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Our Say

It gives me great pleasure to introduce our first Newsletter for this year.

To maintain a regular flow of information from the secretariat of the Anna Lindh Foundation, our Board of Governors, Advisory Board Members, Heads of Networks and all ALF stakeholders will receive this Newsletter four times a year.

At these times of political and economic uncertainty, we believe that the mandate of the Anna Lindh Foundation is more relevant than ever. But we also believe that we can never fulfill this mandate of enhancing Inter – cultural dialogue in the Euro – Mediterranean region without the highly appreciated support of all of our stakeholders and partners.

So, on behalf of the ALF family across the region, please accept our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude.

Dr. Nabil Al Sharif

Executive Director



Empowering Young Voices

Leadership Seminar in Malta

Mediterranean Voices”, the flagship youth-led debate programme coordinated by the Anna Lindh Foundation and co-funded by the European Commission.

Taking place in Malta from 14 to 18 January 2019, the leadership seminar brought together 20 emerging leaders from across the Euro-Mediterranean region, selected from an expanding resource pool of many hundreds of young debaters engaged in “Young Mediterranean Voices”. It has been timed to coincide with the “5+5 Dialogue” of Foreign Ministers from the EU and Mediterranean partner countries, in order to also directly expose trainees to high-level decision-makers.

During four days, the trainees had unique access to experienced global leaders, EU policy-makers, media mentoring, and influential peer networks from politics, business and Civil Society, with the overall aim to build their capacity for positively shaping policy and media narratives. The seminar is part of a blended learning programme that will run through the course of 2019, with both online and offline elements for a more powerful leadership development experience, and providing participants access to a much wider group of decision and policy-makers.

The leadership programme is organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation in co-partnership with MEDAC (Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies) and the World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid, in association with Common Purpose International. The programme has also involved representatives of the other co-partners and supporters of “Young Mediterranean Voices”: the British Council; the Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI); the World Bank Group; Global Thinkers’ Forum; the Government of Finland; and the European Commission.



5+5 Meeting in Malta

The 5+5 Meeting on Sustainable Development was held from 17 to 18 January 2019 in Malta. ALF was invited to the meeting as observer. These two days meeting ended with a joint declaration from the Ministers from the Western Mediterranean Region about the challenges in Sustainable Development and the proposed way forward.

Anna Lindh Foundation is referenced under the section Youth of the Valletta Declaration. More specifically, the ministers recognized the importance of co-operation on youth matters and welcome the contribution of ALF to promote youth debate dialogue and a deepened cooperation on intercultural trends and media dialogue.

It is worth mentioning that , in the frame of the 5+5 meeting, before the ministerial took place, an informal exchange of views between the ministers and a number of young civil society leaders was organized, where the young voices were 9 participants from the Leadership Seminar. Political leadership connected with the bottom up youth led voices.



Launching the first “Young Mediterranean Voices” Month across MENA

November 2018, the Foundation and partners launched the first “Young Mediterranean Voices Month”, a region-wide programme of intercultural debates and national forums as part of “Young Mediterranean Voices” (YMV), the largest dialogue movement of its kind across North Africa and the Middle East. Youth-led debates took place across cities in more than thirty Mediterranean and European countries. The month-long programme was built on a range of motions and topics created by young people across the region, among them: ‘peaceful coexistence and migration’, ‘the role of refugees in intercultural dialogue’, ‘youth inclusion in policy making’, ‘education reform’, ‘cultural heritage and development, and ‘digitally-driven peacebuilding’. The national dialogues were organised for the first time in close cooperation with global partnerships of the Foundation and the Delegations of the European Union.

