

ASSOCIATION DES ÉTATS GÉNÉRAUX
DES ÉTUDIANTS DE L'EUROPE

KEY TO EUROPE
ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-2015

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KEY TO EUROPE - AEGEE'S ANNUAL REVIEW - 2014-2015

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Treviso Cluj-Napoca Zaragoza Ogrë Sibiu
Madeira Ferrara Peiraiás León Sarajevo
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Düsseldorf Las Palmas

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Sevastopol Castelló Pisa Bakı
Ploiesti Zielona Góra Cosenza
Konstanz Barcelona Canterbury Pécs
Milano
Palermo Las
Palmas
Ivano-Frankiv'sk Lublin Lanka
ran Louvain-la-Neuve Istanbul
Santander Kastoria Reggio Calabria
Glasgow Durham
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Rostov-na-Donu
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Frankfurt am Main Ploiesti Paris
Bucureşti
Bucureşti
Kaunas
Istanbul Tyumen Sarajevo
Erfurt Hatay Rostov-na-Donu Bakı
Glasgow Sumqayit Zadar Iași Las
Palmas Odessa Białystok
Newcastle-up-
on-Tyne
Sumqayit
Gdańsk Firenze
Kiel Verona Leuven Budapest
Piliscsaba Niš Kayseri Paris Yerevan
Kraków Podgorica Bamberg
Barcelona Bilbao Wrocław

KEY TO EUROPE
ANNUAL REVIEW
2014-2015





STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We, the members of AEGEE,

young Europeans coming from all regions of the continent, recognise that we are the future and present of our society and that our contribution to the construction of Europe is our responsibility. We come together under a common vision of a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe.

We come together in AEGEE to form an open, voluntary network where we transform our ideas into actions, develop ourselves to participate actively in society, and contribute to the European debate with our independent student's perspective.

We hereby declare these principles to be fundamental to us:

The diversity of Europe has to be valued, and we reflect it in our organisation. The richness of our continent relies on people from different cultures and backgrounds coming together and being united by common values.

Cooperation between people and communities begins with dialogue and mutual understanding. We bring together students from all regions of Europe and create friendships that break stereotypes and prejudices.

Freedom and human rights are essential elements of a European society. Through our work and behaviour, we aim to serve as an example and spread these values among the youth of our continent.

A strong Europe is built upon the foundations of respect, tolerance and solidarity. Following these values, we stand for an inclusive society where citizens enjoy equal opportunities and rights.

Progress in Europe has to be based on knowledge and unlimited access to education. By providing diverse learning opportunities and supporting a European dimension in education, we believe it gives young people better opportunities for the future.

By honoring and promoting these principles we shape a better Europe.

Approved at Autumn Agora Zaragoza 2013

DEAR READER,



In 1985, when AEGEE was founded, I was not born yet, like many of the members that our association has at present. For this reason, being able to witness and to be part of the celebration of its thirtieth anniversary feels like a privilege and an honour.

In the past three decades, AEGEE faced issues, problems and obstacles that we struggle to understand nowadays: members of the Comité Directeur haven't had a Head Office to work together for some years, internet became a sensation only in the late '90s, the Euro arrived to unify currencies only at the beginning of the 2000s, budget airlines have only developed as we know them in the past five years, Facebook and other social media have boomed only from the second half of the 2000s on. Despite all odds, our association managed to grow strong and steady, spreading our core values with all possible means of communication. Members had to face also several political turmoils that changed our society and the face of Europe, like opening towards the East, witnessing the redefinition of borders and helping locals living in war zones. AEGEE was there as a pioneer, adding new locals in countries that at the time (and often now) were not even considered to be Europe.

We have been doing this for thirty years, but if you see the past with the eyes of a member of 2015, it may seem very distant, especially because the last year was not a walk in the park for AEGEE either. Students took a stand against their government in Macedonia and in the Netherlands, with the locals there actively contributing to the cause and a motion presented during Spring Agora Asturias 2015 in order to raise awareness. The crisis hit Greece harshly with months of political instability, in Armenia unrests turned violent and a very delicate situation involving immigration flows deflagrate early this summer involving southern countries like Italy, Malta, Greece, Turkey, but also the Balkans with some countries taking strong positions against them. All this political instability shows how important our voice is and how much potential our members have in taking a stand to live on a continent where cooperation and common values represent priorities. That is probably why our Strategic Plan 2014-2017 reflects this moment of uncertainty and that is probably why at the Autumn Agora Cagliari 2014 an

overwhelming majority chose as the EPM topic the relations between the European Union and Russia. The crisis involving Ukraine deeply touched us as an organisation, but locals and members coming from both sides, showed how is it possible to overcome any political interest with a common goal to pursue.

Dear Readers, dear Members of AEGEE, we are fortunate to be part of such an association. Here we can use our skills, develop others, we can broaden our views in a way that not all of our contemporaries can. But, while we project ourselves into the future, we must not forget our past. That is why we divided this year's publication into two parts: one dedicated to the anniversary year and the other one dedicated to the year we have just lived. I hope that, by reading these pages, you will relive our outstanding year and keep your motivation high for the years to come, in order to be able to participate in the forty-year celebration.

Erika Bettin,
Editor-in-Chief of Key to Europe 2014-2015

DEAR READER,



As students came together from the need to unite Europe based on democracy, human rights and tolerance, a new movement was born in 1985. A movement that brought together visionary students to discuss crucial issues and provided them with a platform to express their perspective.

Ever since, AEGEE has been showing how young people in Europe can use their potential if they work together. We saw Europe going through several developments, bringing us gradually closer towards our vision of a borderless Europe. Our own organisation developed along with Europe and now, AEGEE represents an important means to get the voice of young people heard all over Europe. Nowadays, this voice is perhaps more relevant than ever before, because we are facing a whole new set of challenges in the context of the full reality of our present. With a 'lost generation' because of the youth unemployment and a lack of common European identity, there is plenty to improve in the way young citizens are informed and educated.

Furthermore, we have armed conflicts going on again in parts of Europe, putting citizens in dire situations, while refugees are risking their lives every day in order to reach a safe European haven. The present time requires us to be aware of where we stand and to actively defend our values and principles. It has been thirty years since our first conference in Paris and the means of working towards our goals have only become more accessible and efficient.

Now, three decades later we are imagining what might be lying ahead of us and we anticipate and act on it. Our anniversary has the theme of "Europe in me – me in Europe". It brings the focus on the small scale of the young individual, within the enormous picture of our continent, which we build together. It makes us realise what our role can be in shaping our society, as we know that it is indeed the young people who can define it.

To be part of the strong students' platform AEGEE is to live in an inclusive Europe, and to be able to find in each other like-minded activists. I'm proud to present AEGEE's annual report, the Key to Europe of 2014-2015. I encourage you to pick up this publication to learn, to be inspired and to inspire in turn.

Paul Smits
President of AEGEE-Europe 2014-2015

DEAR READER,



Europe is at a very important turning point. The risk of taking the wrong turn is considerable and would have serious consequences for people's everyday lives and also for the humane and democratic character that has defined the European Union since its inception.

As the EU stumbles on through an economic crisis which has left serious dents on the accountability with which decisions are taken and has undermined people's trust, we are now confronted with a humanitarian crisis the likes of which last happened during the Second World War.

These two rumbling events are testing people and are also leaving moderate political forces around Europe struggling to find the right solutions. In the meantime populist parties are thriving with their tantalisingly simplistic and yet so dangerous 'solutions'.

The young generation, hit hardest by the economic difficulties, is not spared from the lure of those who nostalgically preach a return to the all-powerful nation and reject immigration in all its forms.

For decades young people have been at the forefront of movements which made the world better. This is now not always the case.

AEGEE today, along with other European Youth movements, therefore is in a position with a duty. Its members wholeheartedly believe in the power of Europe to address the challenges we face. They understand that new threats, and new opportunities, require new tools, not tools used in the past. AEGEE must step forward and contribute to bringing more youth into the ranks of those who see the purpose and need of Europe.

AEGEE celebrates 30 years this year. It is an adult organisation in its full right. Mature enough and with a sufficiently broad structure to live up to this challenge. I have no doubt that its presence in the public sphere will be felt positively during these times.

Martin Schulz
President of the European Parliament

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ABOUT AEGEE

What is AEGEE? How is it structured? With whom do we collaborate? With these questions in mind, this section presents the backbone of the association, focusing on the framework by explaining bodies and projects - either thematic or administrative. As part of the internal structure, the organisation established a lot of collaborations, cooperations and partnerships, platforms where AEGEE can have its voice heard.



WHAT IS AEGEE?

AEGEE, the European Students' Forum, is one of Europe's biggest student organisations, with 13.000 members in 200 university cities across the continent, welcoming students of all disciplines. It was founded in 1985 in Paris and since then, it has spread all over Europe with a Network now spanning across 40 countries, from Western Europe to the Caucasus and Russia. Throughout the years, the members have changed and many different activities have been developed, but AEGEE's vision has always been clear: a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe, which is socially, economically and politically integrated and values the participation of young people in its construction and development.

In order to transform this vision into reality, AEGEE works as a politically independent, secular and non-profit organisation, which empowers students and young people in Europe to take an active role in their society. It creates a space for dialogue and learning opportunities for students and, at the same time, acts as their representative towards decision-makers. In this way, AEGEE strengthens mutual understanding and brings Europe closer to young people.

“AEGEE stands for Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe”

The acronym AEGEE stands for Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe. It derives from the first parliament established

during the French Revolution, the États Généraux, and the Aegean Sea, where democracy was born 2000 years ago.

Nowadays, AEGEE's network of students and young Europeans provides the ideal platform for volunteers from different nationalities to work together on cross-border activities such as international projects, conferences, seminars, exchanges, training courses, and case study trips. AEGEE operates in a unique structure, as it directly connects its local groups and the European level bodies without any national level of organisation, reflecting AEGEE's ideal of a Europe without borders. Its European level consists of Project Teams, Working Groups, Commissions, Committees, and the European Board of Directors, called the Comité Directeur.

ACHIEVEMENTS

When looking at the 30-years history of AEGEE, the association has had several important achievements, the most well-known being the effective lobbying for

the creation of the Erasmus programme in the 1980s. In cooperation with the European Commission, AEGEE played a major role in convincing the European Union Member States that mobility programmes are worth investing in. We have continued on this path ever since, promoting programmes and advocating for them, such as Erasmus and Socrates, and the inclusion of more countries, such as Turkey, in the latter. AEGEE is also known for its longest running project, the Summer University Project that gathers thousands of young people each summer providing courses on a wide range of topics from language courses to seminars about political, cultural or environmental issues.

AEGEE has participatory status in the activities of the Council of Europe, consultative status at the United Nations, operational status at UNESCO, and it is a full member of the European Youth Forum.

In order to achieve its aims, AEGEE uses five different means to involve and activate its members:

“AEGEE uses intercultural exchange, personal development and non-formal education, thematic projects, advocacy and policy, and forums for discussion as means to involve and activate its members.”

INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE

AEGEE creates a space for members of different backgrounds to meet and learn about cultural differences, in order to foster mutual understanding. AEGEE supports mobility and encourages young people to cross borders and make new friends, to break stereotypes and to strengthen tolerance, respect and solidarity.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

AEGEE provides learning opportunities for the development of its members through non-formal education and informal learning. By participating in training courses, workshops, and active involvement in the organisation, our members improve their competences (such as leadership skills, communication skills and team management) which will be useful for their future lives.

THEMATIC PROJECTS

Thematic projects, either local or international, are initiatives developed by the members of AEGEE. They deal with current challenges in the European society, create awareness among young people and propose solutions from a student's point of view.

ADVOCACY AND POLICY

AEGEE gathers opinions of the European students and represents them towards stakeholders through campaigns, lobby actions, conferences and membership in bigger advocacy platforms. In addition, AEGEE informs students and young people about the impact that European policies have in their lives and the opportunities they offer.

FORUM FOR DISCUSSION

AEGEE provides a space for young Europeans to discuss and exchange different points of view from a European perspective, in order to find a common ground. This exchange of ideas happens in all of our activities, but a special place for them is inside our Working groups, conferences and General Assemblies (European Planning Meeting - EPM and Agora).

“AEGEE empowers students and young people in Europe to take an active role in society. It creates a space for dialogue and learning opportunities, as well as, it acts as their representative towards decision-makers. Moreover, AEGEE strengthens mutual understanding and brings Europe closer to young people.”



Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe

Vision

AEGEE strives for a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe, which is socially, economically and politically integrated, and values the participation of young people in its construction and development.

