



# EUROMED STUDIES AND RESEARCH

« Youth empowerment »  
in the EuroMediterranean area



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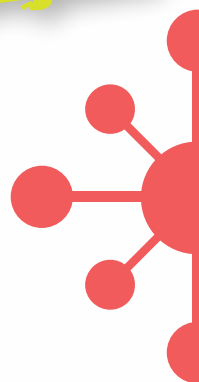


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## INTRODUCTION

At the same time as we started out on this study, the principle of which had been decided at the beginning of autumn 2010, the Arab Spring, the Indignados movement in Spain, the recurrent unrest in Greece, the urban riots in England, preceded a few months earlier by a student uprising, were occupying a major place in the news. Young people were sometimes behind these movements and they always massively took part, sometimes setting the tone. Similarities in the means of mobilisation, organisation, in the demands, firstly encouraged us to try to understand what it was that brought together young people from the southern and northern shores of the Mediterranean. But these movements related to different regional realities and the systematic comparison, regardless of its relevance to the news, required time for analysing them

and specific tools which we did not have in the time we were allowed. That is why we mainly focussed our study on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, reserving the points of comparison to insist on the differences to be found among these young people, but also to bring out what they might have in common, in particular with relation to the topicality. This common news obliged us to analyse the conceptual framework in which the youth policies in Europe and for Europe are thought out, and in particular the expression "youth empowerment". We more especially focussed on the documents coming from the European Commission and its youth programmes in accordance with the order placed with us. But to understand them however we considered that it was necessary to situate them in a more general framework.



In an “impertinent” but necessary way, we can ponder over the fact that an “empowered” youth has been wanted for a long time and that it has suddenly appeared and claiming if not power at least a part of it. Have the end purposes of the European programmes and EuroMed based on « empowering » been able to contribute towards these mobilisations or not? And is it possible today to integrate certain teachings relating to these events in order to think out these “empowerment” policies?

Our ambition here is to answer these questions, first of all by reminding the place of empowerment in the programmatic pillars of the European Commission, specifying the contextual elements in which these movements are included, by questioning ourselves on the part played by the individualisation process which is inseparable from the question of empowerment. We shall examine the different levers on which these youth empowerment policies could be based. The European Commission indeed invites us to do this, reacting to these new conditions<sup>1</sup>, acknowledging that “the radical transformation of the political landscape” required a “qualitative leap forward” and called for the founding of a “partnership for democracy and shared prosperity<sup>2</sup>” based on the commitment to shared values. The question of empowerment is naturally a part of this cooperation logic, the recognition of young people and a better understanding of their democratic aspirations. Even so, we must agree on what is meant by “empowerment”.

Indeed, we note a huge number of variations of the term “empowerment”, an Anglo-Saxon expression which is almost impossible to translate into other languages. In German we find the word “Ermächtigung”, in Spanish “empoderamiento”, in Portuguese “empoderamento” and in Italian “potenziamento”. However, if we go into detail nothing is very clear. In Italian, the literal translation is indeed “potenziamento” but when used in politics it is not translated. In Arabic, “empowerment” it literally translated by “to support skills”, but, as in Italian, the English word is usually used. In French the widest uncertainty prevails. The dictionaries vary between “authorisation”, “responsabilisation”, “autonomisation”. The word therefore has an extremely broad lexical scope. Behind the words and the vague meaning of the word there is a danger: to apply an approach that is specific to we Europeans in forgetting to relativize when it is applied to the specific situation and national realities that are very different to the southern shores of the Mediterranean. It is necessary « to start with the specific situation of the countries concerned, the configuration of the relations between states and the international institutions of the other<sup>3</sup>”. Empowerment, more than any other expression, cannot be disconnected from the context in which it is used.

The following table (Table 1) shows some differing uses in various fields where “empowerment” has been or is particularly used.

**1.** For the record, we might add that this “new context” is part of a story. There is a whole series of precedent. We shall only mention the most recent ones. They are all evidence of the development of a civil society in the countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, within the scope of authoritarian regimes, often sclerotic and monopolising the riches. For the record we can quote the Kefaya movement (“Enough is Enough”) in Egypt in 2004, followed by the strikes in 2007, the revolt of the “people of the mines” in Tunisia in 2008, the Kabyle Black Spring and the popular uprisings in Algeria in 2001 and the riots in January 2003. **2.** Preparatory text for the extraordinary European summit meeting of 11 March 2011 on Libya reported in HENRY J.-R., “L’Europe et la Méditerranée, un défi humain”, *Projet*, March 2011, no 322, p. 14. **3.** LONGUENESSE É., “Ben Nefissa, Sarah, Pouvoirs et associations dans le monde arabe”, CNRS éditions, 2002; *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, June 2004, nos 103-104 (on line).



**Table 1 - Empowerment: some different uses**

Fields	Meanings
Management <sup>4</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Legibility in the production processes</li> <li>&gt; Room for manoeuvre</li> <li>&gt; Legitimacy in carry out an action</li> <li>&gt; Ability to act together; solidarity and/or personal approach</li> </ul>
Social policies (women, health, social work <sup>5</sup> , local development) and youth policies	Power to act, ability to act, appropriation of power, actor of one's own life
NGO, international organisations and agencies	Autonomy, participation, local development
European documents <sup>6</sup>	Mobilize
UNICEF Turkey <sup>7</sup>	Protection of youth against the risks caused by urbanization, rapid social transformations and guarantee that young people will be able to acquire the necessary skills

Through all these variations, the lexical scope of "empowerment" appears to be particularly open. With regard to youth policies, it tends to cover almost every field. This is clearly evident for example in the proposals made by UNICEF Turkey. The term "empowerment": "setting a youth empowerment strategy and mechanism" ("développer stratégie et mécanisme d'empowerment pour la jeunesse") is mixed up with "youth empowerment" and "National Youth Strategy" ("stratégie nationale jeunesse"). The document states the need to protect young people against the risks caused by urbanization, rapid social transformations and to guarantee that they will be able to acquire the necessary skills<sup>8</sup>. We shall retain that the word "empowerment" varies between two different meanings:

> the first one can be included in one of the most individualistic dimensions

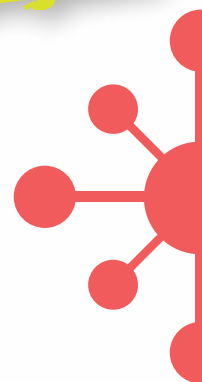
of liberalism: giving responsibility, the acquisition of specific management skills, the ability to control one's life;

> the other, marked by the semantics of democratic aspiration: to feel a real party in, to become emancipated as a group and individually thanks to a shared power; be capable of taking action for a shares cause.

This range of meanings indeed shows the tension in what is expected of young people through this word: personal awareness of responsibilities and/or group emancipation.

If we refer to the recent events that have shaken the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, like the European continent, all these movements have indeed implemented the logics of empowerment.

4. NINACS W.A., Empowerment et intervention. Développement de la capacité d'agir et solidarité. Presses de l'Université de Laval, Laval, 2008. - 5. A conference dedicated to this question at the end of the nineties gathered specialists from the social work sector and, as a result of their discussions, came to the following conclusion: "Some people renounce translating this term and use it as it is on the other hand, other people put a good deal of effort into finding a translation that suited them. There were a number of suggestions: power to act or ability to act (Le Bossé), appropriation of power (Rondeau), actor of one's own life (Ferrand-Bechmann). Others, including Lucie Fréchette, connected it to related practises such as conscientisation, popular education, participation, the structural approach, mentoring, social alternative, social transformation, community organisation." DESLAURIERS J.-P., 'Réflexions sur le colloque Travail social et empowerment à l'aube du XXIe siècle', Nouvelles Pratiques sociales, vol. 8 no 1, pp. 263-267 et ibid. vol. 12, no 2, pp. 165-169. - 6. "Investing and empowering in youth", European Commission, Brussels (Belgium), 27/04/2009, www.ec.europa.eu/youth/\_/eu\_youth\_strategy.pdf. - 7. "Youth empowerment and protection", UNICEF Turkey, www.unicef.org/tr. - 8. Ibid.



## CHAPTER I - "Youth Empowerment" as a programme and new social frameworks

The youth public policies of the Euro-Mediterranean come within the present problems of empowerment marking an enrichment of their standard since their main priority was participation. If the empowerment policies include participation, they go way beyond that; they take into account social inclusion and solidarity, access to employment, education and mobility; the programmes that nourish them should therefore be examined, whether they are pillars of the European Union, the World Bank and international organisations, or States in the region. We shall see that these programmes can resonate with the changes underway in the modernizing Arab societies thanks to the progress made in the elimination of illiteracy, major demographic developments and the collapse of traditional authority structures as underlined by Youssef Courbage and Emmanuel Todd<sup>9</sup>. This progress should not hide

the fact that it is a transitional crisis and the success of these policies presupposes certain conditions. To give support to an individualisation process following the example of the European societies despite the attachment of a number of young people of the region to traditional values in conflict with their dreams of forms of emancipation is essential. To develop the civil society too by using different means for the purpose of an aim, to give priority to a public space for debating and taking responsibility; this is via the awareness and democratisation of the use of the new technologies that played an important part in the Arab Spring, but also the attention given to associative life which should represent real opportunities for freedom of expression, initiatives and democratic life. Such are the stakes that can be neither ignored nor bypassed.

### “YOUTH EMPOWERMENT” AND PUBLIC POLICIES

The present day problems of empowerment are focussed on social inclusion, access to employment, education and mobility; they correspond with a more global approach, an investment in youth. We observe here an enrichment of the European standards for public youth policies. For the European Union today, the question is to develop a strategy for “investing in young people and mobilizing them”. It is essential

to “set up further means in youth policies that affect their daily life and improve their well being” and “to promote the potential of young Europeans to renew society and contribute towards the values and objectives of Europe<sup>10</sup>”.

