



PRESS RELEASE



Euromed Heritage
التراب الأوروبي المتوسطي



A Palestinian journalist wins first prize in cultural heritage photo competition

It's a night pilgrimage, and as the faithful go down the stairs, children light candles on the steps of Saint Mary's Church in Jerusalem. This mysterious and shadowy atmosphere is caught in a moving frame by a young Palestinian photo-journalist, Mahmoud Illean, from Jerusalem. He is the winner of the 2011 edition of "Crossing viewpoints: Mediterranean cities as spaces of socialisation" International Photography Award organised by the EU-funded [Euromed Heritage programme](#) and the [Rehabimed Association](#).

"The photo is perfectly balanced and composed, both in terms of light and colors, and it drives the viewer with great sensitivity and dynamism to the main characters, the boy, the baby girl, the father..." says one member of the Jury Committee, architect Christophe Graz. "We have selected this picture because of its aesthetic and artistic value and because of its relevance to the theme. It is a rich composition of people in ritual," says Christiane Dabdoub Nasser, another member of the Jury and team leader of Euromed Heritage Supporting Unit.

The theme of this award was "Mediterranean cities as spaces of socialisation": the idea was to collect images from Mediterranean towns and cities, which are dynamic, living places that bring together different cultures, generations and types of people. In fact the people going down the stairway in Saint Mary's Church are not of one faith; the holy place appears as shared by both Christians and Muslims: through the winning picture Jerusalem re-emerges as a place that should be shared by all. In fact, most of the entries to the competition reflect this diversity, and celebrate life in its varied social forms, from market squares to courtyards, from public fountains to churches.

The photo competition has once more highlighted the place that cultural heritage holds in Mediterranean contemporary societies, especially for the youth who have massively participated at the competition: the jury has received 266 pictures from 23 different countries. The country with the highest number of participants is Algeria, followed by Morocco and France. In total, 63% of all participants are originally from the Mediterranean partner's countries.

The Jury has given a special mention to Mohamed Karim Boumais, a 29 year old Moroccan photographer, to Olivier Dubuquoy, a freelancer from Marseilles, to Mohamed Badarne, from Haifa, and to Emanuele Ciccomartine, a photographer from Spain. The winner Mahmoud Illean will be invited to the official inauguration of the exhibition "Crossing viewpoints: Mediterranean cities as spaces of socialisation", to be held in Cairo in October 2012.

The winning picture as well as the Award's best photos are available at this link:

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=8888>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".