

VIRTUAL COMMUNICATIONS LAB

From 7 to 11 December, 2020



Organised



In partnership with



Programme co-funded by



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◆ Activity Framework

- Aims to engage 20-25 young people (18-30), from the MENA region, the Balkans and the Euro-Med overall, active in YMV and/or civil engagement practices in their area/region or inter-regionally, with an interest in communications and outreach, and a strong digital profile (influencers)
- Collaboration with leading experts in communications and community engagement working in diverse environments for the delivery of a 'learning by doing' training/ capacity building activity
- The development of four (4) youth-led creative communication/outreach initiatives to challenge extremist narratives in inter-regional settings, presented to youth audiences and local civil society, with the leading 2 ideas receiving seed funding for their implementation
- Connection with German civil society and the youth networks of the Center for Mediterranean Integration, thus broadening the YMV alumni dialogue beyond the programme itself.

◆ Objectives

The YMV Communications Lab focuses on the development of youth-led creative communication initiatives to challenge extremist narratives in the digital world. In previous workshops, participants from the Euro-Med have captured the urgency of the times through their own experience and the virtual narratives, as for example the crucial conversation on climate change, taking place in Kokkola, Finland, in partnership with the Finnish MFA and Heads of Network, in Nov. 2019.

This year, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to limit the programme's face-to-face interactions; however, technology has given us unprecedented opportunities for learning. The Young Mediterranean Voices Communications Lab will **connect 20-25 young influencers and Civil Society workers, from Europe and the Southern Mediterranean and provide a space for intercultural dialogue and focus on the development of youth-led creative communication initiatives to challenge extremist narratives.**

The aim is to leverage youth-led dialogue and exchange connected to Young Mediterranean Voices to shape narratives in the digital world. It is an opportunity to enhance digital literacy and media skills, focusing on how to increase online reach and work in groups to create new compelling campaigns to reach audiences in their own communities and beyond.

The youth will emerge from the workshop with a set of project campaign ideas which will be presented in an online event. **The two best ideas will be supported by the Young Mediterranean Voices programme to jump-start their implementation.** The selection will be based on the campaign's potential to develop a large-scale/ community-oriented counter-narrative campaign. The ideas will be based on the dissemination of dynamic outreach materials, and will contribute to the creative development of the programme.

◆ Description of the Programme

The Lab will have a focus on providing references and creative tools, processes and techniques that tackle social challenges (locally, regionally and inter-regionally) through data storytelling, creativity, enhancing critical thinking and discussion, an understanding of intercultural trends and entrepreneurship. The group composition of mixed backgrounds from Europe and the Southern Mediterranean region will ensure a wide range of experiences and thus allow for a honed message for a specific audience. This also helps the process of developing the initiatives after the Lab.

Mapping and Case Studies:

The activity will center on the participants' personal drivers and experiences, and then focus on the conceptual framework of extremism narratives, hate speech and the creation of counter extremist narratives. It will present and analyse successful communication campaigns and examples that have led to creating positive counter-narratives or awareness to the topic through different techniques, locally, regionally and inter-regionally.

The participants will share topics and concerns from their local contexts, in order to find challenges they would like to tackle through communication campaigns, techniques and tools. Inter-regional groups will be created to start working together in specific challenges, having in mind their specific areas, what joins them and what divides them.

Creative Processes:

Further, the groups will develop a creative process from the beginning to the end with the goal to end up with campaign ideas to tackle targeted situations. Tools and guidelines will be given to go from topic research to key messages definition, audience targeting, tone definition and campaign presentation and pitching. Safety measures for online activism will also be provided to participants to recognise the main risks and potential actions to be adopted. The campaigns designed will be centered on video work and video-based campaigning online.

Presenting and Implementing:

Finally, the participants will present their ideas in a 5-minute presentation, receive feedback from experts in the communication field, and a final voting by a specialised jury and audience will take place. The two presentations with the highest score (accumulative from the two scores) will be supported for their implementation by the Young Mediterranean Voices programme, and its partner organization CMI, to set the basis for a future development of their ideas into actions.

The Lab will be an exercise in creativity: it will generate proposals while engaging in a learning process, generating shared knowledge from different perspectives, and enhancing inter-regional dialogue.

◆ Who will participate:

- ◆ Young people between 18 to 30
- ◆ Nationality of / Residing in one of the priority countries: Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Jordan, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina , Romania, Germany.
- ◆ Experience in communication and social media networks
- ◆ Demonstration of creativity or potential for development
- ◆ Interest in Euro-Mediterranean issues/culture
- ◆ Knowledge around youth sector issues
- ◆ Demonstrated ability in spoken and written English

Programme Agenda

Schedule (CET)

(Day 0) December 3rd

15:00 - 16:30 **Preparation Meeting (90')**

- Meeting everybody, going through the programme, answering questions - formulating working teams.

(Day 1) December 7th

15:00 **Part 1 - Introduction (30')**

- Introduction from YMV programme manager & Lab Structure and facilitators [YMV]
- Introductions, icebreaking and expectations [F]
- The experience of the Communications Lab in Kokkola, Finland [DDS]

15:30 - 18:00 **Part 2 - Mapping and Context (2h 30') (based on 'homework')**

- Mapping participants' experiences of extremist narratives [F] (30')
- Discussion: Communication challenges in polarised contexts and digital behaviours and public opinion [F] (30')
- Values-based Communications Workshop [Kreisau-Initiative e.V.] (60')
- Best Practices: Campaign references that have tackled extremist narratives - Virtual Exchange: introducing the experience and the skill (30') [F]

(Day 2) December 8th

15:00 **Part 1 - Building Teams and Setting Foundations (1h20')**

- Starting your creative process: establishing a target audience, staying safe with your activism, developing target messaging, promoting your campaign effectively [F] (20')
- Making the teams: exploration of specific topics / becoming groups - interactive workshop [F] (30')
- Concept and strategy brainstorming – breakout rooms [F] (30')

16:30 - 18:30 **Part 2 - Online Tools (120')**

- Video Story-Telling Workshop [DDS] (60')
- Simulation Gaming and Conflict Resolution [CRISP] (60')

(Preparation of groups overnight – breakout rooms – own schedule)

(Day 3) December 9th

15:00 - 17:00

- Presentation Skills (in the COVID era) [F]
- Campaign presentations & Feedback [Participants & Guests]
- Preparation for event: logistics and coordination (YMV)

(Preparation of groups overnight – breakout rooms – own schedule)

(Day 4) December 11th

11:00 - 12:30 **Presentations (online event, voting and award)**

The Young Mediterranean Voices Programme

Young Mediterranean Voices is the flagship debate and dialogue programme connecting civil society, education and policy-makers across the Southern Mediterranean region and Europe. The programme is coordinated by the Anna Lindh Foundation, co-founded by the British Council, and developed in partnership with the Center for Mediterranean Integration, Friends of Europe, the World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid, MEDAC and Soliya. The programme is funded by the European Commission (Directorate General of Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations) and co-funded by the Government of Finland, World Bank Group and the British Council.

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