In this sense, the European Union has developed the following programmes: “Youth in action”, action 3 and “EuroMed

<sup>9</sup>. COURBAGEY, TODD E., Le rendez-vous des civilisations, Le Seuil, coll. « La République des idées », Paris, 2007. « Youth: investing and Empowering », résolution du 27 novembre 2009 des 27 ministres de la Jeunesse de l'Union européenne, Commission de la Communauté européenne. Pour une stratégie de l'Union sur 2010-2018.  
<sup>10</sup>. « Youth: investing and Empowering », résolution du 27 novembre 2009 des 27 ministres de la Jeunesse de l'Union européenne, Commission de la Communauté européenne. Pour une stratégie de l'Union sur 2010-2018.



Youth IV'. The youth policy is based on three main pillars:

> to encourage solidarity (through voluntary participation, social inclusion and the globalisation of youth policies);

> to develop opportunities for young people (through education, employment and entrepreneurship);

> to improve the conditions of participation as well as the access to sport and cultural activities.

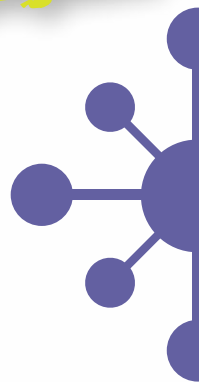
## \* The World Bank, the NGO and bilateral policies

### The World Bank

Over the past few years, the World Bank has greatly invested the problems of youth in its thoughts on the Maghreb and Machreq countries. It is one of its priorities and one of its strategic goals. Its reflexion falls within the scope of the pillars mentioned above of empowerment, based both on the development of young people's abilities to act for the construction of their future and on taking young people into account as actors in the collectivity. The stakes are clearly set out in a document published by the World Bank in 2007<sup>11</sup>. This document is presented as "a first attempt to assess the situation and to make investment in youth a systematic priority for regional development"<sup>12</sup>. It recommends the implementation of an "inclusive and multisectorial policy for youth"<sup>13</sup>. The World Bank, in its various documents<sup>14</sup>, rightfully, firstly emphasizes the importance of meeting the problems related to the transition to adulthood through access to employment and an active participation in society. With regard

to employment, it insists on the lack of jobs offered to new arrivals, the inadequate nature of the qualifications, the inadequacy of the employment services and the difficulties met by young people to have access to credit within the scope of an entrepreneurship action. The World Bank also insists on the participation of young people and on the fact that the setting up of "organized youth activities outside formal education allows strong life skills to be developed". It "notes in particular the lack of spaces (physically and institutionally) to develop leisure and participation activities" and the importance "of the cultural barriers to the participation of young women (and the lack of spaces available)", as well as "the voice and limited presence of youth in decision-making bodies including those at the service of youth"<sup>15</sup>. Within this logic, the Marseilles Conference of April 2010<sup>16</sup> organised by the World Bank, concluded that: "the non-investment in youth today will mean substantial investments for the future, in particular by not creating the necessary jobs for them,

11. « Les jeunes : un atout sous-estimé. Vers un nouvel ordre du jour pour le Moyen-Orient et l'Afrique du Nord ». La Banque mondiale, Washington DC (États-Unis), septembre 2007. - 12. Ibid., p. I - 13. Ibid., p. IV - 14. namely supra - 15. LA CAVA G., "Young People in Arab Countries: Promoting Opportunities and Participation, an overview", Centre de Marseille pour l'intégration en Méditerranée, World Bank, conference held in Marseille, 28-30/4/2010 (joint initiative of the Centre de Marseille pour l'intégration en Méditerranée, the World Bank and Agence française pour le développement), <http://web.worldbank.org>. - 16. Ibid.



youth will be made more vulnerable with the risk that it might become marginalised and partially liable to negative social phenomena.”The Arab Spring has surged since then. Is it related to the expectations of the time<sup>17</sup>? The Middle East Youth Initiative<sup>18</sup> falls within this logic as well as its “Shabab” (“youth” in Arabic) and “Silatech” (“your connection” in Arabic)<sup>19</sup> operations.

Other international organisations are also present and in particular the United Nations through its various programmes and in particular those of UNICEF, PNUD or UNESCO.

### The NGO and the bilateral programmes

The NGO and the foundations in general, and the NGO and the North American foundations in particular, as we have already noted, play an essential part at international level in the promotion of the notion and programmes of youth empowerment. The question of empowerment was first developed within the scope of local development programmes or for the emancipation of women or more precisely, the French translation usually retained in this field, “d’amélioration de la présence des femmes”. Among the NGO or North American foundations widely present in the region, we can mention the Beyster Institute which develops programmes focussing on the support of the civil society and the problems of leadership and entrepre-

neurship<sup>20</sup>, the Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings. We also note the high level of presence in the funding of youth oriented actions by enterprises such as Google (Anita Borg Memorial Scholarship in particular) or Microsoft. However, all the NGO operating in the region and the field of youth are not necessarily North American. For the record we can mention some outstanding initiatives, without being exhaustive, either set up by the state or borne by NGO from Japan, Denmark, Germany, etc. The three major German foundations linked to the major political parties of the Federal Republic are more especially present: Konrad Adenauer for the CDU, Friedrich Ebert for the SPD and Heinrich Böll for the Greens.

Certain states also operate through bilateral programmes and in particular the United States through the USAID. The United States Agency for International Development is an American governmental agency dedicated to development, the purpose of which is to “reduce poverty, promote democracy and economic growth, relieve the victims of natural disasters<sup>21</sup>...” The American USAID is widely present namely through reflexion on the strengthening of the civil society<sup>22</sup> or again The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) which operates in the field of citizenship<sup>23</sup>. The American cooperation agency USAID develops a specific programme in the region called “Empowering Youth” which is

<sup>17</sup>. Ibid. - <sup>18</sup>. Launched in 2008 by the foundation of the previous director of the World Bank James Wolfensohn and the Dubai School of Government. - <sup>19</sup>. [www.shababinclusion.org](http://www.shababinclusion.org) <sup>20</sup>. The Beyster Institute created in 2002 is managed by the management department of the University of California, a previously Foundation for Enterprise Development (1896). [www.beysterinstitute.org](http://www.beysterinstitute.org); Morocco will host the headquarters of the leadership institute of the MENA, [www.tanmia.ma](http://www.tanmia.ma). - <sup>21</sup>. See the article « Agence des États-Unis pour le développement international », [fr.wikipedia.org](http://fr.wikipedia.org). - <sup>22</sup>. For example see “How can the US and International best engage Egypt’s civil society” Brookings, Friday January 27, 2012. [http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/06\\_egypt\\_civil\\_society.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/06_egypt_civil_society.aspx) - <sup>23</sup>. <http://mepi.state.gov/about-us.htm>





based on the following considerations: "The young people in the region need practical skills and positive models and messages. They also need opportunities to guide and take part in their communities and at their work place. At USAID, the aim is to « empower” the young people so that they can make constructive choices. This means giving them the tools, the support and

the opportunities they need to build a solid future in the world of today. It is for this reason that, in its youth oriented management, it insists on leadership. The aim is integration (inclusion) and empowerment so that everyone has a part to play and that everyone can take its bearings from a different place<sup>24</sup>."

## REGIONAL AND NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

### The Arab League

Youth empowerment programmes are also supported by organisations or states on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. Starting in 2005, the Arab League, referring to the 2005 report, sought to give impetus to national youth policies. The creation of national youth councils was encouraged with varying success. An Arab Children's Parliament was created as well as an Arab youth forum which however seems to have been more especially a showcase for the regimes in power at the time<sup>25</sup>. The 5<sup>th</sup> forum, which met in Alexandria between 27 February and 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010, included the issue of the "economic autonomisation of youth<sup>26</sup>" on its agenda.

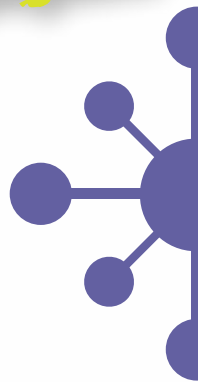
### The National States of the region

At the level of the entire region, a study carried out between 2004 and 2005, at the initiative of the secretariat of the international council on national

youth policies funded by the German technical cooperation agency GTZ, underlined that "little progress has been noted in the Arab region", that "the Arab Council of Ministers of Youth and Sports gave more attention to sport than issues of youth policies" and that "fault of having a dynamic civil society, a number of countries have difficulties in developing and implementing intersectoral youth policies allowing the participation of young people at each of the stages of the process" and it concluded that: "We are obliged to admit that the Arab region is influenced by political constraints<sup>27</sup>."

The situation since then, before the Arab Spring, had not undergone any radical changes as evidenced by the various monographs dedicated by the INJEP to youth policies in the different countries of the "EuroMed" programme. This was so, even if there was unques-

24. "Empowering Youth", USAID Middle East, [www.usaid.gov/omep/programs/emp/pthtml](http://www.usaid.gov/omep/programs/emp/pthtml) - 25. See for example the minutes of the closing session of the forum held in Tunis: "Clôture du forum de la jeunesse arabe à Tunis. Admiration libanaise pour l'approche tunisienne", La Presse, 5/7/2010. - 26. 5<sup>e</sup> Forum de la jeunesse arabe à la BA", Détails d'actualité, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 24/11/2010, [www.bibalex.org](http://www.bibalex.org). - 27. AL-MULLA K., "Situation de la politique de jeunesse dans la région arabe", s. d., [www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/.../N9\\_YP\\_Arab\\_region\\_fr.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/.../N9_YP_Arab_region_fr.pdf) Khalid Al-Mulla is the Director of the youth department, General Youth Authority.



tionably an awareness of the stakes that had put the issue on the agenda, even if some of them were shaping up and starting to implement action programmes (Morocco and Jordan in particular with the help of the PNUD and UNICEF). Youth was often posted as a national priority, as in Tunisia and Egypt, but without this having any

actual effect, if not in the investments dedicated to education. Even so, all these regimes remain prisoners of the contradiction between low development of the civil society and their authoritarian character underlined by Khalid Al-Mulla in this report pour the Arab League dating back to 2005.