Mission

AEGEE empowers students and young people in Europe to take an active role in society. It creates a space for dialogue and learning opportunities as well as acts as their representative towards decision-makers. Moreover, AEGEE strengthens mutual understanding and brings Europe closer to young people.

1985
SINCE

13.000
MEMBERS

40
COUNTRIES

HISTORY OF AEGEE

1985

Creation of AEGEE by "Bureaux des élèves" from five Grandes Écoles in Paris, led by Frank Biancheri.
EGEE 1 conference as focus of student support for European integration.

1986

Video conference **Nights of Europe**
First Agora in München.

1987

Congress **Europe-Africa**
Lobbying to implement the **Erasmus programme** with support of François Mitterrand.

1988

Start of the **Summer University Project**.
Name of the association **changed to AEGEE**.

1989

Conference **Women in Europe**.
Congress on **East-West relations** in Berlin.

1990

Enlargement of the network to the East.

1991

First **European Schools**.
First **Agora** in the East - **Budapest**.
Quo Vadis Europe project, about the future of Europe.

1992

First antenna in **Turkey**.
First **Key to Europe** published.

1993

Management competition Champ.

1994

First use of **Internet Relay Chat (IRC)** in AEGEE.

1995

Decision taken to move the Comité Directeur **from Delft to Brussels**.

10th anniversary

1996

Round table **discussion on a single currency** in Europe.
Find Your Way event cycle.
Creation of **Network Commission**.
Case study **trip to former Yugoslavia**.

1997

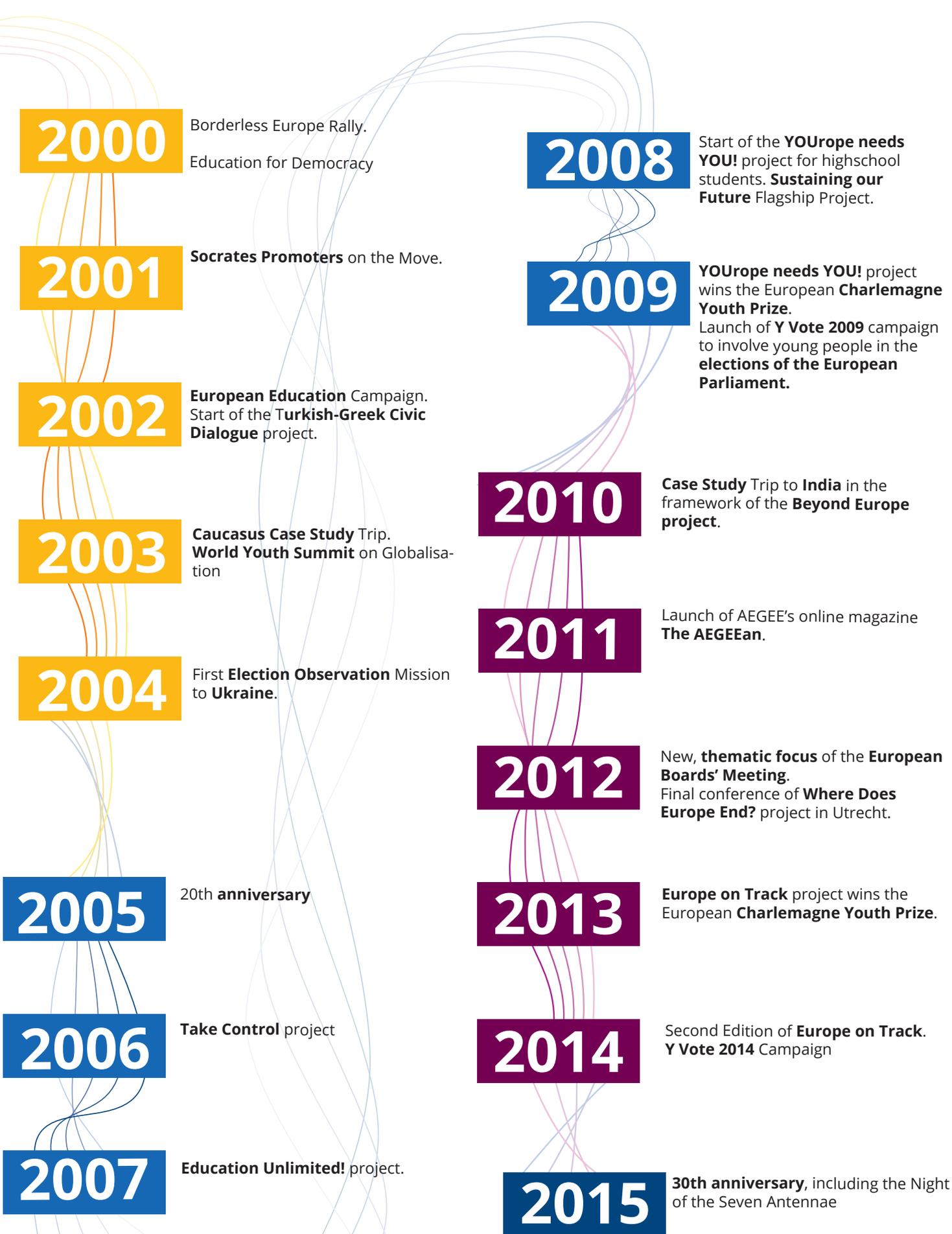
Europe and Euro project.
Socrates Action Days.

1998

Building a **Social Europe**.
Achieving consultative status at **UNESCO** and the **United Nation's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**.
Membership **European Youth Forum**.

1999

Peace Summit, the final conference of the **Peace Academy project**.
Creation of **AEGEE Academy**.



2000 Borderless Europe Rally.
Education for Democracy

2001 **Socrates Promoters** on the Move.

2002 **European Education** Campaign.
Start of the **Turkish-Greek Civic Dialogue** project.

2003 **Caucasus Case Study** Trip.
World Youth Summit on Globalisation

2004 First **Election Observation** Mission to **Ukraine**.

2005 20th anniversary

2006 **Take Control** project

2007 **Education Unlimited!** project.

2008 Start of the **YOUrope needs YOU!** project for highschool students. **Sustaining our Future** Flagship Project.

2009 **YOUrope needs YOU!** project wins the European **Charlemagne Youth Prize**.
Launch of **Y Vote 2009** campaign to involve young people in the **elections of the European Parliament**.

2010 **Case Study** Trip to **India** in the framework of the **Beyond Europe** project.

2011 Launch of AEGEE's online magazine **The AEGEEan**.

2012 New, **thematic focus** of the **European Boards' Meeting**.
Final conference of **Where Does Europe End?** project in Utrecht.

2013 **Europe on Track** project wins the European **Charlemagne Youth Prize**.

2014 Second Edition of **Europe on Track**.
Y Vote 2014 Campaign

2015 **30th anniversary**, including the Night of the Seven Antennae

AEGEE'S STRUCTURE

AEGEE's structure is based on a Network of approximately 200 local antennae, a bi-annual general assembly, a European Board of Directors working in Brussels, Commissions, Committees, Working Groups, Interest Groups and international Project Teams. Each of these bodies is reflected in the graphic below.

BODIES

Academy: AEGEE Academy provides high quality non-formal education training to our members

Agora: Bi-annual general assembly of AEGEE

► Read more about the Agora on page 78, 81, 108 and 109.

Chair: Chair Team, responsible for preparing and chairing statutory events

Comité Directeur: European Board of Directors working in Brussels

► Read more about the Comité Directeur on page 64 and 106.

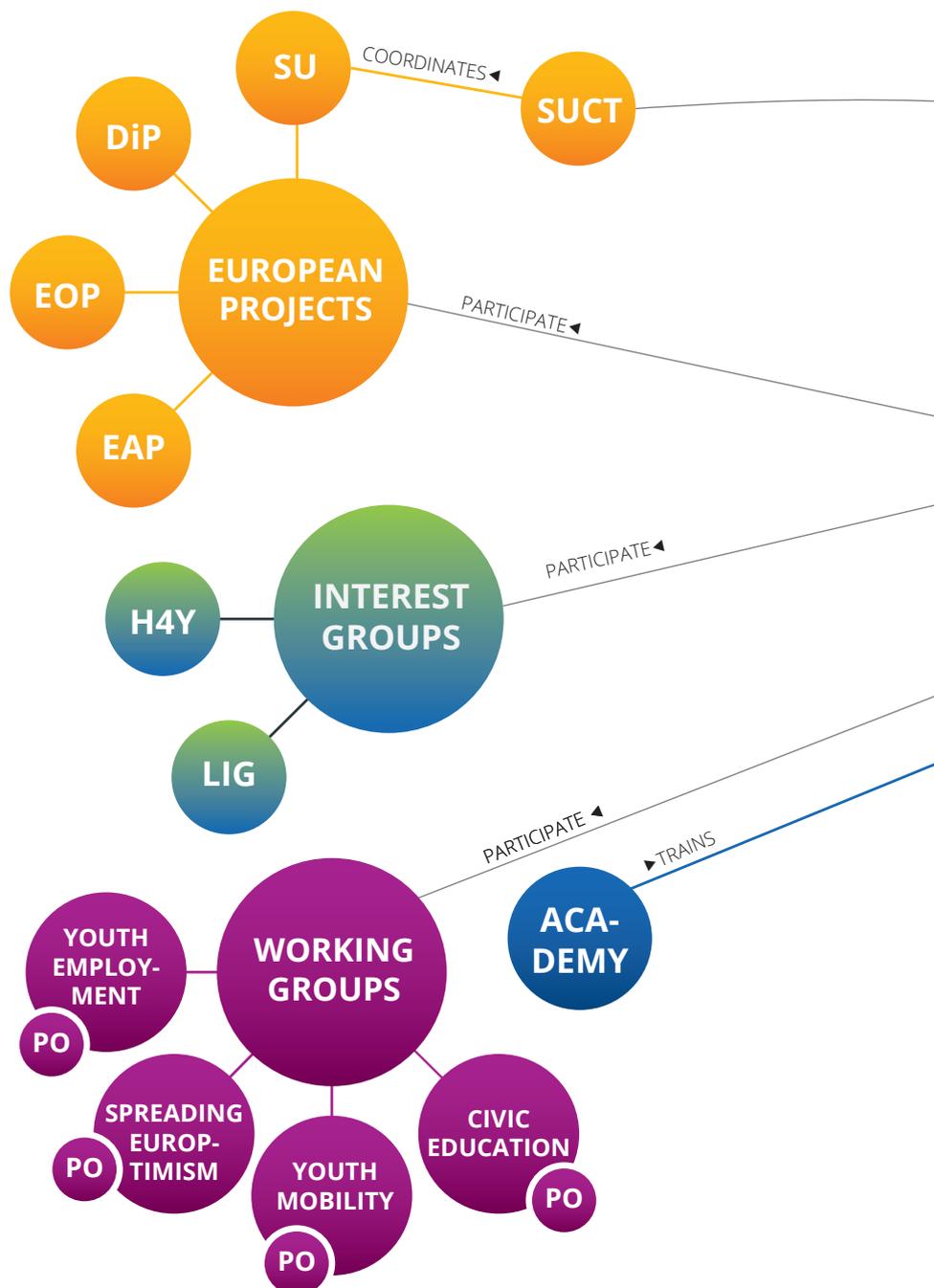
EPM: European Planning Meeting, includes thematic content and Action Agenda drafting
► Read more about the EPM on page 79 and 104

Locals: Close to 200 local branches of AEGEE's network

► Find the full list of locals on page 11 and 12.

Members: 13.000 members of AEGEE's locals

Network Meeting: Discussions and training sessions about topics related to AEGEE's work and topics of interest for young Europeans.



COMMITTEES

Committees help other bodies by providing them with services, information, infrastructure and materials needed to fulfill their tasks.

ACT: Action Agenda Coordination Committee

CIRC: Corporate and Institutional Relations Committee

EQAC: Events Quality Assurance Committee

PRC: Public Relations Committee

ITC: Information Technology Committee

HRC: Human Resources Committee

► Read more about Committees on page 20.

COMMISSIONS

AEGEE's commissions supervise the accomplishment of the rules which direct the functioning of AEGEE.

Audit: Audit Commission, financial supervision of locals and the Comité Directeur

JC: Juridical Commission, regulates the internal functioning of the association

MedCom: Mediation Commission, mediates cases between locals and other European bodies

NetCom: Network Commission, supports locals and Working Groups by informing them about important issues

► Read more about Commissions on page 19.

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

AEGEE-Europe's projects deal with topics of interest for the European youth in general. These European projects are coordinated by international teams and take action in several countries. The projects are decided and implemented by the association as a whole and can call on the resources of AEGEE-Europe for support.

