



# Anna Lindh -säätiön Suomen verkosto

## Coordination of the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) Finland's National Network 2019–2020

Summary of the Semi-annual report  
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### Summary

The main purpose of the coordinator of the national network is to represent the ALF in Finland and to share information of its activities in Finland, to coordinate the activities of the Finnish Network, and to participate to the planning and implementation of the overall ALF plan of action and various programs.


### Aims of the project and actions taken during the reporting period

**Aim 1: FIME works as ALF's official representative in Finland.** FIME provides information on the ALF upon request as well as actively promotes the visibility of ALF in Finland by informing, reporting and advertising its activities in social, cultural and human affairs.

#### Actions:

**Newsletters** for members and others interested in following the news of ALF programs and activities, as well as other information concerning intercultural dialogue. Information on funding opportunities, international meetings, local events, introductions of members and their advertisements. Six newsletters were sent during the reporting period.

Two **international calls** were passed to the Finnish network during the second half of 2019. Both of them were of interest for the network members: among four applicants two members of the Finnish network was sent to Cyprus to "Training for Trainers on Intercultural Citizenship Education in the EuroMed Region" (25.11.-1.12.) and four members were selected to participate the MED FORUM 2020.



**www-pages** updated regularly to inform of ALF activities and other intercultural activities. 18 updates and 1800 page viewers

**Social media** updates in Facebook and Twitter. 68 updates.

A **press release** was sent out concerning the YMV-debate in Rovaniemi.

**Aim 2: FIME participates to the international ALF Work.** The coordinators communicate with the ALF secretariat on a regular basis and welcome international ALF events to take place in Finland. The coordinators actively participate to the development of governance, activities and communication of the Foundation with emphasis on the need to address issues crucial to the region, transparent governance, well-defined work schedules and open and youthful methods of communication. The coordinators also are in regular online communication with ALF network coordinators in other countries and work in collaboration with the ALF Board of Governors.

### **Actions:**


FIME participated in one **webinar** organized by the ALF Secretariat on Med Forum 2020 (no monthly webinars were organised during the reporting period) and stayed in active **e-mail communication** with the ALF Secretariat and other network coordinators and contributed to discussion on the ways to improve the communication and cooperation between the secretariat and the national networks.

The main event of the bi-annual coordination period was a **civil society forum** "Celebrating our Diversity" organized in collaboration with the Swedish National ALF Network coordinator Vårdkulturs museerna with the support of the Swedish Foreign Ministry. The Forum took place in Helsinki from 9 to 11 October and its aim was to bring together civil society actors from the Euro-Mediterranean region in order to discuss, share and develop ideas and practices for building intercultural, sustainable and inclusive cities.

Both ALF coordinators participated in the **Annual Heads' of Networks Meeting** in Thessaloniki, Greece from 24 to 26 October. The theme of the meeting was "Networks and Civil Society: Towards 2030", and it brought together representatives of ALF networks from most of the member countries.

Executive Director of the ALF, **Dr. Nabil al-Sharif visited Finland** at the end of October and members of the Steering Committee of the Finnish network had the opportunity to meet him on October 31.

FIME and network member University of Lapland assisted the international ALF in organizing **Young Mediterranean Voices public debate** in Rovaniemi on 12 November. This oxford-style youth debate titled "Debating Climate Refugees, Inclusion & Millennial Generation" was open to



public and debating teams consisted of a debater from the North and a debater from the South. After the debate, two experts, researcher Saara Koikkalainen from the University of Helsinki and researcher and civil society activist Yeasmin Nafisa, gave comment speeches on the topics of the debate.

The **MED FORUM 2020 task force** made a program proposal of a plenary session “Transformative Education” and related workshop to the Forum to be held in April 2020.