## CHANGES IN THE ARAB SOCIETIES, NEW POLITICAL STAKES AND EMPOWERMENT

The question of empowerment is closely linked with the question of the modernisation of the Arab societies or, to be more precise, with what

Courbage and Todd call “the transitional crises” in the Muslim world in *Le rendez-vous des civilisations*<sup>28</sup>.

### ✧ The transformation of social frameworks

Transition crisis marked by the cultural modernisation process namely through:

- > the spectacular progress made with the elimination of illiteracy in most of the states of the region;
- > the emergence of a new demographic regime marked by a sharp drop in the birth rates which tend to come into line with those of Europe;
- > the collapse of the structures in which traditional authority is exercised in particular by the family.

All these countries are under “the shock of the change of attitudes associated with the rise in the number of people who know how to read and write and the generalisation of birth control<sup>29</sup>”. Insofar as young people are concerned, their

situation, even if it differs a great deal from one country to another, presents specific characteristics, corresponds to economic challenges and background difficulties and contributed towards their revolt and awareness during the Arab Spring.

### The drop in fertility rates

The demographic trend should not mask the fact that the drop in fertility rates, marker of a new demographic system, was preceded by a major increase in the population due to the improvement of living conditions, the progress made in health and medicine while the fertility rate remained high (Table 2). The countries south of the Mediterranean therefore have to integrate a great number of young populations (Table 3).



**Tables 2 - Fertility rates**

Country	Total fertility rates*	Rates of demographic growth (annual variation in %) **
	2009	2010
Algeria	2,3	1,5
<i>Germany</i>	1,4	- 0,2
Egypt	2,8	1,7
<i>Spain</i>	1,4	0,4
<i>France</i>	2	0,5
<i>Greece</i>	1,5	0,3
<i>Italy</i>	1,4	0,5
Morocco	2,3	1
Portugal	1,3	0,1
Syria	3	2
Tunisia	2,05	1
Lebanon	1,8	0,7

The European countries are in italics.

\*The total fertility rate = number of children a woman would give birth to if she lived until the end of her child-bearing years and who would have a number of children in keeping with the fertility rates by present ages.

\*\*The annual population growth rate for a given year is the exponential rate of growth of the population in the middle of the year for the year represented from t - 1 to t and this growth rate is expressed in percentage.

Source: World Bank.

**Table 3 - The age balance**

Country	0-14 years *	65 years and more **
	2010	
Algeria	27	5
Egypt	32	5
Morocco	28	5
Syria	37	4
Tunisia	23	7
Lebanon	25	7
Jordan	38	4
Palestine	nc	nc
<i>Germany</i>	13	20
<i>France</i>	18	17
<i>Greece</i>	15	19
<i>Italy</i>	14	20
Portugal	15	18
<i>Spain</i>	15	17

The European countries are in italics.

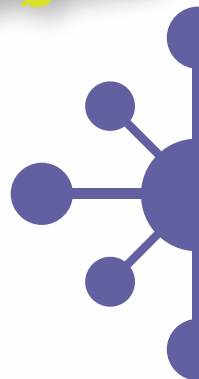
\*The population aged from 0 to 14 years is the percentage of the total population included in the group of persons aged from 0 to 14 years.

\*\*The population aged more than 65 years is the percentage of the total population included in the group of persons aged more than 65 years old.

Source: World Bank; Development indicators in the world.

Out of the 180 million inhabitants that live in the eight Mediterranean countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine,

Jordan, Lebanon and Syria), almost 70 million, i.e. 40 %, are between 15 and 34 years old<sup>30</sup> (Table 3).



### The decline of illiteracy

The progress made in the elimination of illiteracy (Table 4) marks the modernity of these countries but the observers underline the problems in the educational systems: apart from important disparities in the educational investment in the region, and unequal results (the rate of illiteracy is 20 % in Morocco and 3 % in Tunisia), the teaching method remains traditional and cannot be

considered as open; higher education, which produces an increasing number of young graduates, is not adapted to the needs for employment for the region and emigration countries, namely those of Europe. A young and numerous population, training courses not adapted to the needs of the economy are factors that contribute towards the difficulties met by young people in accessing employment.

**Table 4.1 - Progress of literacy**

Alphabétisme des adultes de plus de 15 ans			
Country	Year	M/F literacy %	Gender parity index*
Algeria	2006	72,6	0,79
Egypt	2006	66,4	0,77
Morocco	2008	56,4	0,64
Syria	2008	83,6	0,86
Palestine	2008	94,1	0,94
Tunisia	2008	77,6	0,82

\*\* The gender parity index (GPI) is « a measure used for assessing the differences between genders in education indicators. [...] A GPI value of 1 means that there is no difference between the indicators of girls and boys, so they are therefore perfectly equal. Between 0.97 and 1.03 it is considered that parity is reached. In this table, the GPI values

below 1 show that males are better off, higher than 1 it is the females who are better off

Source: *Global Education Digest 2010, comparing education statistics across the world, UNESCO Institute for Statistics.*

**Table 4.2 - Youth literacy from 15 to 24 years**

Alphabétisme des adultes de plus de 15 ans			
Country	Year	Literacy GF	Gender parity index*
Algérie	2006	91,8	0,94
Égypte	2006	84,9	0,93
Maroc	2008	76,6	0,81
Syrie	2008	94,1	0,97
Palestine	2008	99,2	1
Tunisie	2008	96,8	0,98

Source: *Global Education Digest 2010, comparing education statistics across the world, UNESCO Institute for Statistics.*



## Employment and migration

Unemployment among young people (Table 5) in the region is indeed the highest in world: more than 25 %, a large number of whom with a high level of education are seeking their first job<sup>31</sup>.

Diplomas here, to the contrary of the northern countries, are not a protection against unemployment. The importance

of informal work, the wiping out of trade unions by authoritarian governments are and have been obstacles to the constitution of a real labour market governed by a legal framework, recognized and accepted by all. Table 5 shows the aspects of youth unemployment in the region. The temptation to emigrate abroad is also a problem.

**Table 5 - Youth unemployment**

	Algeria 2006	Egypt 2007	Jordania 2009	Morocco 2009	Syria 2010	Tunisia 2005	Turkey 2010	Lebanon 2007
<b>Youth unemployment Rate % *</b>	24,3	24,8	27	21,9	19,2	30,7	21,7	22,1
<b>Adult unemployment Rate % **</b>	8,9	4,3	8,6	7,3	5,3	10,2	9,8	6,1
<b>Ratio of youth unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate ***</b>	2,7	5,8	3,1	3	3,6	3	2,2	3,6
<b>Share of youth unemployed in youth population % ****</b>	-	8,3	-	6,6	-	10,1	8,3	6,8
<b>Share of youth unemployed in total unemployed (%) *****</b>	43,2	62,9	-	40,9	51,2	42,3	31,6	44,9

\* active youth unemployment rate in the entire working population.

\*\* adult unemployment rate among the entire working population.

\*\*\* ratio between the youth unemployment rate and the adult unemployment rate .

\*\*\*\* share of young job seekers in the entire population of young people.

\*\*\*\*\* share of young job seekers in the entire unemployed population.

Bureau international du travail, *Key Indicators of the labour Market (KILM)*, seventh edition, 2011<sup>32</sup>.

The young people from the southern shore consider that the other shore, the northern shore for the young

people of the Maghreb, those of the Gulf for the Machreq, is synonymous with success professional future, and



the young people dream of finding "elsewhere" what their own country refuses them. First of all as students since "84 649 students from the Maghreb were mobile in the world in 2008. Their number increased between 2000 and 2003 then declined until 2008. France is the first host country since it receives 67 % of the mobile students from this region. Germany, which only receives 8 % of the students from the Maghreb is the second destination country, followed by Canada, Spain and the United Kingdom<sup>33</sup>". The same applies to young people seeking a job.

This desire to migrate can take on extreme forms with the figure of the "harragas » - those young people who try to emigrate illegally to find a job in Tunisia - which has become emblematic

of those dreams of emigration to find work. If this practice used to concern the illiterate, it now affects young graduates. Furthermore, to understand what makes these young people take action it is necessary to understand that the failure of an emigration project no longer stigmatises these young people but gives rise to an important social acknowledgement<sup>34</sup>. Ivan Martin, in his study on employment among young people in the Mediterranean countries, shows evidence through a few examples of this will for emigration dynamics: 1/3 of the young Palestinians aged between 10 and 29 would like to emigrate, 37 % of the young Algerians in 2002 and 75.9 % of the Tunisians in 2005.

## ✧ The process of individualisation in question

This "transition crisis" is behind the individualisation process which, confirmed in Europe, is underway in the southern countries, which cannot be achieved without resistance and jolts in traditional and authoritarian societies. By individualisation, we understand what allows an individual to take charge of his life and only depend on what he considers right for taking action; the society of individuals is a society in which "the individual is considered as a fundamental reference unit, both for himself and for society. It is the individual who decides on his profession, who chooses his spouse. He "freely

assumes his beliefs, his opinions<sup>35</sup>". But individualisation and the place of the individual in society are not synonymous with the destruction of society but rather a different way of operating that implements a « process bringing individual points of view closer together".

