



MED FORUM 2016 Preliminary Conclusions

A BLUEPRINT FOR WORKING TOGETHER

"I send warm greetings to the MED FORUM of the Anna Lindh Foundation in Valletta, Malta, and thank you for recognising the importance of empowering the world's young people."

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
24 October 2016

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SUMMARY

“The Anna Lindh Foundation and the European institutions, with the special role for the forthcoming Maltese Presidency of the European Council, we together can ensure that this Forum shapes the policies of the European Union.”

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini

MED FORUM of the Anna Lindh Foundation, from 23-26 October 2016 in Valletta, Malta, convened 680 delegates from 50 countries, with a global reach to millions of individuals through the FORUM LIVE debates and global media partnerships.

Built on a far-reaching 8-month programming process involving CSO national coordinators, youth sector leaders, intercultural experts, city-to-city networks, and regional institutions, MED FORUM constituted a powerful network of social, political, and media multipliers, and presented “A BLUEPRINT FOR MOVING BEYOND EXTREMISM”.

To now operationalise this enlarged network, MED FORUM has built consensus on the crucial sectors for the Anna Lindh Foundation’s renewed role as central institution for intercultural dialogue: (1) CITIES (2) MEDIA (3) EDUCATION (4) MOBILITY and (5) ENTREPRENEURSHIP; and actors: Youth, Women and Artists.

Investment in Youth received high-level institutional backing through MED FORUM (UN, EU, OSCE, Arab League) and cooperation agreements were signed in Valletta on 25th October with the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) to ensure a sustainable framework for action, including the World Bank Group and the World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid.

It was also announced that ALF will be a member of the the inter-agency steering committee to guide the Progress Study on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250, the first resolution of its kind on Youth, Peace and Security.

The launch of YOUNG MEDITERRANEAN VOICES, along with the announcement of secured financial and political backing for its roll-out from 1st January 2017, represents a major outcome of the MED FORUM process. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini, also confirmed hosting a follow-up meeting with Young Med Voices to see together in which way with the Maltese Presidency Euro-Med policies could be further reshaped.

Large-scale policy and programming actions have also been built through the MED FORUM process, including: “an Erasmus of Associations” to widen access to mobility opportunities; a “Media Analysis Instrument” to monitor cross-cultural reporting to be launched with existing regional media networks; a first mobility fund for Translation; and a “Global Fund for Intercultural Dialogue” in the model of the Global fund for Intercultural Education.

MED FORUM secured the political commitment to leverage the forthcoming Maltese Presidency of the European Council, the only one in an EU Med country for the next years, as a unique opportunity to bring youth sector and civil society actors to the heart of the policy discussion on peace and security in the Euro-Mediterranean space.



#BeyondExtremism

MED FORUM presents a blueprint for “moving beyond extremism”. The Forum disseminated the powerful message that there are alternatives to the extremist discourses dominating global politics, the media - traditional and social - and the personal lives and future of cities across the region alternatives to the extremist discourses dominating global politics. Online and mainstream media can be vehicles to make visible the voice and action of the people committed to improve intercultural relations.

- The scale of the FORUM as a gathering, the diversity of its actors, the “appetite for encounter” illustrated that there are people - young people, civil society actors, journalists, national and international policymakers - who are working on an alternative narrative built on inclusion, dialogue and cooperation.
- A key conclusion of MED FORUM was to shift the policy discourse from “counter-narratives” to unite around proactive campaigns aimed at building inspiring visions of future societies.
- This conclusion was backed up by new polling data on intercultural trends presented at MED FORUM which exposed convergences among values and interests in Europe and the southern Mediterranean region, but also differences of perception that can fuel polarisation and extremist narratives.
- External assumptions made about the risks of youth radicalization – above all, affiliation to groups such as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) – often fail to reflect the more commonly expressed desire of many young people to seek ownership and agency in shaping the future of their communities and societies as active and constructive citizens.





