

11th Mediterranean Research Meeting Newsletter

Created For



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Mediterranean Programme

11th Mediterranean Research Meeting

Florence & Montecatini Terme 24-27 March 2010



The Mediterranean Researching Meeting (MRM) has been promoted annually since March 2000. It has become one of the major meetings of social and political scientists, as well as historians, lawyers and economists working on the topics related to the Middle East and North Africa and recently also Southern and South-Eastern Europe, where their mutual relationships and their relations with Europe are discussed.

The MRM is one of the main activities of the Mediterranean Programme of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, Italy.

An annual MRM session consists of around fifteen workshops with an average of twelve participants and two workshop directors. Workshop directors as well as participants are selected on a highly competitive basis through respective “Call to Direct a Workshop” and “Call for Papers”. In addition, one or more keynote speeches are delivered during every MRM.

Throughout the years, the MRM has been supported by various sponsors:

- Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze has sponsored the MRM since its Sixth (2005) Session.
- The Tuscan Regional Government sponsored the MRM from the First (2000) to the Ninth (2008) Session.
- The Italian Central Bank supported the Third (2002) and the Tenth (2009) Session.
- Capitalia, Compagnia di San Paolo, Eni Spa, Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena, European Investment Bank (EIB) have supported the Mediterranean Programme as a whole; several workshops in the field of migration have been co-financed by the European Commission through the CARIM Project the European Commission.

11th MRM OPENING – March 24th 2010

We are in Montecatini Terme, near Florence, in Italy. The 11th Mediterranean Research Meeting has started. At the opening, all the participants (almost 200 of them) are welcomed by the Director of Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies – Stefano Bartolini, and Oliver Roy - Professor at the European University Institute in Florence and Chair of the Mediterranean Programme at RSCAS since 2009.



Following the welcome, the new President of the European University Institute – Josep Borrell gives a short speech about the main differences between the North and the South of the Mediterranean. He mentions ‘a border’ between the two of these regions, characterized by ‘strong social and economic differences’. These differences are mainly seen in:

1. Revenue (the standard is higher in the Northern Mediterranean region);
2. Demography (the South of the Mediterranean is getting younger);
3. Immigration (there is emigration from the North Africa region towards the Northern Mediterranean).

Since there is an obvious connection and a mutual interest between the two regions the main message coming from Borrell is that ‘we must talk to each other, get to know each other, and try to understand each other.’

He considers the MRM an important element in reaching these goals.

As the MRM opening ceremony continues, Jorge Branco de Sampaio, former President of Portugal also delivers an inspiring speech about cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

‘I’m not a scholar, I’m a practitioner and a retired politician’ – he begins. After giving us a short overview of his political career and after sharing some thoughts on possible ways to develop a dialogue, he continues on the subject of cultural diversity.

‘Cultural diversity is the fourth pillar of sustainable development’ – he states convincingly. He believes that diversity is the key for local governance and that there is a lack of case studies and research when it comes to cultural diversity.

The MRM is, according to him, a great opportunity for increasing this kind of research as well as the number of case studies.

‘Good governance of cultural diversity is all about democracy, and democracy means equality. Good governance is central for cohesion and prevention of conflict. Good governance depends on economic, civil and cultural rights’ – he continues his speech.

According to President Sampaio, ‘cultural diversity is inseparable from human dignity. There is a present challenge to balance social cohesion and cultural diversity. This is a time of intercultural tension and we need to act on different levels.’

He believes that intercultural skills and competences are most important in order to make a change. This is where intercultural dialogue comes in.

‘There isn’t a single model for intercultural dialogue. Also, intercultural dialogue is not an end, but a tool’ – says President Sampaio – ‘It should be a skill in the process of interaction and it is worth mentioning that it is part of a complex system of governance.’

‘When promoting intercultural dialogue, there should be clear aims’ – he finishes his speech.

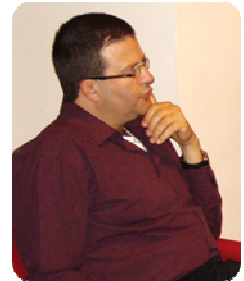


WS1: Globalization, Secularization and Religion – Different States, Same Trajectories?