This process allows individuals to become subjects by gradually freeing themselves from collective identities such as religion, family, to multiply memberships and govern themselves depending on standards and values built on these multi-memberships

33. "La mobilité des étudiants du Maghreb, de l'Égypte et du Levant », Les notes de CampusFrance, May 2011, hors-série no 2. Figures source: UNESCO.  
 34. MABROUK M., "Harrège ou l'honneur du stigmate", Jeunes, dynamiques identitaires et frontières culturelles, UNICEF, 2008. - 35. BOUDON R., BOURRICAUD F., Dictionnaire critique de la sociologie, Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 2000.



and specific rationality. We rediscover the ideal set by the Age of Enlightenment in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, which makes the individual an emancipated subject, released from the constraints borne and capable of exercising his critical mind to make the most of his freedom.

## North/South, differing situations

The situations are very different in the North and in the South Nord. In the North, the process is old and completed, even if differences are insignificant namely with regard to the Eastern countries. If we refer to Alain Ehrenberg, "the "major stories" building the lives of individuals leave room for an increasingly important autonomy, when it is not an injunction for autonomy at the cost of an immense solitude, a tiredness of being oneself"<sup>36</sup>."

On the other hand, in the South, the individualisation process is more recent and causes a certain amount of resistance and reactions as explained by Courbage and Todd. The claims for autonomy are still limited and coexist or are even fought by the permanence of strong social solidarity through the primary groups of socialisation formed by families, relationships and local communities to which the individual remains attached. These primary solidarities continue to delimit an informal civil space and the articulation between this informal civil space and a public space is difficult. As it is underlined by Jacques Ould Aoudia<sup>37</sup>, the Arab societies of the

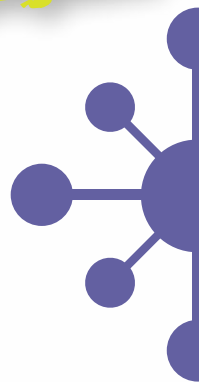
Mediterranean in between, between a society of links and a society based on law, but the link soon disappears whereas law has difficulty in actually being set up. Other than inappropriately. The consequence is an extreme institutionalization of the regulations and a formalism that is often denounced.

A study carried out by the French foundation, Fondapol<sup>38</sup>, illustrates these differences by enabling us to compare how young people from the South and others from the North build their identity or not thanks to traditional or on the contrary modern values, such as religion, nationality, the family, gender equality. This analysis enables us to have a better idea of what makes the specificity of the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Table 6 shows the importance of religion, the family, the nationality in the construction of the personal identity of the young people, in Morocco, Turkey, Spain and France respectively.

## Religion and nationality

When asked what was the most important factor in the construction of their identity, 90 % of the young Moroccans and 80 % of the young Turks answered "religion", compared with 24, 24 and 21 % respectively for Spain, Germany and France. 90 % of the young Moroccans and 64 % of the young Turks say they are interested in

36. ERHENBERG A., La fatigue d'être soi. Dépression et société. Odile Jacob, coll. "Poches", Paris, 1998. 37. OULD AOU디아 J., in BOZZO A., LUIZARD P.J., Les sociétés civiles dans le monde musulman, La Découverte, Paris, 2011. 38. REYNIÉ D., Enquête : 2011, la jeunesse du monde, Fondation pour l'innovation politique (Fondapol), Paris, 2011, 88 p. Study focusing on the Southern countries: Morocco, Turkey and the Northern countries: United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, Greece, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Rumania, Poland, Estonia.



dedicating time to religion. 92 % of the young Moroccans and 74 % of the young Turks declare that religion is an important element in the construction of their personal identity. In Europe, the answer rate is much lower. For example, with regard to the interest in spending time on religion, the answers for France, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Spain are below 20 %. The percentage is slightly higher, but still a long way off from Turkey and Morocco, for Rumania (46 %), Poland (33 %) or Greece (29 %). In these three countries, religion is also rather considered as an element of personal identity (57 %, 55 % and 46 % respectively). In the place given to nationality in the construction of personal identity, we find the same differences between those of the North and those of the South; 87 % of the young Moroccans and 80 % of the young Turks have a very strong relationship with nationality, compared with 59, 56 and 63 % respectively for the young Spaniards, French and Germans.

### Family and equality between men and women

As in the rest of the world, “young people regard the family as the basis

of society<sup>39</sup>”. And all of them, both in the North and in the South, in a large proportion reply that the family is important as an element of identity. If we question the young people on the importance of the family and the fact of having a personal project to have children, the situations appear as very contrasted and we can distinguish three large groups of countries with very different profiles: in Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Italy, the fact of having children is clearly separated from the fact of getting married as well as in Turkey, while in Germany, France, Poland, Morocco and Rumania the two cannot be separated. In the North, the relationship with the family is marked by material support. During a time of crisis, the family protects from uncertainty and precariousness; mutual aid within the family circle has considerably increased as it can be seen from the most recent enquiry carried out by the INED. It provides for financial independence which has an impact on the emancipation and construction of the autonomy of young people. Equality between men and women appears as one of the

**Table 6 - “What matters in the personal construction of one’s identity”**

Country	Religion	Family	Nationality
Morocco	92 %	88 %	87 %
Turkey	74 %	93 %	80 %
Spain	24 %	85 %	59 %
France	21 %	88 %	63 %

The European countries are in italics.

Reading: For 92 % of the Moroccans religion is important in the construction of their personal identity and 21 % of the French.

Source: *Enquête 2011, la jeunesse du monde, Fondation pour l’innovation politique, under the direction of Dominique Reynié, p. 41.*



characteristics of an ideal society, especially for Western Europe, where the positive replies to this item are everywhere higher than 90 %. In the South, a greater reserve can be observed, especially in Morocco, where only 50 % of the young people think likewise. It should be underlined that the sociability systems are very different depending on the gender; the café as a meeting place for socializing is essential for the boys whereas the girls are "confined" to friendly conversations on the telephone or the internet. In the North, Greece, Italy and the countries of the Eastern block are marked by the pregnancy of more conservative models. We will retain from this study carried

out by Fondapol that in the South, despite the claim for independence among young people, sign of the beginning of a more marked individualisation process, we observe the permanence of a strong attachment to the family, religion, the nation, while in the North the young people show a strong aspiration for autonomy correlated to a necessary financial independence<sup>40</sup>, that they do not always have. Turkey is a singular country, very close from a number of different aspects to the countries of Western Europe: an original individualisation process indisputably emerges at the same time as group belongings continue to make sense.

## \* The development of the civil society

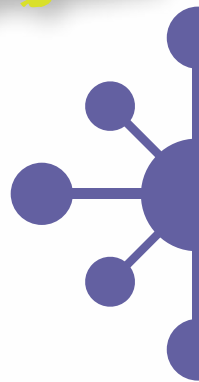
The very process of individualisation, multiplying the interest to infinity, calls the development of the civil society, if we refer to the definition given by UNESCO, a "self-organisation of society through a set of more or less formally set up organisations or groups that do not belong to the governmental sphere nor to the market"<sup>41</sup>. The White Paper on governance in the European Union for its part stipulates that: "the civil society groups together in particular the employer and employee organisations ("labour and management"), the non-governmental organisations (NGO), the professional associations, the charity organisations, the basic

organisations, the organisations that involve citizens in local and municipal life, with a specific contribution from Churches and religious communities"<sup>42</sup>."

### Civil society and democracy

In a democratic society, the civil society is an essential stake as a place for surpassing individual wills, passing from multitude to totality, between differing opinions and the formation of a government will. The question a priori arises in a very different way in the North and in the South, even if it only arises in terms of freedoms that strongly condition the development of a civil society: in the North formal freedoms, but more or less

<sup>40</sup>. Financial independence and autonomy more or less supported by public policies, on this subject, see Devenir adulte, sociologie comparée de la jeunesse en Europe, coll. "Le lien social", Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 2008. - <sup>41</sup>. UNESCO, [www.unesco.org/education/efaf/fr/partnership/civil\\_society.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/efaf/fr/partnership/civil_society.shtml). - <sup>42</sup>. "Gouvernance européenne. Un livre blanc", European Commission, Brussels (Belgium), 2001, [www.ec.europa.eu/governance\\_white\\_paper](http://www.ec.europa.eu/governance_white_paper).



important access of young people to the public space, in the South restricted formal freedoms and residual public space.

In the Northern countries, the democratic society is confronted with the phenomenon of the abandonment of the representative system and the re-articulation between civil society and political society. Young people are particularly sensitive to this. It is the very meaning of the White Paper on governance in the European Union which starts with the acknowledgement of the crisis in political participation in its traditional forms, the crisis of the representative system and the steep rise in the demand for participative democracy. In the Southern Mediterranean region, the civil society is increasingly referred to, as shown by the recent Arab Spring. As underlined by Anna Bozzo and Pierre-Jean Luizard, the expression "civil society" now covers, in the Islamic countries of Africa and Asia, "all the players more or less included in a modern type of associative world" but also "a reality made of local initiatives or in the quarters, ranging from charity work to business, through local committees, around or in the absence of charismatic personalities, in traditional places (mosques), or in new spaces for socializing in modern urban life" and they remind us that "this associative phenomenon coincides with the emergence of the individual in a process of modernisation or differentiation of society"<sup>43</sup>.

