we hope brings an interesting dynamic to the content!



Mark: We are asked to talk about how Youthpass can affect volunteers' employability. I was

thinking about jumping straight in with both feet and emphasising that we like to look at "the whole thing". In our work as trainers for Youthpass we stress very much that Youthpass is as much a process as a final product. Like here in a course where we ask people to show stages of volunteer «life» when Youthpass is part of the action from the beginning to the end:

What is your impression from SALTO about what this looks like in practice?

Kristiina: *Indeed, it is an inherent part of the Youthpass concept that it is necessary to go through the Youthpass process – for the volunteer to consider what they want to learn and what the learning outcomes have been during the activity – in order to come to a quality certificate at the end of the service. If the learning is not planned, followed, understood and documented, a lot of it may go unnoticed or be forgotten by the time the Youthpass certificate is being prepared. In practice, the Youthpass process is supported by the cycle of EVS training courses and discussions with the mentor. The training cycle, with the timing of its activities, provides a good framework for the Youthpass process in the different phases of the EVS project.*

Mark: What do you think that volunteers get out of going through the process?

Kristiina: *It is clear that in addition to leading to the contents of the certificate, the Youthpass process has its own intrinsic value for those*

going through it. The volunteers become more aware of learning as such in the different contexts, of themselves as learners, they know more about their competences and have got an experience of describing them to the 'outside world'. It is exactly this that will in the long run enhance the employability of the volunteers – their increased confidence and skills in describing their qualities to the potential employer.

What is your view, what are the different ways that mentors and project promoters can support the employability of the young people?

Mark: *I think they have two main ways: first to support this process of increasing self confidence and, second, to challenge their self-descriptions in a friendly way, giving the young people a safe chance to "defend" themselves!*

What about the balance of citizenship: employability? Are we getting too market-oriented here?

Kristiina: *It is important that youth work keeps in mind its natural limits when it comes to supporting the employability of young people. After all, there are several actors in the society who are specialised to that and youth work can only contribute with a small, albeit important part of the competence development. It is mostly the soft skills – team work, project planning, language and communication skills, work-related attitudes etc. – that youth work has a good potential to develop in a young person. It does so with or without the political priorities. It is mostly a question of how we make the contribution of youth field more visible and understandable to the important others.*

In your understanding, do youth workers need some specific further competences to support the volunteers' employability?

Mark: *First, of course, you have to get into some healthy arguments around the stereotypical youth worker's ideology which is "We are here to help liberate young people, to help facilitate their personal growth and active role in society - I am not involved in youth work to provide young robots for the capitalist machine". Personally I agree with that too! As to specific further competences, I suppose the most important would be to have at least some good counselling skills, so that young people get to find their own way into the labour market.*

What advice is given to volunteers and mentors to use the terminology of «key competences» in the certificate?

Kristiina: *In the Youthpass certificate, the users are invited to categorise their new skills and knowledge according to the eight key competences of lifelong learning. This is the way that volunteers and mentors should regard the key competences – they are a framework for categorisation, to be used after the learning results have already been reflected on and identified. One should not consider them a basis for reflection and get stuck when one or the other competence is not really covered in the EVS experience – what is not filled in, will simply not appear on the certificate!*

Maybe you – as a Youthpass trainer – have some more concrete suggestions how to tackle key competences in the voluntary service as well as in the connected training events?

Mark: *tough question! One of the biggest challenges in using the whole key competences framework is that it uses fairly complicated language – in a way it has to because it tries to put so much human experience into a fairly small space. From experience over the last couple of years, my colleagues and I have come to the conclusion that concentrating on describing what has been learnt is the most important thing - then you take away the "fear" of the key competences; and they become a help not a hindrance!*

What is done to find out if employers take any notice or give any weight to Youthpass certificates? What is done from the Commission and/or NA's to promote the acceptance of Youthpass among employers?

Kristiina: *This is connected to a much more global question: what is the overall level of consideration of competences acquired in the youth work activities by employers? Can employers see an added value in these experiences? Employability is a prevalent priority in recent EU policies concerning young people and there are currently several initiatives being prepared and implemented that should contribute to the development of mutual understanding between the youth work and employment sectors. For example, in October 2011 there will be the 'Bridges to Work' event in Antwerp, Belgium, initiated by SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre and aiming to bring together youth work and employment actors for discussions on how to enhance the employability of young people.*

The connection to employment sector is one of the important elements that should enhance the recognition of non-formal learning, mentioned as such in the recent "Pathways paper". The Pathways 2.0, in its turn, is the basis for the work of the European Expert Group on the recognition of non-formal learning and youth work, and of the big symposium organised on the same topic in November 2011 in cooperation with the Partnership programme and SALTO Training and Cooperation. Youthpass as a European level recognition tool is a logical part of these initiatives.

Mark: Wow! That is quite a mouthful! But what about practically at the "coal face"?

Kristiina: Well, we have some concrete feedback about how Youthpass has been received. For example, there has been an impact analysis made in Turkey where it turned out that even though some of the employers may not take Youthpass directly account when choosing who to hire, it has given food for discussion during the interviews. That can definitely be considered as a positive impact of Youthpass and also of the Youthpass process. The young person needs to be able to put the learning experience into concepts understandable to the employer in order to promote the gained competences.

Mark: So, how many Youthpass certificates have been issued to volunteers up until now?

Kristiina: By the middle of March 2011, certificates have been created for about 10500 volunteers who have been active in more than 5300 projects, organised by almost 2400 organisations.

Mark: So there is a real pile of experience out there just begging to be researched! We still don't really know what volunteers use their Youthpass for! I have heard a few examples of ex-volunteers using them in a kind of portfolio of their competences and experience. Maybe that's one area that can be improved as time goes on.

What do you think will be the future of Youthpass and volunteering? What are the chances for example that young people outside the Youth in Action programme will be able to benefit?

Kristiina: Youthpass is a good practice when it comes to tools recognising outcomes of non-formal learning activities, and it has been

viewed by both the European Commission as well as project promoters as a source of inspiration for similar activities and tools outside the Youth in Action programme. This can be seen in all different levels – local, national and European. We have been contacted by a promoter of voluntary activities in Portugal about the possibility to adapt their recognition tool, following the example of Youthpass. The national developments on the quality of youth work in Estonia follow the idea of the process of individual recognition being the core of employability of young people. And, the European Commission considers Youthpass as a tool that can be extended to outside Youth in Action. In what form the latter will happen, is early to say. The question of other young people benefitting is not any more "whether", but rather, "how".

Would you like to add your vision here as a member of the Youthpass advisory group?

Mark: I am excited about going further... Right at the beginning of Youthpass I remember one of my colleagues saying something along the lines of "we can tell if it is really something valuable if people start to copy it". My feeling is we need some real, concrete, usable research about how Youthpass is used and abused before jumping into other areas! All we have at the moment is anecdotes: most of them are "nice" which is nice, but I want some hard proof that all this effort would be worthwhile! Then it will be great to make the process and certification available to a much wider public of volunteers! And then of course there could even be some great employability opportunities for trainers... :o))

Kristiina: well, we'll have to see about that! In any case, you are right, and Youthpass will undergo evaluation in 2011-2012.



Good luck to all who get into the Youthpass adventure! ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

If you would like more information about Youthpass, how to use it as volunteers, mentors, employers and organisations then the best place to start is the web site:

www.youthpass.eu.

There is also a range of publications for download, including «Youthpass in the EVS training cycle»





HIGHLIGHTS

“TOOLS FOR LEARNING”

The SALTO network's working group on quality in learning process

Report of the first meeting in Venice 20 November 2010, during the 5th Tool Fair, by Ermete Mariani



For several years now, SALTO EuroMed has been working on the TOOL BOX and co-organising the TOOL FAIR, on behalf of the SALTO Network, as part of its commitment to supporting National Agencies, improving the impact of the Youth in Action programme and also enhancing the European Training Strategy. Within this framework, SALTO EuroMed has identified the need to develop and implement a horizontal and consistent strategy that can mobilise all the network resources towards the common goal of improving quality in the learning process, as well as to better disseminate and exploit the results achieved by the programme so far.

SALTO EuroMed recently obtained the European Commission's approval for setting up and organising an *ad hoc* "Tools for Learning" working group, the overall objective of which is to help the network in creating, implementing and coordinating a horizontal and consistent strategy on educational tools.