#YouthCan

Investment in Youth, the central policy pillar adopted by the Anna Lindh Foundation as part of its 10-year strategic plan (Working Together Towards 2025), was firmly embedded across MED FORUM 2016. The evidence-based debates of the Forum focused on how to now transform new regional youth policies and programming “from debate into action” through a focus on youth-led agency and initiatives to shape policy and media narratives.

- Youth firmly backed as multipliers of positive change, and powerful actors and partners in preventing conflict and radicalisation. This is backed up by new data from the ALF-commissioned Intercultural Trends survey on perceptions and values.
- Across diverse youth communities, feelings of disempowerment are prevalent, and policy-making is perceived as being dominated by an older generation of elites who are out of touch with the aspirations and needs of today's youth.
- It is not a question of creating a narrative for Youth, it is about ensuring that they have the requisite tools to create new and alternative narratives.
- The launch of Young Mediterranean Voices during the opening plenary debate on 24th October marked the importance of establishing platforms for debate between young people to the north and south of the Mediterranean around issues of common concern.
- The creation of consultation mechanisms between youth and decision-makers where policy-makers take seriously youth recommendations going beyond practices of online media consultations. Furthermore it is important to invest in programmes for youth mobility and exchanges with a particular investment on the southern shores of the Mediterranean.



Federica Mogherini @FedericaMog · Oct 24

My message to the Young Med Voices the EU gathered at #MedForum2016 with @AnnaLindh



Irina Bokova @IrinaBokova · Oct 24

Proud & inspired to be part of @AnnaLindh's #MedForum2016. Time to #ActTogether in partnership with #Youth to fight #ViolentExtremism



Sara Alhouni @saraalhouni · 24h

The beginning of #YoungMediterraneanVoice first debate !!!! #MedForum2016





#InterculturalCities

MED FORUM called for a strategic shift in focus to cities. Voted as the joint top theme through the Forum Live “Facebook Debates”, along with YouthCan, international delegates backed the centrality of cities today as the spaces for intercultural relations, and drivers for rethinking policies of social and community cohesion in a context of international migration and a refugee crisis.

- “Intercultural Cities” can represent the most significant strategic shift on the back of MED FORUM 2016.
- Mobilising support for investment in cities as spaces for cross-cultural relations and drivers of intercultural dialogue.
- A priority focus on embedding intercultural practices and policies at city level.
- Leveraging existing regional and global city-to-city and local authority networks to disseminate good practice on the management of diversity.
- Enhanced networking opportunities for city and local authority leaders engaged in intercultural policies and specific measures to support civil society for intercultural action.
- The establishment of “the Mediterranean Capital for Dialogue” can be a strong opportunity to increase the visibility of dialogue practice and attract engagement and investment.

CLUBdeMADRID Retweeted



Zlatko Laumdzija @LaumdzijaZ · 20h

The best way to protect your own identity is protecting others identities
[@LagumdzijaZ](#) #MEDFORUM2016 #MigrantsConnect #shredsocieties



MC2CM @urban_migration · Oct 24

#Thessaloniki aims to create shared prosperity from migration #LinaLiakou
#cooperation among cities key #MedForum2016



Karsten Xuereb @XuerebK · Oct 25

Chronic drain of creatives from Mediterranean cities will complicate their
regeneration - Ferdinand Richard #MedForum2016 #rcf



#ExchangePlus

Mobility was reconfirmed as one of the main challenges in operationalising the far-reaching network of actors constituted through MED FORUM, and widening the participation of opportunities for building a real north, south partnership. There remains key issues of scale and access which must be central to the policy rethink underway on how to leverage existing regional schemes such as Erasmus Plus.