There is however a danger; that of basing our copying our western models on the reality of the Southern countries; it is interesting for example to refer to a work like that of Sarah Ben Nefissa on Egypt<sup>44</sup>, and in particular on the development of the Gam'iyya shar'iyya, a religious association. She underlines, as it is mentioned by Elisabeth Longuenesse in her report on the work, the particular terms and conditions of emergence « of a new representation of the place of the individual, as an "autonomous and responsible subject", through the valorisation of the "virtuous act" (al'-amal al-sâlih), which makes the "citizen virtuous", virtue being declined in all the activities and all the fields of social life, including work, trade, consumption and of course the family. This citizen language, which merges with a moral language, is expressed in the practice of solidarity and mutual aid, which is bound to appeal to the population, and of which the most outstanding characteristic, notes the author, is the absence of any distinction between private space and public space, typical on the contrary of Western modernity<sup>45</sup>".

### The Arab Spring, a revolution 2.0

We will stop here for a moment on an aspect of the Arab social society, an aspect that is the object of a great deal of discussion linked with the development of the internet considered as one of these "new spaces for socializing in modern urban life" referred to by Bozzo and Luizard



and its part played in the mobilisation of young people during the Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring, like the movement of the Indignados, has reset in the centre of the debate the question of public space as a space of free movement and gathering place, even the central role of public squares in movements - Tahrir Square and Puerta del Sol just to mention the most emblematic among them - but also as a space for communication, "advertising" in the sense give by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, as a vast diffusion of information and subjects to be debated upon by the media. In addition, Habermas insists on the importance of exchanging letters in the constitution of the critical public space. Today we can consider that all the means offered by the internet represent a contemporary version of these epistolary relations and basically play the same role as those of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in a world where the media have been widely deviated from their critical function since logics of demonstration and manipulation have the upper hand. Through the internet, the civil society can bring itself together again by means of advertising (in the sense of Habermas) escaping the control of the government. This is what makes it so important<sup>46</sup>.

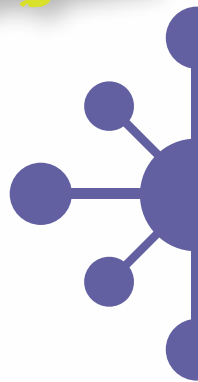
## Information and communication technologies

Information and communication technologies are of prime importance.

It was even spoken of a revolution 2.0<sup>47</sup> for the movements that have just shaken the countries of the Arab world. Firstly we note that access to these technologies is not open to all under the same conditions. They are subject to enormous social inequalities, even if it is different proportions and terms, namely because the objective weight of the internet and social networks varies a great deal between the North and the South.

The number of users in Europe amounts to 58.3 % of the population compared with 39.9 %, 13.4% and 41.3 % respectively for Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. These three figures show the high level of inequality for the southern shores of the Mediterranean<sup>48</sup>. Libya for example only has 5.4 % of the population connected to the internet. In Egypt, this number reaches 24.5 %, 26.8 % in Jordan, 42.4 % in the Lebanon and 19.8 % in Syria. In Europe, countries such as Spain, France, Germany and Great Britain have penetration levels of 62.2 %, 69.5 %, 79.9 % and 82.0 %. The record is held with Norway 94.4 %. Turkey with 44.4 %, Greece 46.2 % and Italy 49.2 % occupy a median place. It should be noted that their penetration levels are in the same bracket as the Lebanon or Morocco. The percentage of those who are connected and in a network through Facebook is also interesting: approximately 1/3 in Egypt, 1/4 in Morocco and 2/3 in Tunisia. In France and in Spain, those who are connected to Facebook represent 50 % and 60 % in Great Britain.

<sup>46</sup> CARDON D. "Vertus démocratiques de l'internet". La vie des idées. 10/11/2009. [www.laikedesidees.fr](http://www.laikedesidees.fr) Dominique Cardon brings out six political virtues of the internet: "Le présupposé d'égalité, la libération des subjectivités, le public par le bas, la force des coopérations faibles (auto-organisation et la légitimité ex-post" but also as many pitfalls: "l'exclusion des immobiles, la dépolitisation narcissique, la fin de la vie privée, la fragilité des engagements, la bureaucratie procédurale et l'érosion de la diversité". <sup>47</sup> Concerning the idea of revolution 2.0 see OUDAN R. "Revolution 2.0". Le Monde. 22/02/2011. The expression is borrowed from the Egyptian demonstrators (NICHOLS). "Revolution 2.0 the people of Egypt win a media war". The Nation. 11/02/2011. [www.thenation.com/blog](http://www.thenation.com/blog) and PARKER N. "Revolution in the age of internet". Los Angeles Times. 11/02/2011. Also discussion by BECHIR AYARI M. "Non, les révolutions tunisiennes et égyptiennes ne sont pas des révolutions 2.0". Movements. February 2011, no 66, pp. 56-61 which sees in the "Facebook revolution" "a myth of the golden youth". <sup>48</sup> These figures are taken from the Internet World Stat. 2011. [www.internetworldstat.com](http://www.internetworldstat.com). They are the only data available for the region. They should be taken with precaution and indicate trends.



In the North as in the South, the social networks or social media perhaps play a major role on the Habermasian model of “advertising”. We can refer to the conclusions of the French political analyst Jean-Pierre Filiu concerning the Egyptian and Tunisian uprisings: they “were essential for nourishing a feeling of resentment and shared aspirations, especially among the urban and educated youth. In revealing the lies and crimes of the ruling government, they took part in overthrowing the wall of fear<sup>49</sup>”. To a greater or lesser extent this applies to the recent movements that have shaken Southern Europe in particular; even if for the militants of the North rather than a wall of fear it is a wall of resignation. As it is further underlined by Filiu,

“there was no revolution 2.0, but a new instrument in the revolutionary toolbox<sup>50</sup>” or at least democratic<sup>51</sup>. It is a “tool” for which we should however retain that its very form, which gives it its efficiency, starts resonating with the new forms of commitment of young people who take part in what Patrice Flichy calls “the connected individual<sup>52</sup>”: “The individual chooses his methods of intervention, but always in coordination with the others” and the author points out that it also technically offers “real opportunities for new multiple and reticular democratic forms, where the citizens are not just content with electing their representatives but where they can debate, supervise and assess actions<sup>53</sup>”.

## ASSOCIATIVE LIFE

Associative life is an essential dimension of the civil society. There is a significant associative movement that has developed depending on the country at different times, rather towards the end of the eighties and during the nineties. This “explosion” should however be relativized:

- > The weight of associative life is relative compared with the whole society, it remains of little importance. Thus, in Egypt the ratio is 0.2 association for 1 000 inhabitants<sup>54</sup>.
- > The associations are often the product of administrations: for example, we consider that this was the case for 2/3 of the associations

in Tunisia. This observation is similar in Morocco with “regional associations” created by key figures close to the monarchy. The same phenomenon is observed in Jordan, Libya, Syria. The management of the associations is, as a general rule, exercised by “leading citizens”, so they therefore have an elitist character.

- > The setting up of association is more urban: in Egypt 20% of the associations are concentrated in the greater Cairo; associations in the country are more especially development associations, usually closely linked with the government<sup>55</sup>.

49. FILIU J.-P., La révolution arabe. Dix leçons sur le soulèvement démocratique, Fayard, Paris, 2011, p. 84. - 50. Ibid. - 51. In Palestine, the non-violent peace activists take advantage of an important and speedy circulation of information thanks to the internet since a large number of them are connected even if they are mainly young people from the enlightened bourgeoisie ... according to the eye-witness account of an activist from the association France Solidarité Palestine after several observation trips to villages in Palestine. - 52. FLICHY P., “L’individualisme connecté, entre la technique numérique et la société”, Réseau, 2004, no. 124, pp. 17-51. - 53. FLICHY P., “Internet un outil de la démocratie ?”, La vie des idées, 14/01/2008, www.laviedesidees.fr. - 54. BEN NEHSSA S., op. cit. - 55. Ibid.



## ❖ The characteristics of associative life

Even if there are vast differences from one country to another depending on the social requirements, economic situations, legislations and their implementation, a few common characteristics and permanent features can be brought out.

### The preponderance of the social dimension

The basic characteristic of this associative system is the importance played by charity work and social work: "Helping the needy and underprivileged sectors of the population is the main factor that pushes the citizens of the Arab countries to form associations." This commitment logic is strongly marked by the religious hold of Islam but also Christianity (Egyptian Copts, Lebanese Maronites, etc.). The charity and social dimensions combine "with community, religious, regional, or even family or tribal types of link<sup>56</sup>". Ben Nefissa refers to the "representation of the majority of the population which links "association" closely to "charity<sup>57</sup>"".

### Limited associative freedoms

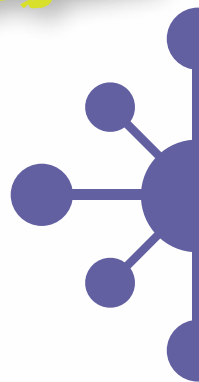
The difficulty in freeing oneself from this archaic model comes from the legislations considerably limited associative freedom and keeping it under tight control. However, within this scope, associations linked with developmental problems have developed in partnership with the public authorities. To a lesser extent, we can speak of the development

of associations of a citizen nature: associations for the defence of human rights, for the defence of certain minorities, in particular Berbers, in North Africa, for the promotion of women's rights. The common characteristics of all these associations are "their relative youth, their fragility which is due not only to administrative and political blockages but also to the fact that they are limited to the westernized urban and intellectual elites". In the countries around the South of the Mediterranean there is a highly developed informal commitment within the scope of family or religious obligations or linked with tradition<sup>58</sup>.