Young Mediterranean Voices - South to North Policy Dialogues

Between October and December 2018, the Foundation coordinated a series of youth-led policy dialogues in the framework of “Young Mediterranean Voices”. This included a public debate on 12 October 2018 in Rhodes, with two intercultural teams of debaters from Greece, Jordan and Algeria, on the theme of cultural heritage and tourism development. The debate was organised as a side event of the Rhodes Model Regional Cooperation, which gathered 400+ young people from across Greece and the region, with the Foundation Head of Network. Following this, on 13 November 2018, the Foundation co-organised with the EC Representation in Marseille a YMV Public Debates in Marseille as part of a series of public debates bringing authentic youth voice from the South Mediterranean to Europe through intercultural debates. Debaters exchanged arguments including points on innovative enterprises, developing skills, community development (proposition team from Jordan and France), and cultural identity, illegal immigration, security (opposition team from Egypt and France).



Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange: Network-led Intercultural Debates

More than 500 young people participated in 40+ intercultural online debates, as part of the Foundation's work on the pioneering "Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange" of the European Commission. 50 motions were suggested and debated by team leaders and participants in the online debates following their training. The motions tackled issues that youth in Europe and the South Med countries consider of priority to them, and can be addressed in an intercultural context. The motions were mostly centered around themes related to migration (i.e. this house believes that for a peaceful coexistence, migrants should adopt the culture of the host countries. This house believes that assimilation is better for the migrant than integration), education (i.e. This house believes that using positive discrimination to increase diversity in university is vital. This house believes that the online learning is better than the traditional learning), democracy (i.e. This house believes that voting should be compulsory. This house believes that the Western democracy model does not work for the Arab nations), along with other themes related to global warming, youth inclusion, data protection, new technologies and the legalization of drugs.



Fighting stereotypes

Intercultural Trends 2018 High Level Advisory Group Round Table

Rome, 22 November 2018, marked the global media launch of the region's flagship report on "Intercultural Trends in the Euro-Mediterranean region". It also coincided with a region-wide programme of intercultural debates with the Foundation Network of civil society Networks and its "Young Mediterranean Voices" debate forum.



The global launch was covered extensively through international media, with testimonies from leading policy figures including the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Nabil El-Araby. As part of the global launch, intercultural debates were organised with the Foundation's Civil Society Networks across the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and the Balkans.



Anna Lindh Foundation @AnnaLindh · 22 Nov 2018

"The report will be officially launched in 30 countries today" Executive Director @NabilAlSharif at the Global Launch of the 2018 #InterculturalTrendsReport in #Rome



Presenting ALF Report

Rhodes - Aegean University

The Intercultural Trends Report was presented several times in different countries in the last quarter of 2018, on the 15th of November 2018 at the University of the Aegean in Rhodes, the Faculty of Humanities of the University of the Aegean hosted the Workshop entitled "Intercultural relations in the Mediterranean: From research to practice", for the presentation of the Anna Lindh Report 2018 on Intercultural trends and social change in the Mediterranean area and share the experience of civil society.



Tunis - Al Manar University - Amman - Petra University

On the 17th of November the report was presented at the University Al Manar of Tunis, the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and on the 10th of January 2019 at Petra University in Amman, the Faculty of Mass Communication.



Shaping regional policy and programming with the European Union

Tunis, 15 November 2018, the President of the Foundation led the opening debate at the European Union High-level Conference on ‘Rethinking the Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Partnership’. The High-Level Conference brought together EU high level officials, including Commissioner for EU Neighborhood policy, Johannes Hahn and the EU Ambassador to Tunisia, with the President providing insights from the Foundation’s Intercultural research. Prior to this, on 13 November 2018, the President took part in the opening of “Mediterranean of the Future – Act II – Priority to Youth & Innovation”, with leading EU officials and a focus on connecting youth voice to regional policy-making.

Leading a movement

Med Forum 2020



During the last quarter of 2018, a high level meeting took place in Zagreb with Croatia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Anna Lindh ‘s Foundation Executive Director. The meeting was to discuss the details of the Forum 2020.

The upcoming planned activities that will take place during the first quarter of 2019 will start with establishing a steering committee and scheduling the first meeting to be held in Zagreb and be hosted by Croatia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Head of Network.

Head of Network’s planning task force will be established and annual meetings schedule will be created.

