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Outcome document

Youth workshop

Organized in the framework of MAJALAT initiative

24 April 2019, Tunis

The "youth" workshop, organized within the framework of the MAJALAT project on 24 April 2019 in Tunis (Tunisia) brought together 30 participants amongst them 28 young people (under 35 years old) from 12 Mediterranean countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, France, Italy, Spain, Libya, Syria).

During the first youth workshop in September 2018 (the final document is available [here](#)), participants identified priorities that should be at the heart of EU policies and made several recommendations to the European Commission. The topics covered were: migration, the fight against violence, sexual and reproductive health, employment and vocational training. The latter point was of particular interest to the participants, as it is a cross-cutting issue and a key challenge for young people in the region. The REF has therefore decided to join forces with a partner of the MAJALAT project steering committee, the Arab Campaign for Education for All, which carries out advocacy work on education-related issues. A session of the workshop was therefore built on their expertise.

The main objectives of this workshop were to:

- Raise awareness of EU policies that have an impact on the southern Mediterranean region and inform young people about EU education policies/priorities/programmes
- Make recommendations to the European Commission on the education theme

MEETING WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION IN TUNISIA

A first session aimed to inform young people about the European Neighbourhood Policy and how it is implemented at national level. Participants were able to benefit from presentations and exchange views with delegation officials on several topics:

1. European Neighbourhood Policy and the EU-Tunisia Association Agreement, the privileged partnership and strategic priorities 2018-2020
2. Civil society participation in political dialogue
3. Thematic presentations: Education; Youth Partnership; Mobility and migration; Justice and the fight against violence



DISCUSSIONS ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE AMMAN YOUTH WORKSHOP (SEPTEMBER 2018)

The second session provided information on the framework governing relations between the EU and young people in the Southern Neighbourhood in general, but also recalled the priorities and recommendations established by the participants of the 1st workshop on employment and training, migration, sexual and reproductive health and the fight against violence.

Concerning:

- **Employment and vocational training:** Participants added that the EU should promote the exchange of good practices/ initiatives in North-South-South entrepreneurship.
- **Migration/mobility:** Mobility is a right and the security approach put in place by the European Union (increase in funds to stem migration, implementation of readmission agreements, externalisation of borders) as well as the categorisation of migration (legal/illegal) are questionable. It is essential to systematically highlight the violence on the migration route (aggressions, trafficking...) and the need to reiterate the responsibility of States for the current situation in the Mediterranean. In terms of mobility, the EU should financially support South-South mobility partnerships.
- **Security and fight against violence:** Violence does not only come from countries in the South. The violence suffered by populations in the South as a result of climate change is worth recalling. Industrialised countries, which leave significant ecological footprints, must assume their environmental responsibility and acknowledge the massive ecological debt left.

EDUCATION, AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REGION

The third session aimed to familiarise itself with EU education/employment policies and related challenges. Rawan Ayash, from the Arab Campaign for Education for all, began by presenting the overview of the employment and education situation in the region, emphasizing the importance given to the latter in the southern neighbourhood region.

Employment, formal and non-formal education

Social, economic, demographic and political developments in the southern Mediterranean have made vocational education and training (VET) a priority for most countries in the region. They can play an important role in combating youth unemployment while contributing to inclusion and social cohesion. This importance is reflected in the SDG4 that calls for ensuring equal equitable and inclusive education, promoting lifelong learning opportunities.

Governments have put youth employment at the top of the political agenda and adopted emergency measures emphasising the importance of tackling unemployment and professional equality. Less attention has been paid to sustainable job creation policies, education and lifelong learning policies.



As the world opens up, the educational process must not be limited to its four basic components (student, teacher, book and school environment). It is essential to be innovative in the means and pedagogical tools put in place. Non-formal education¹ is particularly important today because most employers require skills that are relevant to them (teamwork skills, autonomy and initiative, cultural sensitivity, etc.). These are difficult to acquire in the context of formal education² whose main focus remains learning, its recognition and certification. Nor does it necessarily guarantee employment. Rising educational attainment even tends to go hand in hand with an increase in the unemployment rate.

