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22nd April 2010

Consultative meeting
**Quality in non-formal training youth activities in
the broader Euro-Mediterranean context**

**6-7 May 2010,
European Youth Centre Strasbourg,
Room 5.1.**

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

Background and purpose of the meeting

The partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth has always paid a particular attention to quality in non-formal education and youth work activities. Training youth workers and, in particular, the trainers who train youth workers and multipliers has thus been among the objectives of the partnership since its creation. In addition to pilot courses such as the Advanced Training of trainers in European Citizenship (ATTE) and the now-running Training Active Learners in Europe (TALE), the partnership has also developed the Training Kit publications series. These two types of activities, together with the work on the recognition of non-formal learning, reflect well the importance of quality in training for non-formal education have for the Council of Europe, the European Commission and their governmental and non-governmental partners.

The same concerns and interests were at the origin of the Euro-Mediterranean youth activities carried out jointly by the European Commission and the Council of Europe since 2004, involving also the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe.

Between 2006 and 2007, the partnership introduced a Training course for Active Trainers in the Euro Mediterranean Youth Work (TATEM) which was meant to provide a deeper learning framework to trainers and multipliers already active in Euro-Mediterranean activities. The course was run in close cooperation with the Salto Euro-Med Resource Centre (Salto) as it was felt that the course would be beneficial to all the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation stakeholders, including the national agencies and units of the Euro-Med youth programme in the "Meda" countries.

In parallel to TATEM, Salto implemented an "introductory" course for trainers, Training of Trainers in Euro-Mediterranean Youth Work (TOTEM), between 2004 and 2005 for youth workers with experiences and potential to be trainers, especially at national level.

These trainings responded to a specific need of developing a pool of competent professionals with specific experience and competences related to Euro-Mediterranean youth work. These trainers would in turn contribute to the training activities of the main stakeholders, would know their values and procedures and could operate in the various social and cultural contexts of the European and Mediterranean regions.

A few years have passed since these two long term training courses took place. While some trainers became very active partners of both institutions, others have changed plans or moved on to other professional domains or simply work as freelance trainers in the region. The work for intercultural dialogue and youth cooperation remains equally important and trainers are more needed than ever.

In 2008, the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, Salto EuroMed in cooperation with the Turkish National Agency launched a series of training seminars called "mosaic" with thematic focuses based on the Training Kit "Mosaic" for Euro-Mediterranean youth work. These seminars aimed at providing an opportunity for trainers active in Euro-Mediterranean youth projects to further develop their competences in working with youth in specific areas. The two seminars organised so far focused on gender and religion. Another seminar planned in 2010 should deal with the issue of history in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

MOSAIC, the training-kit for Euro-Mediterranean has, in the meantime, been published. With it, it is expected that trainers and leaders in intercultural Euro-Mediterranean youth projects will have more tools, resources and possibilities to involve young people in issues that concern them. The T-Kit also provides a framework and conceptual reference for Euro-Mediterranean youth work and, in that respect, should play a role in re-assuring those concerned or worried by the quality of Euro-Mediterranean youth projects.

Today, the landscape of Euro-Mediterranean youth work and projects is significantly different from the first training course for trainers organised by the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe:

- There are more possibilities for youth projects based on intercultural dialogue and non-formal education, including those of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and the United Nations' Alliance of Civilizations;
- The Euro-Med Youth Programme has evolved in terms of actions possible, structure and countries concerned;
- Euro-Arab dialogue and cooperation has gained a new impetus with activities carried out with the League of Arab States, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum and the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe;
- Youth policy cooperation and youth policy development now plays a more important and visible role in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, both for the Euro-Med youth programme and for the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe;
- The range of training activities requiring and depending on qualified trainers has expanded in number and formats, including the training courses for trainers in human rights education (partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe) and the intercultural dialogue courses (in Arabic, Turkish and English) of the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport.

In view of these developments, the partners involved in the Sectorial Group on Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, Intercultural Dialogue and Human Rights Education of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth – including the European Youth Forum, the Anna Lindh Foundation, the League of Arab States, the EuroMed Youth Platform, the Salto Euro-Med Resource Centre and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe – have agreed on the importance of sharing their experiences on quality in training activities and how to secure and develop the current quality standards and practices, as well as discuss their future common needs in relation to trainings of trainers. One option informally discussed has been the setting up of a common training course or, at least, a common training approach.

Before venturing further in this route, the Partnership Sectorial Group considered it necessary to undertake an informal evaluation and consultation with those concerned, trainers included.

Aim and objectives

The meeting aims at exploring the current practices and needs in relation to the quality of intercultural non-formal education activities in the broader Euro-Mediterranean context and identify ways to sustain and further develop them.

This will be pursued through the following objectives:

- To analyse the current trends and needs in the field of Euro-Mediterranean Youth work training;
- To share experiences and challenges faced by institutional partners in the field of Euro-Mediterranean youth work training;
- To identify common areas in which further competence development is needed;

- To discuss a possible plan of action for quality development through training as from 2011;
- To identify partners for such a plan of action and their possible roles.

Participants

The meeting will be attended by representatives of:

- The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures;
- The Salto Euro-Med Resource Centre
- The League of Arab States
- The Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport;
- The European Youth Forum
- The secretariat of the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth
- Trainers involved in Euro-Mediterranean training activities and youth projects.

Programme

The programme will be organised and run so as to enable the meeting to find answers to the following questions:

1. What quality criteria exist in relation to Euro-Mediterranean training activities in the youth field?
2. Which challenges do the partners meet in applying those criteria? What is the role of trainers in this process?
3. What can/should be developed – separately or in common – in order to:
 - a. secure the sustainability and development of quality non-formal education activities;
 - b. support exchange of good practice and avoid repetition of common mistakes;
 - c. support the development of Euro-Mediterranean and Euro-Arab cooperation projects with a training dimension;
 - d. train future groups of trainers and multipliers competent and reliable to support national and international training projects?
4. What can be done together, by whom and when?

Practical information

The meeting will take place in the European Youth Centre Strasbourg on 6th and 7th May 2010 (working days, from 09:30 to 18:00).

Board and lodging are provided at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg (30, rue Pierre de Coubertin, Tel: + 33 3 88 41 23 00; fax: +33 3 88 41 27 77) and paid for by the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth.