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Administration Report of Malta UNESCO Youth Association 2012-2013

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Introduction

Another busy term full of events and projects has passed. Year 2012-2013 goes to MUYA's history as one of the most successful years in terms of EU funding and international events hosted by MUYA. In April 2012 the organisation was granted €17,423 to implement a Youth in Action Training Course 4.3 "OUT – Training Course on Outdoor Education". The one-week activity was successfully carried out by MUYA members on 23rd-30th June in Malta.

In August 2012, a two-year Grundtvig Partnership on Adult Education and Social Inclusion within Lifelong Learning Programme with six other European organisations kicked off. MUYA received a grant of €22,000 to send 16 Maltese participants with 8 accompanying staff members to Mobility Visits hosted by partner organisations, to host a Mobility Event itself and organise local activities within the project. Two international meetings have taken place within this project already, one of which was organised by MUYA in the beginning of March 2013.

On the local level, MUYA organised numerous educational and social activities for its members. The most important educational activities organised include MUYA vision seminar in May 2012, Egyptian Cultural Night and Youth in Action seminar in October 2012 and Treasure Hunt in Valletta in December 2012. Apart from these activities, the organisation also organised BBQ in August 2012, MUYA's 6th birthday in February 2013 and initiated a series of social events called MUYA MeetME events.

During the past year MUYA was a partner to various international organisations, sending its members to five different events (including youth-exchanges, training courses and mobilities).

1 National projects and local activities

1.1 MUYA Vision Seminar

18th-20th May 2012

Ten active members, including from the committee spent a weekend in Gozo to work on the organisation's overall vision for the next years and establish a solid roadmap to achieve the vision. The seminar started with a dreaming exercise, in which all participants had to think of what MUYA could do or be within the next two years without any limitations. This part of the workshop was followed by more elaborate discussion on the activities and projects to reach the vision.

As a result of one busy day of workshops and discussions it was decided that during the next two years the organisation will mainly focus on projects and activities related to the published children's book on human rights "Eleo and the Bubble Planet" and events introducing and focusing on local and world cultural heritage. The seminar was facilitated with the help of Anson Aquilina.

1.2 MUYA BBQ in Marsaxlokk

6th August 2012

MUYA summer BBQ of 2012 was held in Marsaxlokk. An entertaining and enjoyable social activity where members meet in an informal environment and grill together, has always been an important social event in the organisation's annual event calendar. Twelve active members participated in this activity.

1.3 MUYA Egyptian Cultural Night

3rd October 2012

As part of the organisation's roadmap to expose Maltese youth more to the world heritage on the local level, MUYA organised its first cultural country evening dedicated to Egypt. The concept behind such events is to invite a native person to give a presentation of his/her country's culture, the current economic and political climate and facilitate discussion with the participants of the event. The formal part is then followed by a culinary experience, offering the participants an opportunity to taste the food from the presented country. Another

important aspect of such events is to organise them in local youth centres by collaborating with youth groups and thus enabling easier access for youth to this information and experience.

The Egyptian Cultural Night was facilitated by Mr. Mohammed Hamed, a native Egyptian residing in Malta and also a member of MUYA, and the food prepared and provided by his wife and Egyptian friends working at the Egyptian Embassy in Malta.

1.4 MUYA Youth in Action Seminar

27th October 2012

The seminar about Youth in Action programme by MUYA for its members has become an annual tradition. The objective of the five-hour-seminar is to introduce the Youth in Action programme, funding rules and opportunities for international activities to MUYA members. Even though the seminar focuses on the formal preparation of project proposal, it also offers an opportunity to discuss potential ideas for next activities for the organisation within the programme.

The seminar was facilitated by Alexander Thenner, an honorary member of MUYA and experiences youth worker, who also led the team responsible for implementing the Youth in Action training course “OUT”. Based on his fresh experience, he guided the seminar participants through step-by-step process of preparing and implementing a Youth in Action project. The seminar was attended by 10 active members.

1.5 MUYA Treasure Hunt in Valletta

29th December 2012

Between Christmas and New Year, as part of its local cultural activities, MUYA organised a 2-hour Treasure Hunt in Valletta. The registration was open to local schools and young adults. The main objectives of such activity are to be able to follow written directions, provide a fun challenge for the participants and work as a team for a common goal, whilst discovering Valletta as one of the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Despite only two groups of five participants registering for the activity, the treasure hunt was successful and offered participants an enjoyable Saturday morning discovering Valletta. It also served as a good way to promote MUYA and its activities.