- Opportunities for mobility are limited and not equitable in their distribution or availability
- Barriers to mobility are increasing in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The establishment of a Cultural passport recognised by the governments in the region could facilitate obtaining visas.
- The need for exposing young people to one another across lines of difference to increase learning and understanding is ever more evident. Launching a programme of intercultural visits to promote mutual knowledge and understanding through face-to-face encounters was promoted at the Forum.
- Virtual exchange, as defined by facilitated, curriculum-driven dialogue, allows an option that can be a counter for many baseline barriers.
- There was a call out to the Anna Lindh Foundation to work on creating evidence based policy to ensure support is provided to increase opportunities for exchange.
- There is now a firm policy call for an “Erasmus of Associations” to fuel a significant scale-up of exchange opportunities among CSO leaders and broader target groups.



Fatima Khachi @fatimakhachi · Oct 24

Discussing **#ExchangePlus**: expanding **#mobility** in the **#Mediterranean** Region
#MedForum2016 @AnnaLindh **#youth** **#education**



Waidehi Gokhale @WaidehiGG · 20h

Represented **#Soliya** to strategize collectively on the use of **#virtualexchange** to increase cross-cultural dialogue,
#MedForum2016, @AnnaLindh



euromed-migration @EMM4_migration · Sep 14

@MFAMalta congratulates @ICMPD for collaboration with @AnnaLindh on **#migration** and **#mobility** towards **#MedForum2016** and beyond





#MediaDialogue

Media are crucial vehicles for promoting mutual understanding, as exposed through the data presented at MED FORUM from the Anna Lindh Foundation Intercultural Trends Report. The Report provides evidence on public perception of media in the north and south, gaps, and different degrees of trust, in addition to relevant platforms and existing networks which could be leveraged for a new phase of media-civil society partnership.

- Media are crucial for the Anna Lindh Foundation.
- MED FORUM delegates expressed during the strategic sessions the view that media bear a heavy responsibility in increasing cleavages and fears.
- It is difficult to achieve balance, accountability and evidence based-news in a region where trust has often been eroded and perceptions about each other have deteriorated further.
- There is renewed interest, expressed at MED FORUM, from media operators in leveraging the INTERCULTURAL TRENDS REPORT as a source of analysis and reflection on media practice and policy.
- Media coverage does not cover enough the vibrant civil society that exists in the region so more investment in connecting media operators and civil society actors should be deployed.
- Proposals have been backed to develop an observatory on how media cover issues of intercultural relations and to provide evidence-base resources to impact on the practice of journalists.
- Training of journalists and media practitioners is necessary to give appropriate coverage of sensitive issues disseminating a code of ethics.



Jaafar Abdul Karim @jaafarAbdulKari · Oct 25

Thank U 4 great insight at #medforum2016 @AnnaLindh in #malta! 800 participants from 50 countries discuss intercultural dialogue. 👍👍



Ethar El-Katatney @etharkamal · Oct 25

"It's no longer about how many people you reached with your media, but how it's shared and its impact." -Shamil Idriss @SFCG_ #MEDFORUM2016



#RethinkingLearning

Taking a long-term, strategic approach brings education front and centre. Dialogue is not just about talking, there are competences required to ensure dialogue is effective - these must be taught in order for us to learn how to engage with one another constructively across lines of difference. Rethinking Learning was underlined across the MED FORUM, from the plenary on countering extremism to opening up space for youth.

- MED FORUM is calling for a solid policy to embed intercultural learning in formal and non-formal education sectors.
- Policy call to establish a Global Fund for Intercultural Learning.
- Identified need to develop further evidence-based research to support advocacy.
- At the programming level, the first “Education Handbook on Intercultural Citizenship Learning”, pioneered during five years by educators from the north and south of the Mediterranean with Anna Lindh Foundation support, should be rolled-out in partnership with regional institutions.
- Empowerment of educators in the formal and non-formal sector to be able to apply the new concepts, skills and methodologies presented in the Handbook through capacity building.
- Promote international alliances and partnerships within the formal and non-formal education sector to facilitate exchange.
- Building a platform for educators with the available resources, good practices, initiatives on intercultural learning presents a clear role for the Foundation and added value for existing programmes and initiatives.
- Training of journalists and media practitioners is necessary to give appropriate coverage of sensitive issues disseminating a code of ethics.



