

# Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission  
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



## **Expert meeting on South-Mediterranean youth co-operation: strengthening knowledge networks for evidence-based youth policy and practice**

*Brussels, 12-13 December 2016*

### **Concept paper**

#### **Background**

According to the stipulation in the log frame, events should be organised in the three geographical priority areas of the current EU-CoE youth partnership programme and the 2016 Work Programme includes an expert meeting on South-Mediterranean youth co-operation.

In the past the EU-CoE youth partnership held several activities in the region with focus on building knowledge and bringing dialogue among policy makers, researchers and youth workers, as well as young people themselves. More specifically, the youth partnership carried out a needs assessment and published online a youth inventory of resources on citizenship and social inclusion of young people in the Middle East and North Africa Region, it organised an event on the role of research in youth policy in 2006, and successful events in 2012 and 2013 following the Arab Spring, the meeting of stakeholders in 2014 and the Arabic version of the revised Youth Policy Manual published in 2015. The 2016 expert meeting will therefore build on this past work bringing a variety of stakeholders with established networks and carrying out research in the region, with a view to developing plans for future activities with tangible results. Furthermore, in order to strengthen the think-tank capacity of the EU-CoE youth partnership, the expert meeting will also aim at widening the network of researchers focusing on youth. Ten years after the first seminar on youth research, the youth partnership proposes an expert meeting to support better future co-operation.

#### **Preparatory actions**

Since January, the EU-CoE youth partnership has held several exploratory meetings with European Training Foundation on regional co-operation (in South-Med, EECA and SEE), attending the ETF-implemented GEMM “Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean” closing event on the role of VET and youth employability in South-Med, and invited ETF to share their expertise in other regional activities planned this year and beyond. In the exploratory phase, it became clear that organising a joint event with ETF in 2016 would not be feasible, but co-operation on bringing together non-formal education and VET for social inclusion of young people could be proposed for 2017 or beyond. The EU-CoE

youth partnership also established contact with NetMed and Anna Lindh Foundation carrying out activities financed by DG NEAR and will attend the Anna Lindh Mediterranean Forum in October in Malta, focusing on strengthening intercultural dialogue actions to counter forces fuelling polarisation and extremism. In addition, the EU-CoE youth partnership is in contact with SAHWA, ARAB Trans and Power2Youth – large research projects supported by FP7 Programme which carry out research on youth participation, employment, migration patterns and how gender influences chances of integration.

## **Objectives**

Experts would be invited to:

1. take stock of the knowledge on youth and research being carried out by different stakeholders;
2. identify gaps in research in areas covered by the EU-CoE youth partnership and areas of interest to the partner institutions;
3. analyse the role of research in the current Euro-Med youth co-operation initiatives and the relevance to policy and practice;
4. contribute to designing a process of strengthening knowledge networks on youth in the South-Mediterranean and connecting them to the PEYR.

## **Participants**

A mix of 20-25 policy-makers, youth workers and especially researchers will be invited. The EU-CoE youth partnership will seek the support of relevant experts and stakeholders from previous activities and existing networks (Euro-Arab Youth Forum, Arab Youth Platform, Mediterranean University on Youth and Global Citizenship, Salto EuroMed, Anna Lindh Foundation, ETF projects in the region and research projects covering youth in South-Med region, including Power2Youth, Arab Trans and Sahwa).

## **Expected outcomes**

The expert meeting should develop:

- a better understanding of the situation of young people, youth research and evidence-based policy-making in the South Mediterranean;
- a group of researchers to support future work with thematic or regional focus (ex: Youth Wiki contributions...);
- a research agenda relevant to the youth field;  
A proposal for a process of building youth knowledge networks in South Mediterranean in following years.

The meeting will also contribute to the visibility of EU-CoE youth partnership activities and specific tools available for actors in the region, such as the Arabic version of the youth policy manual.