

# Meet'In EuroMed

SALTO YOUTH EUROMED QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

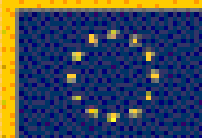
APRIL 2004

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**SALTO-YOUTH**  
EUROMED  
RESOURCE CENTRE



Education and Culture



## >> Salto-Youth EuroMed at INJEP

*Leseve-Nicolle, former Head of the French Agency for the European Youth Programme and Bernard Abrignani, former project officer for the French Agency "training and cooperation plan", our application form to welcome a SALTO YOUTH resource centre was successful.*

*Youth programme National Coordinators and the Council of Europe.*

*This magazine that you are holding in your hands is representative of the last working axis of the SALTO YOUTH EuroMed resource centre: the production and distribution of educational material in the field of training.*

*To conclude, I would like to encourage you not only to read "MEET' IN EUROMED", to spread it around you but also to send your contribution; it is through the constant exchange of information and reflections on good practices that we shall contribute to make the Euromed Youth programme a powerful tool to enhance the quality of the cooperation between both banks of the Mediterranean Sea.*

*The setting-up of such a resource centre is in total coherence with the particular attention, and I could say attachment, brought by INJEP in its relations with our close neighbours of the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. This cooperation is one of the strong axes of the strategy which I wish to develop for our Institute with SALTO YOUTH EuroMed resource centre as major element for this purpose.*

*Since 2001, the role and the impact of the SALTO YOUTH EuroMed resource centre continue to increase, passing from 2 to 16 trainings courses during 2004.*

*However training is only one of five axes of its well organised development strategy which includes also: support to specific events such as the launching of the "Euromed Platform" in Malta, permanent assistance lent to the implementation of youth workers' networks as well as the partnership opportunities with all Youth Programme National Agencies, Euromed*

**W**hen in January 2000 the European Commission launched the "call for applicants" for the creation of the SALTO YOUTH resources centres, INJEP (National Institute for Youth and Non Formal Education) applied at once, according to its vocation: that to be a resources centre in the youth field, dealing at the same time with non formal education and youth NGOs' activities, developing meetings and seminars on these subjects, confronting experiences, implementing both national and European exchanges and concretely supporting international cooperation. Furthermore, the promotion of young people participation and the strengthening of competences for all people operating in the European youth sector are among our priorities. Under the double impulse of Catherine



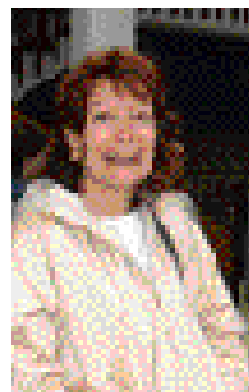
Hervé MÉCHERI  
INJEP Director

## >> A greivous loss for the French National Agency

**C**atherine Lesève Nicolle, head of the French National Agency, died on February the 3rd 2004, because of a sudden heart attack. Throughout her remarkable carrier and mainly during her years as head of the French National Agency one of her main aim was the promotion of all forms of educational mobility for young Europeans. To reach this objective, every small

accomplished step and every small victory were for her a legitimate source of pride.

We will all remember her as a person full of great human qualities, a vivid and active woman who will be missed by those who knew her personally but also by those who worked with her within the framework of the YOUTH programme.





## New horizons for Euromed...

### Euromed in Hungary, Hungary in Euromed

Officially Hungary, together with other seven new member states of the European Union, will be able to support youth projects with the Meda countries. This situation offers a lot of new opportunities for Hungarian youth organisations and local communities as well as for the youth sector of the Meda regions.

This new possibility is not absolutely without historical traditions though. The Hungarian youth policy is still working with the so called "bilateral protocol agreements" with countries willing to broaden their professional cooperation in the youth field. In this line, the Hungarian Ministry for Children, Youth and Sports started a fruitful cooperation with some countries out of the EU.

More specifically, from the Meda region there is a tradition of cooperation with Israel, Palestine and Algeria and there were some ad hoc activities with Egypt and Tunisia.

Moreover, in the 70's and 80's many students from these countries came to study in different Hungarian universities, some of them stayed and settled down in Hungary while the greatest majority went back to their own country.

Secondly, these regions are the favourite destination for Hungarian families, in particular Egypt, Tunisia, Israel and Jordan. Somehow, this means that these countries are already well known and popular among our citizens.

We should not omit the important role played by foreign trade as a significant source of communication with Meda countries especially Israel, Jordan and Egypt.

In the broader sense, all these considerations show clearly our existing cultural, business-related and social links with this rich and vital region.



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Concerning the importance and the impact that the Euromed Youth Programme will have on young people and youth organisations of Hungary, I believe this programme will be undoubtedly a very successful one!

There is a great potential in these cooperation projects especially in key fields as intercultural learning, antiracism, tolerance and also conflict resolution.

The network of National Agencies of the new eight countries together with the Euromed countries National Coordinators and with "senior" EU member countries are planning a special seminar focusing on this new dimension of the "Euro Mediterranean cooperation" in the second half of this year.

For further information see latter issues of our newsletter! Bye!



## “ The EuroMed Youth Co-operation within the BEFR National Agency ”

### >> Introduction

Since 2002, the Belgian National Agency of French speaking community (BEFR) has been deeply involved with the EuroMed Youth Programme co-operation.

In order to give you a complete overview on how this co-operation has been developed in our Agency, it is important to know where we started from and where we are now.

### >> New perspectives

As a starting point, I would like to underline that our experience with some Mediterranean countries precedes the adoption of the EuroMed Youth programme.

For instance, BJJ started co-operation with some Maghreb countries fifteen years ago within the framework of our bilateral youth exchanges programme called “Axes Sud”. This programme is aimed at providing young people with the opportunity to implement bilateral youth exchange projects with partners from North, West or Central African countries. Therefore, in 1999, when the pilot EuroMed Youth Programme was adopted, we felt that it was an opportunity for us to enlarge this co-operation and to give our youth organisations the means to further develop their partnerships within the Meda region.

However, during this first phase (1999 –2001), it was not so easy to get really involved in the implementation of the Programme. Due to the centralised process, our role as National Agency was limited to the support of a few youth organisations willing to develop EuroMed youth activities. Sometimes, it was quite difficult for my colleagues and me to promote the programme and to give the right pedagogical support without being aware of how the youth sector is structured in the Meda countries.

From this first phase we clearly learned that we had an amazing programme but no real means to define a specific strategy for its development.

### >> A wind of change - Twinning process

The first meeting in September 2001 between the European Commission, National Co-ordinators and National Agencies was a new and exciting experience for all of us.

During this meeting, the European Commission proposed the establishment of the twinning process and the nomination of a EuroMed contact person. The Belgium French speaking (BEFR) National Agency considered these two proposals to be key elements for setting up a real EuroMed co-operation strategy.

For us, the twinning process offered a way to share our respective experiences and to learn from each other. Moreover, the presence of a

EuroMed contact person within the Agency in charge of the whole programme helped to develop a more coherent approach.

At the end of September 2001, we started our twinning co-operation with Algeria.

At this time, our work plans had already been adopted and it was, therefore, not possible to define common training and co-operation activities. As a result, we decided to focus on an exchange of information about the youth sector in our respective countries and to work on the development of information materials (web page, leaflets and similar) needed for the promotion of the programme in Algeria.

For the subsequent work plans, we decided to consult each other in order to determine common activities within the twinning process. We worked in the same way with Lebanon during its twinning with the BEFR National Agency.

In Algeria and Lebanon, the main priorities were to put as much effort as possible into promoting the programme, developing the quality and the quantity of the projects and last but not least, into setting up a national network to support the work of the National Co-ordinators. For us, the priority for 2002 was to increase the quality of the projects and to encourage youth organisation partnerships between our country and our two twin countries.

We therefore decided to organise an Intercultural learning (ICL) training course which took place in Liege in December 2003 and to invite youth leaders from Algeria and the Lebanon to participate.

The idea was to propose an activity which was complementary to the activities implemented by our twin partners and to the training courses organised by the SALTO Youth EuroMed Resource Centre.



*Fatima Lanaan and her “twin” the Algerian National Coordinator, Nouredine Si-Bachir.*



*Participants to the SALTO Training of EuroMed Multipliers – Algeria*

As a result, the Lebanese National Co-ordinator wanted to organise the same training course in co-operation with our National Agency. In order to prepare this activity, we met in Brussels to define the participant profile, planned the programme and its methodology and divided the tasks within the team.

This meeting was an exciting experience as, during the two days, we succeeded in adapting an existing training course by creating and adding new educational tools. We are now all impatient to see the concrete results so... "Watch this space!"

## >> Involvement in the EuroMed training strategy

Besides our involvement with the twinning process, we decided to support the work of the SALTO Youth EuroMed Resource Centre by co-operating with it in several training and co-operation activities.

Our aim was to learn more about the EuroMed training strategy by being actively involved in the activities implemented by the Resource Centre.

We therefore hosted a SALTO Step In training course which took place in Liege in June 2003 and in which 28 youth workers from European and Meda countries participated. It was an amazing experience to meet such a diverse group and the strength of will, the commitment of the participants in setting up partnerships that will benefit to young people from EuroMed countries.

Moreover, we had the opportunity to get involved as a twin National Agency in the SALTO Training of EuroMed Multipliers which took place respectively in September 2003 in Lebanon and in February 2004 in Algeria.

In a nutshell, these courses were aimed at training people to become multipliers and to be able to act on behalf of the National Co-ordinators.

During these two training courses I was impressed to meet people working night and day in order to present training and information situations for which they were able to adapt existing tools or to create new ones.

As a concrete result of our participation in these training courses, two Lebanese multipliers will be involved in the Intercultural Learning training course to be organised by the Lebanese National Co-ordinator in co-operation with the BEFR National Agency and one Algerian multiplier will participate as observer in our EuroMed training course on Conflict Prevention and Management which will take place in the French Community of Belgium in June 2004.

Following the call for interest launched by the SALTO EuroMed Youth Resource Centre last summer, the BEFR National Agency was invited to be a member of the "EuroMed Training Bag" Steering group. This group is aimed at designing a pedagogical kit which will support the work of all the actors involved in the development of the EuroMed Youth Programme. The Steering group met at INJEP at the end of January 2004. During this meeting the content and the format of the EuroMed Training Bag were decided as well as the strategy for its distribution.



*Another "twin":  
Elisa Aslanian, Lebanese  
National Coordinator  
(with Bernard Abrignani -  
SALTO EuroMed Youth  
Resource Centre coordinator  
happily in the middle!)*

## >> Conclusion

To conclude, from 2001 to the present day, the BEFR National Agency has played an active role within EuroMed Youth co-operation, from its involvement in the twinning process to joining the EuroMed Youth network through its participation in the activities of the SALTO EuroMed Youth Resource Centre.

All these experiences helped us to be more aware of the realities for EuroMed youngsters and gave us the opportunity to develop a more coherent EuroMed strategy which is based on creating synergies with our colleagues from the EuroMed network.

On a more personal note, I'm proud to work for a programme which gives young people from my country the opportunity to experience EuroMed diversity and to create strong links with young people from partner countries.



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# What does it mean to be Euro-Med National Coordinator in Palestine ?

Since 1993 (one year after my graduation) I had been working for the Palestinian Youth Union. When in 1999 I heard that European Commission asked to our Ministry of Youth and Sport to suggest nominees for the position of Euro-Med National Coordinator, I applied but I was not nominated in that occasion.

I was working in a youth organisation at that time so I started to increase my knowledge and competencies about the Euro-Med Youth programme because I believed (and I still do!) that such a programme is very important for the Palestinian youth since it represents a path or window for knowledge and skills exchange with Europe.

In 2003 I participated to two training courses organised by Salto-Youth EuroMed (Step TO and Step AT) and I was lately nominated by the Ministry for the position of National Coordinator.

The Palestinian National coordinator needs to work a lot on the programme presentation and promotion in order to convince youth organisations – often with modest knowledge and means plus few activists (especially under these political circumstances) - to get involved. These local youth organisations concentrate their activities on the sport sector and they have no experience in implementing other social activities, raising youth awareness or dealing with youth exchanges.

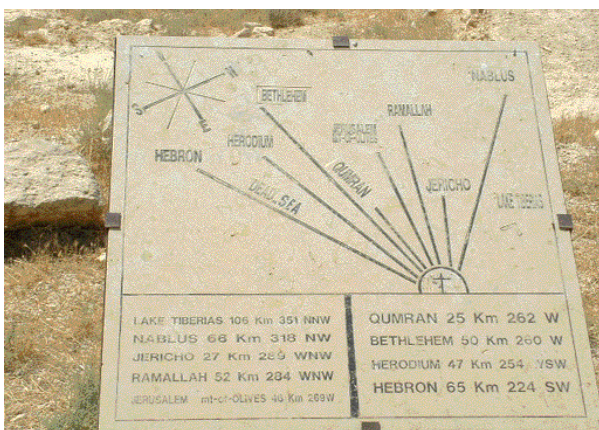
The fact is that these structures are suffering of lack in human and financial resources. When the programme is presented, their main question is: "How are we going to benefit from the EuroMed Youth Programme? Can we buy computers? Is it possible to rehabilitate our centre through its actions? Can we pay water or electricity bills?"

The answer is "no" of course; but it will be easier to convince youth organisations about the value of the programme if they had, at least, the necessary communication means to work on projects development.

Be National Coordinator, under the abnormal conditions of Palestine, demands not only to be expert in youth work and NGOs, but also to have some "secret intelligence" and "police work" skills and sometimes to act as "public relations manager" or "passports coordinator" ! I will explain myself better...

## Daily difficulties

Concerning the people circulation inside and outside Palestine, the National Coordinator should constantly follow the news concerning all checkpoints in order to know if "today" it is possible to go to the north or to the south. Here you find a new occupation for the National Coordinator which is checkpoint forecasting!





You also need to follow carefully all the recent political Israeli rules concerning the borders between Palestine and Jordan since daily we have different decisions taken - such as preventing those who are under 45 years old from travelling abroad Palestine. No need to say that the programme target group is often around this age!!

On the Jordanian side too, we have modified rules such as preventing Palestinians, holding a Jordanian passport, from travelling without a special permission that should be issued and delivered by "relatives" living in Jordan. So, as you may notice the National Coordinator works as employee for a passport/permit agency. Locally, you will face difficulties in moving between Palestinian cities because of barriers and checkpoints. On the national level it is very difficult to move between West Bank and Gaza and between West Bank and Jerusalem. You feel that you are living in three countries... no, four countries: West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, and Israel.

Another problem is the high level of competition among youth organisations - especially the ones following political factions or the one willing to participate to the Euromed Youth programme to travel (instead of working on projects).

Under these conditions the programme should consider some basic facts concerning local youth organisations:

- Lack of communication means.
- Lack of trained youth officers.
- Lack of programmes (local youth organisations concentrating on sport programmes only)
- There is no Palestinian Youth Policy supporting youth organisations

The present situation makes the task of engaging youth organisations in the programme very difficult without using creative and convincing methods connecting the programme to their needs. How do we reach this? On the one hand, we can try to involve more young people in training courses, in hosting international groups, in project writing, coordinating and managing or in creating future partnership; on the other hand we have to further develop concepts as conflict management and conflict resolution, mutual understanding, tolerance and intercultural learning.

In order to be a successful National Coordinator, you need to overcome:

- Needs of youth organisations especially the ones possessing less
- Political situation, visas and checkpoints which slow down the national coordinator's work
- Border regulations and the modification of passport rules
- Need for good quality projects according to the needs of youth organisations within Euro-Med.