DiP: Democracy in Practice

EAP: Eastern Partnership Project

EOP: Election Observation Project

SU: Summer University Project

► Read more about AEGEE's projects from page 85 onwards.

WORKING GROUPS

Working Groups carry out the thematic goals of AEGEE-Europe described in the Strategic Plan of the organisation. Their goal is to ensure that thematic focuses of AEGEE have been fulfilled. Policy Officers (PO) are responsible for the coordination of externally oriented activities and the monitoring of the topics of the Focus Areas

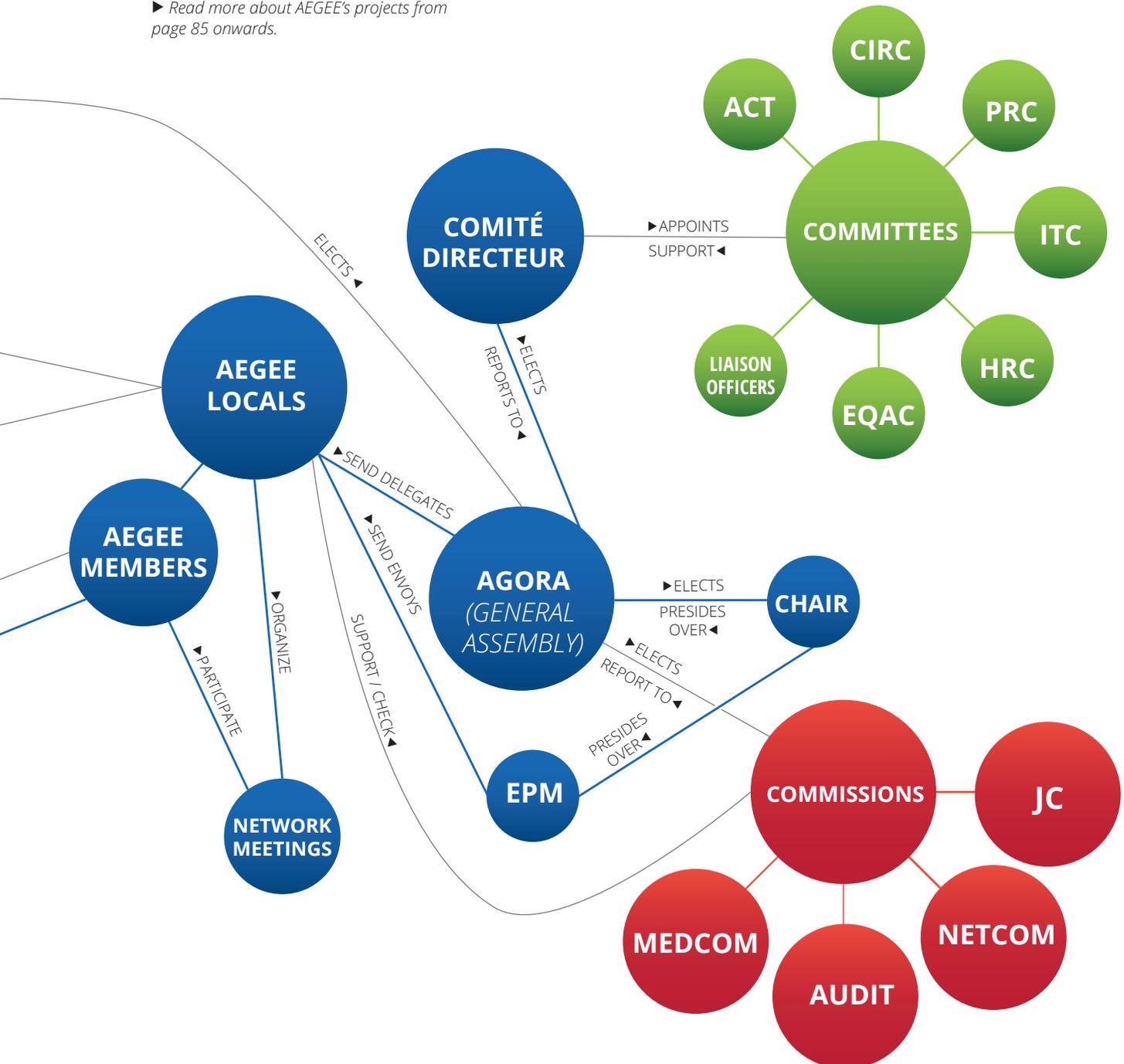
► Read more about AEGEE's Working Groups from page 92 onwards.

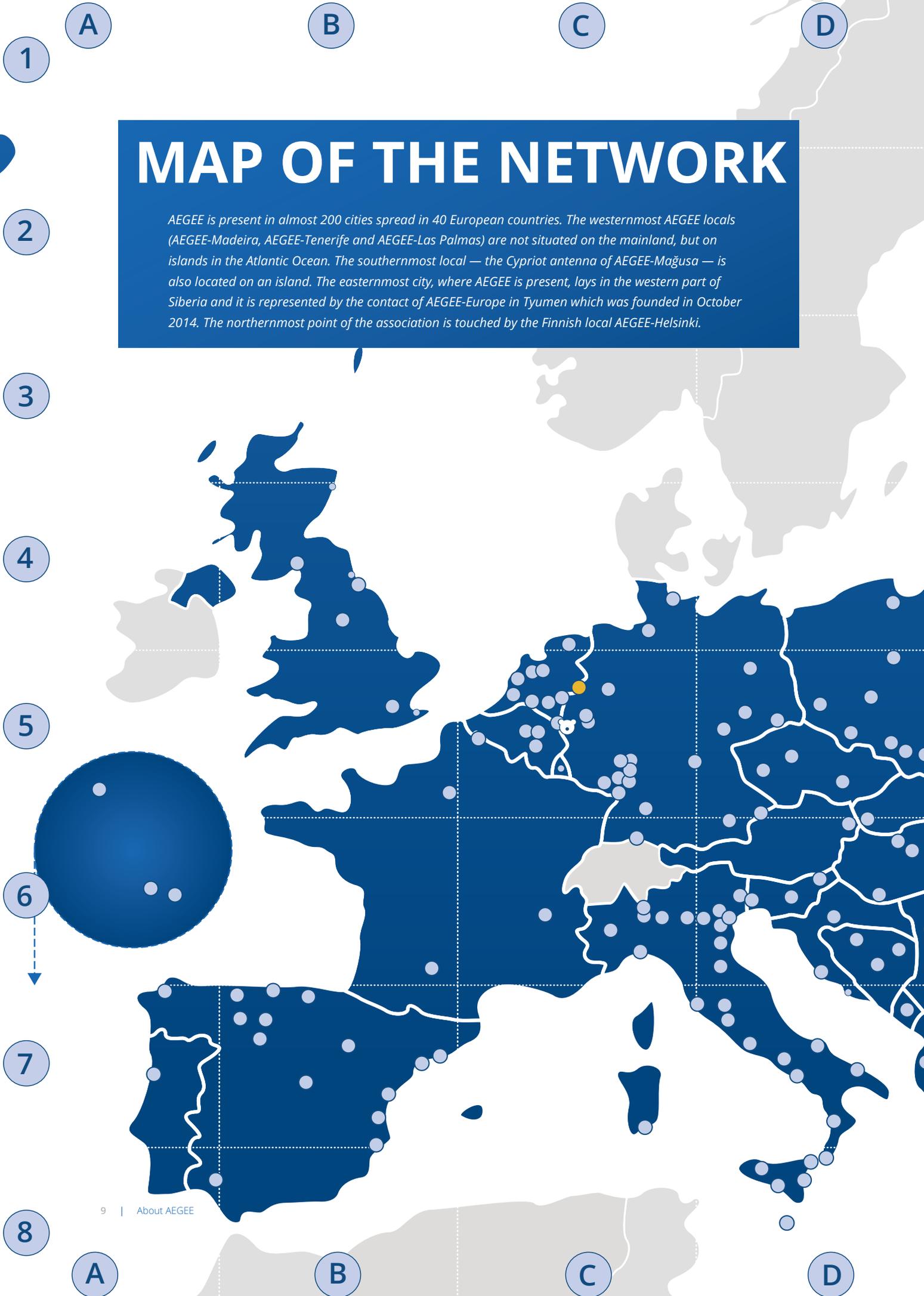
INTEREST GROUPS

An Interest Group is a group of AEGEE members who share a common interest

H4Y: Health 4Youth

LIG: Language Interest Group





MAP OF THE NETWORK

AEGEE is present in almost 200 cities spread in 40 European countries. The westernmost AEGEE locals (AEGEE-Madeira, AEGEE-Tenerife and AEGEE-Las Palmas) are not situated on the mainland, but on islands in the Atlantic Ocean. The southernmost local — the Cypriot antenna of AEGEE-Mağusa — is also located on an island. The easternmost city, where AEGEE is present, lays in the western part of Siberia and it is represented by the contact of AEGEE-Europe in Tyumen which was founded in October 2014. The northernmost point of the association is touched by the Finnish local AEGEE-Helsinki.



YOUR KEYS TO EUROPE

This list shows the around 200 cities in 40 European countries where AEGEE is located. The antennae and contacts can be located on the map on the previous page with the grid coordinates listed behind them. Contacts are recent additions to the network which have not yet reached the status of antenna.

A Coruña	A7	Durham	B4	Kharkiv	F5
Aachen	C5	Düsseldorf	C5	Kiel	C4
Adana	F8			Köln	C5
Agrigento	D8	Eindhoven	C5	Konstanz	C6
Alicante	B7	Enschede	C5	Kragujevac	E6
Amsterdam	C5	Erfurt	D5	Kraków	D5
Ankara	F7	Erzincan	G7	Kyiv	F5
Athina	E8	Eskişehir	F7		
Bakı	H7			Lviv	E5
Bamberg	C5	Ferrara	D6	Las Palmas	A7
Banja Luka	D6	Firenze	D7	Leiden	C5
		Foggia	D7	Leipzig	D5
Barcelona	B7	Frankfurt am Main	C5	León	B7
Bari	D7			Leuven	C5
Beograd	E6	Gdańsk	D4	Lille	C5
Bergamo	C6	Genova	C6	Ljubljana	D6
Berlin	D5	Gəncə	H7	London	B5
Białystok	E4	Glasgow	B4	Louvain-la-Neuve	C5
Bilbao	B7	Gliwice	D5	Lublin	E5
Bologna	D6	Grodno	E4	Lyon	C6
Bratislava	D6	Groningen	C4		
Brescia	C6			Maastricht	C5
Brno	D5	Hamburg	C4	Madeira	A6
Brussel-Bruxelles	C5	Hatay	F8	Madrid	B7
București	E6	Heidelberg	C5	Mağusa	F8
Budapest	D6	Helsinki	E3	Mainz-Wiesbaden	C5
Burgos	B7	Heraklio	E8	Manchester	B4
				Mannheim	C5
Cagliari	C7	İași	E6	Maribor	D6
Çanakkale	E7	Ioannina	E7	Messina	D8
Castelló	B7	Istanbul	F7	Milano	C6
Catania	D8	Ivano-Frankiv's'k	E5	Minsk	E4
Chișinău	F6	Izmir	E8	Moskva	G4
Cluj-Napoca	E6			München	D6
Cosenza	D7	Kaiserslautern	C5		
		Karlsruhe	C5	Napoli	D7
Darmstadt	C5	Kastoria	E7	Naxçivan	G7
Debrecen	E6	Katowice	D5	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	B4
Delft	C5	Kaunas	E4	Nicosia	F8
Dnipropetrovsk	F6	Kayseri	F8	Nijmegen	C5
Dresden	D5			Niš	E7

Nova Gorica-Gorizia	D6	Stuttgart	C5
Novi Sad	D6	Sumqayit	H7
Odessa	F6	Tallinn	E3
Ogre	E4	Tarragona	B7
Osnabrück	C5	Tartu	E3
Oviedo	B7	Tbilisi	G7
		Tekirdağ	E7
Padova	D6	Tenerife	A7
Palermo	D8	Thessaloniki	E7
Paris	B5	Tilburg	C5
Passau	D5	Tiranë	D7
Pátra	E7	Torino	C6
Pécs	D6	Toruń	D5
Peiraiás	E8	Toulouse	B6
Piliscsaba	D6	Treviso	D6
Pisa	D7	Tuzla	D6
Ploiești	E6		
Plzeň	D5	Udine	D6
Podgorica	D7	Utrecht	C5
Porto-Invicta	A7		
Poznań	D5	Valencia	B7
Praha	D5	Valladolid	B7
		Valletta	D8
Reggio Calabria	D8	Venezia	D6
Rīga	E4	Verona	D6
Roma	D7	Voronezh	F5
Rostov-na-Donu	G6		
Ryazan	G4	Warszawa	E5
		Wien	D6
Salerno	D7	Wrocław	D5
Samara	H4	Yerevan	G7
Sankt-Peterburg	F3		
Santander	B7	Zadar	D6
Sarajevo	D6	Zagreb	D6
Sevastopol	F6	Zaragoza	B7
Sevilla	A8	Zielona Góra	D5
Sibiu	E6		
Siena	D7		
Skopje	E7		
Sofia	E7		