The Working Group met for the first time in Venice 20 November 2010 during the Tool Fair, which was obviously the most appropriate venue and occasion for it, both logistically and symbolically.

Independent experts, trainers as well as representatives of SALTO network attended the meeting, namely:

- 1 - **Bernard Abrignani**, WG organizer (SALTO EuroMed, Co-ordinator)
- 2 - **Federica Demicheli**, WG coordinator (SALTO EuroMed, Project Officer)
- 3 - **Andriy Pavlovych**, (SALTO EECA – Eastern Europe and Caucasus, co-ordinator)
- 4 - **Jonathan Bowyer**, (freelance trainer and coach - The view from here)
- 5 - **Mark E. Taylor**, (freelance trainer and coach - Unique)
- 6 - **Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez** (freelance trainer and evaluator)
- 7 - **Ermete Mariani**, rapporteur (freelance trainer and DEOR)

The working group's composition and aims were officially presented to National Agencies in Venice on 21 November 2010 (second meeting with NAs), which showed an interest in it and committed themselves in sustaining its actions, albeit to different extents. ■

WORKING GROUP'S NAME, MISSION AND ROLE

After the presentation of the limits, potentialities and identified needs about educational tools, the Working Group agreed on its name, mission and role:

Name: "Working Group on Tools for Learning". The WG's main concern is to support the learning process in Youth in Action training sessions. At the same time, the group is convinced that the tools and skills already developed and tested in this programme could also be of more general interest for a wider debate about the learning process. Therefore, "Tools for Learning" has identified both the group's core activities and its main concern: facilitating learning through more effective educational tools.

Mission: improving the efficacy and transferability of already developed and tested educational tools, as well as creating the most favourable conditions in which the SALTO network and its trainers can continuously update their training skills and benefit from other experiences. Engaging in a wider and real debate about learning has been identified as a strategic tool for carrying out this mission, as the flow of ideas can only be kept advancing through real challenging and sharing of experiences.

Role: even though the working group is at the centre of several SALTO horizontal activities, its role will be exclusively consultative. The WG provides advice and proposes a strategy to better co-ordinate the Tool Box, the Tool Fair and the Educational Tools Newsletter; to ensure their potential is exploited to the maximum on behalf of the SALTO Network as a whole and, as a result, to make the European training strategy more effective.





HIGHLIGHTS

EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE, A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE!

Carmen Maria Ramos Espejo, Asociación REC, www.asociacionrec.org and Centro Creativo Joven, www.centrocreativojoven.org. Nouha Ben Salem, youth worker, AJMEC / Association des Jeunes Méditerranéens pour les Echanges Culturels, www.ajmec.org

The idea for the EVS project "Towards an active citizenship" came to a group of participants during the first phase of the LTTC "EVS as tool for active citizenship" seminar in May 2010 in the Balearic Islands.

We wanted to give disadvantaged persons the possibility to feel that they can be active citizens and we also wanted to make it an intercultural experience, by bringing a volunteer to the Tunisian bank of the Mediterranean sea.

"EVS-EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE AS TOOL FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP"

It is a LTTC – Long Term Training Course organised by SALTO YOUTH EUROMED RC with the support of French, Greek and Spanish National Agencies that started in the Balearic Islands in May 2010. We are now in the second phase, coaching about EVS projects and partnerships development, while the final evaluation seminar is planned for January 2012. Watch the video <http://vimeo.com/12481912>

The team of Centro Creativo Joven decided to take part in this process because we think that EVS is a great opportunity to promote a positive change in life, especially for young people with fewer opportunities, such as our volunteer.

It was his first trip outside Spain, so when he arrived in Sousse, Tunisia, he was first scared by the new context. He arrived there with a lot of stereotypes and was initially so astonished by everything he saw and heard that he didn't dare to speak! In time he became less dependent on his support person and more integrated into the hosting society. He learned how to trust and live with people he had never met before, even hosting a group of young Algerian break dancers in his apartment. He shared his bedroom, food, spare time, passions, and very good moments with them... without speaking the same language!

We have noticed that implementing such exchanges in Arab countries has the wider social and cultural impact of promoting intercultural exchanges. In less than one month all the village had got to know a

Spanish volunteer; every weekend we had new children and young people coming to the youth center to talk to this Spanish guy about olives from Granada, its culture, history, and also to taste his food! He also led activities together with the centre's animators.