Ben-Porat Guy (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Negev – Israel)

Jeffrey Haynes (London Metropolitan University, London – UK)



With both of the above workshop directors already working on this topic at several other conferences, the creation of this workshop at the 11th MRM was only one step further in their work.

‘The subject is important’ – they believe, ‘because we live in societies where religion is important and this is a useful way to make a parallel among the Mediterranean countries.’

What is interesting is that they have participants in the workshop who are diverse in many ways: they come from different academic backgrounds, are of different ages and from different countries. ‘We expected them to be fully engaged and they were’ – they both state with satisfaction in their voices.

Asked about the ‘different states – same trajectories’ part of their workshop title, they mention that this refers to countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, and Bangladesh. They compared them in order to see whether the common trajectories could be identified in terms of globalization, secularization and religion or whether they are a matter of regional similarities.

Their findings are that most of these issues had a common focus but subjects like these are not easy to resolve. What is important here is the fact that during these workshop sessions some fruitful discussions took place and a wide network was established among participants.



One way to connect globalization, secularization and religion is to take a look at how globalization encourages communication and thus secularization makes religion less important in politics.

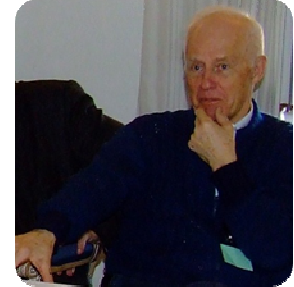
Following 11th MRM, they plan to have the workshop papers published either in a book or a special issue of a journal.

WS2: Sustainable Waste Management in the Mediterranean Region: Impacts of Socio-economical and Political Factors



Arafat Hassan Ali (An-Najah National University, Nablus – Palestinian Territory)

Jens Aage Hansen (University of Aalborg, Aalborg – Denmark)



Jens Aage Hansen works in the area of solid waste management so he is always interested in bringing people from different countries together to work on this subject. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of the journal ‘Waste Management and Research’. Together with Prof. Arafat Hassan, he therefore created this workshop for 11th MRM.

Even though the subject of sustainable waste management is truly important, it is unfortunately not very popular. The two professors feel that ‘few people think about the social aspect even though there is a lot of attention given to the technological aspect of this matter.’ ‘The problem with sustainable waste is universal, and everybody ought to be interested’ – they continue.

At the 11th MRM workshop sessions they examined the situation in the MENA region and they feel there is a unique situation in Palestine (not officially a country) where there are so many other actual issues that sustainable waste has become marginalized.

In order to have a better impact on the future evolution of this matter, ‘good governance is the key’ – they believe. ‘We are all parents and we must create a better world for the young people.’ However, sometimes problems occur when people decide to make changes. These problems are of social character.



For example, when there were some efforts to modernize the recycling system in Cairo, problems arose. The people previously working there were dissatisfied because they lost their jobs in order to make way for a more modernized system of controlling the waste.

But the directors of this workshop actually have an idea that goes a step further in solving the problem of sustainable waste: ‘Reasons for clean cities are many’ – they believe, ‘the solution is studying and changing the mindsets of people’.

WS3: Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean: the Middle East and the Balkans Compared



Eyal Ginio (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem – Israel)

Karl Kaser (University of Graz, Graz – Austria)



The two directors knew each other prior to the MRM, and when they heard about it, they thought that the “Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean” would be an interesting and a significant subject for a workshop. Even though the topic has not been researched enough, the directors received almost 60 paper proposals, which showed that it is important.

They felt it was necessary to bring the diversity of approaches together. During the workshop sessions they realized that the newer, younger generations of researches are quite promising. ‘The MRM is an absolutely excellent way to bring them together, and the framework is great’ – they state, satisfied.

‘This is a huge and relevant subject’ – they believe.

Asked about the importance of the Ottoman legacies, they feel like there are even some countries that keep them as treasure, like Turkey, and some pay no attention to it, even though ‘people have a deep memory. But, even so, no one is indifferent to the Ottoman Empire period.’



There is change for sure, brought about by the new generations, who ask important questions and thus influence the older historiography – ‘full of stereotypes’.