CONTACTS

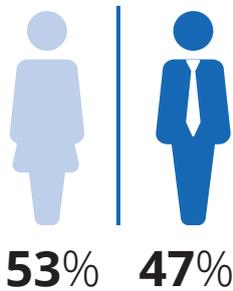
Aberdeen	B4
Canterbury	B5
Gaziantep	F8
Länkæran	H7
Luxembourg	C5
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	B4
Split	D7
Tyumen	H3
Vinnitsia	E5
Yaroslavl	G4
Yekaterinburg	H3

AEGEE'S MEMBERS

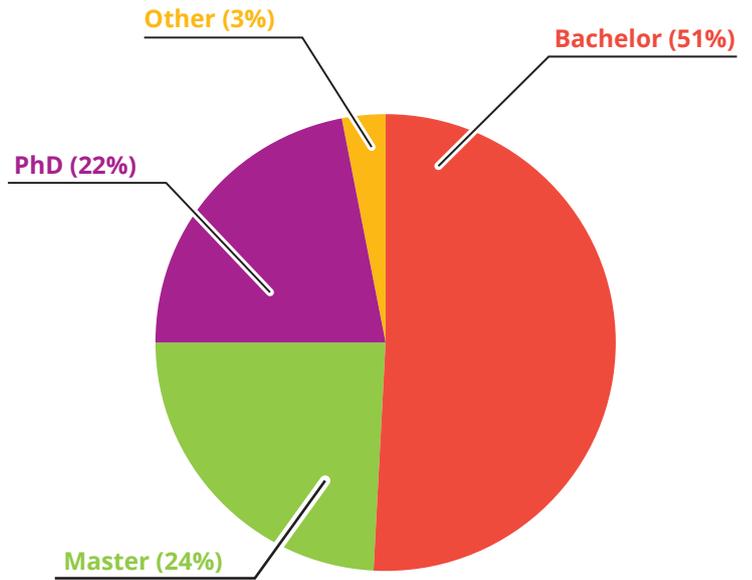
AEGEE is one of Europe's biggest interdisciplinary student organisations, striving for a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe. As a non-governmental, politically independent, and non-profit organisation AEGEE is open to students and young people from all faculties and disciplines. These statistics will show how diverse AEGEE really is!

Source: Cooperation proposal for external partners by the Comité Directeur

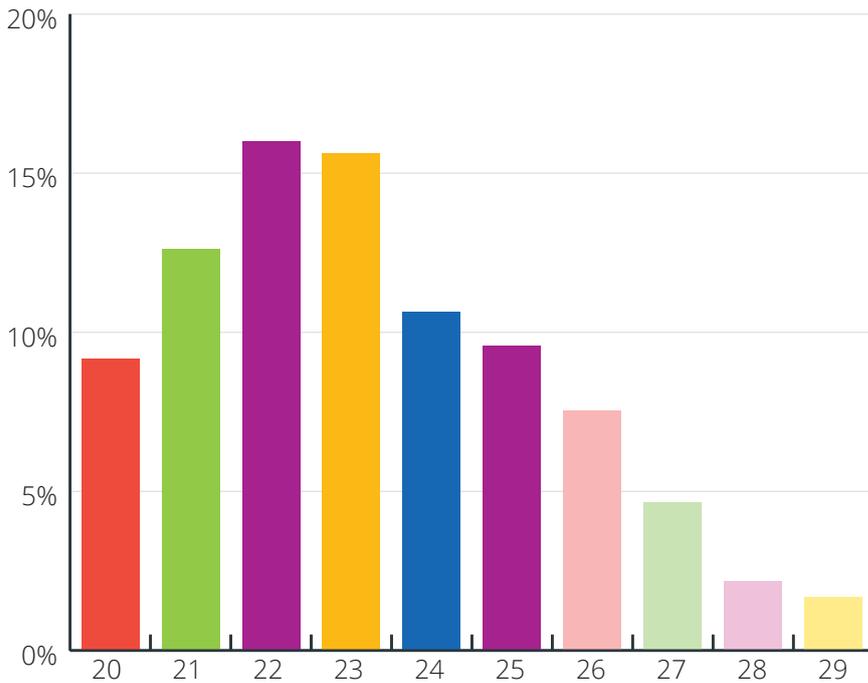
▼ GENDER

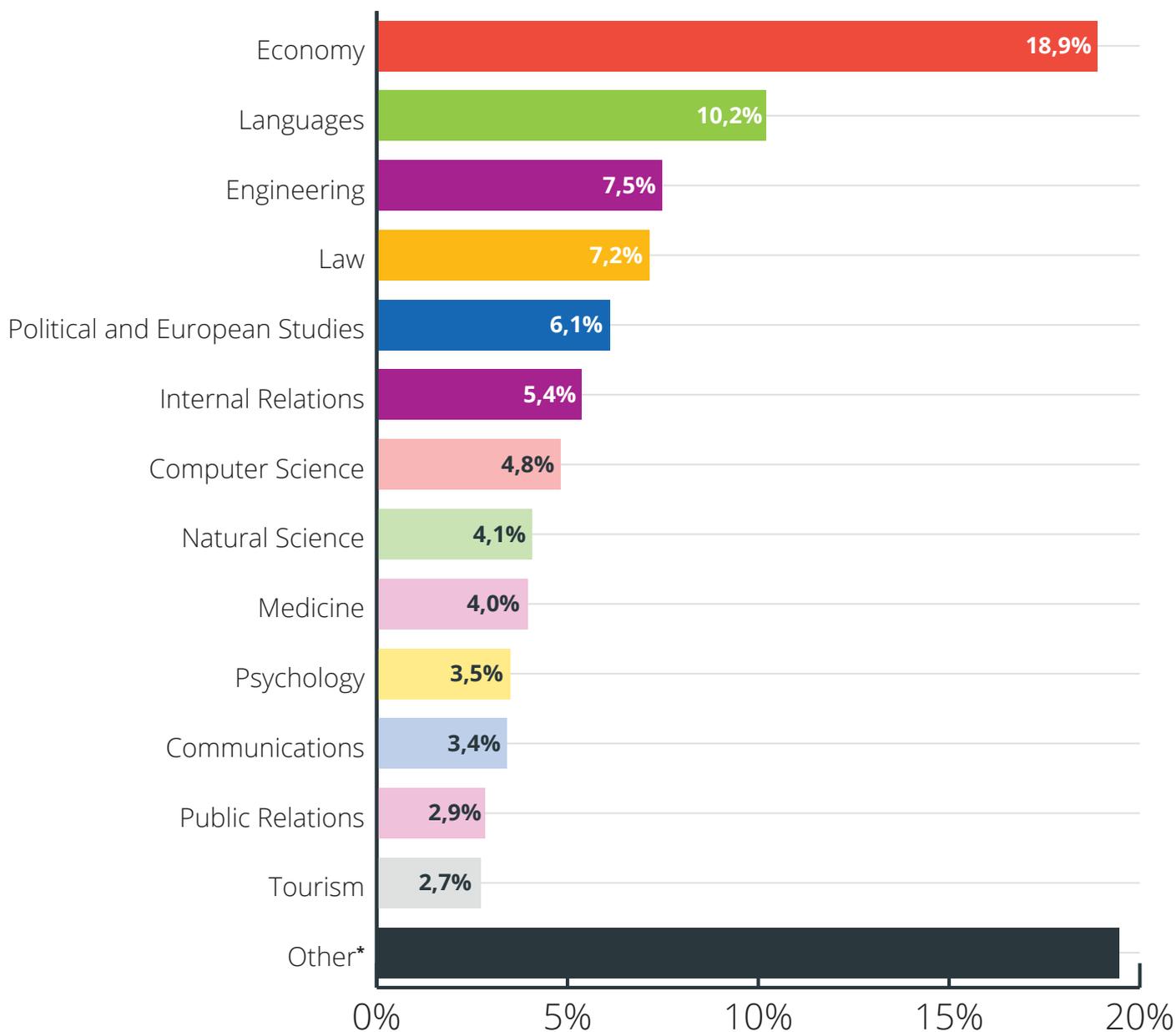


▼ STUDY LEVEL



▼ AGE





▲ FIELD OF STUDY

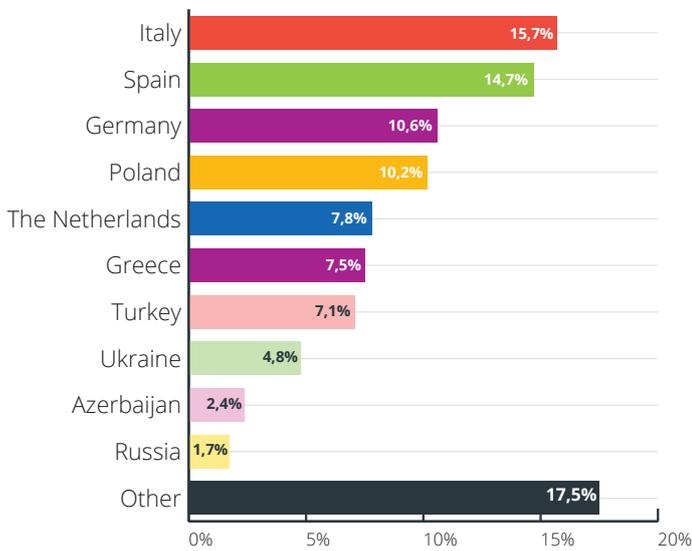
* Other: Pedagogy (2,4%), Sociology (2,4%), Architecture (2,2%), Literature (2,2%), History (2,1%), Design (1,8), Philosophy (1,4%), Maths (1,3%), Music (1,1%), Pharmacy (0,8%), Geography (0,6%), Agriculture (0,5%), Food Science (0,5%), Veterinary (0,3%)

ANTENNAE OVERVIEW

AEGEE hasn't always been as big as it is now. During the early years, AEGEE kept growing bigger and bigger. From a certain period on, some (contact) antennae grew inactive. Because of this, policies for downgrading and deleting locals became stricter, causing a decrease in numbers of (contact) antennae. Today, antennae still show great differences in their sizes.

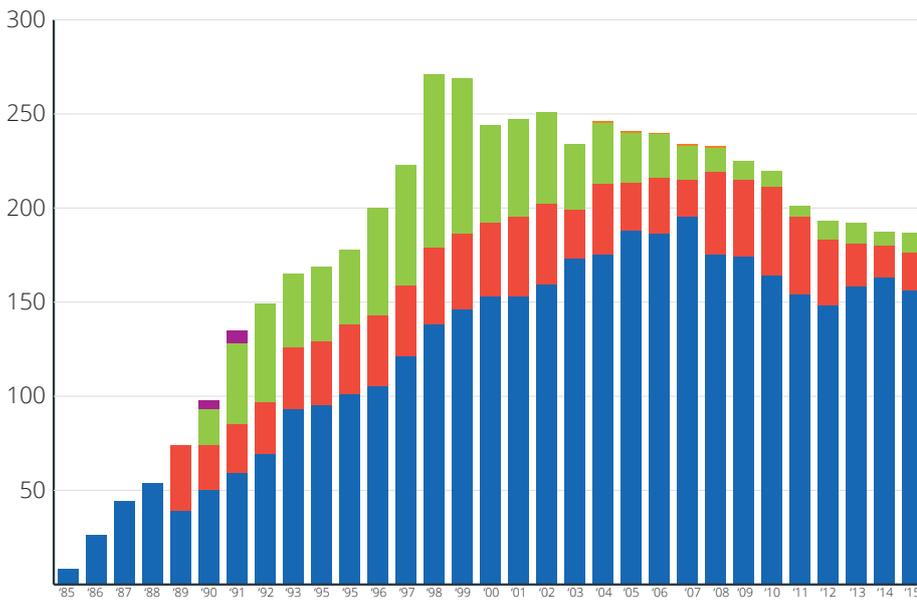
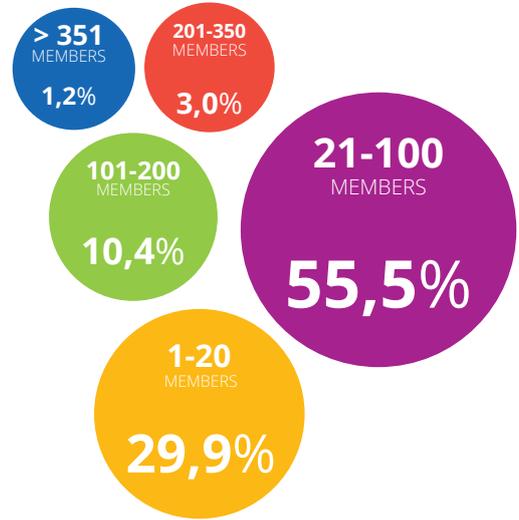
▼ ANTENNAE PER COUNTRY

Source: Cooperation proposal for external partners by the Comité Directeur



▼ ANTENNAE SIZES

Source: Members lists submitted by antennae for statutory events



◀ ANTENNAE PER YEAR

The term 'Contact Antenna' was introduced at Spring Agora Milano 1988, introducing the first antenna criteria: organising European events in order to become and maintain antenna status.

