



Youth in Action

*Mobilising the potential
of young Europeans*



On 15 November 2006, the European Parliament and the Council adopted [Decision No 1719/2006/EC](#), which establishes the Youth in Action programme for the period 2007 to 2013. This document is the legal basis of the Programme for its entire duration.

Youth in Action is the EU Programme for young people aged 15-28 (in some cases 13-30). It aims to inspire a sense of active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future.

Youth in Action is a programme for all! It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background.

Youth in Action is the successor of the [YOUTH Programme](#) (2000-2006). Building on the experience of the previous programmes for youth, Youth in Action is the result of a large consultation with the different stakeholders in the youth field and aims to respond to the evolutions and needs of young people at European level.

With a total budget of 885 million euros for seven years (2007-2013), the Programme supports a large variety of activities for young people and youth workers through five [Actions](#).

Youth in Action in figures

- Duration: 2007-2013
- Budget: 885 million euros for seven years
- Geographic reach: EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey, the EU neighbours (Eastern Europe and Caucasus, the Mediterranean region, South-East Europe) and other partner countries in the world
- Age brackets: 15-28 (in some cases 13-30)

Programme Actions

The Youth in Action Programme aims to achieve the following general objectives:

- promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- promote European cooperation in the youth field.

To this end, the Programme is structured around 5 Actions:

Action 1 - [Youth for Europe](#)

encourages young people's active citizenship, participation and creativity through youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy projects.

Action 2 - [European Voluntary Service](#)

helps young people to develop their sense of solidarity by participating, either individually or in group, in non-profit, unpaid voluntary activities abroad.

Action 3 - [Youth in the World](#)

promotes partnerships and exchanges among young people and youth organisations across the world.

Action 4 - [Youth Support Systems](#)

includes various measures to support youth workers and youth organisations and improve the quality of their activities.

Action 5 - [Support for European Co-operation in the Youth field](#)

supports youth policy co-operation at European level, in particular by facilitating dialogue between young people and policy makers.

Programme priorities

The Youth in Action programme has four permanent priorities and additional annual priorities which potential projects will have to be aware of as they frame their bids for support:

European Citizenship: A key goal of the programme is to raise awareness in young people that they are citizens of Europe, as well as citizens of their own countries. The aim is to get youth actively involved in shaping the future of the European Union. Projects will have to show a strong European dimension if they are to receive programme backing.

Participation of young people: Youth in Action promotes and supports young people's involvement in democratic life, spurring them on to be active citizens who care about their communities and understand the value of representative democracy.

Cultural diversity: Respect for people's cultural origins is at the heart of the Youth in Action programme, as is the desire to fight against racism and xenophobia – forces that undermine European values and people's solidarity.

Inclusion: The focus is on ensuring that young people with fewer opportunities get access to the Youth in Action programme, as well as on encouraging projects with a thematic focus on inclusion.

Annual priorities: In addition to these permanent priorities, each year the focus is also placed on specific annual priorities.

Euro-Mediterranean Youth Programme

Introduction

The Barcelona Process is the result of the political will to provide a framework for strengthened dialogue and comprehensive cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

The involved partners are currently the 27 Member States of the European Union and 10 Mediterranean partner countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

Launched in 1995, the Barcelona Process stressed that "youth exchanges should be the means to prepare future generations for a closer cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean partners. A Euro-Mediterranean youth exchange cooperation programme should therefore be established based on experience acquired in Europe and taking account of the partners' needs".

The Euro-Med Youth programme is one of the regional programmes set up in the third chapter of the Barcelona Process entitled « partnership in social, cultural and human affairs ».

This third chapter suggests a permanent dialogue between young people from the 37 Euro-Mediterranean partners. This will help to foster mutual understanding among the people of the region, to integrate young people into social and professional life, and to contribute to the process of democratisation of the civil society.

Short chronology

Since 1992, the dialogue between young people and youth exchanges all over the Mediterranean has been supported within the framework of the Community Programme "Youth for Europe", and since 1996 through the "European Voluntary Service" programme.

In June 1996, a conference held in Amman on "Youth Exchanges between the European Union and its Mediterranean partners", gathering officials and NGO representatives, elaborated further on the objectives of a new cooperation scheme under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The second Euro-Mediterranean Conference held in Malta in April 1997 reiterated that a programme of activities for youth should be put forward shortly.