1.6 MUYA 6th Birthday Party

15th February 2013, at Birgit's & Anson's premises

Inspired by the 5th birthday event of MUYA in 2012, the core group decided to continue this beautiful tradition of celebrating MUYA's birthday and invited its members over to a members' event in Siggiewi at Birgit's and Anson's home. The food was prepared by Anson, whereas the delicious dessert was made and brought by Ryan. This event proved to be yet another successful social evening, enabling members to get to know each other better and discuss ideas and activities within informal context.

1.7 MUYA MeetMe Events

5th April, at Tal-Village in Iklin

Social events for members are activities of crucial importance within every voluntary organisation, especially when the organisation does not have its own space where to gather. Sarah Suda, the founder of MUYA, former Secretary General and President and current Committee Member came up with an idea to start organising spontaneous monthly MUYA MeetMe Events to offer its members an opportunity to gather in a wine bar – an informal environment – and spend good time together. The first MeetMe Event enjoyed attendance from several older as well as from fresh members.

MUYA MeetMe Events are planned to be organised once a month.

2 International Projects implemented by MUYA

2.1 Youth in Action Training Course “OUT – A Training Course on Outdoor Education”

Marsaxlokk, 23rd – 30th June 2012

“O.U.T – A Training Course on outdoor education” was organised by the Malta UNESCO Youth Association at the Marsaxlokk Youth Activity Centre in Malta from 23rd to 30th June, 2012 (6 working days, 2 travel days). This project was implemented according to the European Commission Youth in Action Programme 2012 under Action 4.3 - Training and Networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations. The training course was carried out by qualified trainers and support staff. There were 24 participants (2 per country) from 12 countries (Austria, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Malta) who worked together on the subject of youth work and outdoor education.

The project aimed at exploring the concept, principles and practices of outdoor education and the way they can contribute to the efficiency of youth work and also to the development of healthy and pro-active lifestyles. It was a solid learning opportunity since most of the working methods were highly experiential and implemented in the outdoors. The Training Course mainly aimed to inspire and not qualify. While taking into consideration the variations existing in different countries in terms of qualifications in the outdoor education practice, participants were encouraged to build on the experiences gained from the project and adapt them according to the demanded standards in their home countries.

The project’s methodology was based on the principles of non formal education. During the training course participants had the opportunity to explore outdoor education through simulation exercises, outdoor activities, multimedia presentations, creative workshops, lectures, thematic discussions, presentations on good practice and more. During the training course participants were also provided with sufficient space and support to exchange experience, present their organisations and plan future projects.

The project was implemented by Alexander Thenner, Desiree D’Amato and Christianne Caruana and entirely funded by European Union under the Youth in Action Programme of the European Commission which amounted to €17,423.

2.2 Grundtvig Partnership within Lifelong Learning Programme: “European Partnership on Adult Education and Mobility for Social Inclusion” (EPAEMSI)

Between August 2012 and July 2014 MUYA is participating as a partner in Grundtvig Partnership “European Partnership on Adult Education and Mobility for Social Inclusion” (EPAEMSI). This Partnership consists of seven organisations from Spain, Malta, Romania, Poland, Slovenia, Italy and the UK.

Throughout the 2 years period the EPAEMSI project spans, adult learners from 7 different countries (organisations) have the opportunity to participate in a number of local activities run by every individual organisation as well as travel to a Mobility Event organised by the partner organisation. The aim of these events is to introduce participants to informal and non-formal learning and through other different methods engage them in activities that would help reduce the risk of unemployment and social exclusion. Every partner organisation is responsible for hosting one international Mobility Event attended by partner organisations. MUYA is responsible for sending MUYA can send a total of 16 participants (adult learners potentially at risk of social exclusion) and 8 accompanying members (trainers, staff, organisation representatives) to six events taking place in the partner countries.

The first international Mobility Meeting took place between 27th – 29th November, 2012 in Logroño (Spain) and was organised by the project coordinator Neighbourhood Association of La Rioja (Federación de Vecinos de La Rioja). Throughout the first meeting, partner organisations were able to meet face-to-face and learn more about each other’s organisations, whilst setting up the foundations of the work which will take place during the next two years. The representatives of the partner organisations had the opportunity to experience the introduced best practices (informal English language course), by taking part in a series of activities and interacting with the local adult learners. Birgit Oidram and Thelma Bonello as project coordinators attended the meeting.

The second international Mobility Event was organised by MUYA between 2nd – 5th of March, 2013. 44 international and 6 Maltese participants took part in the activities on social inclusion prepared by MUYA staff. During the four-day intercultural experience the participants had workshops on social inclusion, a treasure hunt in Valletta and interactive activities at Hagar Qim. The experience culminated on 4th March at the Kennedy Nova hotel

with a conference on non-formal education for social inclusion. During the conference, presentations by several Maltese organisations working in the field of social inclusion were delivered. The speakers included Dr. Romina Bartolo from National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, Dr. Neil Falzon from Aditus Foundation, Ms. Gabi Calleja from Malta Gay Rights Movement, Ms. Louisa Grech from Equal Partners Foundation, Mr. Ronald Calleja from National Parents Society of Persons with Disability and Mr. Mohammed Hamed from Foundation for Inclusive Education. The conference was followed by an intercultural celebration open to all participants, local NGOs and members of the public.

Next Mobility events will be taking place in Romania (24th – 27th May, 2013), Poland (August 2013), Slovenia (November 2013), Italy (March 2014) and the UK (June 2014). To implement this project, MUYA is actively collaborating with local organisations catering for people at risk of social exclusion such as Equal Partners Foundation, Young Women's Christian Association, National Parents Society of Persons with Disability, etc.

On the local level MUYA has already organised three Mobility meetings for Maltese participants, in which the Lifelong Learning Programme, its aims and objectives and also the EPAEMSI project has been introduced.

3 Participation in the international projects abroad

3.1 YiA Training Course: Youth Photo Games

Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad, Serbia, 1st – 9th June 2012

Maltese participants: Maria Apap, Ryan Bonnici

The main aim of the project was to promote voluntarism and social inclusion and to learn how to do creative photography. The Training Course “Youth Photo Games“ offered participants new art techniques and learning methods for improving inclusion of excluded groups of youth with psychological problems – mental health problems. One of the objectives was that by promoting youth voluntarism and photo activities, participants would be able to use those learning methods in everyday work with excluded youth, including them in active local community life.

The project was held in English and 2 participants from 15 different countries aged 16 and 35 were eligible to participate. The participating counties included Serbia, Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Germany, Croatia, Italy, Macedonia, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine.

The course taught the basic skills for city and nature photography. There was also had a workshop held on photo batik, post production of photos and night photography. As part of the project, the participants organised an exhibition in the main gallery of the city.

In addition, intercultural evenings and a VMO fair were organised, in which each country could introduce the organisation they represent. Throughout the project, participants had several discussions about human rights and anti-discrimination. Furthermore, other discussions were held on how to develop strategies to enhance youth work by art photography, and how to prepare a project proposal for future training.

At the end of training course all participants shared contact details, photos and information about different organisations and some organisations invited participants to the next projects organised in the near future.

3.2 YiA Youth Exchange: Natural Born Players II. - Who will survive?

Baldovec – Rozstání, Czech Republic, 2nd –14th September 2012

Maltese participants: Thelma Bonello, Marija Elena Borg, Kimberly Caruana, James Cutajar, Mariano Galea, Thomas Naudi

This youth exchange was a continuation of an exchange in Finland held in December 2011. The main purpose of this youth exchange was to show all the participants the biggest environmental issues in Europe and how to protect the effected nature. It involved 26 youngsters from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Norway, Malta and Italy.

During the 12 days stay participants were able to learn basic survival techniques like lighting a fire and water filtration using sources found in the surrounding environment including sand, burned wood and small stones. Participants were also able to perform sports like volleyball, swimming, archery, paintball, zip-lining and abseiling. They explored the surrounding habitat were they visited the nearby Cave Macocha and also ventured into the nearby forest.

All the participants were assigned the task to present a particular environmental issue in their countries. The environmental issue presented by the Maltese was related to the problems of water flooding and the lack of an appropriate water-storage system. During a particular day the youngsters were taken to the nearby city Prostějov and were given the opportunity to talk to other youngsters attending the local secondary school Gymnázium Jiřího Wolkeru about their respective national environmental issues.

At the end of the exchange during the activity "Who will survive" the participants were able to prove their knowledge about nature and also to prove their ability of working in a team. They also had the possibility to showcase what they learnt during their duration in Baldovec.

