

# Meet'In EuroMed

SALTO YOUTH EUROMED QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

JUILLET 2005

# 5



- édito
- NA's perspective
- Training events
- Participant's perspective
- EuroMed good practices

SALTO-YOUTH  
EUROMED  
RESOURCE CENTRE



Education and Culture



# The Mid-Term Evaluation of the Euromed Youth programme (2001-2003)

The European Commission as part of its good governance evaluates regularly its different programmes through internal monitoring mechanisms but also with the help

of external experts hired specially for this task. In March 2004, the European Commission decided to evaluate externally the programme Euromed Youth and it instructed the European Consultants Organisation (ECO) to conduct an independent mid-term evaluation covering the period from 2001 to 2003. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess whether the programme was consistent with the political objectives of the European Union regarding its neighbours around the Mediterranean and also to what degree has the programme responded to the urgent needs of more than 30 millions young persons in the Mediterranean area and especially in terms of youth exchanges, youth work and non formal learning. The intention was also to evaluate the

impact of the programme and to assess how its actions have been received by young people and the extent of the immediate impact in their local community. Finally, the evaluation appraised sustainability and replicability of the Programme. The sustainability here means the capacity of the regional stakeholders involved in perceiving themselves as owners of the programme, the extent to which target groups and youth beneficiaries have participated and have committed themselves to achieve the programme objectives, how deeply they were involved. Furthermore, this evaluation explored the strengths and weaknesses of the Euromed Youth and of its programme structures, as well as the opportunities and main obstacles facing the programme. The evaluation was carried out by two independent female experts. Their evaluation concept and activities included a balanced mixture of documentary research and fieldwork. Field missions to meet directly decision makers in youth policy, project promoters and participants as well as representatives of youth associations and clubs took place in the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and the Palestinian Authority. This odyssey around the Mediterranean encompassed also participatory evaluation workshops, and face-to-face interviews in the nine MEDA countries. The workshop showed through the vivid participation of the young people (over 140 MEDA youth associations) the high interest of this public in the programme. Finally, the direct consultation processes culminated in a stakeholders meeting in Brussels with over 70 participants from Europe and the Mediterranean. This was a great opportunity for the programme participants to discuss



of external experts hired specially for this task. In March 2004, the European Commission decided to evaluate externally the programme Euromed Youth and it instructed the European Consultants Organisation (ECO) to conduct an independent mid-term evaluation covering the period from 2001 to 2003. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess whether the programme was consistent with the political objectives of the European Union regarding its neighbours around the Mediterranean and also to what degree has the programme responded to the urgent needs of more than 30 millions young persons in the Mediterranean area and especially in terms of youth exchanges, youth work and non formal learning. The intention was also to evaluate the

of external experts hired specially for this task. In March 2004, the European Commission decided to evaluate externally the programme Euromed Youth and it instructed the European Consultants Organisation (ECO) to conduct an independent mid-term evaluation covering the period from 2001 to 2003. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess whether the programme was consistent with the political objectives of the European Union regarding its neighbours around the Mediterranean and also to what degree has the programme responded to the urgent needs of more than 30 millions young persons in the Mediterranean area and especially in terms of youth exchanges, youth work and non formal learning. The intention was also to evaluate the

the programme together with the European Commission, the Technical Assistance Office, the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform, the European Youth Forum, the Council of Europe and Salto Euromed. This whole process was additionally supported by on-line questionnaires launched on the web portal of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform. The 80 answers to the questionnaire proved again the commitment of young persons to the programme. It needs to be highlighted that the national evaluation workshops organised by the Meda National Co-ordinators of the Euromed Youth Programme were very efficient and showed the very high level of commitment and enthusiasm of youth leaders for the programme. They insis-



ted on the importance of consulting directly the opinion and experiences of the direct beneficiaries and invited the European Commission to do it on a regular basis. It was indeed a very rewarding experience for the experts who carried a marathon mission to 9 Mediterranean countries in one month time and completed the evaluation in the period of 5 months.

Given that the programme has funded 120 MEDA organisations from 2001 to 2003, the research sample accessed provides a solid and credible base for findings and recommendations for the next phase of the programme, particularly for the MEDA region.

## The Key Findings and Recommendations of the Evaluation

The Euro-Mediterranean Youth Programme has become the singularly most focussed and successful regional instrument to promote youth



intercultural dialogue within the Euro-Mediterranean area. No other international organisation deploys such an important budget to regional youth exchanges! Furthermore, the programme fosters the development of the youth associative sector in the MEDA countries. Both the aspects of intercultural dialogue and development are key strategic issues, given the current international political context and the emerging importance in several MEDA countries of creating a basis for a civil society in which the youth sector is at its core. Furthermore, the programme fills a funding gap in MEDA countries that in general have marginal budgets for the youth sector, and scarce support from other international donors.

The 'bottom-up' approach of the programme allows youth organisations to submit projects according to their specific interests and needs, within the current programme framework. Additionally, the strategy of the programme allows a certain degree of independence, creativity, and diversity among the participating youth and civil organisations.

During its second phase, Euromed Youth has achieved important results including:

- A balance in participation between the number of MEDA and EU youth associations in the programme
- Training in Euromed youth work for a significant number of youth leaders and trainers from the countries of both the EU and MEDA
- A satisfactory level of performance of the programme structures: the National co-ordinators, the SALTO resource centre, the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform, and the Technical Assistance Office
- Efficient administrative procedures primarily concerning the selection process and the issuing of contracts.

During the second phase of the programme, Euromed Youth has achieved a critical mass. A total of 256 associations have been active in the Programme from 2001 to 2003. Of these, 136 were from the EU and 120 were from the MEDA countries. The programme experiences a genuine commitment and enthusiasm from the

participants and youth leaders. Moreover, the formal and informal networking activities of the programme, such as project partnerships, contact-making seminars, and multilateral training to promote networking, are resulting in the emergence of the first generation of regional networks.

Highlighted in this evaluation are a number of elements that need fine-tuning to further improve the performance and the impact of the programme. These include an improved coordination among the multiple programme actors, a more efficient information and communication strategy providing more emphasis in the thematic priorities of the programme, strengthening the Voluntary Service, and a revised approach to training for the next phase.

The overall recommendation of the evaluation was that the Euromed youth programme should be continued given the short-term results and the expected long-term impact at the level of individuals and youth organisations.

The third phase of the Euromed Youth programme is bound to start in the second semester of 2005, with a new decentralised implementation mode, where the Mediterranean national authorities will take full responsibility of the programme, as it is the case for the European national agencies.



*Esther Gelabert and Judith Neisse are independent EU experts and the authors of the evaluation.*



**For more information about the Euromed youth evaluation see:**  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/eval/euromed2004\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/eval/euromed2004_en.pdf)