The complexity of the decision-making framework and the centralization of education and training systems

The difficulty of implementing educational policies that can alleviate youth unemployment is due to the fact that most of the southern Mediterranean countries have highly centralised education and training systems. Social partners and other actors are rarely involved, which aggravates the skills mismatch. A number of actors can be mobilized: learners, teachers and trainers, ministries, employers' organizations, local authorities and civil society. Ensuring good governance in employment and vocational training is a difficult task because it is a complex policy area at the crossroads of education, training and social, economic and labour market policies (ETF, 2013)³.

Anissa Ben Aziza, from the Tunisian Coalition for Education, then gave an overview of the EU's priorities and programmes in education and employment in relation to the region.

Projects in the youth field are funded through bilateral envelopes under the ENP National Indicative Programmes and Euro-Mediterranean Regional Cooperation. The EU does not have a comprehensive strategy for young people in the region. The main cooperation policies between the EU and neighbouring partner countries on education are: the European Neighbourhood Policy, Europe 2020 : A European Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (2010), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Mobilising, connecting and empowering young people: a new European Union youth strategy, ERASMUS+.

There are also specific programmes carried out by **DG Education and Culture (EAC): Erasmus +** (support for university reform and student and teacher mobility); **Non-formal education** (support for young people through short-term exchanges and voluntary activities) and DG NEAR. The European Training Foundation (ETF) contributes to the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and

¹ "Non-formal education refers to all planned social programmes and processes for young people aimed at improving a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum (in places such as youth organisations, sports clubs, theatre groups and associations)". Definition from the CoE : <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/european-youth-foundation/definitions>

² "Formal education refers to the formal education system, which extends from primary school (and in some preschool countries) to university and includes specialized technical and vocational training programmes. Definition from the CoE : <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/european-youth-foundation/definitions>

³ European Training Foundation, *Governance arrangements for vocational education and training in ETF partner countries Analytical overview 2012–17*, p. 1.



programmes aimed at: promoting social mobility and social inclusion, reforming education and training systems, and better balancing the capacities of these systems with labour market demands.

Participants were then divided into 3 sub-groups to agree on three-level education recommendations, presented below.

Education and employment

Recommendations

1. Support the development of new approaches/programmes to enable, within traditional education systems, the acquisition of professional skills and know-how resulting from non-formal education (voluntary projects within communities, etc.) enabling better integration into the labour market (for example, every citizen could benefit from certification based on a skills assessment, professional achievements that he/she can then enhance during job search)
2. Improve and develop access to and provision of technical and vocational training for young people but also throughout life
3. Involve young people and CSOs in the design and evaluation of EU employability and education programmes

Education and mobility

Recommendations

1. Develop awareness-raising activities on EU educational projects promoting the mobility of young people so that they are known and accessible to all
2. To provide citizens of the Southern Neighbourhood with the opportunity to have their skills and competences validated and to obtain full or partial qualifications in Europe
3. Develop and promote more broadly programmes that facilitate the mobility of young people from the southern neighbourhood countries to EU countries for education and capacity building purposes
4. Generalise voluntary service between the countries of the Southern Neighbourhood and the EU countries to strengthen relations, exchange cultures/experiences
5. Seek more partners and other methods to implement partnership projects with the EU in the field of education in the countries of the southern neighbourhood in crisis, instead of putting them on hold (Libya, Syria)
6. 6. Develop North-South exchange and training programmes and facilitate access to education. between universities in the North and South by strengthening partnerships between universities in the framework of educational programmes such as the Erasmus Mundus scholarships



Education strategies

Recommendations

- 1.** Encourage the development of a regional roadmap on educational strategies and then implement them at the national level, drawing on local actors and several stakeholders: learners, teachers and trainers, ministries, employers' organizations, local authorities and civil society
- 2.** Involve local actors in the development of educational strategies
- 3.** Invite the EU to support programmes that promote non-formal education and strengthen partnerships with local NGOs in projects related to education and capacity building
- 4.** Support in particular non-formal and vocational training initiatives for out-of-school/disadvantaged youth