### Le pôle social et le pôle citoyen

The associative movement is built round two main poles: a majority "social" pole and a minority "citizen" pole and with little room to manoeuvre. The latter however intervenes in questions of rights. These « associations do not endeavour to assist, but to mobilise the Arab citizens on themes concerning them (corruption, environment, heritage, defence of the consumer, etc.). These associations show a will to take part in defining public matters by placing themselves as partners of the public authorities in the choice and piloting of the development. [...] Apart from the question of human rights, which has become an inescapable theme in the Arab political debate, they put the accent on subjects that are sometimes

56. *Ibid.* - 57. BEN NEFISSA S., "Le secteur associatif dans le monde arabe", Institut de Recherche et Débat sur la gouvernance (IRD), [www.institut-gouvernance.org/fr/analyse](http://www.institut-gouvernance.org/fr/analyse). Sarah Ben Nefissa is a political analyst for the IRD. - 58. *Ibid.*



taboo in these societies such as the protection of unmarried mothers (Morocco), the institution of a civil marriage in countries where several religions coexist (Lebanon) or supervision of the elections<sup>59</sup>”

Tension is high and permanent between authoritarian capturing and the construction of citizenship. This materialises within a legal and institutional framework for the freedom of association often combining common law and special regimes, a framework all the

easier since for a number of associations access to resources passes via the State according to a mechanism perfectly described by Ben Nefissa<sup>60</sup> for Egypt, but in all the countries of the region we find this same tension between strict authoritarian control and transfer of the public space towards more freedom of expression and action. Despite everything, these associations open spaces of social policy which in return can concern the political side of things.

## \* The place of young people in associations

Young people are parties to this associative life. The figures of the World Bank concerning the associative participation of young people are as follows, even if in addition it insists on the lack of data: “15 % of the young people take part in leisure or sports activities in Morocco. In Egypt only 3.3 % of the young men and 1 % of the young women take part in voluntary activities. 67 % of young Egyptians have never taken part in an extracurricular activity<sup>61</sup>.”

### In Egypt

In Egypt<sup>62</sup>, a number of young NGOs are weak, especially in the governorates outside the large urban areas and in particular that of Cairo. They include both youth associations working for youth, intervening on other themes or other publics than young people; these are associations at the service of young people in which young people do not play a major

part in the management functions. When they do not intervene among young people, these associations most often come with the social field. More often that not, the young volunteers working for the associations are not members of these associations. Finally, the organisations that address youth more often than not target educated young people who have at least an intermediary level (secondary school). “There is only a limited number of associations that develop programmes for young people who are illiterate for example<sup>63</sup>.”

### In Tunisia

In Tunisia, young people show little interest in associative life. Only 0.5 % belong to an association: “This lack of interest can be explained by the difficulty in gaining access to the associations which often operate in closed circles. It can also be explained



by the non-involvement of young people in the conception and implementation of associative activities and the low level of autonomy granted to them within these associations [...] the monopolisation of the responsibilities by the elders prevent the young people from reaching a position of responsibility, therefore of conception and management [...] when they are involved, it is selectively, with objectives of quick result [...] their commitment is never long-lasting, but often limited in time<sup>64</sup> and opportunist.

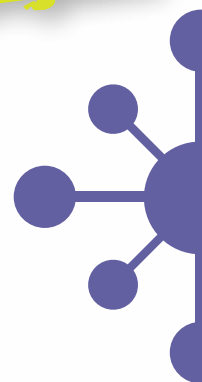
## In Morocco

In Morocco, only 10 to 15 % of the young Moroccans belong to an association. This low level is the result of a lack of official acknowledgement of this type of activity, considering the fact that no diploma nor any other form of recognition is awarded. We also note a gap between the expectations

of the young people and the activities proposed. The centres require a permanent commitment whereas the young people prefer not to commit themselves on the medium or long term. Thus, in Morocco, insofar as the associative network is concerned, young people are drawn between attraction and rebellion. Attracted by the associations due to the real efforts granted by the public authorities in terms of infrastructures and support, they nevertheless feel obliged to rebel against them since they are part of a hierarchy and, despite the official discourses that uphold the contrary, obedience continues to stifle the spirit of initiative. During meetings, certain young people claimed a national youth council which could be an official space where the young people would be represented<sup>65</sup>.

64. "Tunisie. Pour réconcilier les jeunes avec la vie associative", Kapitalis, l'actualité autrement, 1/7/2010, [www.kapitalis.com](http://www.kapitalis.com). Source to be used with precaution.

65. FLORIS S, Studies on youth policies in the mediterranean partner countries: Morocco, SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed Resource/INJEP, 2009.



## CHAPTER 2 - Stakes and means of action: levers and bearing points

The new order, whether at international, regional or local level, brings one to consider new courses of action, to widen, renew and strengthen the field of problems invested by the EuroMediterranean cooperation, now essentially focussed on mutual understanding between young people, the fight against stereotypes and prejudice. This renewal was already partly sketched out by the “EuroMed IV” programme that places the promotion of the active citizenship of youth in the forefront and introduces a solidarity side. The implementation of these priorities should not however neglect the essential dimension of the intercultural dialogue that necessarily includes the taking into account of otherness. Today, an empowerment policy requires recourse to three different levers: giving priority to the autonomy

of young people, increasing their position in society and developing democratic logics. However, to operate these levers means having bearing points; we will single out two of them: training and employment.

The revolutionary movement has imposed the first precondition to the development of any empowerment policy on the political agenda, that of the recognition of fundamental freedoms. This is a prerequisite to any youth empowerment policy. Two other conditions, related to the first one, should be considered as determining in the pursuit of the empowerment process started by the Arab Spring and the necessary consolidation of freedom regimes: access to employment and the adaptation of the training systems.

### THE BEARING POINTS: EDUCATION, ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

No empowerment policy can really be engaged unless the problems of access to employment are settled beforehand through the adaptation of the training system to the economic requirements of the country. Employment and training are two stakes at the heart of any empowerment policy and preconditions

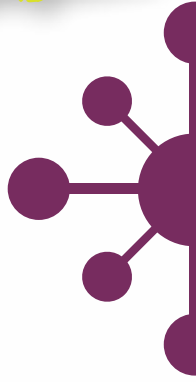
to any empowerment policy. They have already been widely identified both by international organisations and by the European Union, or even certain governments in the region. The implementation of the commitments proclaimed as necessary is more than ever on the agenda.

#### \* Employment and education

The questions of employment and education are very closely linked. The

major objectives of what should be an employment and education policy for





young people at EuroMediterranean level were set in a relevant manner within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean in as early as 2008 by the Conference of the Ministers of Employment and Labour: These objectives have remained dead letters but are still a current issue and are a precondition for any youth empowerment policy.

For the record, it should be remembered that the main objectives fixed by this conference focusing on “a better integration of young people in productive and formal jobs<sup>66</sup>” were:

- > to guarantee equality of access to an education of quality at all levels for male and female students by 2015;
- > to facilitate the passage from school to work;
- > to reduce the inadequacy between, on one hand, education and the professional aspirations of young people (particularly towards the public service) and, on the other hand, the requirements

of the labour market;

- > to give priority to the development and improvement of the quality of professional training by making it more appealing to young people and more especially focussing on offering support “through the strengthening of their professional capacities, to young people having difficulty in integrating the labour market<sup>67</sup>”.

In addition, the document insisted on the need to “develop an integrated strategy to transform informal employment into formal employment which is of primary interest to young people and on the management of the migration of labour considering the requirements of the labour market on both sides of the Mediterranean [underlined in the text] ».

These objectives and the need for an integrated strategy remain on the agenda. In a logic of empowerment, youth entrepreneurship is also a major work priority.

## \* Entrepreneurship support

Today, entrepreneurship support, in particular for young people, is an important pillar in the work of the European Commission namely through the Europe Strategy 2020<sup>68</sup>. For the European Youth Forum, “the promotion of youth entrepreneurship is another option filling the void

between the educator and the labour market; it encourages youth autonomy and participation in their communities’. It appears as a possible answer to the issue of access to employment, as an alternative method for starting their career. For young people confronted with unemployment it can offer the

66. Ibid. p. 10 - 67. Ibid. p. 10 - 68 “Donner un visage à l’entrepreneuriat des jeunes”, press release, Brussels (Belgium), 31/5/2011, [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org).



possibility of « being active in the labour market, earning an income and achieving their potential”. For the forum this approach “goes hand in hand with the strengthening of the capacities of young people and youth organisations”<sup>69</sup>. On the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean support in favour of entrepreneurship also appears as a possible answer to the question of informal economy, the search for a job in the civil service and the emigration of young graduates. It is considered as a means of developing the capacity of young people to act,

to enhance their skills and it is supposed to remedy the weakness of the SMEs, or even form an important element in the transformation in the relationship to work. Experiments carried out to date on entrepreneurship, especially in local development programmes, show however that there is no structural change unless the projects are really borne by the acceptance of citizen values and a critical conscience<sup>70</sup>. In this field we should bear in mind the importance of tutoring, its necessary linking with methods of funding through micro-credit, the non-control by the banking system of these credits, etc.

### Recommended actions

To facilitate the funding of such initiatives through the setting up of micro-credit arrangements not placed under the control of the banking system within a logic of social and joint economy.

- > To develop accompaniment platforms with the systematic organisation of a tutoring programme.
- > To educate in entrepreneurship through the organisation of industrial placements giving priority to the interactive approach based on the exchange of experiences and apprenticeship.
- > To extend to non-students the European programme “Erasmus for young entrepreneurs”<sup>71</sup>.
- > To extend to the EuroMed space the European Unions programme « Progress », the European micro-funding instrument so as to help young entrepreneurs to create or develop their own enterprises<sup>72</sup>.