With the Head of Networks, a webinar will take place in March to discuss and confirm project ideas / themes and with the Croatian Head of Network will communicate a list of Croatia’s host activities in 2019 which will be communicated with an invitation to other Head of Networks to join in delivering activities of interest. Finally, the visual identity for the Forum in Croatia will be created.

A Network of Networks

The General Assembly of the National Civil Society Networks of the Anna Lindh Foundation

The General Assembly of the National Civil Society Networks of the Anna Lindh Foundation took place in Brussels from 10th to 11th December 2018 involving Network coordinators from more than 30 countries and representatives of the Foundation management

The 2018 two-day Agenda centered around management support to Networks through the presentation of the 2019-20 work plan, generating an enhanced sense of ownership across the Head of National Networks institutions, communicating a collective vision of the future of the Foundation as a Network of Networks, establishing dynamics and structures that encourage dialogue and effective collaboration between the Foundation Networks and International Headquarters, building consensus around the characteristics of good practice and the methodology for mapping the Members of the Foundation Networks and launching the preparation process for the Mediterranean Forum 2020.

The Agenda included: (i) presentations by the Foundation management on the corporate work plan to 2020 and new support tools for Networks, and an open exchange moderated by the Executive Director; (ii) open space for the coordinators to lead cross-network discussions on the topics and issues most important to them; (iii) working sessions on a new communication policy for the Foundation and data protection (GDPR) with the support of external communication and legal experts; (iv) dedicated plenary sessions on “Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange” and “Mediterranean Forum 2020” as operational frameworks for the Network of Networks; and (v) World Cafe group discussions framed by the forthcoming “Mapping of the Networks” aimed to better understand the Foundation Network members’ capacities and identify good practices but also challenges for enhanced cooperation.



Institution-Building & Organisation Development

Signature of the Action Grant

The Action Grant for the multi-annual programme 2019 – 2021 has been signed with DGNEAR on December 20, 2018. The overall value of the contract is EUR 8.749.659 co-funded at 80% by the EU. The Action Grant will fund three main pillars of the Foundation Corporate Plan – Intercultural Trends and Media, Intercultural Cities & Learning and Network Connect – alongside it will support the Foundation Institutional Building process

Launch of the Management Support Team

Throughout 2019 – 2021 (Phase V), ALF will ensure support to the national networks' coordinators through service global price contracts in relation to the tasks and activities they are asked to deliver. The management support envelope globally values 1,700,000 EUR.

The overall objective of the contract is empowering the ALF National Networks as spaces for conception, action and exchange for intercultural dialogue by enhancing and fostering their coordination, mobilisation and development as well as by supporting them in promoting ALF programmes activities.

Grants Plan to launch the call for proposals 2019

The grants plan will start by identification and preparation of the grants team and hiring an expert to support the team in the preparation of the guidelines, applications and all other forms and annexes.

Afterwards, getting the grants management system ready to be tested for the call and then be used for the concept note and to verify the ALF membership and finally would be used for the full application and uploading the required documents.

CSO Network and Organizational Development

The Foundation established a Monitoring & Evaluation Heads of Network working group, strengthening its collaborative-participatory approach to build a strong evidence base for more effective CSO/Network support (leverage), reporting to donors and political decision makers, and visibility of civil society work, in addition to supporting ALF's organizational development by establishing a Results-Based Monitoring system, as requested by the external consultants.

The Way Ahead

Preparing the “Summit of the Mediterranean”

The Anna Lindh Foundation has been invited to participate in the inter-institutional group involved in their preparation of the “Summit of the Two Shores of the Western Mediterranean”. The French President proposed to Western Mediterranean partners a Two Shores Summit, to be held at the Palais du Pharo in Marseille on 24 June 2019.

Enhanced EU Liaison & Coordination

During the first quarter of 2019, the Foundation is participating to monthly coordination meetings with the European Union central services in Brussels, including the European Commission and the European External Action Service (MENA, Global, Strategic Communications). The aim is to ensure enhanced synergies between the Foundation’s work programme and the regional programmes supported by the EU, and to leverage the Foundation’s intercultural research and experience in the field to contribute insights to EU policy-making and programming.