Simply, the National Coordinator should wear more than one hat in order to be able to carry on and to solve all problems. Although Palestine has signed the Barcelona declaration, the Ministry of Youth and Sport do not understand the nature of Euro-Med programme yet and clarify the importance of this programme to the Minister is a difficult task.

Considering all these challenges will it be possible to carry on and succeed? This question shall be answered after the end of Action Plan 2004 to measure the achievements that will be realised.



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## Euro-Med Youth Seminar on "Non-verbal Communication"

**Date and Venue:**  
7-11 December 2003;  
Zichron - Yaa'kov - Israel

**Target groups:** Youth workers,  
Youth Leaders, trainers, facilitators,  
Youth coordinators, NGO  
representatives preferably with  
some experience of work in the  
Euro-Med Youth Programme.

**Aims:**

- \* To expose the participants to different types of communication problems within groups in general and multi-cultural groups in particular.
- \* To share knowledge and experience of the participants on the subject of non-verbal communication.
- \* To meet different groups in Israel that use non-verbal communication as part of their work within the group and the community.
- \* To experience (Learning by doing) the use of non-verbal communication in Group Dynamics.

This event was a Euro Med seminar on "Non Verbal Communication" organised by the "EuroMed Youth Programme" Israeli National Coordinator and a voluntary and enthusiastic team.

Over fifty people from fifteen countries gathered in the beautiful municipality of Zichron Yaa'kov on the hillside looking over the Mediterranean seashore of Israel.

### >> The Seminar

The seminar opened with a short-guided tour of Zichron Yaakov that enabled the participants to learn where they were.

Actually, Zichron Yaakov is a small pastoral municipality established in 1882 by pioneers from Eastern Europe, also known for its vineyards.

By the afternoon of the first day everyone was engaged in the seminar activities: The EuroMed Youth programme was presented on two different levels – one for beginners and an alternative session for more experienced people.

Later in the evening each group of participants presented shortly their national flag, the meaning of the colours and the philosophy behind the flag itself. This was a Non Verbal Communication exercise and the evening was called "Fly the Flag".

Throughout the following three days all participants experienced various activities ran by a multicultural team of trainers from Greece, Italy, Belgium and Israel.

On Tuesday, the seminar was held in Tel Aviv at the Jewish Arab Community centre in Jaffa.

Matan - an Art and Culture Youth Organisation - ran some art workshops.

The afternoon was used for a short visit to the market in Tel Aviv and a more emotional visit to the site where former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin was assassinated.

That day, two colleagues from Germany and Israel presented their joint EuroMed project "Bridges through Art" as a good example of young people joint activities of using "Non Verbal Communication" through art. One of the most important topics of the seminar was the "Open Space session" where the participants were able to discuss and plan in small groups about news ideas of programmes within the frame of Action 1 (Youth Exchanges). Some of the ideas became projects and will be submitted to the European Commission within the next application deadline.

One of the conclusions of the seminar was to creation a new Internet based network of youth organisations to open new opportunities to exchange educational programmes and ideas for multilateral exchanges.



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## Growing with Euromed

**M**y name is Roy Abou Habib, I am 27 years old from Beirut, Lebanon. I have been collaborating with several Youth NGOs, especially YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association).

Once, my YMCA manager proposed me to apply to a training course presenting the "EuroMed Youth programme".

This is how I end up participating to "STEP IN" Algeria in April 2003! I was really fascinated by the trainers' approach and by the "non formal" way of training and transmitting information. Thus, I decided to go through the whole curriculum and I participated to "STEP TO" in May 2003 and to "STEP AT" in June of the same year. I learnt a great deal of technical information about the programme and its actions as well as the meaning of words as "EuroMed strategy" and "networking".

On a more personal level, I met very interesting and committed people with whom I worked on some Euromed youth projects.

Once in Lebanon, I was very glad to share my experiences with all YMCA colleagues.

This is the reason why we adapted the "non formal education" concept to our training courses.

The SALTO training course for "EuroMed Multipliers" organised in Lebanon in September 2003 has been another milestone in my personal and professional development.

Let's go back to my adventure when Bernard Abrignani, Salto-Youth

Euromed Coordinator proposed me to join the "STEP IN" 2004 in Sweden, but this time as a junior trainer!

I was delighted because this time I would have had a different role, therefore a different perspective and a different "taste of EuroMed".

For sure, the fact that I have been following the whole "STEP" training courses curriculum gave me some excellent basis in terms of EuroMed spirit in order to fully play my new role of junior trainer. So, now that the "Step In" is over I can say that I have learnt a lot from my colleagues both on a human and professional level. Especially this easygoing and funny atmosphere, these moments we spent simply talking together even if, I must admit, I still have a lot to learn on "how to work in a team" mainly with colleagues you do not know in advance.

Professionally speaking I discovered some new skills and I broadened my horizons...something rather "usual" when working within an intercultural team and a group of participants coming from 16 countries ....but still a thrilling and intense experience!

I believe I had a wonderful experience and if I will be asked to do it I will say YES!

Now...back to Lebanon...another training course – on a local level this time - will start tomorrow!



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## Hand in Hand

When I first attended a two day info session about the Euromed youth programme I thought myself "the sky is the limit" and one year after I am even more confident "that the sky is the limit" of this ambitious programme.

My name is Cedar Zureikat and I am from Jordan.

I have been a junior trainer for Salto "STEP IN" too!

My personal involvement with Euromed started in 2003 with an information session about the EuroMed which eventually lead me to attend the "STEP IN" for beginners in Cairo, Egypt, the starting point for my "Euromed journey" full of knowledge, joy, excitement and projects.

The turning point for me was the Multipliers training course which took place in Jordan. It was a very good challenge and it gave me an insight on my weak and strong points. It was the fuel for change. Being a trainer could change a person

bringing more confidence, strength as well as knowledge. One of the best things about being a trainer is the fact that once you were a participant and then you see and live things from the other side. Thus, you have the chance to change things you did not appreciate and apply your own recommendations in a training course.

Euromed is one of the best things that happened to me and I would like to take this opportunity and invite all young people to explore deeper EuroMed. This is an invitation to learn, to discover, to think of projects and implement them. I would like to extend my gratitude to those who worked so hard to make this programme a success, for all the pieces in this puzzle are creating a beautiful picture of EU and Meda countries together, with their youth hand in hand.



*Some participants of the youth exchange "Les Chemins de Ghardaja"*

# Les chemins de Ghardaja

## >> How did it start

May 2003: we met in Alger, during a Salto Youth EuroMed training course. Who are we? We are Francesca from Italy, Kika from Mallorca, Abdelmadjid from Algeria, Mahmoud from Jordan, Montassar from Tunisia and last but not least Georges the Frenchman. Our common project: "Protection and conservation of the cultural and natural heritage" was realised as concrete application of the skills acquired during the aforementioned training course.

During this first meeting we decided to organise a youth exchange for winter 2003.

The NGO "Heritage Protection and Environment Conservation" showed its will to realise this exchange in Ghardaia (Algeria) to concretise this action on their own territory.

This was an excellent opportunity to widen young people range of activities by permitting a real confrontation with another culture presenting very different social, historic, cultural features. The frame of Ghardaia lent itself formidably well to this experience.

The main issue of our exchange was: "Raising young people awareness towards the importance of the conservation of the Euro Mediterranean cultural and natural heritage" where "heritage" is a natural carrier of intercultural learning developing knowledge about history and philosophy, but also about traditions, local urbanisation, water management, crafts and so on.

## >> Ready, steady, go!

The advanced planning visit was really necessary to give its definitive shape to the exchange because too many questions were still unclear.

Our project "the Road to Ghardaia" (le Chemin de Ghardaia, in French) gathered five partners: two Mediterranean countries Algeria and Jordan and three European countries Spain, Italy and France.

The whole group was formed by 32 young people (17-25 years) coming from both urban and rural areas, forming smaller groups of four young people, while the APPPE (local structure) was represented by six young people.

The Programme pursued two general objectives:

- 1- Raise young people awareness in relation with heritage conservation issues;
- 2- Involve young people in the organisation and the development of all aspects of this exchange but also to produce some further considerations on "heritage" our main theme and a document to testimony of their experience.

The exchange is conceived as a specific social micro-system illustrating the various functions every citizen is brought to perform in his/her current life. For that purpose, we collectively stimulated a functioning of four rotating workshops (six to seven young people each):



- Workshop on Ghardaia "Heritage"
- Workshop on estate management and collective life
- Workshop on organisation of the collective leisure activities
- Workshop on the report

As example; for the workshop on "collective life" youngsters had to go shopping to the market of Ghardaia, to discuss about prices or to conceive together recipes based on the culinary traditions of every country.

Through these workshops, we did everything we could to fully integrate young people into the local community or by discussing with the inhabitants, interviewing them in the street to find out the feelings of Ghardaouis about common heritage or visiting a school where Marco the Italian managed to show his talent in Arabic with the children or the possibility of meeting some women (reserved to the girls of the group!) stressed the differences of conceptions of the place of women in society.

Looking back, we can proudly assert that the progressive approach we proposed, the selected places and the conceived tools for



*Playing music together*

investigations truly allowed our young participant to make a fine analysis of the cultural specificities and to integrate the impact of heritage on the local inhabitants' way of living.

The presence of young people from different nationalities in each group favoured the linguistic mutual aid and the richness of the discussions.

## >> The group

The bus journey from Alger to Ghardaia was the occasion for a first contact among participants while discovering the beauty of Algeria passing from the snowy mountains of the Atlas to the desert which we crossed under a wind of sand.

Indeed, conviviality had already "made its way" during the diner and honestly there's nothing like eight hours together on a bus to create links!

THE WALK IN THE DESERT: "Magic moment, unforgettable expe-

rience, a stay in Sahara could not be conceived without a full immersion in the atmosphere of the desert of stone and sand" said Francisco from Spain.

The group made a three hours hike in the heart of the desert through games and jumps from the sand dunes and tracks discovery to reach the camp bivouac where nomads' community was waiting for us.

We had a touch of their art of hospitality: they offered us ewe milk and dates, the traditional mint tea and couscous shared from wooden dishes.