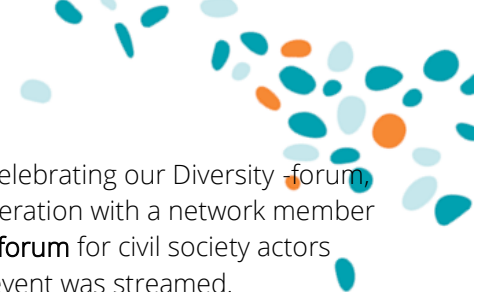
**Young Mediterranean Voices Communication Lab** was organized 2–3 December in Kokkola in co-operation with the international ALF and network member Youth Center Villa Elba. The Lab’s aim was at leveraging youth-led debate connected to Young Mediterranean Voices to shape narratives in the digital world. It enhanced digital literacy and media skills, focusing on how to increase online reach and work in groups to create new compelling campaigns to reach at-risk audiences in their own communities and beyond.

**Aim 3: FIME strengthens the Finnish network.** The coordinators actively promote the network’s membership and inform potential new members about activities and possibilities of support and assistance the ALF can offer. FIME facilitates the improvement of the project management, financial and organizational capacity of network members. FIME organizes and coordinates national and international seminars and training related to ALF activities and ensures that the ALF Finnish network is transparent and democratic one.

### **Actions:**

In collaboration with network member University of Helsinki, FIME organized “**Middle-Eastern Cultural Evening**” at the KoKo Jazz Club in Helsinki on August 15. The event was part of the Nordic Conference of Middle Eastern Studies (NCMES) held at the University of Helsinki. In the Cultural Evening, a Helsinki based and Iraqi-born poet and artist Muhaned Durubi recited his poems and Meera Band played Arabic, Persian and Kurdish traditional and modern music. The event was open to public and received an audience of 290 people.

The Finnish National Network’s **second general assembly** 2019 was organized on October 9 at the Arkadia International Bookshop with the title “Young Influencers in Cultural Dialogue”. At the network meeting, the new steering committee was elected and the network started to draft its action plan for the year 2020. After that, a Young Mediterranean Voices -debater Ariadna Romans gave a speech “The Time of the Youth: when our claims became actions” and Roxana Sadvokassova from the Academy of Moving People & Images introduced the program of this new network member organization in her talk “Marathons & neurosurgeons”.



On October 10, as a side event of the Celebrating our Diversity -forum, the Finnish Network organised in co-operation with a network member Moniheli "Associations integrate!" **NGO forum** for civil society actors working in the field of integration. The event was streamed.

During the Celebrating our Diversity -forum, FIME and the Swedish ALF Network organized a **cultural evening** open to public in Kapsäkki Theatre. The evening program consisted of poetry in open mic style, a vogue performance with an overview to this art form by artist Alyssa Chloe and music from a Syria-born but Sweden-based artist Kristina Issa.

**Meeting of the Steering Committee** was organized on November 25. The steering committee made revisions to the network rules and discussed the work plan for the year 2020.

In order to broaden and activate the network, FIME actively **contacted** current and potential member organizations. During the reporting period, half of the current members were met in person or contacted by phone.

Two **staff missions** in Finland were implemented during 2019: Nokso-Koivisto met potential member organisations in Rovaniemi and in Jyväskylä.

During the reporting period, network was broadened with three **new members**.


## Challenges and Achievements

On the international level, some problems in communications and governance of the ALF organisation pointed out by network coordinators remained to be unsolved. For instance, intended monthly webinars were not organised during the reporting period and most of the communication between networks was implemented by e-mail. In addition to that, there were still no official national network coordinators in many ALF member countries.

As for the Finnish network, the reactivation proceeded relatively well. The numeric indicators of success posed in the work plan were reached well in the first year of the coordination. Also, the activity of members, interest of new organisations in joining and, for instance, the grown interest in becoming a member of the steering committee indicate that the network does have a place in the Finnish civil society field.

Celebrating our Diversity -forum was successful: program content was diverse, and participants were from various backgrounds and all of them took an active role and gave valuable contribution to the forum. In general, the Forum met its goals and the feedback received from the participants was positive.

The aim of strengthening the national role of the network in Finland by organizing events also outside Helsinki area was accomplished while



the debate and the communications lab were organised in Rovaniemi and Kokkola, although these events required a lot of work hours.