69. Ibid. Declaration of the Chairman of the European Youth Forum, Peter Matjasic. - 70. See the conclusions of WILLIAM A., Types et processus d'empowerment dans les initiatives de développement économique et communautaire au Québec, thesis Université Laval, Québec (Canada), 2002 and ELYACHAR J., “Finance internationale, micro-crédit et religion de la société civile en Égypte”, Critique internationale, October 2001, no 13, pp. 139-152. - 71. “Erasmus European Programme for young entrepreneurs”, press release, 26/7/2009, www.r2erong Pilot projet initiated by the European Union in 2009 so as to enable new entrepreneurs to acquire the skills necessary for the proper management of a small and medium sized firm by training with an experienced entrepreneur member of another member state of the European Union. - 72. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/>

## THE LEVERS FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE. TO ACQUIRE INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM, BUILD NEW WORLDS IN COMMON

### \* Youth mobility

Mobility is a strong aspiration for young people both in the North and in the South. In the North it is greatly encouraged both in a logic of development of a European citizenship but also of employability. On the other hand it is strongly controlled and limited from the South towards the North namely through the visa system. Yet mobility is an important lever of empowerment in the construction of the personality, the consolidation of the personal and professional development as in the learning of otherness in a context that is sometimes unfavourable because it is full of racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, the negative consequences of the colonial legacies. Concerning North-South mobility, as underlined by the Patrick Karam report: "If it would naturally not be conceivable or realistic to generalise mobility between North and South and to open it to everyone due to the extent of the demand of

young people anxious to emigrate, we could not be satisfied with a limitation of mobility to a small number of young people, in addition coming from an advantaged cultural and financial background which gives an image of a fortress Europe, excessively elitist, incapable of addressing the majority of people<sup>73</sup>. »

#### Recommended actions

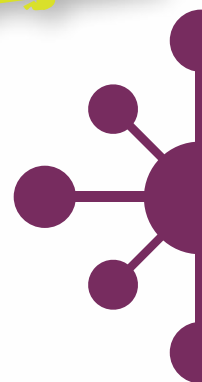
- > To develop youth exchanges in a logic of intercultural confrontation with the prerequisite of the application of the European visa code which advocates to treat student applications in the same way as those of young people taking part in non formal educational activities.
- > To develop opportunities for continuing studies in Europe for young people wishing to obtain qualifications in economic sectors in chronic deficit in the Southern countries.

### \* Interculturality

Interculturality refers to a double reality: globalisation and the consequences generated by this process like the construction of Europe, the migrations and the heri-

tage of multi-ethnic and multiconfessional societies both in the South and the North. As underlined by the European Commission: "Due to globalisation and the widening of the Euro-

73. KARAM P, Coopération euroméditerranéenne en matière de jeunesse, INJEP, 2011, p. 53. Report at the request of the Minister of National Education, Youth and Associative Life.



pean Union and the greatest professional mobility within the single market, our countries have become more multicultural and the number of languages, religions and ethnic groups present has grown” and sets out the consequences: “Even if it can give birth to dynamic and vibrant societies, coexistence between people of different cultures can also lead to tension<sup>74</sup>.” Tensions in the North exist with the migration and the reception of foreign populations but also with the process of European construction and the difficulties caused by “minorities” in various countries including the transnational issue of the Roma. To the South are the Berber issue throughout the Maghreb and the Kurdish question in Turkey and Syria, the multiconfessional character of the Lebanon but also Syria and Egypt with its 10 % of Copts. Interculturality is party to any empowerment process in that it firstly focuses on giving priority to communication, negotiation and living together beyond frontiers. It takes part in the construction of mutual rules of recognition between the different cultures and identities. It presupposes the recognition of the

other in a relationship of equality. But interculturality is also, to take up the formula of the Portuguese Santos Boaventura de Sousa, about the “multi-diversity” of human dignity<sup>75</sup>: “if human rights may well be universal [...] the expression of dignity is manifested in a variety of different and sometimes contradictory ways, without this affecting the universality of human rights<sup>76</sup>.” Since its origins (1995) interculturality has been one of the strategic targets of the “EuroMed Youth” programmes, the fundamental aim of which is to promote deeper understanding and dialogue between young people thanks to mobility and exchange actions<sup>77</sup>.

### Recommended actions

- > To exceed the generalist approach to interculturality and to work in a more specific way on the creation of shared spaces with supports such as comparative law for example.
- > To rearticulate interculturality with the issues of living together and social cohesion.

## \* The promotion of girls and young women<sup>78</sup>

Women are very present throughout the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean but not favoured, whether in their economic participation (rate of 17%, one of the lowest of the world<sup>79</sup>), their personal status

in terms of law, with the exception of Tunisia<sup>80</sup>, or their access to education (at the beginning of the century, 2/3 women were illiterate in the region<sup>81</sup>) even if in the latter area, considerable progress has been made. These ine-

74. « Le dialogue interculturel dans les programmes de l'Union européenne », European Commission, general directorate of education and culture, 2008, p.5. - 75. BOAVENTURA DE SOUSA S., “The process of globalization”, Eurozine, 2002, www.eurozine.com - 76. GOMES R., “État des lieux et des débats en Europe”, in BIER B., FOURNIER C., Culture, cultures : quelle(s) pédagogie(s) de l'interculturel, coll. « Cahiers de l'action », INJEP 2009, nos 24-25. - 77. “Le dialogue interculturel dans les programmes de l'Union européenne”, op. cit., p. 44. - 78. CHARAFEDDINE F., “Savoir, culture : le statut de la femme dans le monde arabe”, UNESCO 2004; “Le rapport arabe sur le développement humain”, bureau régional des pays arabes, PNUD, 2003; “Les développements économiques et sociaux dans la région de l'ESCWA 1994-1997”, United Nations, 1998; “Le genre social et la mondialisation la participation économique de la femme arabe pour la formation et la recherche”, CAWTAR, 2002. - 79. ESCWA/AWTAR, 1998. - 80. In addition Tunisia is the first country to have imposed a strict male/female parity on the occasion of the October 2011 elections. - 81. “Femmes et hommes dans la région arabe : un portrait statistique”, United Nations, 2000.

qualities were reinforced during the colonial period and still last today. This does not mean that these countries are not aware of the problem of the emancipation of women. In as early as 1899 the book by Kassem Amin (1863-1908) *L'émancipation des femmes*<sup>82</sup> was published in Cairo and the issue was brought supported by the promoters at the time of the Arab Renaissance (Nahda arabia). Women played a certain part in the national movements<sup>83</sup> and were very much present in the Arab Spring of today. All these inequalities not only refer to the law, equality and justice but are also stakes for a development policy as the PNUD reports have often underlined. Youth empowerment cannot be achieved without taking into account girls and young women.

## Recommended actions

- > To include womens rights in the new following the example of Tunisia.
- > To grant special attention to the place given to girls and young women in all the policies and systems for the empowerment of women.
- > To integrate the gender issue into all the actions carried out for favouring youth empowerment.

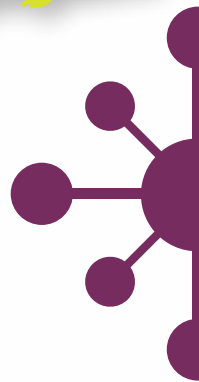
## THE LEVERS FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION SOCIALE: IMPROVING THE PLACE OCCUPIED BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOCIETY

### \* Support given to youth associations and youth movements

The association is a constituent element of any civil society, together with trade union organisations in particular, NGOs, organisations integrating citizens in local life, as it is reminded in the White Paper on European

Gouvernance. It is a fundamental player of the democratic form, even if it is not democratic in itself since all associations are not necessarily civic<sup>84</sup>.

<sup>82</sup>. Amin K., *L'émancipation des femmes*. Librairie Al-Taracki, Cairo (Egypt), 1899, mentioned in CHARAFEDDINE F., op. cit. In Tunisia similar movement with Tahar Haddad (1899-1935). - <sup>83</sup>. For example see the classic by MRABET F., *Les Algériennes*, Maspero, Paris, 1967. - <sup>84</sup>. See CAILLÉ A., LAVILLE J.-L., "Association, démocratie et société civile. Introduction", *La revue permanente de Mauss*, December 2007, [www.journaldumauss.net](http://www.journaldumauss.net)



### Recommended actions

- > To consolidate associations by setting up networks through the creation of a specific fund for the development of associative life in order to favour local, regional and national structures, as well as network coordinators within coordinations, and also favour places of dialogue, exchange of best practices, sharing resources and expertise.
- > To reinforce the central North/South role created within the scope of the youth partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission as a training tool in the democratic field: youth training within youth organisations, trainer training, summer universities.
- > Sustainability of action 4 and credits open within the scope of "EuroMed Youth IV" enabling the EMYU (EuroMed Youth Unit) to decide on their own strategy for training, information and networking of youth associations.

### \* The training of youth leaders

The public space is built around the political debate, the civil society develops through associations, trade unions, corporations, foundations etc.

The question of those who animate these frameworks and take responsibilities is a key issue. Young people often have difficulty in carving out a place or accessing positions of responsibility. Through the development of a "Youth Leaders" program, the issue is to identify and promote young people with talent, recognition in their professional field and a political, trade union or associative commitment so as to develop a shared awareness about what can strengthen the democratic

value in the EuroMediterranean space taking into account specific legacies of each and by crossing them.

This "Youth Leaders" programme could be declined both through training sequences, meetings between young leaders from both shores of the Mediterranean and the whole of Europe, allowing the joint construction of the prospects for the future based on the key issues of our societies and create links, engage on topics of general EuroMediterranean interest in relation to the challenges of our time such as set by young people through the major mobilizations both in the South and in the North.