We had precisely conceived this activity so that, through the desert walk, young people made a joint effort to reach a common purpose: "spend a night in the desert with the nomad community" to share a unique and intense experience in a totally new environment, rich in sensory and emotional discoveries. We took place under a nomad tent listening to the sound of guitars and Arabic lutes with Arabic, Breton, Italian, Spanish, French and English songs and dances. The evening was animated by some traditional

music and stories on the nomad way of living before falling asleep under the stars, while in a corner the fire was regularly maintained by the nomads of the desert.

To conclude, after this precious experience led by APPPE, Altresttrade association, Centro d' Estudis de l' Esplai and D'Ecouves Verte association, we consider this exchange a very valuable both for participants and for organisers.

Despite all obstacles, this event allowed to lay the foundations for a long-term collaboration, proved our capacity to manage collectively a project and especially it sealed a profound friendship between us and between the young people.

We will be pleased to receive your comments and suggestions to benefit from other experiences and evaluations on this subject.



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# My voluntary service in Morocco

Well, I do not know exactly what I should say concerning my experience as European Voluntary Service volunteer in Morocco. I believe that I had infinite experiences, but it may be difficult to express so many different moments or situations and put them down on paper.

My first "encounter" with Morocco happened in May 2001. I took part in a youth "Exchange on Art and Culture of Mediterranean countries" which took place in the town of Chefchaouen within the framework of the European Youth programme.

It was during this exchange that I got in touch with my future hosting organisation, ADL (Association de Développement Local) - Chefchaouen.

I realised this work with my colleague Esther, also employed by Cic-Batá.

By using the ADL bibliography and the interviews we realised (some agents from the provincial delegation of culture and tourism as well as local businessmen, innkeepers, craftsmen) we had the idea of opening a round table around tourism and culture to debate with these professionals and get their opinions.

In November 2001 we decided to realise this small discussion forum in Chefchaouen.

Around December this idea was presented to my sending organisation for approval.

I returned to Malaga to spend Christmas with my family.



Somehow there started my relationship with Morocco, a country - it sounds like a paradox - so close and at the same time so unknown to the greatest majority of Spanish people.

At the time ADL was collaborating with Cic-Batá (Centre of Initiatives for Cooperation - Batá) Andalusian NGO - and my EVS sending organisation - situated in Cordoba.

I got a proposal for an EVS project in Morocco. The project title was: "Tourism, culture and youth employment in Chefchaouen".

At the beginning, the idea of passing one year in another country puzzled me!

I had finished my studies in Geography almost one year ago. I had no work in Malaga and I was interested in the Arabic world. Besides, if I had to change my mind I would have been not too far from home!

I left for Morocco. It was at the beginning of September 2001.

My first days in Morocco, everything was very fast and intense! I was sharing a flat with some people working for some development NGOs. I enjoyed living with them. Concerning my EVS mission I had to collect information about the state of local tourism and culture.

I got immediately in contact with NGOs members on the spot (mostly Spanish) and I tried to get from them their impressions about that area.

The proposal made to Cic-Batá in relation with tourism and culture was not taken into consideration.

Unfortunately, at the end of December, Cic-Batá's direction announced some new priorities: "youth awareness and youth participation". "Local tourism and culture" were not two main working axes any longer! For me it was a bad surprise!

Chefchaouen's province possesses a great quantity of natural resources to be exploited in relation to tourism, sport or exploration as: paths tracking, canyoning, climbing, caving, and so on.

What a waste!

### Starting anew

Back in Chefchaouen, I left aside the topic "tourism" (though I never abandon it completely!) and I started taking contacts with youth structures. In the meantime I had fewer contacts with my sending organisation.

I devoted myself to take contacts with my "new target" and I took part in some activity with young people. I kept going on a daily bases to the ADL office and collaborating voluntarily with the some colleagues from a development NGO I met.

They were leading projects on rural development i.e. rural electrification, installation of solar panels as well as apiculture and other



projects more linked to agricultural production (olive trees, carob-trees). Their work seemed very interesting to me and I wanted to know more about “decentralised solar power” projects in rural areas. During the following months I had been reading books on the topic and searching for information on the Internet.

Simultaneously, I was pursuing my own passion and my work with youth organisation activities – to stick to the new Cic-Batá policy based on youth exchanges.

It was in March when, on the behalf of the European Commission, Mostra Communication came to Chefchaouen to realise a video on my activity as EVS volunteer on the spot.

At first I considered this video very positively even if I had an excessive “protagonist role”. Indeed, I felt like John Wayne lost in the Northern Moroccan Mountains and truly it was not the way I was living over there! My real intention was to try to show to the whole European continent the great potential of that natural local environment and to emphasize, at the same time, the great work done by



NGOs employed in the area in relation to Chefchaouen youth too. The recording lasted in several days.

## >> Hard times

In summertime all local youth organisations stopped their activities for the season. This was a tough moment!

Basically I had nothing to do! I did not know what to do! Every day I was going to ADL without any specific task to accomplish. I was almost on the point of giving up!

Instead of abandoning, I started to write down a project on rural decentralised electrification for the area of Ain Beida with the firm intention of presenting it to the AECI (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional) under a local NGO's patronage.

After few months compiling information, I was ready to “dive in”. This project main aim consisted in improving the living conditions quality of the local inhabitants by installing “Photovoltaic domiciliary solar power” placed in four different spots of Ain Beida's Rural Commune, a rural depressed zone without possibilities for installation of medium or long term conventional electric power. This means a substantial advantage for more than 130 local families.

