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## **Introduction**

Another busy year for MUYA has passed, during which several significant projects have been implemented and completed on the national and many new collaborations built on the international level.

The past term (May 2011-May 2012) is definitely a highlight of MUYA's five years history. After two years of hard work, "Eleo and the Bubble Planet" – a children's book on human rights was finally published in January 2012. This project can be considered as the most significant and successful of all projects, endorsed by the Hon. Minister Dolores Cristina. The book launch event, which took place on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012 was widely covered by the main Maltese TV channels and several newspapers and online news portals. The book has been distributed to all Maltese primary schools.

For the third consecutive year, MUYA also continued coordinating the Crocus project on the national level, attracting even more interested groups to participate. Apart from the national projects and events, the organisation also organised a YiA seminar for its members to generate ideas for new projects MUYA could undertake with the help of YiA funding. In February 2012, the organisation celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

During the past year MUYA was a partner to various international organisations, sending its members to nine different events (including youth-exchanges, training courses, partnership building activities, seminars and the 7<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum).

In 2012 the organisation also applied for YiA, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig funding. YiA project "OUT" has already been approved and will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> June in Malta. The decision on the other projects has not been taken yet, however, the responsible persons are very hopeful that at least one of the projects will be approved.

# **1 National projects**

## **1.1 The Crocus Project**

*Malta, September 2011 – March 2012*

The Crocus Project is intended for pupils aged eleven years and upwards. The project is now a perennial activity with schools from all over the world becoming involved in it every year.

Holocaust Education Trust Ireland usually provides schools with yellow crocus bulbs to plant in autumn in memory of one and a half million Jewish children and thousands of other children who died in the Holocaust. Through the Malta UNESCO Youth Association, the organisation provides the schools not with yellow crocus bulbs, but with yellow daffodil bulbs due to the fact that crocus plants do not survive in Malta. The yellow flowers recall the yellow Stars of David that Jews were forced to wear under Nazi rule. The daffodils bloom around March and when people admire the flowers, the children can explain what they represent. The international Holocaust Memorial Day is on the 27th of January, which MUYA encourages the schools to remember.

The Crocus Project is a tangible way to introduce young people to the subject of the Holocaust and to raise awareness about the dangers of racism, discrimination, prejudice and bigotry. The Trust makes available guidelines and information which may be of assistance to teachers during this activity. These resources complement existing material on integration and acceptance. The children's involvement in planting the bulbs and watching the flowers grow encourages ongoing learning about the importance of tolerance and respect.

The Trust has also launched the Online Crocus Club, a secure online forum ([www.hetireland.org/crocus](http://www.hetireland.org/crocus)) where participating schools can share their experiences of the Crocus Project and make new friends. There are separate forums for teachers and students and it is administered by the Trust. We hope that all schools and students will become active members of the Online Crocus Club.

The project has been carried out in Malta during three consecutive years and has been a very successful activity. The second and third year apart from the Malta UNESCO Youth Association, the Scout Group of Malta was promoting the project within several scout groups on the island. In the second edition, during 2010-2011 six scout groups took part actively and

during the third edition (2011-2012) the number of scout groups increased to ten. During all editions MUYA, with the help of the Education Division identified a number of schools that were interested in participating in this project and distributed hundreds of bulbs to all the children. MUYA invited the schools to propose a focal point within the school, be it a form teacher, history teacher, geography teacher or any other teacher deemed fit to be responsible for the project within the school, with one (1) class of not more than thirty (30) students. The participating schools were asked to send the teacher responsible to an information session whereby details about the project were announced and guidelines and information packs distributed.

During 2011-2012 the Crocus Project was also implemented as a Community project in Qrendi where the school, Scout Group and Local Council were involved in it. Around 1000 bulbs were distributed in both years around schools and scout groups.

Timeline of the project:

- 1st -2nd November 2011 – Distribution of bulbs
- 14th October 2011 – Crocus Project briefing with the contact persons at the Education Department
- End of January 2012 – schools organise exhibitions
- End of March 2012 – collection of reports, photos, videos to be uploaded on the website

MUYA has been proposed by HETI to become partners for the Crocus Project for its next edition 2012-2013 which the organisation has gladly accepted.

## **1.2 MUYA Seminar**

*Marsaxlokk, 24th September 2011*

*Participants: Sarah Suda, Christianne Caruana, Desiree D'Amato, Tiziana Grech, Analiza Abdilla, Birgit Oidram, Joanna Bonnici, Daniel Mifsud, Julian Portelli, Alexander Thenner*

This seminar was organised to introduce the Youth in Action programme and work on potential project ideas in smaller groups. Ten volunteers from MUYA gathered on a Saturday to join the creative minds and channel the ideas into implementable project concepts.