WS4: ‘Provincializing Europe’? Towards a Local History of Maghribi Modernity

James McDougall (Trinity College, Oxford – UK)

Etty Terem (Rhodes College, Memphis – USA)

‘The idea behind this workshop title and subject of discussion was to bring together people who will share opinions and participate in discussions about what modernity means, and have discussions on the history [of modernity] as a global phenomenon. We want to bring the North African countries into this conversation’ – says James McDougall.

They already knew each other prior to the MRM.. They consider their subject popular among scholars and very important because ‘it is difficult to figure out what modernity means, and European Union countries need to understand what it means in other parts of the world, in the North African countries in particular.’



During the workshop sessions, they discussed subjects such as how to write history of modernity outside Europe, and how the history of North Africa and European countries is created.

In terms of the workshop subject and questions related to it, the directors feel that both the initiatives coming from the EU and those coming from North Africa ought to be made more visible.

They find that the MRM is a great way to bring people together for ‘intense discussions’.

Asked about whether or not he feels they will be able to influence this particular subject after the MRM, McDougal answered “I don’t know”; however, the workshop papers may be published as a book.

WS5: Re-examining Federalism and Consociationalism as Constitutional and Political Arrangements for Community Conflicts in Post-Ottoman Lands



Nicos Peristianis (University of Nicosia, Nicosia – Cyprus)

Yücel Vural (Eastern Mediterranean University, Magusa-Mersin 10 – Turkey)



Nicos Peristianis and Yücel Vural come from a divided island: Cyprus. But based on their friendship and mutual academic interests, they decided to come together to create a workshop for the MRM.

This problem (stated in the title of the workshop) seemed like ‘a good topic for a conference’, so they further expanded it to other countries that used to be under the Ottoman rule, called Post-Ottoman Lands. These are for example the Balkan countries, Cyprus, and Lebanon.

Peristianis believes that the subject of the workshop is popular because it is based on historical events, and when it comes to ‘re-examining’ this subject ‘the main aim is to see if there are connections with the past’ – he continues, in order to ‘find a parallel with the Ottoman Millet system and look for new forms of cohabitation.’

During the workshop sessions the participants and the directors discussed the main characteristics of the Post-Ottoman Lands (one of which is conflict) in an attempt to find out if there is correlation between these characteristics and the fact that these are Post-Ottoman Lands.



‘Modern forms of communities were divided in the Ottoman Empire period; now they try to bring together ethnic federation and consociationalism’ – continues Peristianis.

The directors hope to come back next year since ‘participants have shown very big interest and the conclusions coming out of the workshops are important’.

WS6: Who is who in the Balkans Today: Mythmaking and Identity Mutations, 1989-2009



Darko Gavrilovic (University of Singidunum, Sremska Kamenica – Serbia)

Vjekoslav Perica (University of Rijeka, Rijeka – Croatia)



Darko Gavrilovic, Director of the Center for History, Democracy and Reconciliation (CHDR) found that the Mediterranean Research Meeting promoted the same values as CHDR, and he therefore invited Vjekoslav Perica (member of the CHDR) to join forces and create a workshop for the 11th MRM.

Their workshop examined the following topics:

- The (dis)continuity of the former nation's myths and the comparison of the old and new myths; new class structure, particularly the so-called "criminal privatization" and new poverty it brought about; new nation-founding myths of the ex-Yugoslav states, the roles of the state and the "negative other(s)" in every single case; the regional, provincial, urban, rural, clan and similar identities congruent with or in conflict with the national; religious institutions as national co-founders and new religious myths incorporated into national ideologies etc. Since they call the Balkans 'Myth Factory', they feel that 'we need to separate myths from political myths'. It seems that the former 'are older than any ideology' while the latter 'have created so many changes in the past years'.



Asked about what the truth is about the Balkans, since the whole subject is surrounded with so many myths, they answer: 'we will try to figure out in this workshop. We are drawing from the debate what it is and what is not true, to see how collective identities changed on the Balkans over the past twenty years in particular regions'.

They are already planning on publishing a selection of papers after the 11th MRM.

WS7: Socio-economic Dilemma, Cultural Challenges and their International Dimensions



Lofti Boumghar (Institut National d'Etudes de Stratégie Globale, Alger – Algeria)

Tuomo Melasuo (University of Tampere, Tampere – Finland)



This topic has been a subject of research of Tuomo Melasuo for a long time and he finds there are not enough studies and theoretical evolution related to it. However, he believes the MRM is a great opportunity for mending this.