Through a petition, we gathered requests for installation and I started again compiling documents which were unfortunately never

submitted. It was almost the end of my EVS (end of August) and this project remained unachieved. And this is it!

To sum up, my EVS has been an unforgettable experience! Let me conclude, by proposing you a quotation, few words in which it is possible to summarise a way of thinking, a way of acting:

“Human beings have to develop fully and freely, but how to be just people who think, feel, choose, collaborate, rely on others and enrich one another is something as simple as forgotten.

This appears to be necessary considering that it is far from being achieved, it is not any banality but an important political aim; for this reason I have to insist on the idea of a revolution, of a slow revolution, voluntarily assumed, defended with amiability, happiness and understanding, which should re-discover the essential things in life and should finish with misunderstandings or mistakes. For example, the idea of competing can be tolerated in sport or games, but not in human relationships.

Let us start a revolution capable of making compatible equality and difference, of shouting that human beings, men and women, do not have to be excluded or discriminated and of convincing the differences in race, sex, language, sensitivity and culture are the salt of life itself.

If we do not consider ourselves to be equal in rights and opportunities we might not live, but without the wonderful plurality of the world and of the people we might not learn anything; we would be blind, deaf, mute. For this reason this revolution would make equality and difference coexists inside a general idea of respect towards the human race, be men or women. There can be neither respect nor love without equality and without difference”

Article and quotation translated from Spanish by Flavia Giovannelli

*“Los seres humanos tienen que desarrollarse en libertad y plenitud, se trata de algo tan sencillo y olvidado como ser, simplemente, personas que piensan, sienten, eligen, colaboran, se apoyan y enriquecen mutuamente.*

*Esto, que se plantea como necesidad porque está lejos de haberse conseguido, no es ninguna banalidad sino un objetivo político de primer orden; por ello hay que insistir en la idea de revolución, de revolución pausada, voluntariamente asumida, defendida con amabilidad, alegría y comprensión, que redescubra las cosas esenciales de la vida y acabe con los equívocos o errores. Por ejemplo, la idea de competir se puede tolerar como juego, pero nunca como forma habitual de relación. Amanece una revolución capaz de hacer compatibles la igualdad y la diferencia, de gritar que los seres humanos, hombres y mujeres, no han de ser excluidos o discriminados y de convencer de que las diferencias de raza, sexo, lengua, sensibilidad y cultura son la sal de la vida misma.*

*Sin considerarnos iguales en derechos y oportunidades no podríamos vivir; pero sin la pluralidad maravillosa del mundo y de la gente no podríamos aprender nada; seríamos ciegos, sordos, mudos. Por ello esta revolución hace que igualdad y diferencia convivan dentro de una idea general de respeto hacia los seres humanos, sean hombres o mujeres. No puede haber respeto ni amor sin igualdad y sin diferencia.”* “EL MUNDO SEGÚN LAS MUJERES” : MARGARITA RIVIERE



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# Is there another life after... a training course?

The real story of "Two shores for a common ground" EuroMed training course

**H**ow does an idea come to life and grow? How does it become a concrete action? And what is coming after? Hold on, these are a billion dollar questions!

### *But let me start from the beginning*

One day Marta Angerri, youth worker responsible for EuroMed in the Youth Secretary of the Catalan Government applied to a Step IN SALTO Euromed training course in Marly-Le-Roi (France).

As she found out she had been selected...she thought: "How lucky I am! I'll have the possibility to acquire new skills and to promote youth projects between the Mediterranean and the European countries".

And that is exactly what she did! During this training course she worked in group with an Austrian, a Turkish and an Israeli participant. They dreamt of setting up a training course for beginners in the field of youth exchanges: a course which aimed at bringing participants by the hand to promote youth exchange quality projects (or other programme actions).

After the SALTO training course it was not easy to keep the communication ongoing, but Marta and her mates insisted, managed to bring into the process a French and a Jordanian partner and finally the magic moment arrived when all wills merge into one: let's apply and see!

They decided to realise the project in Catalonia (Spain) and Marta asked me to work together on this idea, prepare the application and set up a Euro-Mediterranean training team. I joined them with pleasure and I personally tried to give coherence to this process.

### *Our recipe*

#### >> Venue

We were living and working in Barcelona in a former zoo, actually a Vocational Training School in the middle of a nice relaxing park, really a special atmosphere...actually environment is important for the sake of the activity!

#### >> Ingredients

We had in mind some clear points to be developed, such as:

- hints on EuroMed cooperation,
- intercultural learning (theory and practice) with the creation of shared landmarks for the youth leaders/participants,

- the red line "from the idea to the action",
- quality aspects of a youth exchange (application, preparation, partnership, group dynamics, risk assessment, evaluation and follow up);
- link between group and individual learning moments.

The participants were directly chosen by the partners among people they knew beforehand, conscious of the overall aims and target of the training.

We managed to have a well EuroMed balanced team.

The team kept constantly (both in designing the training course and during the implementation) an eye on quality aspects of a youth exchange.

#### >> Cooking phase

One key point was the link we tried to establish between concrete practical experience on a specific topic (project management, exploration of identity and culture, for example) and a short, clear, theoretical input on it afterwards: good rhythm and timing worked and brought good results for our "food" (the content).

