



PRESS KIT



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INTRODUCTION

Young people play a pivotal role in developing, planning, managing, delivering and evaluating the work of FEMYSO and its member organisations. This is to be expected since FEMYSO and its member organisations are all composed of and run by Muslim youth and their projects are targeted at youth and students mainly between 15-35 years old. Young people play an integral part in the development of FEMYSO and its member organisations at all levels.

FEMYSO is a European effort involving more than 30 countries!

In order to secure youth involvement in all aspects of European life, the Executive Committee was formed, aiming specifically to network young European Muslims from all backgrounds to enable collaboration and to involve this group in outreach focused towards other young people. To help fulfill this mandate, FEMYSO has developed the concept of the European Muslim Youth Conference.

For the first time in 2011, The conference will bring together youth from a diverse set of backgrounds and nationalities to discuss the issues affecting them in Europe, their effects on a global scale and ways of addressing these issues. The conference will also serve to highlight ongoing research and papers, especially research being undertaken by youth.

PRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPT

The conference will focus on interactive events, on youth attendance and participation, Interdisciplinary meetings and policy recommendations imagined by youth to provide a perennial framework for youth involvement in European policies.

The conference will be of great importance to the European scene because it will serve as the principle venue where youth from many different disciplines, backgrounds and countries will be able to gather and interact. It will allow FEMYSO to showcase the work of Muslim youth to both the media and the general public at large.

It will inspire many youth to become more actively involved in European institutions and issues, while reinforcing for those currently undertaking these endeavors the importance of their contribution.

It will provide the opportunity for a highly motivated group of youth passionate about the development of Europe or (of their European identity) to connect, forming a network that they will be able to draw upon in the future.



DESCRIPTION OF EVENT, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Youth Conference will take place for five days in Brussels. The conference will plant the seeds of a new style of integration and understanding of European Muslim Youth.

Participants will see the value of work in different fields from their own and how it may be applicable to their own lives. Young Muslims will have the opportunity to talk to youth living in other parts of the world and learn from them the best approaches to working in communities.

Young people working in research and policy will have the opportunity to interact, allowing policy workers to emphasize the need for policy relevant documents coming from the youth community.

Ultimately these interactions will contribute to the next generation of European Muslims, policy makers and leaders being better equipped and more willing to work together and across disciplines than has been the case in the past. This will hopefully allow them to better address some of the issues faced by Muslims in Europe.

- ✓ Establish a network of young European Muslims, leaders and policy makers who will be able to work together to find creative solutions to the issues facing Young Muslims in Europe.
- ✓ Encourage dialogue between young Muslims in different disciplines, youth living in Europe and youth working on making policies.
- ✓ Provide an opportunity for youth to present their concerns regarding and solutions to issues facing the Muslim youth to leading politicians and policy and decision makers, both in person and in resulting conference reports.
- ✓ Increase general knowledge among Youth and the general public.
- ✓ Increase the profile of Muslim Youth working in Europe.
- ✓ Encourage Youth not currently involved in European issues to become involved and provide support for Youth already working.
- ✓ Highlight connections between Europe and the rest of the World.



During the five-day meeting, the group representing young activists from across Europe will discuss a range of issues of concern to Muslim youth in Europe.

These concerns include:

- Education and Training
- Human Rights Education
- Gender Equality
- Access to personal development through non-formal Education
- Youth participation and Citizenship
- How to empower Youth as leaders and active members in their local and national communities
- How to combat discrimination
- Social cohesion and diversity
- Intercultural and inter-religious Dialogue
- Career path/Employment

The topics discussed during the roundtable discussions and their outcomes will serve as the basis and objective for closer examination by the working groups. The Conference EU Fair will provide an interactive environment for youth to learn about European Institutions.

Field visits: these give participants the opportunity to interact with local policymakers, (local) governmental institutions, youth organizations, youth workers and NGO representatives. These visits will stimulate participants to think both theoretically and practically

Network and social activities: the conference will also facilitate different side activities for participants to get to know each other, and share information about their cultural backgrounds. These activities will give participants the chance to meet and interact with different inspiring international role models.

Youth Awards - awards will be given to innovative and creative new projects and campaigns by youth across Europe, on the individual, local, regional and national levels



YOUTH AWARDS

As part of our “Get Active” session, we would like to launch our Youth Award. Throughout Europe, young Muslims are trying to express and spread their creativity using their skills. FEMYSO, through its motto “GET ACTIVE” invites young people to think, develop an innovative project and express their desires and their will to create a multidimensional European identity. Their creative artistic expression should reflect universal values that FEMYSO seeks to represent.

Innovative expression allows discussions and dialogue between the young people of Europe who are full of doubts and desires. In this way, the competition aims to be an open window towards meeting others and promoting dialogue between citizens at all levels.

It is building our European youth identity as a bridge between the different communities composing our society. It asserts and underlines both the social divides and the shared concerns. It raises difficult questions and offers other ways of seeing life together. Meetings, forums and cultural events are being organized everywhere.

We are coming to a turning point and Muslims are increasingly making themselves heard. This trend has penetrated all the layers of the Muslim communities across Europe. It heralds the way forward for an entire generation. A new culture seems to be emerging, carrying along different legacies and feeding on new adaptations.

There is no event of this kind with a European dimension, and FEMYSO is the first and only actor to disseminate this message among European youth. FEMYSO also wants to be the first to organize this kind of event by involving all its Member Organizations, in order to better promote and define the shape of the new Muslim cultures of Europe. Therefore, we would like each participant to come with some ideas:

During the afternoon of the 2nd of July, the competition will take place from 15h to 18h30 in order to think in group the future project in 3 fields:

1. Creative project
2. Research project
3. Best Intercultural project

There will be an international jury to choose the best group in these different fields. FEMYSO with its partners will give beautiful prizes. The winners will be known on 3rd at our Farewell party with Julien Breton (artist-calligraph), Medine (French rapper),...



GUEST SPEAKERS AND DIGNITARIES

Artists

This group will spend most of their time in the fair, although they will also participate in the roundtable discussions and in some instances, for example a documentary filmmaker, in the Young Researchers Conference.

Mentors/Keynotes

These participants will be involved in all areas of the conference and should be available for participants to approach throughout the event.

Politicians/Policy and Decision Makers

This group will focus most of their time on the roundtable discussions and the Fair Finale, although some may attend other sections of the conference as well.

Media

This group will attend all aspects of the conference but will probably focus their attention on the Fair Finale

Speakers and Lecturers

- **Tariq Oubrou** (Imam, Bordeaux Mosque)
- **Khalid Louhichi** (Director of Youth, League of Arab States)
- **Asmaa Abdolhamid** (Danish politician)
- **Sajjad Karim MEP** (first Muslim member of the European Parliament)
- **Mahinur Ozdemir** (Member of Belgian Parliament)
- **Myriam Francois Cerrah** (spokesperson, Oxford University Islamic Society) (tbc)
- **Radouane Bouhlal**, President, Movement Against Racism, Antisemitism and Xenophobia
- **Medine**, French rapper
- **Bilal Hassam**, Fellow, Tony Blair Faith Foundation
- **Yasri Khan**, Chair, Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice, and many others.

Conference Requirements

The conference will require two main spaces. The first will house the youth roundtables on day one and the young researchers' conference on day two. The second much larger space (preferably with a stage) will house the Fair. If possible a third space to display the poster presentations from the young researchers conference separate from the presentation room would be ideal, as this would allow posters to be displayed for all three days of the event, would require less set-up on Day 2 and cause less space restrictions for the young researcher presentations.



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