He is not sure about the subject's popularity but 'it is important since it creates relations between societies, not just states' – he continues. By relations among societies he means comparisons between universities, arts, sports quality etc.

However, the fact that the directors had the chance to choose 16 among 52 paper proposals from interested potential participants says a lot about the subject's popularity.

Asked about most important cultural challenges nowadays, he is confident in saying: 'In certain ways it is promotion of tolerance, respect for the others. These are challenges because, in the south especially, hate is rising' – he believes.

Since they have chosen the socio-economic dilemma for one of their main subjects of workshop discussions, we were curious to hear about their solutions to this dilemma.

Melasuo states that they are trying to research the subject, not solve it. They are looking into everyday life conditions, the way young generations live, the educational systems, the families, job positions they have etc.

During the selection process for participants, the directors used 4 criteria:

- scientific interest of the paper;
- topic of the paper;
- gender balance in the group;
- 'country balance' (participants from the Balkans and the North African Region).



WS8: Alternative Publics in the Middle East and North Africa



Kevin Gray (American University of Sharjah, Sharjah – Afghanistan)

Already doing research on the public sphere, Kevin Gray applied for the 11th MRM with a workshop proposal concerning the Alternative Publics in the MENA Region.

Kevin feels this subject ‘is popular for every government that wants to create a vibrant civil society as part of democracy’. He even believes that participants, including himself, will be able to influence this particular subject after the MRM. He teaches a Civil Society course and the conference ‘is a way to present my research, do networking and meet people’.

We asked him to give us some examples of alternative “publics”.

‘They are groups such as minority groups who have access to methods of government. Some of them are gay organizations, women organizations, feminist movements etc.’

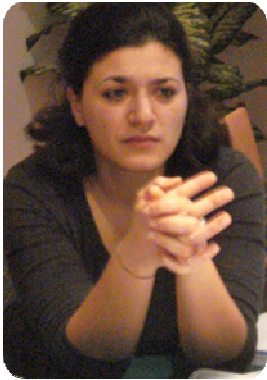
Asked about their role and the reasons why the countries in the MENA Region (or other countries) need alternative publics, he replies without doubts: ‘for minority groups to have access to power’.

During the workshop sessions the participants focused on the process of the construction of the public sphere. Among other subjects, Jürgen Habermas’s theory of civil society was also criticized.



All the participants were ‘very interested [in the subject], and everybody was getting along well and having fun’ – he states as we finish the interview.

WS9: EU Democracy Promotion and Electoral Politics in the Arab Mediterranean



Kamilah Khatib (Paralleli-Instituti Mediterraneo Del Nord Ovest, Torino – Italy)

Already working for ‘Mediterranean Politics’ and seeing a connection between her PhD work and the focus of 11th MRM Kamilah gladly applied with a workshop proposal when she received an e-mail inviting her to take part in this conference.

She believes the topic and the subject of her workshop is ‘interesting but understudied. It is a mix of different studies: Mediterranean Studies, Democracy Promotion, Political Behavior’ – she continues. ‘Political Behavior is mainly studied in the Western countries yet it has its origins in Middle East countries’.

We asked her about the existence – in her opinion – of a ‘full democracy’ in the Arab countries.

‘Rights are a problem in all Arab World. When we speak about democracy, it is more about elections’ – she goes on. What is specific about the electoral politics in the Arab Mediterranean is ‘showing that the elections are disregarded. We want to change this.’



When it comes to the atmosphere in the workshop and her expectations, she says: ‘I had low expectations because there are people with different backgrounds and to make them work will be difficult, but the quality of the discussions is amazing.’

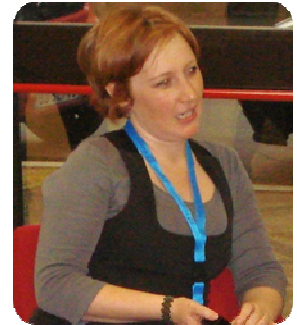
She hopes they will be able to influence the subject after 11th MRM since ‘for one thing, not all participants are academics, many participants have papers that are transferring theory into practice, so a special edition to a journal is an idea and since this subject is a new international subject, a conference is possible’ – she finishes enthusiastically.