Some of methods we used:

- interactive way of exploring and visiting the surroundings,
- workshops,
- outdoor experiential learning,
- the World Café (see below),
- reflection groups

and, last but not least, we proposed also to participants to have a short personal reflection time. A session on Euro-Mediterranean tales animated by the participants gave a taste of real life and consequentially more sense to some "EuroMed growing feelings" and to the will of building new projects together.

#### >> Special effects for presenting the table

World Café was a special feature (a method actually) which gave the participants the possibility to share their experiences and ideas in a comfortable way and to start building together paths towards common activities and projects.

This situation created a cosy atmosphere, like being in your usual bar...with coffee, tea served and the possibility to draw ideas on the paper tablecloth!



*Davide, Gulesin and Detta working for a very special coffee bar!*

This session ended with the session: "Planting the Seeds" for future cooperation around a tree, giving a metaphorical end to the constant flow of energy everybody expressed during the week.

## >> Team of cooks

Detta Regan: expert British chef mixing all kind of spices, theories, projects and concrete life. Her favourite ingredients here were Euromed co-operation, project management, partnership and risk assessment.

Gulesin Nemutlu: Turkish ambassador of intercultural learning and of Mediterranean tales. Other specials: filling in application forms and the preparation of a youth exchange.

Davide Tonon: a genuine EuroMed "product": Italian, Greek, Turkish and now also Catalan/Spanish... "maitre" of group dynamics, identity and culture, evaluation and of the "World Café", the main courses elaborated here.

Marta Angerri and Barbara Carrettero, two Catalan youth workers of the Government who strongly believe that "multiplying" is important and worked to make the venue possible.

Thus...those 19 participants, coming from 6 countries, shared their stories, ideas and will to co-operate.

We had a really funny intercultural night! Israeli and Jordanian participants presented their food together and had – in some cases for the first time in their life - the opportunity to approach "the other".

## >> And what's cooking after it?

As a result of our work, a lot of ideas arose and some of them took the shape of project during the course.

At the moment it seems that we have 4 projects "on the stove" ...let's see when and where they will be cooked!

1) A Study Visit to be realised in autumn 2004 under the title of: "Social casework with disadvantaged youth! – Methods and different ways of working with target groups", with partners from Austria, Israel, Germany and...

The project should be a previous step towards a future youth exchange.

2) A Youth Exchange to be realised in August 2004, under the title of: "The personal dimension in Art and Culture - Intercultural learning through arts", with partners from France, Morocco, Lebanon,

Turkey, Egypt, Italy, Greece, France and Austria.

3) A Training Course to be realised in summer 2004, under the title of: "Inter-religious understanding", with partners from France, Israel, Jordan, France, Spain. The project should be a previous step towards a future youth exchange.

4) A Training Course to be realised in February 2005, under the title of: "Youth leaders empowerment: training on leadership and youth policy", with partners from Israel, Turkey, France and...again, the project should be a previous step towards a youth exchange.

## >> One very important learning point for us was...

...that in order to work on follow up, a relaxed situation and some time to realise, observe and evaluate is necessary. Beside preparing and implementing a quality training course with focus on "follow up phase" it is very important to have the possibility to check what happened during the training course and to work on it together with participants so as to make treasure of the experience.

To see if we invested our resources efficiently and evaluate results, we should maybe think about "long term trainings courses" in order to give an important role to the "coaching" part and the evaluation of the follow up.

This requires strategy, time, passion, money...but it is worthwhile if, what we are looking for is to give a sense to what we do.



*Some participants at work*



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# Launching of the "EuroMed Training Pass"



This pass, elaborated by the SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed Resource Centre, is jointly delivered by the European Commission - DG Education and Culture and by the Council of Europe - Directorate of Youth and Sport.

This document offers full description and accreditation of skills and experiences required by the holder during all training courses organised within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation only.

It is handed directly to all participants at the end of the attended training course.

More concretely its purpose is to recognise and state:

- The personal record of achievement as participant
- All training courses run as trainer

For updated infos, visit [www.salto-youth.net/euromed](http://www.salto-youth.net/euromed)

## Thank you Alejandra !

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed Resource Centre would like to deeply thank Alejandra Martinez Boluda who left the Youth Unit at the EU Commission in March 2004.

Alejandra Martinez Boluda can be identified as "the queen" or "the mother" of the Euromed Youth programme, consi-

dering that she started working on it just after the terrorist attack of September the 11th, 2001 in N.Y.

Despite all obstacles to mobility due to this tragedy, she managed to set up the large "family" of Euromed National Coordinators, the twinning system among NAs and NCs, but mainly she managed to create a professional and high quality management for the European Commission.

Professionally speaking, she is a very dynamic, efficient, responsible and caring woman. Two of her main qualities – a colleague suggested – are her well balanced attitude and the fact of always being equal of the situation.

On a more personal level, she likes photography, design and cinema. She enjoys travelling and she may flight to Argentina



or to Brazil soon. She appreciates good food too! All colleagues will miss her...that's for sure!

We can just thank her and wish to this "bright lady" good luck for her future!

**SALTO-YOUTH**  
EUROMED  
RESOURCE CENTRE



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