- Connection
- European Contact Group
- Contact
- Contact Antennae
- Antennae

Source: Gunnar Erth; AEGEE-Europe; AEGEE-Milano; AEGEE-Kiel



AEGEE'S HEAD OFFICE

Rue du Noyer 55, where AEGEE-Europe comes together!

Although as AEGEEans we are lucky to have thousands of places we can consider as our home (as many as members and friends we make), there is one concrete place where we can meet each other: AEGEE-Europe's Head Office!

Located on Rue du Noyer 55 (1000 Brussels, Belgium), this beginning of the 19th century house is hosting the Head Office of AEGEE since February 2013. The new house is much more closer to the European Institutions (10 minutes to the European Commission and 20 minutes to the European Parliament by foot), in a better area and, most importantly, offering a much better space for the people living and working in it, enabling AEGEE to continue growing in the next years while fulfilling all the legal regulations.

Our landlady is a really nice woman that also shares AEGEE's vision and understands our needs and lifestyle, for example the need to have the office and the living part of the Comité Directeur in the same house. It is our main priority to preserve the status of the house (our Activity Plan includes a long-term stability plan), improving it with our resources little by little to continue fostering our activities and making Europe our home.

The house is the home for the seven members of the Comité Directeur and two renters (normally AEGEE members who are studying or working in Brussels). It is divided in five floors: a basement for the servers, archives and social room; main floor with the entrance, hall, toilet, kitchen, dining room, office and garden; first floor with the meeting room, bathroom, toilet, one personal room of Comité Directeur members and two rooms for renters; second floor with three personal rooms for Comité Directeur members, guest room, toilet and bathroom and, finally, the attic, used only for storing for now. If you have done the maths, you realise that there are only four rooms for the seven members of the Comité Directeur. In order to save money (and maybe even for teambuilding), the Comité Directeur is allocated in three double rooms and one single room. Also, from time to time, the house welcome AEGEE

members, especially for meetings of AEGEE Bodies, in the guest room, where there is space for four people in two bunkbeds.

“We can indeed call it home; a place where we know that our dreams merge and where all of us gather from time to time to strive for a united and integrated Europe”

Of course, the house has its rules that everybody has to follow (guests pay a deposit and sign an agreement during their stay in the house) in order to preserve the house in the best condition (or even better). It is up to all of us to keep the house clean!

From the outside, the Head Office may just look like another (nice) building, but the seven members of the Comité Directeur, the two renters and the guests that come from time to time, can call it Home; a place where we know that our dreams merge and where all of us, with motivation and patience, gather from time to time to strive for a united and integrated Europe.

.....
Ander Guerrero Ruiz

Financial Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

SAME NAME - DIFFERENT STRUCTURE

Introducing the new concept of Working Groups

What are the Working Groups (WGs)? In case you have been in AEGEE for a while, you have probably met several thematic bodies that aimed to provide a strong backbone knowledge on various different fields. Environmental Working Group, Education Working Group or International Politics Working Group. The concept was clear: gather a group of AEGEEans who are passionate and have knowledge related to the field, and let them discuss contemporary societal issues, draft new strategies for the Network on how to tackle them and eventually try to educate AEGEEans more on the world around themselves.

And while the Working Groups structure before Spring Agora Asturias 2015 was focusing on various different fields, there was also a strong need for reconnecting the work of some of these WGs with the thematic structure of AEGEE itself: the Strategic Plan for three years and the Action Agenda coordinating most of our activities during the course of one year. For the period between 2014-2017, AEGEE is focusing on four areas, namely Eurooptimism, Employment, Mobility and Civic Education

political agenda, fight for equal mobility opportunities for all, and improve citizenship education and active participation.



“The new Working Group structure aims at redefining the role of the four new Working Groups for each focus area.”

– but how can locals get more involved in the activities related to these fields? The new Working Group structure aims at redefining the role of the four new Working Groups for each focus area: they gather AEGEEans who have interest and knowledge on the related field and who will support the locals in the implementation of activities related to these fields. On the other hand, the Working Group structure with a Policy Officer dedicated to each Working Group, will also allow the implemented activities to be gathered into an output that can reach the external world better and therefore bring results directly to the relevant actors. We should also spread eurooptimism on a bigger scale, bring the high rate of youth unemployment to the

The Working Groups offer a great opportunity for every AEGEEan to enhance their knowledge on the related fields and to better understand the different perspectives and measures from the local – national – European sphere of all these fields. The WGs can provide locals with the knowledge and they can bring the interested audience by. Educating members in the thematic world of AEGEE will surely result in improved levels of participation, a better understanding of AEGEE’s aims and objectives and improvement of the European society.

.....
Réka Salamon

Vice President & Projects Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

PROJECTS

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP PROJECT



The Eastern Partnership Project (EaP) aims at promoting active citizenship and youth participation in the Eastern Partnership programme countries. Through conventions and other means they bring together young people all over Europe to build mutual understanding and trust.

► *More on the Eastern Partnership Project on page 87*

AEGEE ELECTION OBSERVATION



AEGEE Election Observation

The AEGEE Election Observation project brings together young Europeans who want first-hand experience of democracy, by giving them a chance to observe major elections in Europe as officially accredited international election observers. By doing so, the project doesn't only contribute to the transparency of elections, but also gives a chance to young people to learn about democracy in today's world.

► *More on the AEGEE Election Observation Project on page 88*

DEMOCRACY IN PRACTICE

The Democracy in Practice (DiP) project aims to raise awareness among young people about the importance of human rights as the



basis of a healthy democracy, in order to promote social and political participation of young people in their local, national, and European environment. The main tool for the project are training courses, which bring together young Europeans to learn about democracy and human rights and become multipliers after returning home.

► *More on the Democracy in Practice Project on page 86*

SUMMER UNIVERSITY PROJECT

The Summer University project is one of the best ways to promote European values, tolerance and multiculturalism among young people. It is AEGEE's biggest project involving more than 2000 young people every summer. Students from all over Europe spend on average two weeks together in places where they get active, learn about different cultures, gain knowledge on topics such as environment, health, photography etc., break stereotypes and gain unforgettable memories and experience AEGEE spirit through true European integration.



► *More on the Summer University Project on page 89*

COMMISSIONS AND OTHER BODIES

JURIDICAL COMMISSION (JC)



The Juridical Commission ensures that the internal functioning of AEGEE-Europe is according to its Statutes (CIA). They assist the bodies and antennae of AEGEE-Europe with legal matters, verify the conformity of the Statutes of each antenna, verify the signing of the Convention d'Adhésion and integrate the modifications of the Statutes that are accepted.

MEDIATION COMMISSION (MEDCOM)

The Mediation Commission acts in case a dispute between members (locals, bodies) arises. In these cases, it is responsible for making decisions, occasionally leading to disciplinary sanctions. They are also responsible for the creation and monitoring of the Data Privacy Policy.

NETWORK COMMISSION (NETCOM)

The Network Commission is responsible for the contact with the whole Network, working in close cooperation with the Network Director. They take measures to help threatened locals and support the new ones, while motivating the antennae to fulfill the Antenna Criteria. Besides that, they organise Network Meetings (NWM), which aim at fostering cooperation, training members (learning experiences) and solving locals' problems.



AUDIT COMMISSION

The Audit Commission checks the accounting of AEGEE-Europe, European bodies, AEGEE-Europe events and antennae. They present their findings at the Agorae.

CHAIR TEAM

The Chair Team is responsible for the preparation and coordination of the statutory events of AEGEE-Europe, namely Agorae and the European Planning Meeting. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson preside over the meetings, the Secretary is responsible for collecting and taking the minutes of all the sessions and the IT responsible takes care of the technology needed during the events.



THE AEGEEAN

The AEGEEan is the online members magazine of AEGEE-Europe, providing members with information about other members, antennae, (statutory) events, the Comité Directeur and other happenings in Europe.



AEGEE ACADEMY

The Academy is an official partner association of AEGEE-Europe functioning as the pool of trainers. Several times a year, the Academy organises European Schools on different topics and other trainings.



COMMITTEES

ACTION AGENDA COORDINATION COMMITTEE (ACT)



Action Agenda Coordination Committee

The Action Agenda Coordination Committee helps out the Network with the implementation of the Action Agenda and to track the progress with it. Each year, a team of up to eleven members works with the most recent Action Agenda, cooperating closely with the locals and other bodies of

AEGEE-Europe.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE (HRC)

The Human Resources Committee supports the human resources of AEGEE-Europe. Among their tasks are the development of a recruiting strategy for new members, the establishment of a structure for sustainable knowledge management and the creation of manuals for members.



Human Resources Committee

CORPORATE AND INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE (CIRC)

The Corporate and Institutional Relations Committee helps out AEGEE-Europe with fundraising by developing corporate and institutional partnerships and preparing grant applications. They are also working on a fundraising strategy, the Study and Career Fair at the Agora and their members assist any local or body that needs help with fundraising.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE (ITC)

The Information Technology Committee supports AEGEE in anything related to IT by offering support to users and maintaining the hardware. Among other tasks, they are responsible for the development of the OMS, intranet and the mailinglists.



EVENTS QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (EQAC)



The Events Quality Assurance Committee works on maintaining the quality standards of AEGEE events by assessing event application forms, aiding local organisers in keeping the overview over quality event management and evaluating the events once they took place.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE (PRC)

The Public Relations Committee supports the European projects and local PR enthusiasts in terms of communications and public relations. Their designers and PR consultants are in constant contact with the AEGEE Network aiding their needs in terms of PR materials, campaign strategies and further tools for improving the visibility of their actions.



Public Relations Committee

HONORARY MEMBERS

Honorary Members are individuals who have performed outstanding service for the community of AEGEE-Europe and have therefore been awarded the highest recognition in our association. These people have distinguished themselves through their services to the ideals of AEGEE-Europe or may be people considered friends of AEGEE-Europe for their permanent support of the AEGEE's cause. Nominations are done by antennae or bodies of AEGEE-Europe and is subject to ratification at the Agora.

Franck Biancheri

1989, AEGEE-Paris

Honorary President of AEGEE-Europe,
Founder of AEGEE, President of AEGEE-



Europe (1985-1988). Recognised for the creation of the organisation, for his contribution in launching important initiatives that influenced European policy makers and European students such as the introduction of the Erasmus Programme

Michael Merker

1993, AEGEE -Leipzig

Member of the Comité Directeur of AEGEE-
Europe 1990-1992, Vice-President of AEGEE-



Europe 1991-1992, Chairman of the Agora 1994-1995, founder of AEGEE-Leipzig, the first AEGEE antenna behind the Iron Curtain in 1990. Recognized for his involvement in AEGEE's expansion to the East and the foundation of new locals beyond the Iron Curtain

Georg von der Gablentz

1993, AEGEE-Berlin

President of AEGEE-Europe
1990-1992 (Quo Vadis
reform CD), President of the



East-West Working Group, President of AEGEE-Berlin. Recognised for his contribution in increasing the participation of AEGEE antennae in the decision-making process of AEGEE, as well as for his initiatives to open up AEGEE to students from Central and Eastern European Countries

Zsuzsa Kigyós

1995, AEGEE-Budapest

Founder of AEGEE-Budapest in 1990,
Organiser of the Agora in Budapest in 1991,
the first Agora in Central and Eastern Europe,



President of AEGEE Europe 1993-1994. Recognised for her involvement in establishing AEGEE in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as being AEGEE-Europe's first female president

Vittorio Dell'Aquila

1993, AEGEE-Milano

Coordinator of the AEGEE Summer
University Project, the largest and long-



est-running mobility project of AEGEE-Europe from 1990-1995, Vice-President of AEGEE-Europe 1990-1991. Recognised for his dedication to promote, develop, disseminate and sustain the Summer University Project and for his dedication to promote the use and learning of languages

Philipp von Klitzing

1996, AEGEE-Aachen

Member of the Comité Directeur
in 1993-1994, Editor-in-Chief of the



OneEurope Magazine 1994-1998, ongoing support for the past 20 years of AEGEE's technical infrastructure. Recognised for his contribution of introducing the concept of long-term strategic planning and Year Plan projects that helped AEGEE to streamline and focus its activities, and also for his enormous dedication to the IT infrastructure of the organisation.