The whole Saturday consisted of productive workshops which resulted in several interesting project ideas, including 'Outdoor education' and 'Agriculture and Maltese Heritage'. Due to

lack of human resources and considering the labourious preparation to submit an application for funding, the seminar group decided to focus on one project idea at the time. As a couple of professional trainers from MUYA's network had already implemented successful training course on Outdoor Education, the group decided to proceed with that topic. Christianne, Alex and Desiree became responsible for submitting the application to the Maltese National Agency. Due to some issues with the foreign partners the submission of the project proposal took place for the 1st of February 2012 deadline.

### **1.3 MUYA's 5th Birthday Party**

*25th February 2012*

As the organisation was set up in February 2007, MUYA had a great pleasure to celebrate its 5th birthday in February 2012. The birthday party took place in a wine bar Tal-Villagg in Lija. Even though fewer guests turned up than expected, it was great to meet several members and partners who had been actively working with or in MUYA in the past. In addition, Dorianne Formosa, formerly a very active member, attended MUYA's birthday party directly from Brussels.

### **1.4 MUYA's Hike from Bahrija to Mtahleb**

*22nd April 2012*

On Sunday, 22nd April 13 people joined for a four-hours hike from Bahrija to Mtahleb.

## **2 International Projects implemented by MUYA**

### **2.1 Children's Book on Human Rights – “Eleo and the Bubble Planet”**

*Malta, July 2010 – January 2012*

The Project run by the Malta UNESCO Youth Association and funded by the European Youth Fund of the Council of Europe takes the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and re-writes it in child friendly language. Partner groups of MUYA in this project were the Estonian UNESCO Youth Association, the Youth Center of Dravinya Valley (Slovenia) and Initiative Regional Youth Council (Bulgaria).

“Eleo and the Bubble Planet” presents the 30 Articles in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights through a story 'lived' by a main cartoon character, called Eleo. Colourful illustrations and simplified text make it more interesting and eye-catching for 7 - 9 year olds - which is the target audience of this book.

Although the creative process of writing the book started in 2010, the main work in terms of the content, illustrations and design was carried out throughout 2011. Following several forum discussions between the partner groups and Creative Session for the characterisation of the main character in 2010, the story line of the book was finalised in January 2011 and individual articles drafted during the international Creative Session in April 2011 in Malta.

The illustrations of the book were finalised in September 2011 and during the following months the design of the book was completed. “Eleo and the Bubble Planet” was sent to print in the end of December 2011 and was published during the first days of January 2012.

About 300-400 books have been disseminated in primary schools in Malta. Every partner organisation will be disseminating 100 books in their own country. With the help of further funding and collaboration the project is expected to be taken to the next level with distribution all over Europe and translation into many other languages.

More information about the book project can be found on: <http://www.childrensbook-onhumanrights.org/>.

## **2.2 The Book Launch – “Eleo and the Bubble Planet”**

*De La Salle College, Birgu (Malta), 18th of January*

The Book Launch event was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2012 at De La Salle College under the patronage of Hon. Minister Dolores Cristina. Apart from the Hon. Minister, MUYA had a great pleasure to host other distinguished guests, such as the Commissioner for Children Ms Helen D’Amato, Ambassador to UNESCO Dr. Ray Bondin, the principals of the Maltese colleges and Heads of Schools and others.

The 30-minutes event started with a musical performance by the De La Salle choir. It was followed by MUYA’s President Ms Sarah Suda’s welcome speech and speech by the representatives of the Student Council of De La Salle College. Then, Ms Marie Louise Vella presented “Eleo and the Bubble Planet”, by reading the excerpt from the book. After the presentation of the book Hon. Minister Cristina endorsed the efforts by MUYA and along with Ms Suda handed over the copies to the representatives of the Colleges and Schools. The launch event was followed by a reception.

“Eleo and the Bubble Planet” and its launch event gained much positive attention in the media. All major TV channels, such as TVM, Net Television and One TV covered the event. Articles of the book were published on Times of Malta TV Guide, Malta Independent and MaltaRightNow.com. In addition, Sarah Suda gave an interview to Radio Kulturali on 9<sup>th</sup> of February.