In September 1998, the first Euro-Med Youth programme was adopted by the European Commission and the Euro-Mediterranean (MED) Committee.

In November 2001, a second phase of the Euro-Med Youth programme was adopted by a decision of the European Commission and the MED Committee.

Euro-Med Youth III, featuring the decentralised management in the Mediterranean Partner countries, started in 2007 and will run until the end of 2008.

Euro-Med Youth Programme I (1999-2001)

The Euro-Med Youth programme I was adopted by the European Commission and the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona process. This Programme represents a concrete initiative prompted by the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and provided for the extension of the YOUTH programme's activities to the Mediterranean partner countries. It involved three actions of the YOUTH programme: Youth Exchanges, Voluntary Service and Support Measures (Actions 1, 2 and 5). The budget provided 9.7 million euros (6 million from MEDA and 3.7 from YOUTH).

This first phase of the Euro-Med Youth programme was subject to an evaluation carried out by external experts. Goals to be achieved in the second phase of the Programme were inspired by this evaluation.

In order to implement the Euro-Med Youth programme, a system of National Coordinators was set up with the nomination of one Coordinator in each Mediterranean partner country.

[Executive summary of the mid-term evaluation report](#)

Euro-Med Youth Programme II (2002-2004)

Following the MED Committee's approval in September 2001, on the 22nd November 2001 (Decision n°2001/2347), the European Commission adopted, a second phase of the Euro-Med Youth programme.

Euro-Med Youth II provided a budget of 14 million euros for 2002-2004 (10 million from MEDA and 4 million from YOUTH), in other words an annual budget of 4.333 million Euros for the period 2002-2004. This represented a budget increase of 40% compared to Euro-Med Youth I.

The Programme beneficiaries were young people and other actors in the youth field in the 10 Mediterranean partner countries and in the 25 EU Member States.

The Commission defined some thematic priorities especially focused on the Mediterranean needs. Projects tackling the following subjects were welcomed:

- fight against racism and xenophobia, which is also one of the general priorities of the YOUTH programme;
- active citizenship and the development of civil society;
- the role of women in society;
- minority rights;
- protecting the environment and cultural heritage.

As in the first phase of the Programme, Euro-Med Youth II focused on the three main actions of the YOUTH programme: Action 1 (Youth Exchanges), Action 2 (Voluntary Service) and Action 5 (Support Measures). Its major goals were:

- to facilitate the integration of young people into social and professional life and to stimulate the democratisation of civil society in the Mediterranean partner countries.
- to improve mutual understanding and cohesion among young people across the Mediterranean region, based on and committed to mutual respect, tolerance and dialogue among cultures.
- to increase the importance of youth organisations, developing young people's active citizenship, especially that of young women, and promoting the exchange of information, experience and expertise between youth organisations.

The Euro-Med Youth programme II focused on the consolidation and reorientation of the following 5 main areas:

1. **Consolidation of the National Coordinator's role:** the Programme was implemented locally by a National Coordinator. For the effective and efficient implementation of Euro-Med II, the competent national authorities in each Mediterranean partner country, upon request from the European Commission, designated a National Coordinator with good knowledge of local non-profit associative life as well as the needs and realities of youth work.
2. **Strengthening and improvement of the supported activities:** The European Commission gives high priority to training activities. These are very important for the development of the national human resources that will guarantee the sustainability of the activities and the diversification of the priority themes (for instance: women's role in the development of society). This also ensures a better involvement of all partners. This was reflected in the creation of a SALTO YOUTH Euro-Med Resource Centre to support the implementation of the programme through training activities focused on beneficiaries, National coordinators and YOUTH National Agencies. For more information, please consult: <http://www.salto-youth.net/euromed>. The development of cooperation on training with the Council of Europe was also achieved in the form of a Partnership Agreement.
3. **Increase the quality of the projects as well as the number of youth exchanges and voluntary service projects**
4. **The Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform:** The launch of the Euro-Med Youth Platform took place in September 2003 in Malta. Its activities involve mainly promoting partnerships and networking among youth organisations in the Member States and countries of the southern Mediterranean basin, the exchange of best practices and the development of new projects. For more information please consult: <http://www.euromedp.org>
5. **An improved programme through increased debate and communication:** The impact of these measures is reflected in the almost 20.000 young people that have been involved in the Euro-Med Youth Programme since 1999. More than 800

projects have been approved and the quality of the projects has increased (figures January 2005). The report of the mid-term evaluation covering 2001-2003 is available on