This was a unique experience, as it was the first time that a young person with fewer opportunities had made an EVS in an Arabic country and we all learned a lot! First of all that to ensure a young person benefits fully from EVS, it is essential to assess the volunteer's needs honestly: technical and logistical (such as an appropriate car, flat or work place), health needs (hygiene and medical support), as well as educational and professional needs. These needs have to be taken fully into account while designing the project. We also understood how crucial the mentor's role is in accompanying a volunteer throughout a project like this, while a support person is sometimes needed to provide material help. Finally, this kind of project wouldn't be possible without a great trust between sending and hosting organisations, and we are particularly glad that this was also an opportunity to plan future collaboration projects.

We were also intrigued to discover that this project has had an unexpected wider social and cultural impact on all the people concerned, however indirectly involved...

"EVS offered me the chance to work with a wonderful team. We had really good times together and I've learned the importance of teamwork as well as how to effectively communicate ideas in a group while being willing to listen to criticism and other points of view." Student, 20 years old, Tunisian.

"The EVS project with the Spanish volunteer gave me the opportunity to learn things about Granada that I didn't know before. And I'm very happy to have met my new Spanish friend." Student, 18 years old, Tunisian.

"It is important to meet other young people, because we can learn from each other and improve ourselves... it was also a pleasure to participate in this event, and I hope that this is not the last time. We have many ambitions & hope to share them with people from other countries." Student, 19 years old, Algerian.

Finally, we would like to say SHUKRAN JAZILAN to the young people from the **Dar shabab in Kalaa Kebira, Tunisia**, the youth leaders from **AJMEC**, young people from **Les mysterieux crew from Tlemcen, Algeria** and the young people from **Centro Creativo Joven in Granada, Spain**, all of whom contributed to the success of the exchange before, during and after; and of course, thanks to the LTTC mentors and all the others who gave their precious help throughout the process. ■



HIGHLIGHTS

VOLUNTEERING FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION: SUPPORTING YOUNG ADULTS AS THEY PAVE THEIR WAY TO EMPLOYMENT

Inbal Shtivi, Coordinator Minorities of Israel, www.moi.org.il

Disabilities are often an obstacle to getting a job. The employment process for the disabled is extremely complicated not only because of architectural barriers, prejudices, fears and lack of knowledge on potential employers' side, but also because of the low self-esteem of people with disabilities and their tendency to self-identification with the disability itself.

Funded by several private donors and foundations and operated by Gvanim and Bat-Ami Associations, the Mishlavim program, www.gvanim.org/eng/Young-Adults/Mishlavim.htm focuses on increasing the employability of young adults with disabilities by providing them with unprecedented opportunities and frameworks to assess their own values and self-perceptions, while reflecting on and further developing the skills and capacities acquired during the program. Thanks to the close coordination and essential support of several governmental agencies and ministries, we are able to use the existing platform of a long-term National Service Program.

The three year mandatory military service (considered a first step towards adult life) is part of every young Israeli's route towards the future, allowing them to experience a different life and acquire useful working skills (team work, compliance with hierarchy etc.). This is not the case, however, for disabled youths as they are automatically discharged from this service and thus have fewer opportunities for such self-development. Usually, these young people have been beneficiaries of various local and national projects since childhood.

Innovative National Service initiatives, such as the one led by Gvanim and Bat-Ami associations, help them develop an identity that goes beyond their specific disability and re-connects them to society. This type of national service can be done in hospitals, nursery schools, special education institutions, local authorities, zoological parks and more.

«When it comes to young people with special needs, the link between volunteering and employability is stronger than even», says Ms. Orit Tal, head coordinator of Mishlamim, the post-service program at Mishlavim.

«The long-term voluntary program puts disabled volunteers in a completely different position, where they experience a powerful transition from beneficiary status to benefactor status.»

The program's target groups strive to overcome their self-perception as primarily disabled by building a «young identity», and by so doing prepare themselves for a more meaningful future.

The main focus of the program is education and employment. *«This is a first step towards self-recognition and the development of future plans,»* says Tal. *«Being a young adult is a period of exploration. Young people with no special needs usually use this time (ages 20-30) to examine their abilities, desires, points of view and those of others. They will often start studying and working, leave home and begin making their way to independent adulthood. For young people with special needs this is rarely the case.»* Mishlamim is an on-going program, working with approximately 50 young adults dealing with various difficulties, ranging from sensory, mental, intellectual or physical disabilities to complex learning disabilities. It is distinguished by its mentoring program and is specially designed with rigorous one-to-one mentorship given by professionals and regular group meetings. *«Parents come to us asking if we could just arrange a day job for their child but this is not what we do – we try to give them the fishing rod, and not the fish. We try to work with what they experienced during the volunteering period, think together about potential meanings and implications, and only then start to think where else it can be applied.»*

According to Tal, *«Success stories are abundant»*. Adi, a young woman with cognitive disabilities volunteered in a kindergarten and is currently working in a coffee shop: *«Volunteering helped me develop my self confidence. I realized I could do things and communicate.»*

Amichai, another participant, is working in a national NGO, helping other youths and children with disabilities: *«The program helped me develop my own independence. I call places myself and go to meetings on my own. Volunteering helped me believe in my own abilities, understand that I can do things, which was satisfying.»* ■



¹ In Israel, military service is mandatory for all citizens over 18, except for Arab minority communities, Ultra-Orthodox Jews and youths with special needs. Women do shorter service than men.



HIGHLIGHTS

NEW MEDIA IN OLD CITY / CAMERA, ACTION, REFLECTION

Magdalena Jakubowska, President Together Polska Foundation, www.togetherpolska.org
Co-ordinator of Let's Film Project and Youth Multimedia Center project in East Jerusalem

CAMERA

Everything started with the camera- plenty of them looking at the Old City of Jerusalem, watching the everyday life of Shadi, Aya, Abdallah but also Izabela, Krzysiek and Marcelina who came here on a youth exchange in January 2010. For 10 days of the project the camera was in their hands. It was the first time they were able to zoom in on the elements of Jerusalem reality they founded interesting, annoying or amusing. They understood, all of a sudden, that focusing on one point means eliminating others: the camera provides amazing possibilities to create reality!

ACTION

The Polish group was confused: it took them a couple of days to accommodate to Arabic food, language and understanding of time: non-verbal translation was needed! The creation of small Polish-Palestinian filming groups helped to orient both cultures while also zooming in on differences and similarities. Visiting families, walking to school together, crossing checkpoints and dancing at someone's sister's wedding – all that provided an opportunity to not only collect amazing footage but also to name new realities.



REFLECTION

By the end of the project, 3 documentary movies and one animation were in the box. Young people chose the topics for the short films themselves in small groups - many of them filmed small pieces of reality and described their concerns.

The project facilitators found themselves wondering if they were not "too political" but as the young Palestinians commented: our life IS political for the moment. Izabela from Poland started to wonder: "I have never thought about the rights I have in my country, what role the State plays in my life and who I am as a citizen..."

That "political" aspect was not the only one though. Izabela continued: "...and how close we are to Palestinians in terms of our ideas for our personal and professional futures". Producing a documentary provided young people with learning opportunities on several levels: digital skills visible in the operation of high-tech video and photo-camera as well as editing of collected footage; social and intercultural skills practised while working in an international team and finally entrepreneurship as the project started with their own idea that was put into action step-by-step. The successful results created a reason to celebrate with friends and families, giving new motivation to make future plans.

Back in Poland, Izabela started drawing courses, Yousef wants to continue his studies as camera-man in Jerusalem and Aya is thinking about publishing her short texts and doing some journalism. ■

POLISH-PALESTINIAN YOUTH EXCHANGE

Polish-Palestinian youth exchange initiated by Together Polska Foundation www.togetherpolska.org and Spafford Children's Center www.spafford-jerusalem.org took place in East Jerusalem in January 2010 thanks to a small grant from the Anna-Lindh Foundation. It provided the creative basis for the Spafford Youth Multimedia Center that offers computer and media courses for Palestinian youth.

The movies created by young people can be found on YouTube at: www.togetherpolska.org





HIGHLIGHTS

BRIDGES TO WORK / CONNECTING EMPLOYMENT STAKEHOLDERS AND INITIATIVES

By Tony Geudens, Coordinator SALTO Inclusion & Bridges to Work, bridges@salto-youth.net

Bridges to Work is a European conference aimed at bridging the worlds of youth work and the employment sector. The conference will give participants an update of the different employment initiatives in Europe and work on concrete steps forward. Join Bridges to Work to contribute to the employment chances of young people: from 18-20 October 2011 in Antwerp.