WS10: Adriatic Frontiers: Communications across Cultures, Space and Time



Hartmuth Maximilian (University of Sabanci, Istanbul – Turkey)

Amanda Hope Phillips (University of Oxford, Oxford – UK)



The directors knew each other prior to the MRM and they used the 11th MRM as a framework for bringing people coming from different disciplines together.

‘The subject is not very popular’ – explains Maximilian, ‘since it is trans-disciplinary and we are talking about communications between communities’.

What is important is that this subject is ‘studied very little and I hope to establish a new field of studies: border regions studies’ – he continues.

During the workshop, the directors and participants focused on 16th-18th century. As to the title of the workshop, Maximilian explains that it speaks about ‘people crossing cognitive borders and finding a way to deal with each other’.

The discussions concentrated on the Adriatic Frontiers, which are part of the Mediterranean Frontiers, but ‘have been neglected as a subject’ – believes our interlocutor.

The directors focused on originality as a main criterion for choosing the workshop participants. They were looking for original sources and concepts. Interest was high and they received many paper proposals.

‘The atmosphere is relaxed, collegial, 12 people managed to come (even though 18 were selected)’ –Maximilian explains. ‘I hope we can influence this particular subject after the 11th MRM, once we publish the book, which will be a collection of the papers’.

WS11: Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the MENA Region



Jo Cari Clark (University of Minnesota, Minneapolis – USA)

Marwan Khawaja (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Beirut – Lebanon)



The idea for this workshop came from Jo Cari Clark. He recommended the MRM to his colleague while organizing a panel for the World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES). Marwan [Khawaja](#) is our interlocutor during this interview.

Marwan believes the subject of their workshop is important since ‘there were a large number of proposals and unfortunately violence is popular’ – she states at the beginning.

Asked about statistics concerning gender-based violence and the actual actions to prevent it, the interest on the subject and foreign help, she answers:

‘There are lots of statistics related to this subject. I think the interest is both local and from donors coming from the EU, showing interest in the Mediterranean Region. There are different social work programs, and NGO programs, depending on the country’.

When suggesting that perhaps the key to the whole matter is dissemination of the subject and actually talking about the gender-based violence that happens in the MENA Region but also worldwide, she replies:



‘More people report about it when they are aware of the problem. Making this subject public opens the door for people to feel comfortable enough to report violence.’

What inevitably follows is making room ‘to fix the

problem coming in the public sphere’ – she adds.

‘The 11th MRM’ – she believes ‘is a perfect place’ to disseminate the subject ‘because of the format of the workshops and fruitful discussions.’

WS12: Superpower Rivalry and the Third Way(s) in the Mediterranean



Rinna Elina Kullaa (Columbia University, New York – USA)

Victoria De Grazia (Columbia University, New York – USA)

Rinna Kullaa has been working on another larger project addressing the Cold War, but found the announcement of 11th MRM interesting and wanted to participate.

She feels the subject of their workshop is ‘missing from history’. ‘The Cold War is important for the new generations, even though it is not very popular’.

The Cold War history talks about the USA and the Soviet Block but the Mediterranean is often left out.



Rinna explains further:

‘Third Way(s) means not committing to Western Alliance or to the Soviets during the Cold War. An example of not committing is a Non-Aligned Movement.’

This Non-Aligned Movement ‘took shape in the Mediterranean Region, north and south’ – she continues. More importantly, ‘in future the Cold War period should be seen as part of a longer history in Europe, not as a period of Cold War’ – she concludes.

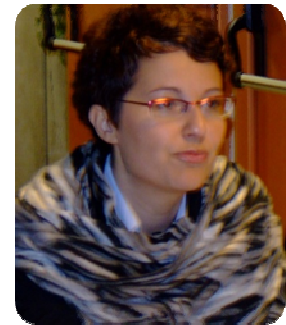
There are some future publications planned, which will probably include some of the papers presented during the workshop sessions.

