

Alexandria 19- 21 January 2008

Workshop 5 Education and Research

The project of the plan of action was the object of extensive discussion which was validated by the end of the workshop. This plan, which recommends that cooperation and exchange in education and research develop in quantity and quality, is indispensable for any partnership between Europe and the countries of the South and East of the Mediterranean. This development must be founded on acquired experiences and existing networks and should create new expectations and ambitions in the dialogue and inter-cultural context.

The European entity must perform two actions beside bilateral efforts:

Better adaptation and use of existing European programs such as Erasmus and Tempus-Meda, PCRD and in particular Marie Curie which has not been made use of in comparison to other programs. However, the benefit reaped from such programs is not enough when compared to the challenges.

For this reason, it is indispensable that another program for cooperation and exchange be added to the existing one. This program should include all divisions and levels of the educational systems and can be called EducaMED or Averroes, and must be supported by a huge budget. This project must define the existing deficiencies, and simultaneously compare between the different solutions that it has reached, and the results obtained by the other countries. It should also set priorities for co-development. This list must always be open to creative suggestions and be able to adapt to the different situations and the results of the different countries.

Among the expected work is the following:

- Training and qualifying teachers of the primary and senior stages.
- Developing necessary skills appropriate for this age of globalization and the information society in which we live.
- Developing the principles and tools necessary for living together and for dialogue, especially learning languages, reconsideration of the tools and the educational methods applied, and increasing European studies in the South and Mediterranean culture and civilization studies in the North.
- Supporting efforts made to refashion and restructure educational and training programs and organizations, including the development efforts of the Bologna process.
- Supporting the mobility of students, researchers, administrators, and volunteers from the North to the South for participation in special programs, summer courses and youth exchange programs. Moreover, grants for excellence should be accorded to organizations and individuals who support in-field education and training in the South and East of the Mediterranean.
- Creating an observatory for establishing and comparing systems, defining initiatives and effective networks, publishing best practices, suggesting pertinent indicators in addition to producing analyses that aim at criticizing principle points.

2. Members of the workshop listened to Ms. Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux, who is responsible for the Mediterranean Union for higher education and scientific research.

3. Few suggestions were made and allowed for exchange of viewpoints in a fruitful way in the frame work of the workshop, hence, its validation. The following are the main points:

- Organizing, in 2008 and under the sponsorship of Milan, a seminar on higher education institutions in the framework of inter-cultural dialogue. This project is a product of the Rome Declaration on the Mediterranean Union.
- Training and education according to the demands of work offers in the European market. This is important as it will facilitate finding work opportunities through networks of Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and making use of international and European work opportunities.
- Meeting of students in the Mediterranean region. This proposition consists of publishing good practices that result from the accumulative experiences of some universities, among which are Cergy-Pontoise and the French University of Egypt.
- The Mediterranean Youth Office will keep record of all the meetings of the Euromed for youth and the meetings of the French- German Office for Youth. This is because dialogue among peoples and cultures takes place through exchange of youths, leaders and artists, and passes through new channels of technology.