Our organisation is grateful to all volunteers and De La Salle College who assisted in organising the book launch. We are also very grateful to the Ministry for Education and Employment who has helped MUYA to distribute the books to Maltese primary schools.

### **3 Participation in the international projects**

#### **3.1 YiA Partnership Building Activity: Move your body!**

*Buzau, Romania, 3<sup>rd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

*Maltese participants: Raina Gatt and Daniel Mifsud*

The main objective of this project was to promote learning and improving the aspects of living environment through sport activities. 35 participants all from different countries Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and Romania.

Participants had the opportunity to take part in discussion games and express their views on how to deliver the thoughts through physical recreation. Before every discussion, an energiser took place which enabled the participants to get to know each other and to get prepared for the workshops.

This training course also welcomed local participants who were deaf. Overall the training course offered the opportunity to participate in multiple sport activities, from table tennis to football, tennis, volleyball, basketball and even swimming.

#### **3.2 YiA Partnership Building Activity: It's Action Time**

*Srebrna Góra, Poland 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

*Maltese participant: Cynthia Ann Ellul*

This Partnership Building Activity gathered together 24 different people from different countries including Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Spain, Northern Ireland, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Germany, Greece, Slovakia, Lithuania and Malta, in order to discuss different ways of spending free time, share their knowledge and skills concerning time management, most of all create a strong partnership between partners, rediscover richness of possibilities how to spend spare time in outdoor.

The synergy effect made by all participants and appropriate methods based on creativity and interactivity, brought up a strong partnership between all participants and partner organisations. The PBA focused on giving participants the space to meet new people and create new projects concerning outdoor activities and time management.

The participants had plenty of opportunities for sharing their partnership projects experiences including sharing methods and aids to improve management and communication between each organisation like Doodle ([www.doodle.com](http://www.doodle.com)) and Prezi ([www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com)).

Activities included:

- ice-breaking games
- workshops: communication, leadership, managing projects
- cultural visits in Srebrna Góra surroundings

### **3.3 YiA Youth-Exchange: Active Ingredients – Cooking in a Melting Pot**

*Mazury Lakes, Poland, 13th – 22nd June 2011*

*Maltese participants: Dorianne Formosa, Clayton Hili, Antoine Dacacche, Cris Borg, Terence Galdes, Thomas Galea, Maria Sacco and Nicky Sammut*

The project took place in Mazury Lakes in Poland between 13th-22nd June 2011. It saw the participation of 30 other youths coming from 3 different youth organisations in Europe, namely Membrillos por el Mundo, an organisation from Cordoba Spain, MUYA from Malta and the hosting organisation from Warsaw Poland.

The participants had cooking workshops including basic kitchen practises. The work was carried out in a team from the 3 countries which enabled the 30 participants to work with each other. Almost none of the participants had ever worked in a kitchen, but creativity and imagination led to wonderful meals everyday both for lunch and dinner. Other workshops included preparing serviettes according to the occasion, the history of ingredients in europe and worldwide. The participants also had the opportunity to have a demonstration of how polish cottage cheese is made.

Activities apart from the cooking workshops included the canoeing trip around the lake, the daily energizers and games, lakeside cookout and the rest!

### **3.4 YiA Youth-Exchange: CREATIVITY VI – Volunteering & Activism**

*Orphani Kavalas, Greece, 6<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

*Maltese participants: Deborah Abela, Roberta Bonnici, Christianne Caruana, Andy Grech, Dhiraj Narwani and Alex Thenner*

120 young people from 12 countries of the EU came together in a specially arranged place within the premises of the «Tsaf Tsouf» summer camp at Orphani Kavalas, Greece to participate in and contribute to artistic workshops (performance, dance, cinema, photography, web radio, handicraft, circus, comic book) in view of creating for and expressing themselves about volunteering and activism.

The participants, using their expression and creativity, made statements and exchanged opinions through which, they fostered their perception to and respect for multiculturalism and sought for new, creative ways for promoting the ideas of volunteering and active citizenship. In parallel, they were involved in sports' activities, intercultural nights, exhibitions and music nights.

“Creativities” are projects funded by the European Commission’s “Youth in Action / Youth” Programmes. They are categorised as multilateral intercultural youth exchanges. Everything started in 2004 by “Kids in Action” with the helping hand of several partner NGOs from different European countries. Thenceforth, several editions of the concept took place.