Jeroen Hoogerwerf

1993, AEGEE-Amsterdam

Chairman of the Agora 1990-1991,
President of AEGEE Europe 1992-1993



and President of AEGEE-Amsterdam, first Editor-in-Chief of the News Bulletin 1988-1989

Stefan Recksiegel

1999, AEGEE-Karlsruhe

One of the leading people of AEGEE's
IT Working Group in the early years of



the Internet. Administrator of the first AEGEE server, President of AEGEE-Karlsruhe. Recognised for innovations and improvements which he brought forward in the field of IT in AEGEE, as well as his contribution in establishing AEGEE on Cyprus.

Markus Schönherr

2001, AEGEE-Passau

Founder and Speaker of the Visa Freedom Fighters (Visa Freedom Working Group), Financial Director and Network Director of AEGEE-Europe 1997-1998, first generation Network Commission member in 1997, Organiser of Case Study trip Moldavia in 1997. Recognised for his commitment to the network development in Central and Eastern Europe and his activities to abolish visa in Europe.



Michiel Van Hees

2002, AEGEE-Eindhoven

Member of the Coordination Team of the Year Plan Projects "Find Your Way" in 1996 and "Europe and Euro"

in 1997, creator of AEGEE.tv and organiser of several Media Schools, Liaison Officer towards the European Cultural Foundation in 1996, President of AEGEE-Eindhoven, founder and President of AEGEE-Arnhem in 1998. Recognised for his contribution to AEGEE-Europe projects and for introducing AEGEE.tv and Media Schools.



Olivier Genkin

2005, AEGEE-Mainz/Wiesbaden

Project Manager of Year Plan Project of AEGEE-Europe "EU & Europe" in

2003-2004, Speaker of the International Politics Working Group 2000-2004, member of the AddressBook Coordination Team, AEGEE20 Project Team Member 2004-2005. Recognised for his overall contribution to the organisation, development and planning of new AEGEE-Europe projects, establishment of new antennae, constant support to European project teams.



Gunnar Erth

2006, AEGEE-Szeged

Editor-in-Chief of five Keys to Europe, organiser of five European Schools, two PRES, President of

the Human Rights Working Group 1995-1996, Member of the Comité Directeur 1996, Network Commissioner 1997-1998, Founding member of the Academy and many other projects, commissions and Working Groups. Recognised for his contribution to AEGEE-Europe's publications and human resources trainings, as well as ongoing support.



Silvia Baita

2009, AEGEE-Cagliari

President of AEGEE-Europe 2004-2005, Network Director of AEGEE-Europe 2004, Vice-Chairperson of the Agora 2006, PRWG Board Member 2002-2003.

Recognised for being a prime example of female leadership for many years, being a rare person in the history of AEGEE who took both the roles of the President of AEGEE and Chair of the Agora.



Kamala Schütze

2009, AEGEE-Gießen, AEGEE-Termoli

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2004-2005, Project Manager and

member of the Summer University Coordination Team 2000-2007, Address Book Coordination Team member 2003-2007. Recognised for her years of devotion to the Summer University Project of AEGEE-Europe, and for bringing innovation and quality to AEGEE's biggest and most important project.



Burcu Becermen

2012, AEGEE-Ankara

President of AEGEE-Europe in 2005, European Institutions Director of AEGEE-Europe 2004-2005, Project Manager of

the "Turkish-Greek Civic Dialogue Project" 2002-2005. Young European of the Year in 2006, awarded by the Schwarzkopf Foundation. Recognised for her contribution to peace-building, people to people contacts and cooperation of young people and organisations in the region by managing the large-scale dialogue project.



David Stulik

2013, AEGEE-Praha

Vice-President of AEGEE-Warszawa, Speaker of the East-West WG - 1993-1994, Projects Director and

Vice-President of AEGEE-Europe -1995-1996, coordination Team of Find your Way project of AEGEE-Europe, coordinator of the Case Study trip to Ukraine 1995 - establishment of AEGEE antenna in Ukraine. First ever Young European of the Year, awarded by the Schwarzkopf Foundation in 1997.



Christophe Leclercq

2014, AEGEE-Köln

He was part of the first group of AEGEEans who shaped this organ-

ization (involved in the famous dinner with French President Mitterand lobbying towards ERASMUS). Founder of Euractiv, one of the leading online media platforms for European issues. He has provided valuable support to our European Boards in Brussels year after year, with his personal advice and through a special partnership with EurActiv.



PATRONS



JOSÉ MANUEL BARROSO

Former President of the European Commission

For: *Agora Budapest (2012)*



MARTIN SCHULZ

President of the European Parliament

For: *Agora Budapest (2012), Agora Rhein Neckar (2013) and the Y Vote 2014 campaign (2013-2014)*



BARONESS CATHERINE ASHTON

Former First Vice President of the European Commission

For: *Eastern Partnership Project (2012)*



ANDROULLA VASSILIOU

Former Commissioner for Education, Multilingualism, Culture and Youth

For: *EBM Valletta (2013) and Spring Agora Enschede (2012)*



HERMAN VAN ROMPUY

Former President of the European Council

For: *Spring AGORA Rhein Neckar (2013)*

VIVIANE REDING

Former Vice President of the European Commission

For: *EBM Lublin (2014)*



BAN KI-MOON

Secretary General of the United Nations

For: *Autumn Agora Zaragoza 2013*



MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Marian Harkin (ALDE)

Salvador Sedó i Alabart (EPP)

Katarína Neveďalová (S&D)

Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D)

For: *Europe on Track Project (2012)*

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)

Gabriel Mato Adrover (EPP)

Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D)

Joachim Zeller (EPP)

Iratxe García Pérez (S&D)

For: *Y Vote 2014 campaign (2013-2014)*

Eva Paunova (EPP)

For: *Structured Dialogue on Youth Round Table (2015)*

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



AEGEE IN PLATFORMS

AEGEE-Europe is actively represented in the following European Civil Society platforms:

EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM



The European Youth Forum is the umbrella platform of youth organisations in Europe, bringing together 99 youth organisations. It represents the common interests of millions of young people and advocates for youth rights in international institutions. AEGEE-Europe is currently represented in the Board by Luis Alvarado Martinez and present in various networks

(on topics like mobility and education).

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM ON LIFELONG LEARNING (EUCIS-LLL)



EUCIS-LLL

EUCIS-LLL gathers 33 European networks working in education and training. It is the main advocacy platform in the field of education policy towards the European institutions. AEGEE-Europe is currently represented in the Steering Committee of EUCIS-LLL by Mayri Tiido.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



The Advisory Council (AC) consists of 30 representatives from youth NGOs and networks which give input for all the youth sector activities of the Council of Europe. It co-manages and co-decides on policies, programme priorities, and budget allocation. AEGEE-Europe is currently represented by Marko Grdošić.

Europe is currently represented by Marko Grdošić.

EUROPEAN MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL (EMI)



EMI is a network composed of 39 national councils and 34 international associations, whose objective is to contribute to the establishment of a united, federal

Europe founded on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, and respect for human rights. AEGEE-Europe is currently represented in the Board by Aleksandra Kluczka.

EUROPEAN CIVIC FORUM (ECF)



The European Civic Forum is a transnational network that brings together over 100 associations

and NGOs across 27 countries in Europe actively working to promote civic and popular ownership of Europe. AEGEE-Europe is represented in the Steering Committee of the European Civic Forum by Aleksandra Kluczka, who takes over from Paul L. Smits.

CIVIL SOCIETY EUROPE (CSE)

Civil Society Europe consists of various European civil society umbrella organisations. The aim of the platform is to facilitate and enable horizontal and vertical dialogue between European civil society and policymakers. AEGEE-Europe actively contributed to the establishment of the platform, and is represented in the Steering Committee by Paul L. Smits.

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum aims to strengthen civil society's role in the European Neighbourhood Policy.



EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE

European Citizen Action Service is an international umbrella organisation providing services to a network of 150 civil society organisations and citizens on EU citizens' rights enforcement and civic participation in the EU decision-making process.



CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM ON MULTILINGUALISM

The Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism consults the European Commission on multilingualism and promotes multilingualism as one of the key elements to foster European integration. AEGEE-Europe is represented by Nico Huurman.

INFORMAL FORUM OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORGANISATIONS (IFISO)

IFISO is a platform of 20 international student organisations, covering around 22 million students around the globe. It aims to support and improve

international student organisations through networking, cooperation, and sharing knowledge and best practices. AEGEE-Europe is represented in the management team by Réka Salamon, who takes over from Ivan Bielik.



AEGEE'S COOPERATIONS

AEGEE cooperates with the following organisations and institutions:

BOARD OF EUROPEAN STUDENTS OF TECHNOLOGY (BEST)



BEST is a student NGO which provides communication, co-operation and exchange possibilities for students all over Europe. BEST and AEGEE share knowledge and best practices, work together on training opportunities and participate in each other's events.

YOUTH FOR EXCHANGE AND UNDERSTANDING (YEU)



YEU is a network of young people from 30 countries working to promote peace, understanding and cooperation between the young people of the world, in a spirit of respect for human rights. YEU and AEGEE work together on various projects, such as QUAT, Joining Hands and EBA. [read more on page X]

ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DE FRANCK BIANCHERI (AAFB)



Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri (AAFB) aims to bring in and promote many actions in order to disclose Franck Biancheri's work to the general public in Europe and the world. As Franck Biancheri was the founder of AEGEE, the organisation cooperated with AEGEE for the 30th Anniversary. Since 2014, AAFB each year rewards an initiative in AEGEE with the Franck Biancheri Award.

LIQUID DEMOCRACY E.V.



Liquid Democracy works on innovative ideas and projects for democratic participation with the goal to establish a transparent democratic principle in both the political and social domain based on strengthening the citizens' participation. Liquid Democracy offers AEGEE the Y Part platform for online participation and discussion. Just like AEGEE, the organisation is a partner in the EUth project.

DEBATING EUROPE



Debating Europe is a platform which connects European citizens and politicians together in an online debate. It brings questions, comments and ideas of citizens directly to the policy makers and experts that can trigger a discussion on European challenges.

EU CAREERS

EU Careers is responsible for selecting staff on behalf of the European Institutions and Agencies, including the European Commission, Parliament and Council. It provides European youth with information on the career opportunities within the European Institutions.



B!NGO

Brussels Interns NGO (B!ngo) focuses on promoting quality internships, supporting interns and dialogue with stakeholders on this matter. B!ngo and AEGEE cooperate on the basis of mutual promotion, exchange of events and initiatives related to quality internships.



THINK YOUNG

Think Young is a Brussels-based think tank focusing on young Europeans. It aims at mobilising young Europeans into reflecting upon their future, believing in their potential and showing the results to political, business and social actors. AEGEE-Europe and Think Young cooperate on the basis of mutual promotion, exchange of events and sharing best practices.



MEDIA PARTNERS:

EURACTIV

EurActiv is an online media dedicated to EU news and policy debates, providing free in-depth information on EU affairs to more than 675.000 readers in 15 languages. EurActiv's aim is to contribute to transparency and efficiency in EU affairs. The long-term partnership between EurActiv and AEGEE-Europe is based on common values. The founder of EurActiv, Christophe Leclercq, is an Honorary Member of AEGEE-Europe. [read more on page X]



POLITICO EUROPE

POLITICO Europe is an organisation that covers the politics, policies and personalities of the European Union. POLITICO and AEGEE's partnership is based on mutual promotion and cooperation for the EU Studies Fair.



ACTION AGENDA: APPLYING OUR VISION FOR EUROPE

Like within many other organisations, the work done in AEGEE by its members is defined not just by their vision and mission, but there is usually a document gathering their short-term objectives that, reflecting on their beliefs, helps them aim for something achievable.

A great example of this would be the eight Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations in the year of 2000, which gathered the aims to achieve a better and a more equal society, along with a more sustainable planet. This, on a bigger scale and with a deadline of 15 years, is comparable to the objectives that we, as AEGEEans, set ourselves to spread our vision and mission inside and outside of the organisation.

“Despite all the difficulties, AEGEEans all around Europe tried to create a better Europe for everyone”

contain our short-term plans in different Focus Areas, which let us achieve our vision for Europe in a more qualitative and quantitative way.

