



Facilitating Political Dialogue in the Baltico-Mediterranean Axis

Programme Summary

This programme gathers together civil society actors from six countries from the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea regions to enter in dialogue on mobility, culture and environment.

Mobility of people is a common issue for both regions, where migrants from across the sea face similar difficulties rising from intolerance and lack of understanding between cultures. This programme works to alleviate these difficulties through disseminating knowledge and sharing best practices among actors from a wide range of cultural surroundings around the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea. Intercultural understanding and the political dialogue between regions are also elemental in overcoming the challenge of increased xenophobic movements in Europe and in the Mediterranean partner countries. Both areas also face similar environmental challenges resulting from oil transportation, agricultural runoff and tourism, among other issues. These challenges can be lightened through sharing of knowledge (i.e. on ecotourism), cooperation and political dialogue.

The dialogue develops through thematic round-tables facilitated by experts and attended by youth, women, migrants and NGO members from the programme countries, and culminate in a final conference to be held towards the end of the programme.

Programme Partners:

- The Lead Agency;
The Finnish NGDO Platform to the EU, Kehys ry (FIN)
- International Centre for Black Sea Studies – ICBSS (GRE)
- EKO LIBURNIA, Association for Development of Ecotourism, Organic Agriculture and Environmental Protection (CRO)
- IPCRI, Ltd. Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (ISR)
- Groupement d'Etudes et de Recherches sur la Méditerranée - G.E.R.M (MOR)
- MTÜ Arengukoostöö Ümarlaud - AKÜ, Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation (EST)
- Tampere Peace Research Institute (TAPRI), University of Tampere (FIN)

Objectives

The overall objective of this programme is to contribute to the enhanced political dialogue between the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea regions. These two regions in the vicinity of the European Union have several similarities. They share common challenges and they are both important areas for partnership with neighbouring regions - a fact highlighted by the two high-profile EU strategies, the Union for the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea Region Strategy. This programme strives to promote the regions as partners in dialogue for beneficial cooperation, rather than rivals in competition, and to build up sustainable structures and networks for future collaboration.

The specific objectives of this programme are

- a) to improve networking of civil society between the two regions,
- b) to promote benefits of co-operation and mutual understanding,
- c) to introduce an opportunity for civil society actors, especially women, youth and migrants, from the programme regions to present policy recommendations for decision-makers regarding culture, mobility and environment, leading to increased awareness on political opportunities.

Programme Schedule:

December 1st, 2009 – June 1st, 2011

Programme's Location:

Finland, Estonia, Greece, Croatia, Morocco and Israel.

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