COMBINING EFFORTS FOR EMPLOYMENT



You probably already know of some employment projects for young people. So do we. But it is difficult to get an overview of all that is happening to help young people (with fewer opportunities) on the job market. Bridges to Work provides THE opportunity to exchange your expertise and **learn about employability projects** from the youth sector and beyond.

- A spider-rapporteur is currently visiting all kinds of job-related projects in Europe, to collect their approaches and recommendations.
- Representatives of different employment initiatives will be invited to Bridges to Work to present their good practices.

Contact SALTO Inclusion if you want to present yours: bridges@salto-youth.net

Together, new strategies will be forged and cooperation possibilities will be encouraged to improve or intensify the inclusion efforts towards (long-term) unemployed youth.

YOUTH WORK IS NOT AN ISLAND

Besides many other things, youth work (non-formal learning) undoubtedly contributes to young people's employability, through all the personal, social, civic and often also technical or organisational skills acquired in youth activities. Youth workers know this, but people outside our little youth island often don't.

That's why Bridges to Work wants to **build bridges between youth work and the employment sector**.

If we want to convince employers or job centres of the benefits of youth work and employ the young people that acquired their competences via our youth activities, we need to sit together around the table and figure out how to go about it. Bridges to Work aims to bring different employment stakeholders closer so that they understand each other's needs and strengths.

This is the way forward to reach a **win-win situation for all**. Youth work gets recognition, the young person gets a job, job vacancies are filled and society's employment situation improves.

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

This is an important phrase in working with inclusion groups. All too often decisions are made and projects are organised 'for' young people with fewer opportunities, or for unemployed young people in this case. Bridges to Work will be more participatory in its approach and will invite **unemployed young people** to participate in a parallel seminar – talking about the same issues, with more youth-friendly adapted methods.

At the end of the 3 day conference, the conclusions of both groups (institutional representatives and young people) will be compared and contrasted. This will be a reality check for both groups, to see how viable their proposals are.

LIKE TO JOIN THIS EXCITING PROCESS?

Currently, reflection meetings with different stakeholders, funders and sectors are underway to collect ideas and analyse needs for Bridges to Work. Towards the end of Spring, all ideas will be merged into a programme that will allow for:

- Giving & getting an overview of youth employment initiatives in Europe
- Bridging the worlds of youth work and employment, encouraging win-win cooperation
- Rooting proposals in reality, checking new ideas with young people and other stakeholders.

Bridges to Work will take place **from 18-20 October in Antwerp**, the 2011 European Youth Capital. Registration for participants will start in June.

You will find more information as the preparations advance at: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/BridgesToWork/





HIGHLIGHTS

EUROMED YOUTH IV: INVESTING IN YOUTH AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

Bernard Abrignani, Project Director of RCBS - Regional Capacity Building and Support Unit for the EuroMed Youth Programme IV, www.euromedyouth.net; Coordinator Salto-Youth EuroMed.

Linking the young people from the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea; reinforcing civil society of Mediterranean partner countries and meeting the interests of youth policies implemented at national level are the real watchwords to follow from the first call for proposals scheduled for this springtime under the EuroMed Youth Programme Phase IV.

There are more than **100 million youth in the MENA region** (North of Africa and Middle East) aged 15 to 29 years old. They constitute around one third of the population of these countries and about half of the population in working age. The EuroMed Youth Programme complements the EU's assistance in other relevant areas, such as **education, vocational training and civic participation**. This assistance signifies its support for the region's promising youth and its commitment to investing in their young people.

The Euro-Med Youth Programme, holding its **1st Regional kick off Meeting in Amman** between the **22nd and the 24th of February 2011**, is based on the European Union awareness that **Youth is the pillar of the development and the asset of improvement of any society**.

The EuroMed Youth Programme aims to support and strengthen the participation and contribution of youth organizations and youth in the Euro-Mediterranean development of civil society and democracy. The goal of the Programme is to **motivate young people to become key players in the development of their society while creating links with countries in the region and with European counterparts**.