Last year, 2014-15, was a year full of changes for the way all sorts of AEGEEans look at these two documents. The Comité Directeur 2014-15, set it as one of their aims for the year, and the Action Agenda Coordination Committee (ACT), the main orchestrators of the fulfilment of these objectives, created a path by which all sorts of members could contribute to the improvement of these documents.

Compared to the Action Agenda 2013-14 that had an overall fulfilment of around 30%, the Action Agenda 2014-15 would get closer to complete fulfilment. Being the first one working with the Focus Areas of the Strategic Plan 2014-17 (Spreading Eurooptimism, Youth Mobility, Youth Employment and Civic Education), there was quite a challenge with it. Even though the idea

Thus, the Strategic Plan and Action Agenda are the two documents that we write collaboratively every three years and annually, respectively. They

behind it was a good one, practically, it was difficult to achieve, to measure and sometimes even to decipher.



Despite all the difficulties, AEGEEans all around Europe tried to create a better Europe for everyone, contributing to those four Focus Areas. We have seen great activities, from workshops about spreading knowledge regarding the rights of deaf people, to debates about the role of young people in Europe.

Now, the challenge for the AEGEEans, remains the Action Agenda 2015-16. After the previous year, the path was set for an easy transition to the newly written document. With the aim of making it more understandable to everyone, tools and aids are being delivered to antennae and members. Documents such as the Guidelines to the Action Agenda 2015-16 or the workshops that the ACT are preparing for the NWMs and the Agorae will be at the reach of everyone.

Last but not least, it only remains the will of people to make an awesome year, so now it is you who has to take the challenge. Stay cool, stay ACTIVE.

.....
Ruben Navarro

AEGEE-Tarragona

EUROPE IS CLOSER THAN EVER!

Erasmus+ is a new programme of the European Union which aims to support actions in the fields of education, training, youth and sports for the period of 2014-2020. This programme merges the former programmes in these fields (Youth in Action, Erasmus, etc.) under the successful name Erasmus.

The new Erasmus+ offers young people the possibility to learn, discover and travel through Europe in a different way for almost no money. This can be done in a more relaxed way (with a Youth Exchange) or in a more educational and training way (with a Training Course or an European Voluntary Service or EVS). Everything is based on the concept of non-formal education that complements the educational and personal development of youngsters. It is an experience that you will never forget, and you would like to do it again as soon as possible.



For AEGEE, the Erasmus+ programme is vital because it allows our members to participate in this type of actions and AEGEE locals to fund the

projects presented and approved by the correspondent National Agency of each country where you have to submit the application. For the newbies in this field, many of the terms and words used may be unknown and it might seem that the program isn't useful for us. On the contrary, the actions of Erasmus+ offer a wide range of possibilities, providing us with opportunities to learn, discover and taste all of our continent (from Portugal to Georgia and from Norway to Turkey) or even beyond.

Erasmus+ is contributing to spreading euro-optimism and the European feeling that AEGEE is actively fighting for. A feeling that nowadays gets obscured by the political and economic tensions, but nevertheless

remains important. Participating in the programme as organiser, participant or even both proves that Europe is our home and all of us together can make it bigger and stronger. And that's not all, because the acquired skills can also be officially recognised by the European Union with the Youthpass certificate.

The Comité Directeur strongly encourages all of the readers to participate in this new programme. Do not hesitate to explore the European dream and become a true citizen of the world. If you have any doubt, your local or AEGEE-Europe is here to help you as much as possible or to put you in contact with the institutions that can help you.

“Erasmus+ is contributing to spreading euro-optimism and the European feeling that AEGEE is actively fighting for.”

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Ander Guerrero Ruiz

Financial Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

EUROPEAN MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL

European Movement International (EMI) is a network of European organisations that strives for the establishment of a united, federal Europe founded on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, and respect for basic human rights. It consists of 39 national councils and 34 international associations. The organisation was founded after the Congress of Europe that took place in The Hague in 1948 and was championed by such notable figures as Winston Churchill and Duncan Sandys.

Among the first achievements was the creation of Council of Europe and College of Europe. European Movement International played an important role in fostering European integration over the decades, by founding think-tanks in European countries and advocating towards European and national stakeholders. The network supported the cause of direct election of the European Parliament by all European citizens, the Treaty on the European Union and a European Constitution.



Over the past year, European Movement International held two Federal Assemblies, in Rome in November 2014 and in Riga in April 2015. The Rome Federal Assembly voted upon the EMI Priority Policy Areas 2015-2017, which focus on the following fields: more democracy, citizens' rights and freedom, jobs, competitiveness and sustainable growth and Europe in the World. The Federal Assembly in Riga was

“ AEGEE-Europe is a full member of European Movement International since 2011, as both organisations share many common values and priorities. ”

accompanied by the conference 'The Helsinki Accords and the OSCE, 40 Years on, What Now?'

AEGEE-Europe is a full member of European Movement International since 2011, as both organisations share many common values and priorities. Our involvement includes participation in EMI's Federal Assemblies, Members Councils and work in the Political Committees related to the Priority Policy Areas. AEGEE members have the chance every year to participate in the EMI Training Academy, which is a great opportunity to receive insights on the work of the EU Institutions, and gain knowledge about European stakeholders and political processes. Since November 2014 AEGEE-Europe has a representative in the board of European Movement International, as Aleksandra Kluczka was elected to the board during the Federal Assembly in Rome.

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Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

IFISO AND AEGEE – HOW THE INFORMAL FORUM HELPS US REALISE PROJECTS TOGETHER!

The Informal Forum of International Student Organisations (IFISO) takes place twice a year in the shape of an informal gathering of 15-20 student and non-governmental organisation partners. During the weekend, they focus on sharing best practices, brainstorming on common project ideas, realizing common strategies for trainings and other development ideas in a strictly informal setting. IFISO is where you meet people who share your aspirations for Europe through different lenses and you realise your organization is only one among many others working for transnational cooperation and strengthening the youth sector.

AEGEE has been in the Management Team of IFISO, meaning being in the organizer team, for the meetings that took place in Utrecht, Belgrade and Budapest, the last one being hosted by AEGEE-Bu-

dapest. The upcoming IFISO meeting will take place in Zürich, Switzerland, between the 1st and the 4th of October 2015 and will be hosted by EGEA Zurich, the European Geography Students Association. The rotation of the hosting organisations, just like the rotation in the Management Team, ensures continuity and new approaches at the same time. The IFISO meetings have a truly unique atmosphere where board members of the biggest student organisations come together not for a high-profile conference or a hearing in the European Parliament, but for a casual drink in the evening, being young and making friends, just like how it is for members in each of these organisations.

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Réka Salamon

Vice President & Projects Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016



SHAPING EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY - THE BIRTH OF CIVIL SOCIETY EUROPE

European civil society organisations play an important role in shaping European democracy and bridging the gap between institutions and citizens by making the voice of citizens heard. December 2014, situated in Rome, a wide group of European networks of associations and non-governmental organisations decided to coordinate their efforts by creating Civil Society Europe. The platform brings together organisations that share a common vision on Europe, as well as the values of equality, solidarity, democracy and inclusiveness. It aims to become a platform of permanent coordination between European civil society organisations, by creating a space for horizontal exchanges between them and shaping the agenda for organised civil society in Europe.

Civil Society Europe emerged as a follow-up to the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA), an 'open network of European and national civil society organisations willing to promote active citizenship as a core element of the European democracy in the frame of the European Year of Citizens 2013.' Following its estab-

lishment, the official launch of the platform took place during a press conference in the European Parliament on the 3rd February, with the presence of MEP Sylvie Guillaume, European Parliament Vice-President responsible for Citizenship. Since then, the cooperation on laying grounds for the platform continue by defining its mandate, planning the upcoming initiatives and establishing working groups.

Being an active contributor to the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA), AEGEE played a role in shaping Civil Society Europe since its establishment. AEGEE was also elected to the Steering Committee of the platform, and is represented there by Paul L. Smits. We are planning to continue our contribution to the development of this platform, seeing it as a crucial component of the European civil society.

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Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

EXTERNAL PROJECTS OF AEGEE-EUROPE

EUTH

EUTH is an innovative research project funded by the European Commission aiming to get more young



people involved in political decision-making and increase youth's trust in European political institutions. To do that, the partners in the project will develop an open and easy-to-use online participation platform along with different mobile tools and apps for smartphones and tablets. This way, young people can get involved whenever and

wherever they wish with minimum effort.

As one of three pilot projects within the EUTH Living Lab, AEGEE is implementing and testing the tool before it goes live, and thus developing the tool with the project partners according to AEGEE's requirements. The pilot consists of implementing and testing the EUTH features in locals, at Network Meetings and at Spring Agora Bergamo 2016.

Partners are NEXUS Institute for Cooperation Management and Interdisciplinary Research, Liquid Democracy, Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia (HS), European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA), Alfstore (ALF), Institute of Studies for the Integration of Systems, International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany (IJAB), Liquid Democracy e.V., Missions Publiques, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) and The Danish Board of Technology Foundation (DBT).

GR-EAT (GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION – EUROPEAN ADVANCED TOOL)

GR-EAT is a youth project with the aim to enhance the recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and provide youth-led organisations with guidelines on how to implement a coherent system of recognition of the competences of their volunteers. The recognition of Non Formal and Informal Learning has been identified as a key challenge by many

youth organisations and youth activists given the nature of the learning experience; the skills improvement and enriching experience is present in youth work, yet it is hard to measure this impact on an individual.

AEGEE as a managing partner is responsible for ensuring the collection of research data and writing the guidelines that youth organisations can later use for developing their internal tools for the recognition of their Non-Formal Educational activities.

Partners are The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL), La Ligue de l'Enseignement, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), World Scout Movement (WOSM) and Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU).



GR-EAT

JOINING HANDS

Joining Hands aims to explore the concept of social entrepreneurship, which is one of the priorities of Europe 2020 for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The objective is to train youth on social entrepreneurship and promote the method on a local and European level. The project is coordinated by Youth



for Exchange and Understanding (YEU), and AEGEE-Europe is currently promoting the trainings among our members, and organising a conference on social entrepreneurship in October 2015.

Partners are AMC, FNG, MOJU and Municipality of Nea Ioannina.

LIFESTYLE IN MOBILITY

Lifestyle in Mobility is a collaborative research project aiming to investigate how study abroad (mostly Erasmus) students' lifestyle and health behaviours (eating behaviour, physical exercise, alcohol consumption, etc.) change during their period abroad and once returned to their home countries.

A representative sample of 2,000 - 4,000 European Study Abroad Students will complete an anonymous

online questionnaire upon their arrival abroad, 5 months through their period abroad and 6 months after returning home. 40 students will also be concurrently interviewed to integrate the survey results and offer insights into interpretation. AEGEE-Europe's role in the project is to spread the survey among study abroad students with the help of our locals.

Partners are Cardiff University and the Catholic University of Milan.

MY-WAY

The MY-WAY project is a Horizon 2020 project lead by Europa Media with the aim to enhance and improve the collaboration and efforts of web entrepreneurship initiatives, web/business experts, educational actors and young adults as the final beneficiaries through student networks, their alumni and student entrepreneurship centres.

AEGEE-Europe has been involved in the project by spreading a survey among students and leaders of student organisations and entrepreneurship centres. Besides that, it will organise two stakeholders meeting

in Brussels in the form of workshops encouraging active discussions.

Partners are Bar-Ilan University, The London Association of Enterprise Agencies Ltd., Sabanci University, Menlo Media UG (EU-Startups.com), National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs, YES-European Confederation of Young Entrepreneurs, Euclid Network and H-FARM Italia SRL.



QUAT: QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TRAINING

The QUAT project is a joint initiative aiming to bring together three organisations to implement quality assurance indicators and impact measurement in a coherent way in their training structures. Besides that, the project also aims to exchange best practices.

During the course of 9 training courses organised in various European cities by the partner organisations, 220 multipliers have gained training on the importance of a quality Non Formal Education (NFE) experience, transforming the training systems of the participating organisations.

Partners are Board of European Students of Technology (BEST) and Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU)

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Svenja van der Tol

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

► *More external projects of AEGEE-Europe on the next page*



CERTIFICATION OF THE QUALIFICATIONS OF YOUTH WORKERS

The COY project, finished in 2014, aimed to develop a process of certification, which gives youth workers in NGOs like AEGEE-Europe the possibility to assess and validate the qualities they gained through their volunteer work. Within the project, AEGEE-Europe represented Belgium and supported the creation of the certification, also inviting members to take part in the project and share their input.

Partners are Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU), Institute of Entrepreneurship Development, Modavi ONLUS and Cracow University of Economics.