## Recommended actions

- > As proposed by the Patrick Karam report: "The European Union could broaden the scope of action 1.3 by focusing on the opinion leaders (namely the young people who made the Revolution) but also, at local level, on promising young talent [...]. The aim is to ensure the promotion of European values and ideals by the most dynamic sectors of society which relay opinions in their country and strengthen them by organizing a networking system with opinion leaders in other countries. This report even sets targets: "This should be able to relate to 1000-2000 young people per year and by MEDA country starting with Tunisia, Egypt and Libya [...]"<sup>85</sup>."
- > Also, as proposed by the same report, to set up a "Youth for democracy" programme which would include "democracy-oriented training courses and meetings with the European institutions, members of parliament, youth organisations, trade unions... of the Northern countries"<sup>86</sup>."

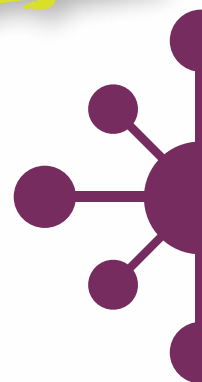
## \* The training of youth workers

Youth empowerment also involves development through youth work which aims to increase opportunities for young people to take their future into their own hands. Youth work calls for skilled youth workers who are also key players alongside the elected representatives in the process of setting up public youth development policies, one of the sides of the famous triangle proposed by the "Youth Partnership" which includes policy makers, researchers and youth workers. Their training is a decisive issue in the implementation of youth empowerment policies. It concerns every level, from the young coordinator (youth worker) to the people in charge of youth-oriented networks or heads of youth departments in the administration of regional authorities

or government departments, in the spirit of what has been undertaken by the Training and Cooperation Plan (TCP) of the "Youth in action" and "EuroMed" programmes.

## Recommended actions

- > The financing of training: the TCP, tool given to national agencies of the European "Youth in Action" programme, finances training in partnership with the countries in the South, in particular the training courses organised within this framework by SALTO-YOUTH and the on line learning site "EuroMed E-learning-community" so as to bring together the trainers, the participants and the national agencies in relation with [...]



[...] the UEM)<sup>87</sup>.

- > The setting up of modules for budget management training, the development of skills in project management in all the youth related fields, the conception and implementation of youth policies.
- > The reinforcement of the network of training centres already existing in most countries of the southern mediterranean (Institut Supérieur d'Animation pour la Jeunesse et la Culture (Bir el Bey) in Tunisia, Institut Royal de Formation des Cadres de la Jeunesse et des Sports (IRFCJS) in Morocco, the four national training institutes for youth executives in Algeria) in relation with their European counterparts.

## THE LEVERS FOR CITIZENSHIP: DEVELOPING CITIZEN LOGICS

### \* Education in citizenship, active citizenship and support of the voluntary activities of young people

Firstly it is necessary to promote the active citizenship of young people as set out in the "EuroMed IV" programme and as it was reminded by the European Union européenne on the occasion of the proclamation of 2011 as European year of Volunteering: "Volunteering is one of the fundamental values of active citizenship and democracy<sup>88</sup>." Exercising rights as a citizen is party to the empowerment process. Traditionally, citizenship was defined through the exercise of fundamental freedoms (press, expression, assembly, association), political participation (right of vote, eligibility) and more recently social rights. Today, citizenship can also and more especially be defined in a logic of empowerment through the will to be a player; a player of multifaceted

commitments meeting its own ideal and as coproducer of the society through its commitments as a player. Our society, and in particular young people, long for a more participative democracy. Education in citizenship is at the same time the learning of its formal conditions but also commitments in participation mechanisms (youth councils, youth parliaments) and more especially learning through its very exercise in action, through volunteering.

#### Recommended actions

- > To transpose to the MEDA countries the provisions of action 1.3 "Youth for democracy" which aims at a better understanding of the functioning of



democratic bodies at local, regional, national or European level; to promote mechanisms that encourage all young people to take part in the decision-making process; to encourage young people to express themselves and be involved in decision-making on matters concerning them; to foster dialogue between the institutions, youth and policy makers at all levels. These provisions provide recipients with an opportunity of rubbing shoulders with concrete projects, the practices of their country and comparing with other countries through cooperation between regional authorities and their youth.

- > To create a support fund for citizen and democratic participation in order to strengthen the process involving the civil society organised in public life and improve dialogue with the institutions; the question is to encourage active citizenship by supporting projects for compliance with the equality between men and women, diversity and access to rights and citizenship such as the right to vote, civil equality, public freedoms (association, press, etc.)<sup>89</sup>.

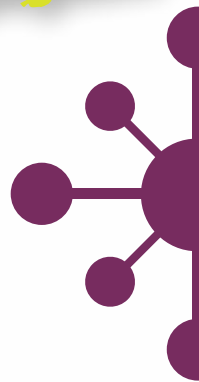
> To support volunteering through the implementation of a real Euro-Mediterranean voluntary service<sup>90</sup>, extension of the EVS (European Voluntary Service) i.e. to create the opportunity for a young person go abroad receiving support in the preparation of the project, but also upon arrival and upon his return; "volunteering" being taken here in the sense given by the AVSO (Association for Voluntary Service Organizations) for a "specific full-time volunteering activity, within the scope of a project conducted on an ongoing basis for a limited period of time". Such system is at the same time a return on investment both for the associative environment that strengthens its expertise that it can then share and for the territory on which it is developed and for the young person himself who can develop his skills and acquire new ones.

## ✱ Encouraging the participation of young people and support of initiatives or participation through action

The Arab revolutions, like the Indignados movement and the other mobilisations of this kind that have recently shaken Europe, showed that young people aspired to take an active part in the life of the City; this obliges us to look

beyond the observation that is sometimes made of a certain disengagement both in the North and in the South vis-à-vis political participation in its traditional forms. This aspiration and these changes are also attested to by a number of

<sup>89</sup>. KARAM P, op. cit., p. 64. <sup>90</sup>. Commitment that can take place both in the field of culture, childhood, youth, the elderly, the preservation of the heritage, education, the environment, sport, leisure activities... It is necessary to be between 18 and 30 years of age and reside in a Member State of the European Union (including Turkey which takes part in the youth programme) or a partner country (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Palestinian Authority and the Lebanon). Priority is given to "young people having fewer opportunities".



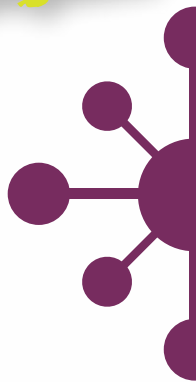
studies concerning the values of young Europeans<sup>91</sup>. The participation of young people is today one of the policy areas preferred by the European Union in the continuity in particular

of the resolution of the Council of Ministers responsible for youth on February 8, 1999, which invited the Member States to "promote the political participation of youth, namely by contributing to the creation of representative youth parliaments at local, regional and national level;" to encourage the participation of children in organizations and democratically managed associations". Participation is also one of the main principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention confers on children (defined as human beings of less than 18 years old) the right to take part in the decisions concerning them. These principles are strongly supported in the MEDA region by UNICEF for the unders 18s and taken up at varying levels by the various states. Children and young people represent a significant part of the civil society.

Their skills can be useful to their society. The young people who have the occasion to express their knowledge, their views and their creativity have the opportunity of acquiring essential practical skills, relating for example to the analysis of problems, democratic decision making, the search for viable solutions and their implementation. Through participation, children and young people are offered opportunities to learn and practice democracy at all the stages of their development.

### Recommended actions

- > Institutionalisation of youth participation mechanisms both at local and regional level through national youth councils, local youth councils, youth parliaments, lycée student councils, youth committees, youth associations.
- > Support of youth initiatives as elements of participation through action.



## CONCLUSION

Empowerment is embodied through multiple figures. Young people from the Northern Shores, in a context gradually dominated by an ageing process of the population, demand the possibility to find a position that is not one of eternal adolescence but a position as a responsible adult.

On the other side of the Mediterranean, young people from different countries, through their participation in the Arab Spring alongside the older generations, have shown their determination to fight against the authoritarian powers; empowerment is above all a process of emancipation from the constraints suffered. The young people from the southern shores have demonstrated their strength and courage to make public their disagreement with the ruling powers, to ask for more freedom and more democracy, but also to obtain jobs in keeping with their investment in extended studies, to found a family, to assert their right to a real autonomy. That their expectations are to be found in contexts that are very different from those of their likes in the North means that attention should be paid

not to impose a vision "of the North". It should not be forgotten that the young people of the South were a sort of model for the Indignados of the northern shores. The sociologist, Cécile Van de Velde, refers to the mimetism of the latter vis-à-vis the young people of the Arab Spring. The stakes are therefore indeed to accompany in the best possible way these young people from the North and South with differing paths towards new democratic situations, enriched with the commitments, wealth and imagination of the young people of the South who have yet to invent their way of living together; providing they can develop skills and ambitions and on condition that they can have some power over their personal and community lives. Today, it is at the heart of the cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean that a new generational horizon can be invented. Empowerment, in this sense, is indeed at the service of the construction of a future that is not common but shared.

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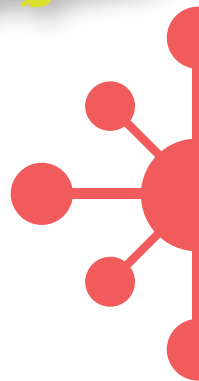
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\* Notes

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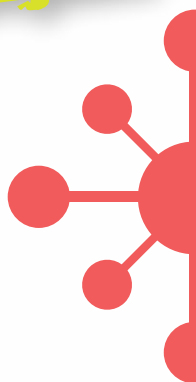
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Impertinently but necessarily, we can wonder about the fact that for a long time one has wished of a empowered youth and it brutally barges in and claim if not the power at least to take part in it.  
Do the declared aims of European programs and EuroMed around empowering contribute or not to these mobilizations? Is it today possible in thinking about empowerment policies to integrate some learning of these events?

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