karl_donert @karldonert · Oct 24

Anna Lindh trends report shows **education** & training key, importance of <http://youthmetre.eu>
[#opendata](#) [#Yengage](#) [@Youthmetre](#) [#MedForum2016](#)



EUNIC Global @EUNIC_Global · Oct 24

The launch of the Young Mediterranean Voices programme [#MedForum2016](#)
[@AnnaLindh](#) [@BritishCouncil](#) [@FedericaMog](#)



Mehdi Jomaa Retweeted



chiraz bensemmane @isphahane · Oct 24

[#MedForum2016](#) [@Mehdi_Jomaa](#) "When talking about radicalisation the main focus should be **education** which is key, not only learning but values"



#CreativeEnterprise

Creative social entrepreneurship emerged through MED FORUM as a form of organisation for the promotion of social cohesion and dialogue while offering opportunities for income generation among civil society actors and youth in particular. In some countries of the region it is necessary to promote the notion of special legal status for social enterprise to enable them to operate as both a profit generating entity whilst concurrently be able to access government, NGO and charity trust funding and/or benefit from tax exemptions.

- MED Forum is calling for strengthening support systems to promote creative social entrepreneurship in the region through education, mentoring and business development strategies.
- Policy for the inclusion of women in social enterprise and to remove barriers to entry (socio-cultural realities, childcare issues, issues about travelling alone, male dominated business environment) and include marginalised groups, such as refugees, in entrepreneurial activities.
- The ALF should work to leverage our institutional partnerships and draw on the expertise within the network members to develop and implement policies on training, mentoring, networking, business skills development, access to finance, incubator and accelerator schemes. It also needs to create a platform for sharing good practices and methodologies across the Euro-Mediterranean space. This cooperation could take the form of work exchanges, mobilization of emerging cultural entrepreneur to facilitate knowledge exchange, creation of new physical and virtual knowledge networks. This cooperation would provide a space for intercultural dialogue and promote shared values.
- There is also the need to leverage public-private sector support to invest in organisations to develop their capacity to generate income. In operational terms the public-private support can be ensured through mentorship, job shadowing, and participation of business sector in the NGO Board of Directors.
- The idea of Facilitate a social enterprise passport was shared to enable social enterprise exchanges and networking and minimise the risk of visa denials.



Alison Coburn @AlisonCoburn · Oct 24

Wonderful panel session on social **enterprise** inspiring speakers
@CommonPurpose @AnnaLindh #MedForum2016



Ellada @elladaeva · Oct 24

#MedForum2016 debate on #creativeEnterprise, interesting diverse panel.
Revolutionary Irish, educ. Specialist & innovative Egyptian.



#WomenInAction

The MED Forum emphasised the importance of women as actors for peace in the Mediterranean. There cannot be stability nor peace without gender equality.

Legislation and treaties to ensure gender equality have been adopted in several countries but policies have not been implemented for gender equality.

There should be a revision of curricula and training of teachers in citizenship and gender equality and prioritise projects that give women the means to become more independent.



Delphine Borione @delphborione · Oct 25

Against negative discourses, take action to give a voice and empower engaged young women and men #MedForum2016



#ArtsAcrossBorders

MED Forum underlined the important of artists for their representation of the rich and complex realities in the region and the role they can have in building between different countries and engage audiences.

Policy should be shaped to develop strategies with chamber of commerce, music expos, governments and artists to raise the profile of arts and develop new roots in established and potential markets and therefore promoting sustainability. This approach would contribute to the establishment of creative groups or spaces in small and medium cities, besides the creativity spaces present in main cities.

Investment in the visibility of art work could raise attention to the sector and contribute to its promotion.



Toni Attard @AttardToni · Oct 24

Amina Abodoma sharing her experience on setting up @TeatroEskendria #creativeenterprise @AnnaLindh @ArtsCouncilMLT

HOPE



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PALAZZO PARISIO, MERCHANTS STREET, VALLETTA, MALTA