



## 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Forum on Inter-Cultural Dialogue to examine youth issues and concerns in the Euro-Mediterranean Region.

Bruxelles, 21/10/2016 - 19:56 - UNIQUE ID: 161021\_11

[Press releases](#)

The third Edition of the Anna Lindh Foundation organised Euro-Mediterranean Forum on Intercultural Dialogue takes place in Valetta, Malta from 23 – 25 October. With civil society organisations from almost 50 countries alongside leading international organisations, the Forum represents – with its 800 participants – the largest single gathering of actors working on intercultural dialogue. The EU, a leading donor of the Foundation, aims to tackle the unprecedented challenges in the Mediterranean region, particularly those affecting youth – unemployment, radicalisation, migration – by fostering dialogue among the younger generations and improving inter-cultural relations. This is in line with the EU's commitment to promoting international cultural relations and cultural diplomacy, as confirmed by the EU strategy for international cultural relations issued in June. Supporting the Anna Lindh Foundation and its network is one of the actions the Strategy foresees to promote culture and inter-cultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations.



Following the two previous Forums in Barcelona, [2010](#) and [Marseilles, 2013](#), the [Malta Forum will discuss](#), *inter alia*, 'Moving beyond the Extremist Narrative: Youth on the Frontline' and also host the launching of the EU-funded initiative 'Young Mediterranean Voices,' following the success of its forerunner 'Young Arab Voices.'

Speaking ahead of the event the European Union's High Representative/Vice-President, Federica Mogherini, said: *"We have a responsibility to create new pathways for our region's young people to be the drivers of change. And we need to start **today**, not **tomorrow**. This was the original idea behind the Young Arab Voices programme, launched by the Anna Lindh Foundation five years ago. **Today** we know that our young people in Europe feel many of the same passions, fears and aspirations of their Arab peers. We dream the same dreams. So for me, the evolution from 'Young Arab Voices' to 'Young Mediterranean Voices' is only natural."*

The Forum, taking place in the refurbished Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valetta, falls on the eve of Malta assuming the Presidency of the European Council from January 2017. One of the major objectives of the gathering is to develop policy recommendations for regional cooperation and inputs for the Maltese Presidency. Putting the Southern neighbourhood region and youth on the political agenda is consistent with the recently launched EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy.

In Malta [today](#), Dr George Vella, Maltese Minister of Foreign Affairs, who will officially open the Forum on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October said: *"On the eve of our landmark gathering, MED FORUM of the Anna Lindh Foundation is sending out a powerful message across the region that there is an alternative narrative based on dialogue and cooperation. The diverse youth and civil society actors gathering in Valletta over the coming days represent a far-reaching movement for intercultural action in the face of unprecedented cultural aggression and violence in the region. The Forum is a beacon of light across the Mediterranean which can lead us to our first EU Presidency and transform into action new policies aimed at launching a new era of relations for our common Mediterranean future."*

*As a key speaker in the Opening Plenary, UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova declared ahead of MED FORUM that "We must equip young men and women with the tools they need to carry the torch of peace and human rights. Facilitating the exchange between youth along the banks of the Mediterranean is key to build effective and sustainable policies, generate positive and constructive discourses and establish enabling economic, social and political environments."*

More information:

[Mediterranean Forum 2016](#)

[Anna Lindh Foundation](#)

[A new strategy to put culture at the heart of EU international relations](#)

Author

## EEAS press team - Contacts

The EEAS press team is the key contact point for the journalists interested in the European Union's foreign affairs and security policy. We provide information about the policy priorities, proposals and decisions to the press, we organise press events and we issue press material and statements.