WS13: Rethinking Interethnic Reconciliation in the Western Balkans: Minorities, Borders, Governance



Cyril Blondel (University of Tours and University of Kent, Tour – France)

Antonija Petricusic (University of Zagreb, Zagreb – Croatia)



Cyril Blondel was looking for a new project and since he had already taken part at a conference similar to the MRM, he thought this 11th MRM could be a step further for him. He contacted Antonija Petricusic with whom he created the workshop proposal.

The subject of their workshop is ‘important and interesting for the region’ –Blondel begins. We asked him if he believes changes are possible nowadays.

‘I hope so’ – he replies, ‘I feel it will be wrong to go the long way round to reach some form of reconciliation. Another generation, that did not experience the war, with good education, can contribute and problems can be solved.’

When they mention borders in their workshop subject, they are referring to all types of borders; geographical, symbolic, ethical, religious etc.

They are focused on creating inter-ethnic reconciliation because it is a ‘central point for a peaceful region.’

As to their future influence on the subject matter, he states: ‘We are not politicians, we try to produce a neutral perspective as scientists and I don’t think we know more than others; we are just doing research and presenting our results.’



WS14: The Evolving International Role of the GCC Economies



Fabio Scacciavillani (Director of Macroeconomic Research)

Giorgio Gomel (Bank of Italy, Rome – Italy)



‘This topic is unusual; it goes beyond the borders of the MRM, but it is an important subject because a closer economy links countries of the Gulfs and the North African countries’ – Giorgio Gomel begins, when explaining the importance of their workshop. He believes importance is also added to this subject since a significant number of the North African labor force works and lives in the countries surrounding the Persian Gulf.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established in an agreement concluded on 25 May 1981 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, between: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Gomel is representing the Bank of Italy. It is the second time that this bank supports a workshop at the MRM: ‘I proposed the cooperation with the Bank of Italy: since it supports universities and we have interest in the economies of the Mediterranean, we came for the second time.’

When asked about the importance and the aims of the workshop, and in particular about the ‘evolving international role’ mentioned in the title of the workshop, he continued:

‘These are countries that are very rich because of the oil but they are trying to find other resources of money, in order to diversify and integrate them with Asia, Europe and the USA.’ – He adds: ‘Financially, they are very strong and once upon a time they were investing only in banks. Now, in the Middle East, they are investing in buildings and infrastructure etc., and the Mediterranean countries need this money’.

It is clear that the countries surrounding the Persian Gulf have initiated this type of cooperation since ‘it is nice to invest in Arab countries because the population is large as well as the need for investments.’

During workshop sessions there were lively debates and good discussions. Therefore, some people proposed a publication following the workshop.

WS15: Governance of the Mediterranean Sea: Meeting the Needs of the Future Today



Oral Nilüfer (Istanbul Bilgi University, IUCN, Istanbul – Turkey)

Tullio Treves (University of Milan, Milan – Italy)

Oral Nilüfer has been working on the subject of the Mediterranean Sea for several years now, and she suggested to Tullio Treves, expert on the Mediterranean Sea, that they participate in the 11th MRM.

‘The Mediterranean Sea is very important both from an ecological and an economic point of view’ – Oral Nilüfer begins, when explaining the aim of their workshop.

She is part of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which helps the world find pragmatic solutions to the most pressing environmental and development challenges.

‘The Mediterranean Sea is a heritage in itself’ – she believes, ‘and there are a lot of problems with extinction. We are losing blue fish tuna and other types of fish for example. Monk seals are also facing the problem of extinction’.

These are just some of the problems of extinction that exist when it comes to the Mediterranean Sea. We asked her about the workshop title and the plans of ‘meeting the needs of the future’:

‘We give ideas about what needs to be done to save sustainability of the Mediterranean Sea and we are thinking about acting today. We are concentrating on the key issues regarding this subject’ – she explains further.

First-time participants in the MRM, the directors were impressed with the type of participants they had, coming from legal, governmental, academic backgrounds.

They would like to influence this particular subject after the MRM, since the outcome of the workshop sessions helped them to get a better idea of what needs to be done in future.



WS16: Integrating the Western Balkans into the European Union: Overcoming the Political and Economic Constrains



Bozidar Cerovic (University of Belgrade, Belgrade – Serbia)

Milica Uvalic (University of Perugia, Perugia – Italy)



The idea behind this workshop is to study the current situation in the Western Balkans – Bozidar Cerovic begins. He was informed about the MRM by his colleague, Milica Uvalic.