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/priorities/euomed_en.html#programme1#programme1

Preparation of Euro-Med Youth III - Decentralisation process (2005-2006)

In December 2004, Euro-Med Youth II came to an end. Before launching phase III, the Commission decided to carry out a review of the centralised management mode of the programme to bring it in line with the principles of decentralised management in the context of the reform of external aid and cooperation. In order to support the decision-making process, the Commission's Cooperation Office EuropeAid (DG AIDCO) launched a feasibility study.

The selection of projects submitted by youth organisations based in the Mediterranean partner countries was therefore suspended until the new management mode would be in place.

Following the recommendations of the feasibility study, the Commission envisaged to decentralise the MEDA part of the programme. Such decentralisation entailed the transfer of the management of the Programme, that is, the selection, issuing of conventions and financial management of the projects presented by youth organisations from the Mediterranean partner countries - to new structures (called Euro-Med Youth Units, or EMYUs) which had to be identified by the authorities of the relevant countries.

The decentralisation process was divided into two phases: the first one focused on the creation and capacity building of the new structures. To this end, a Regional Capacity Building and Support Unit (RCBS) was created.

The specific work of the RCBS encompasses activities such as:

- Support the MEDA youth national authorities to define the profile for the Euro-Med Youth Units (EMYUs) (selection of staff, coaching, training etc.) for programme management, financial and communication tasks, assisting in organising the selection panels;
- Enhancing sub-regional and regional co-operation among the different stakeholders through annual meetings and networking activities, guidance and support in the creation of a network of Euro-Med Youth Units (EMYUs), dissemination of best practices and results of the Euro-Med Youth programme;
- Design of the overall communication, information and visibility strategy of the Programme in co-ordination with the European Commission and the EMYUs of the MEDA national youth authorities. This will be necessary to harmonise the different national publications for the promotion of the Programme.

- Produce studies/reports on the evolving situation in the MEDA countries after the introduction of the decentralisation.
- Monitoring activities (different levels).

The second phase of the decentralisation process consisted in re-opening project selections to be managed in a decentralised way by the new structures. The process took place under the supervision of DG AIDCO, which is responsible for the implementation of the Commission's external aid.

Directorate General Education and Culture (EAC) continues to manage the part of Euro-Med youth projects taking place in Europe, which are introduced by European youth organisations to their respective National Agencies or by Europe-wide youth NGOs to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. It also continues to manage the programme's support structures (SALTO YOUTH Euro-Med Resource Centre, Euro-Med Youth Platform).

Euro-Med Youth Programme III (2007-2008)

By 31 December 2006, 9 out of 10 Mediterranean Partner Countries (except Egypt) signed the necessary bilateral Financing Agreement with DG AidCo in order to participate in the newly decentralized phase III of the Euro-Med Youth Programme, which will run until the end of 2008.

Under this Agreement, MEDA authorities were called, among others, to identify and set up a Euro Med Youth Unit (EMYU), which would be responsible for the implementation of the programme at national level. Euro-Med youth projects that are intended to take place in a Mediterranean partner country should therefore be presented by the relevant MEDA partner to their respective Euro-Med Youth Unit according to the criteria and deadlines set out in specific calls for proposals, which are published by each EMYU.

Further details on the objectives, actions and application criteria as well as the contact details of each EMYU can be found on the [Euro-Med Youth website](#).

Similarly to the previous phases, the Euro-Med Youth III supports three types of actions: youth exchanges, voluntary service and support measures, and aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Fostering mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue between young people within the Euro-Mediterranean region;
- Promoting young people's active citizenship and their sense of solidarity;
- Enhancing the contribution of non-governmental youth organisations to civil society and democracy;
- Contributing to the development of youth policies.

For more information on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, please visit the [EuropeAid Co-operation office web page](#).