This programme focuses on **mobility, non-formal education and intercultural learning** among young people, youth leaders and youth workers operating within the framework of youth organizations, civil organizations dealing with youth. The programme is designed to facilitate encounters, partnerships and networks within the Euro-Mediterranean partnership through three types of actions:

- Euro-Med Youth Exchanges
- Euro-Med Youth Voluntary Service
- Euro-Med Youth Support Measures (Job-shadowing, Contact Making Seminars, Study Visits, Training Courses and Seminars)



Phase IV of the Euro-Med Youth Programme (2010-2013), has a budget of 5 Million Euros financed by the EU.

During this phase, it is notably expected that an estimate of around 100 projects will be funded.

Eight countries have participated: **Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Israel. Syria is not taking part to the Programme.**

The projects will be submitted only by organizations from the eight southern Mediterranean countries at their respective EuroMed Youth Units, within the three different available actions, in response to the call for proposals launched by Euro-Med Youth Units.

Applicants (project leaders) from the Mediterranean partner countries apply directly for grants to their own national youth authorities, now responsible through the Euro-Med Youth Unit (EMYU) for grant awarding and the overall management of the programme. Each eight Units will have their own applications forms and guidelines which will be published on their websites.

Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Tunisia have already launched the first call for proposals of this IV Phase on April 12th 2011. Still few days to submit the proposals (until June 14th).

Other **five deadlines are expected throughout the course of the program:**

- Nov 1st, 2011
- Feb 1st, 2012
- June 1st, 2012
- Nov 1st, 2012
- Feb 1st, 2013

Morocco, Algeria and Israel are going to launch their call. The deadline for the applications will be on November the 1st.

For any updates and further information about the programme visit: <http://www.euromedyouth.net>.



ABOUT US

SALTO EUROMED & GOOD PRACTICES

www.salto-youth.net/euromed

SALTO-YOUTH... stands for «Support and Advanced Learning & Training Opportunities» within the **Youth in Action Programme**. This is a network of 8 regional and thematic Resource centres set up by the European Commission to improve the quality of cooperation within the Youth in Action programme by providing support, training sessions and information to National Agencies.

More specifically, **SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed supports and reinforces Euro-Mediterranean Youth cooperation** by offering training sessions, events, tools for learning and good practices, support to EuroMed Youth Units, the network and our partners.

SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED has been hosted in **INJEP** (National Institute for Youth and Non-formal Education) since August 2000 and is part of the **French National Agency** for the Youth in Action programme.

In cooperation with National Agencies and EuroMed Youth Units, SALTO organises thematic training sessions, seminars and conferences on EuroMed Youth priorities and Tools for Learning.

These allow participants to share, test, analyse, transfer and develop project ideas, international partnerships and to implement these priorities in future strategies.

Moreover, the Resource Centre is also in charge of the development and dissemination of tools for learning and good practices in the field of youth and training. SALTO EUROMED co-organises the TOOL Fair with National Agencies, SALTO Network and a specialised working group.

INTERVENTION ZONE

131 programme countries:

27 EU, Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway and Turkey 9 Mediterranean Partner Countries that are involved in the Barcelona Process: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia.

INTERVENTION FIELDS

- International events
- Tools for Learning and Good Practices
- Networking
- Partnerships



SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed Team:

Bernard Abrignani (coordinator) - Federica Demicheli (Project Officer)

FOCUS ON 2011 ACTIVITIES

T.O.T.EM

Training of Trainers (Long Term Training Course, 2011/2013)

18/29 Octobre, Turkey,
Deadline 11/07/2011

«International Tool Fair VI» Open to participants from Programme Countries, Meda, EECA, SEE.

6/20 November Estonia Deadlines for applications
27/06/2011 for participants who need a visa to enter Estonia
31/08/2011 for all other participants

«Investing in Youth: Braga European Capital of Youth»

3/27 November Portugal
Deadline 17/09/2011

«Our White Sea III: Empower Youth through NGOs»

5/9 December Turkey
Deadline 24/10/2011

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed INJEP
Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Populaire
95 avenue de France - 75650 Paris cedex 13 - France
Tel.: +33 (0)1 70 98 93 69 - Fax: +33 (0)1 70 98 93 60
euromed@salto-youth.net - www.salto-youth.net/euromed