Different themes have been addressed: Peace & Solidarity (2004, Greece), Tolerance & Diversity (2005, Greece), Love & Unity (2006, Greece), Democracy & Participation (2008, Greece), Creativity.cat - Act for Interculturality (2009, Girona, Spain), CreActivity - Creativity & Innovation (2009, Greece), Creativity.UK (2010, UK)

In the latest edition, Volunteering & Activism, the MUYA had the honour and pleasure to be one of the partner groups among 12 in total, which consisted of one “leader” and five participants each. Together the participants shared the experience of the vision of a world where difference is a driving force, equality is a must, mistakes are means for change and development and creativity is being. It was and still is a lived experience.

For most people might describe creativity as “to make, to begin, to launch or to set forth.” “Creativity” by Kids in Action does so much more than this. It is a creative process that empathizes with and embraces the youth world and seeks to dynamically evolve and maintain its appropriateness to all youth, with no exception. Because no one is better than another, there is no in or out, up or down in the circle that is “Creativity”...

### **3.5 YiA Youth-Exchange: Come On, Come On! A Little More Action!**

*Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, 15th – 21th October, 2011*

*Maltese participants: Audrey Rose Spiteri, Clinton John Saliba, Clint La Rosa, Anneliese Sammut, Jessica Schembri*

The project based on 6 working days involved the participation of 30 young people from 6 different organisations and 6 European countries. Each organisation included a total of 5 participants. The countries that took part were Latvia, Malta, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary.

The whole activity had the aim of promoting partnership among youth NGOs from EU countries, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding under the Youth in Action Programme. This project was based on experiential learning and non-formal education. A variety of creativity methods were used in order to ensure that participants get out of the project as much as possible and will in turn multiply the knowledge in their organisation and local community.

The main themes during the program which were discussed were active participation, voluntarism, European citizenship, features of non-formal education and the Youth in Action Programme, intercultural learning and cultural diversity. Each country also presented their country to the other participants in the evenings. A presentation on the country was given and different foods and drinks were offered to the participants.

Apart from the usual presentations the project included two outdoor trips. One took the participants to visit the city of Stara Zagora. The other trip took the participants to a school where the group was divided into smaller numbers. This school is a meant for children with disabilities and special needs. Participants were asked to play and do crafts. The EU representatives were present during the participants' interactions with the children.

The project was very successful and a great deal was learned on the different topics, new contacts made and great friendships cherished.

### **3.6 The 7<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum**

*UNESCO Headquarter, Paris, 17th-21st October 2011*

*Maltese participants: Joanna Bonnici, Thelma Bonello*

UNESCO Youth Forum is an integral part of the UNESCO General Conference, organised every two years since 1999. It serves as one of the few regular mechanisms at the global level, allowing young people to submit their recommendations to representatives of States.

The 7<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum addressed the theme “How youth drive change”. The Youth Forum examined how youth constructively contribute to building a culture of peace, supporting good governance and promoting economic opportunity. More importantly, it was examined which challenges the youth is facing in contributing to their societies: unemployment, gender inequalities, lack of access to education, marginalisation, poverty, discrimination, limited or no involvement in public affairs. It was argued during the Youth Forum that valuing and supporting youth development and constructive engagement results in preventing the violence.

The Report of the Youth Forum was presented to the plenary of the 36<sup>th</sup> UNESCO General Conference, as well as to the thematic round tables and related programme commissions. MUYA has had the honour to represent Maltese youth in the UNESCO Youth Forums for the past six years.

### **3.7 YiA Seminar: Volunteerism in Debate**

*Cordoba, Spain, 21<sup>st</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

*Maltese participants: Analiza Abdilla, Birgit Oidram, Erika Borg and Martha Bartolo*

*Aġenzija Żgħażgħ representative: Angie Farrugia*

The aim of the seminar was to bring together young European volunteers and politicians/decision-makers to discuss different aspects of voluntary work in society, its importance and challenges imposed by the legislation and policies as well as good practices from different countries. As a result of the workshops taking place during the weeklong seminar in November, the participants from various European countries were asked to draft a list of recommendations for policy makers on how to improve the voluntary work sector.

Additionally to MUYA there were voluntary organisations from Spain, Portugal, Greece, France, Germany, UK, Poland, Lithuania and Estonia. The participating voluntary organisations ranged from those working with minorities (such as disabled persons, immigrants) to those dealing with youth participation in the decision-making processes and human rights.

Angie Farrugia from Aġenzija Żgħażaġh took the opportunity to introduce the recently launched Malta Youth Portal. During a session facilitated by the European decision-makers she explained how the voluntary work in the youth field is strongly and actively supported by Aġenzija Żgħażaġh in Malta.