3.3 I Grundtvig Mobility – European Partnership on Adult Education and Social Inclusion

Logroño, Spain, 27th – 29th November 2012

Maltese participants (coordinators): Birgit Oidram, Thelma Bonello

In November 2012, the representatives of MUYA took part in the first meeting of the European Partnership on Adult Education and Mobility for Social Inclusion (EPAEMSI) project in Logroño, Spain.

The project is co-funded by the European Commission through the Lifelong Learning Programme. It aims to use the partner organisations' experience of social inclusion and the active participation of adult learners from disadvantaged social groups to promote and improve social inclusion through education, in particular non-formal and informal learning methods.

The partner organisations in this project are Malta UNESCO Youth Association, Federación de Asociaciones de Vecinos de la Rioja from Spain, Fundatia Centrul de Resurse Pentru Diversitate Etnoculturala from Romania, Stowarzyszenie WIOSNA from Poland, Društvo Nigerijcev v Sloveniji - Association of Nigerians in Slovenia, Cantiere Giovani - Cooperativa Sociale ONLUS from Italy and Engage Youth Empowerment Services from UK.

During the two-year project, the partners will organise mobility events and activities at local level to share best practices on how to use education for social inclusion. One of the objectives is to shed light on the issue of social exclusion and to create more mobility projects as a means to further enhance social inclusion. Participants will mainly include adult learners from disadvantaged social groups. Besides experiencing the best practices and providing feedback they will benefit from an intercultural experience.

3.4 Youth Exploring Rio+20 – UNESCO Clubs Trans-National Youth Meeting & Eco Skola Local Project

Dublin, Ireland, 29th November – 2nd December 2012

Maltese participants: Owen Muscat, Justin Schembri, Adriano Galea, Julian Zammit, Gaberial Borg and Daniel Sinagra, accompanied by Desiree D'Amato and Audrey Gauci.

In the end of November 2012, six Maltese school students from De La Salle College accompanied by two teachers, visited Dublin to participate in the UNESCO Clubs Trans-National Youth meeting. The objective of this event was to explore RIO+20 (United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) outcomes, how they relate to the young people of Europe and how these young people can take action to affect positive change toward a more sustainable world as a result of these outcomes.

In the framework of this meeting and following activities, the participants were given a project to help their school, De La Salle College, introduce smart, clean and economically efficient equipment to raise the awareness of how small actions can make a huge impact for our environment. Through the four day stay in Dublin, Ireland, the Maltese participants along with their teachers went to find ways to improve the school's and the country's environment. In the case of little island Malta, there is a serious problem. According to many experts present in the conference, the problem of Malta is that it has no other means to gather water from the environment except by distillation (reverse osmosis).

Due to this, there are high electricity and water bills in Malta. In order to solve the issue, people have to invest in sustainable energy. As part of the project, a meeting was held during the Christmas holidays, with Robert N. Farrugia, a lecturer at the Institute of Sustainable Energy at the University of Malta. During the meeting participants discussed the most efficient projects to help their school.

During the meeting it was concluded that the best idea is to make a project in which the participants try to reduce the energy consumption of their school. This involves changing all the light bulbs to energy saving ones, a campaign on switching off the light when there is nobody in the class, or where there is natural light in class. De La Salle College has also applied for EU funds in order to install photovoltaic cells.

Upon the arrival back to Malta, participants consulted the Headmaster of the school to see if he liked and approved the ideas. The solar panel pilot project is going to be launched in the next couple of months, in order to increase the sustainability of the school. As for the sun pipes, further research is still required in order to install the new system in the school.

The participants are also doing a campaign on reusing paper – there is a paper bank on each floor. The papers thrown in this paper bank are turned into notebooks which are handed out to the students. Furthermore, the participants have organised an organic garden where they plant vegetables and fruit and sell them for fundraising.

3.5 YiA Youth Exchange “Winter Creativity – Ecology & Healthy Living”

Seli Mountain, Greece, 4th – 12th March 2013

Maltese participants: Ryan Bonnici, Matthew Fenech, Michael Zammit, Philip Mallia, Juanita Magro, Alexander Thenner

“Winter Creativity – Ecology & Healthy living” was organised by the Greek NGO “Kids in Action” from Thessaloniki.

This project was implemented according to the European Commission Youth in Action Programme 2012 under Action 1.1 - Youth Exchanges. The multilateral youth exchange was accompanied by qualified and experienced trainers, facilitators and support staff. There were 72 participants (5 + 1 leader) from 12 countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and the UK) who worked in several creative workshops on the topic ecology and healthy living.