What is important about this subject is that ‘there is a piece of Europe that is still outside’ – Cerovic explains. ‘Europe is getting older, EU as biggest power should count on all countries, also the Balkans.’

Asked about the possibility of accepting the remaining Balkan countries in the EU, he states: ‘I think that fast acceptance is in everyone’s interest. The EU includes the countries that are historically and geographically closer. This is normal, but if you want to enlarge further this is wrong’ – he believes.

‘If the EU leaves Western Balkan countries aside, then small problems will become more serious.’

Interested in which constraints the Balkan countries face he continues:



‘The connection between direct foreign investments and the prospect of acceptance exists, but it is important to identify which one will happen first. Support must come from the EU in order for a country to enter it.’

Apparently, the process of ‘materializing through investing leads to entrance’ – he finishes his clarification.

The MRM Newsletter Team

The writers and editors of the 'MRM Newsletter' are Jasna Stamenkova from Macedonia and Mustafa Enes Zayimoğlu from Turkey.

Jasna Stamenkova graduated from the Faculty of Economics at 'Sts. Cyril and Methodius' University in Macedonia in 2008. In 2009, she started her Masters in International Management Department at the 'Economic Institute –Skopje' (Macedonia). She speaks several languages (English, German, Italian, Spanish, Croatian and basic Greek).

Mustafa Zayimoğlu is currently studying at the Faculty of Statistics at 'Ege University' in Turkey. Aside from his mother tongue, he speaks English and German.

They both have experience with internationally organized events and conferences and have communication, presentation and intercultural skills and knowledge.

The MRM Newsletter

It was very hard, but interesting and rewarding to work on the MRM Newsletter. They conducted interviews with all directors of the 16 workshops. The MRM was located at three different hotels within walking distance from each other. Their daily assignments consisted of going to the different hotels to conduct the interviews during coffee breaks and at lunch-time.

However, despite hard work the Newsletter team thoroughly enjoyed meeting all the directors and getting a chance to talk to them about their workshops, the basic ideas behind them and the future goals on the subjects discussed during the MRM.

Montecatini Terme



Montecatini Terme is an Italian district of 21,095 inhabitants within the province of Pistoia in Tuscany. It is the most important center in Valdinievole. The town is located at the eastern end of Piana di Lucaa and has a strong vocation for tourism, as well as industrial and commercial industries based around the spa, which in turn has increased the interest for hotel accommodation in the region.

Keynote Speaker: Mr. Florensa Senèn

The 11th MRM was honoured with the presence of Mr. Florensa Senèn, Director of Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània (IEMed).

IEMed is:

- An actor in the dialogue between the EU and the other Mediterranean countries;
- A centre of reflection and debate on Mediterranean societies;
- A think tank specialized in Euro-Mediterranean relations;
- A promoter of cooperation;
- A Mediterranean lobby close to institutions and public opinion.

IEMed is governed by a Governing Board with the participation of the Government of Catalonia, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and Barcelona City Council, and by a Board of Trustees formed by companies, universities and institutions from civil society and by an Advisory Council made up by Mediterranean personalities of recognized prestige.

Some of the main activities of IEMed are the following:

- To encourage knowledge, through research and study;
- To carry out training and promotion of activities;
- To encourage the participation of civil society agents in the Barcelona Process;
- To contribute to the Mediterranean projection of Catalan and Spanish institutions;
- To promote development of cooperation projects;
- To work in favour of the Mediterranean networks;
- To organize exhibitions and cultural activities;
- To publish books and periodicals;
- To act as an observer of the Mediterranean reality (www.iemed.org).

Mr. Senèn was kind enough to give us some details about the upcoming event called World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES), organized by IEMed. This Congress takes place every 4 years, the first two being held in Mainz – Germany (2002) and in Amman – Jordan (2006). The 3rd WOCMES will be held in Barcelona on 19th-24th July 2010. Over 2000 researchers and experts on the Middle East, coming from a large number of universities, research centers and other organizations from all over the world, will gather in Barcelona.







MRM Style