### **3.8 YiA Training Course: Volunteers Take a Step Forward**

*Murcia, Spain, 20<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> February*

*Maltese participant: Damien Attard*

The aim of the training course was to acknowledge the role of volunteers in the field of Human Rights Education and empower them with knowledge, skills and attitudes to serve better the society. It also aimed at making the participants more aware of Human Rights and therefore turning every volunteer into a Human Rights educator.

In addition to Malta, there were several organisations that work on protecting Human Rights from Spain, Italy, Holland, Denmark, Greece, Albania, Slovenia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Armenia and Hungary. This made the course a perfect intercultural exchange, were the participants could share and learn about human rights issues resulting in very useful peer learning.

The training course was perfectly set up. The lecturers were professional and very well prepared on the subject. The course consisted of different role plays, current HR issues discussions and HR experts. The course also included the information and help the participants could receive from the EU. Damien was amazed by the opportunities and support one can receive from the EU. He found this course very useful to his social work. He was empowered with knowledge and realised the importance of raising awareness on HR through his organisation and in his local community.

### **3.9 YiA Training Course: Humour is Serious Business**

*Derry, Northern Ireland, 12th –20<sup>th</sup> April 2012*

*Maltese participants: Duncan Muscat, Dayle and Jane*

Three Maltese youth workers selected by MUYA ventured to the green town of Derry in Northern Ireland to attend a very unusual Training Course namely “Humour is a Serious Business. The training course was attended by 10 different nationalities. Although

## **4 Other Meetings and Collaborations**

### **4.1 Meeting with the Assistant Director General for UNESCO Dr. Francesco Bandarin**

*Valletta, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

On 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011 four representatives of MUYA, Sarah Suda, Birgit Oidram, Anson Aquilina and Daniel Mifsud had a pleasure to meet the Assistant Director General for UNESCO Dr. Francesco Bandarin during his short visit to Malta. During the brief meeting, MUYA's activities and role in the field of UNESCO main areas on the Maltese national scene were introduced to him. Assistant Director General expressed his recognition and support towards the efforts made by the organisation on the national level.

### **4.2 Membership in the KNZ (Kunsill Nazzjonali taz-Zghazagh)**

MUYA has been a member of KNZ since 2009. During 2011-2012 MUYA has continued contributing to the organisation's activities by participating in most of their meetings and other events.

### **4.3 Membership in Agenzija Zghazagh**

In August 2011 MUYA become part of Agenzija Zghazagh. During the past year, MUYA has actively collaborated with the organisation, by participating in their events and disseminating the results of its own projects through them. Through its network Agenzija Zghazagh has also assisted MUYA in finding participants for certain international projects and supported the organisation financially for the participation in the 7<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum. MUYA's committee is very grateful to Agenzija Zghazagh to all its support and help provided and hopes that this fruitful collaboration will continue.

## **5 Upcoming Projects and Events**

### **5.1 OUT – a Training Course on Outdoor Education**

It is a great pleasure to announce that thanks to Youth in Action funding, MUYA will be hosting yet another international training course. The training course “OUT – a Training Course on Outdoor Education” scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012 will focus on outdoor education as a tool tailored for youth workers to help increase young people’s participation in, and also promote healthy, counter-industrialised, more ecological lifestyles.

It will be a situated learning opportunity since most of the working methods will be highly experiential and implemented in the outdoors. It is mainly a training course to inspire and not to qualify. By this it is meant that, whilst taking into consideration the variations that exist in different countries in terms of qualifications in the outdoor education practice, participants will be encouraged to build on the experience gained from the project and adapt them according to the demanded standards back in their countries.

**The participating countries:** Austria, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia.

### **5.2 Pending applications**

In collaboration with a Spanish organisation Neptelia, MUYA has submitted two project applications to the Maltese National Agency:

- 1) Grundtvig Learning Partnerships: “European Partnership on Adult Education and Mobility for Social Inclusion”
- 2) Leonardo Da Vinci Partnerships: “Vocational Education and Training for Volunteer Coordinators”.

Both applications are for the EU grant of 22,000 €. If one or both projects are approved by the Maltese National Agency, MUYA will be part of the long-term (project duration 2 years) European partnership with organisations from various European countries. There will be international meetings, seminars and visits organised to every project partner’s country, to learn from the best practices and discuss the challenges of the given topics. The decision of the Maltese National Agency on funding will most probably announced mid-summer. In that case, the project(s) will kick off in October 2012.