The aim of the project was to provide young people with the possibility to experience living in the country side/mountains and through that to develop a better understanding for the environment and its preservation but also an appreciation of healthy living as defined by physical exercise, nutritious non-processed food and harmonious relationships with the community and the earth.

The project’s methodology was entirely based on the principles of non formal education realised in six different workshops namely Land Art, Improvisation Performance, Ice Carving, What you see as Green through your lens (Photography), Aerial Skills and Up-cycling. Participants also could choose to form part of a task force (Animation,

Administration, “Green team”) or of the News Team that provided daily evening news in form of a video after dinner.

Furthermore, participants were provided with enough space for interaction with each other in order to discover the variety of cultural and other backgrounds and through that to foster their intercultural sensitivity. Finally, support was offered for the participants to express themselves and raise questions through the use of skills and techniques learned in the various workshops.

The project was entirely implemented with European Union funds under the Youth in Action Programme of the European Commission.

4 Other meetings and collaborations

4.1 VOs Radio Show on One Radio – Interview with the President Ms D’Amato

29th October 2012

The president of MUYA Ms. Desiree D’Amato was invited to participate in the One Radio programme about Voluntary Organisations in Malta. The interview helped to gain more visibility of the organisation on the local scene amongst youth and wider public.

4.2 MUYA at the Tree Planting Initiative

4th November 2012

National Youth Council (KNZ) decided to contribute Euro 200 to plant 14 trees in the light of what happened at Xrobb l-Ghagin Park. They invited all their member organisations to participate in the initiative and donate some trees as well. MUYA decided to participate in this initiative and contribute three trees.

The trees were planted on 4th November at Ghajn Tuffieha during the Tree Planting Day – an activity for all families. Several distinguished guests such as Hon. Minister Dr. Mario de Marco and Hon. Minister George Pullicino were present. MUYA was represented by the Committee member Ms. Thelma Bonello.

4.3 Membership in the KNZ (Kunsill Nazzjonali taz-Zghazagh)

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

5 Upcoming Projects and Events

5.1 “Eleo and the Bubble Planet” – Continuation

After the success of the Children’s Book on Human Rights “Eleo and the Bubble Planet”, MUYA has continuously sought opportunities to have the book translated into other languages and also distributed in other countries. Until now, the organisation has not yet built a partnership with any foreign organisation. However, in collaboration with the Commissioner for Children Ms. Helen D’Amato, the book has now been translated into Maltese by Maltese author Trevor Zahra.

The Maltese version of the book will be published in May during a launch event which is planned to be held at Safi Primary. Similarly to the first book launch, the copies are going to be distributed to all primary schools in Malta.

MUYA will keep on seeking opportunities to collaborate with other organisations abroad to take the book also to children in other countries.

5.2 Upcoming Youth Exchanges & Training Courses

This year, MUYA has again great opportunity to offer its members several training courses and youth exchanges of a high quality organised by trusted partners. There are currently three approved YiA projects coming up:

- 1) YiA Training Course “Stop, Block, Talk” on bullying and child protection taking place between 19th – 26th May, 2013 in Ireland, organised by Youth Work Ireland Galway.
- 2) YiA Training Course “Young Entrepreneurs in Action: Discovering Means of Beating Unemployment” between 1st – 7th July, 2013 in Estonia (50km from capital city Tallinn), organised by Shokkin Group
- 3) YiA Youth Exchange “Food for Thought III” taking place between 22nd July - 2nd of August, 2013 in Monte Campione (close to Milan) organised by Associazione Joint

In addition to YiA project, in 2013 there will be 3 more Mobility Events organised within Grundtvig Partnership EPAEMSI in Romania (24th – 27th of May), Poland (August 2013) and Slovenia (November 2013).

5.3 Pending Applications

In February 2013, MUYA has reapplied for Leonardo Da Vinci Partnership project “Vocational Education and Training for Volunteer Coordinators” within Lifelong Learning Programme. This project was submitted in February 2012, but was not granted funding. There are 8 partner organisations from the UK, Spain, Slovenia, Estonia, Malta, Italy and Denmark in this partnership. Should the project receive funding, MUYA will be granted €16,000 and will have an opportunity to send 12 volunteers to the Mobility Events hosted by partner organisations.