ERASMUS VOTING ASSESSMENT

The Erasmus Voting Assessment, finished in 2014, carried out a Europe-wide survey among (former) Erasmus and non-Erasmus students to measure how the Erasmus programme influences feelings of European citizenship and identity, with a special focus on the possible correlation between participation in the Erasmus programme and voting in the European Parliament elections. AEGEE-Europe was responsible for the coordination of the overall project.

Partners are Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and Generation Europe Foundation (GEF).



ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

In the Spring of 2014, AEGEE-Europe was elected to represent the Member Organisations of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) in the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe until Spring 2016. In this advisory council, international youth organisations and national youth councils are represented, having co-decision power on all the policies and initiatives dealing with youth inside the Council of Europe. Currently, the council is composed of 30 organisations, 20 of which are elected by the European Youth Forum, and 10 that are appointed directly by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The main role of the Advisory Council is to make youth policy mainstreamed and spread it to all the organs of the Council of Europe, which is located in Strasbourg and works for topics like democracy, human rights and rule of law. In the last years, AEGEE-Europe was present at different international conferences, where it promoted the benefits of the co-management system. This system aims to empower young people and show them that their voices are just as important as those in the government, while also allowing them to develop a feeling of ownership and responsibility for the policies that are implemented.

Besides that, AEGEE-Europe has also been present in many different intergovernmental meetings, for example in meetings of the Joint Council on Youth (composed by the 30 Advisory Council Members and the 47

government representatives). Additionally, we assisted in advising different governments and bodies of the Council of Europe about what the exact needs of young people are and what tools are

needed to ensure them full access to their fundamental rights. Currently, AEGEE-Europe is represented in the Advisory Council on Youth by Marko Grdošić, who was also elected for the upcoming term of the Advisory Council on Youth 2016-2017.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Svenja van der Tol

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

AEGEE BECOMES AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF ICMYO

The International Co-ordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO) is a global platform for cooperation of youth organisations. The membership of ICMYO is composed of two types: Regional Youth Platforms (such as for instance the European Youth Forum) and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations. The platform aims at joining efforts to advocate for youth globally towards the United Nations and other stakeholders. It focuses also on exchanging information and good practices, working jointly on common thematic priorities and impacting political processes and decisions of international institutions related to youth matters.

The work of ICMYO is coordinated by a yearly elected task force, representing various member organisations.

The members have the chance to meet and plan the priorities during Annual Meetings.

In 2014 the Annual Meeting took place

in Baku, where AEGEE was present and had the chance to share the scope of our activity. AEGEE achieved a remarkable success, being admitted as a direct member of ICMYO, receiving the status of an associate member. We are looking forward to bringing the voice of European students and youth further!



Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

TOWARDS THE POPULAR OWNERSHIP OF EUROPE - EUROPEAN CIVIC FORUM

A Europe of equality, solidarity and democracy, that is what the European Civic Forum stands for. Founded in 2005, it is a transnational network bringing together over a hundred associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) across Europe and actively working on issues such as citizenship education, defence of human rights and the advocacy of democracy. The work of the platform focuses on three main goals: to enhance civic participation, develop civic space, and build civic dialogue.

AEGEE is a founding member of the European Civic Forum and has been continuously present in the activities of the organisation ever since. Presidents of AEGEE-Europe have been representing AEGEE in the board of the platform for many years, and are currently also present in the Steering Committee. In the past year AEGEE was closely cooperating with the European Civic Forum on the follow-up of the

European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA) and the establishment of Civil Society Europe, in order to ensure a better coordination of European civil society to reach common goals that matter to European citizens.

Representatives of AEGEE participated in the initiatives and conferences of ECF throughout the year, as well as in the work of its Working Groups on Consultation and Citizenship Education. Since civic education is one of the focus areas of AEGEE for the years 2014-2017 and active citizenship is at the core of our organisation's identity, many synergies and opportunities for cooperation in these areas have been found between the two organisations and will be continued in the future.

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Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016



EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM ON LIFELONG LEARNING

The recognition and validation of non-formal and informal education and learning has always played an important role in our organisation. It therefore should not be a surprise that AEGEE-Europe is also playing an active role in the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning, an umbrella association that gathers 36 European organisations active in the field of education and training and aims to be a platform for the dialogue between European institutions, citizens and all organisations with an interest in the topic of education and learning.

Born in 2005, the platform functioned as a response from civil society organisations to the defining and implementation of a European education and training policy in the framework of the Open Method of Coordination. Before the official establishment, several lifelong learning networks already gathered in 2001 to share their experience and expertise, but four years later the European Civil Society Platform was born. With success, because in 2009 the platform was acknowledged by the European Commission as a "unique representation" of lifelong learning and in 2011 as "in a unique position to support European networks in education and training".

Another good reason for AEGEE-Europe to be involved in the platform are the very important initiatives they organise. As a member of the Civil Society Contact Group, EUCIS-LLL joined forces and took part in monitoring the allocation of budget of future EU programmes and funds, and contributed to a better distribution of them. Most especially, they ensured a 40% budget increase for the updated version of Erasmus +, and that was only the beginning!

AEGEE-Europe is currently involved in the work of EUCIS in the Steering Committee by Mayri Tiido, Projects and Communications Director 2014-2015, and in a European project - GR-EAT (Guidelines for Recognition: European Advanced Tool) - that the two organisations are working on together. The cooperation brings AEGEE great opportunities to represent and give a voice to the needs and challenges youth is facing, while successfully cooperating with the other organisations in the platform and continuing to strive for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal education.

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Svenja van der Tol

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

STRIVING FOR YOUTH RIGHTS

European Youth Forum

As far as youth rights, participation and empowerment are concerned, the European Youth Forum (YFJ) has been their advocate since its establishment. Being a platform of 99 organisations, national youth councils and international associations, YFJ brings together European youth and undoubtedly has a significant impact on the shape of youth policy in Europe. European Youth Forum strives to be 'the voice of young people in Europe, where young people are equal citizens and are encouraged and supported to achieve their fullest potential as global citizens.' In order to put this vision into practice, the work of the platform is built on three main goals, such as greater youth participation, stronger youth organisations, and increased youth autonomy and inclusion.

2014-2015 was definitely a dynamic year for the European Youth Forum. During the General Assembly, taking place in November 2014 in the European Youth Capital 2015 Cluj-Napoca, the new Board of the platform was elected and the Work Plan for the period 2015-2016 was adopted. AEGEE-Europe proposed a candidate for the Board, Luis Alvarado Martínez, who was elected as the Vice President of the European Youth Forum. The Work Plan 2015-2016 foresees among others advocacy and capacity building related to youth participation, strong youth organisations and youth autonomy and inclusion. It also aims at empowering member organisations and developing the European Youth Forum as an agenda setter.

The European Youth Forum has been working on a variety of topics last year. Since youth unemployment is one of the biggest challenges Europe faces at the moment, employment policies gained a significant focus. YFJ continued the work on quality internships & youth guarantee, and explored other fields such as quality jobs, job creation, entrepreneurship and an inclusive labour market. Another important topic was youth mobility and the advocacy related to the Visa Directive. The platform continued the work on

youth political participation, playing a coordinating role in the Structured Dialogue on Youth and starting the Youth Up campaign. An innovation in terms of internal work was the creation of Networks, that bring the members together to jointly work on a specific topic. The established Networks are devoted to various policy fields, such as mobility, job creation, youth work, education and funding.

AEGEE has been continuously contributing to the

work of the European Youth Forum. Since two of AEGEE's current focus areas are youth mobility and youth employment, AEGEE was intensively involved in YFJ's work related to employment and in the advocacy related to the Visa Directive. AEGEE contributed to the development of the Work Plan 2015-2016 and has been working

in the newly established Networks. Our organisation held activities during the Education Week in Brussels, fostered cooperation between European stakeholders, worked on empowering youth in the Structured Dialogue, took part in the advocacy for establishing the Youth Intergroup in the European Parliament and strived for the recognition of non-formal education and youth work. We are planning on continuing our involvement with the European Youth Forum in the key areas that matter to AEGEE, to empower youth and make our voice heard across Europe!

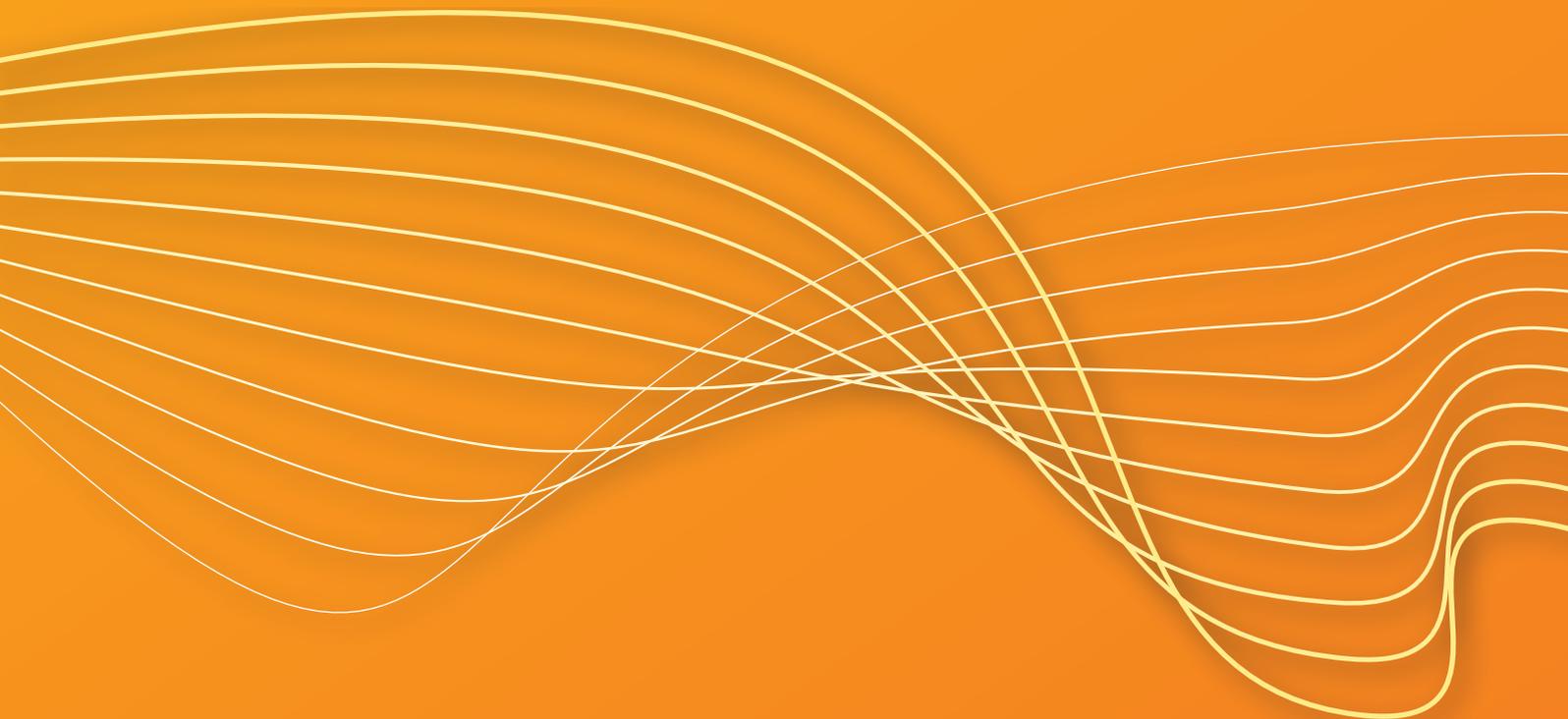
Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016



30-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In 1985, AEGEE (known, at that time, as EGEE) was founded by a group of French students lead by the visionary Franck Biancheri. In 2015, thirty years later, the organisation has changed a lot and grew to have locals in 40 countries, reaching almost 13.000 members. Among this year's celebrations, the most ambitious one was the Night of Seven Antennae that showcased one of the organisations' principles: striving for a borderless Europe. A three-decades history requires also some reflection upon what has been done and the important, often front line, role of AEGEE in the decision-making processes regarding Europe.



PREVIOUS STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

This version of the Statement of principle was adopted during Spring Agora Praha 1993 and revised in Spring Agora Utrecht 2000 and it stayed until Autumn Agora Zaragoza 2013, when a new and more current one was adopted, along with the new Visual Identity.

We, the Members of AEGEE,

Realising that the European youth is building the future of our continent,
Aspiring to a peaceful Europe free of obstacles and enmities, of false divisions and forced differences,
Resolved to remove barriers between the peoples of Europe,
Determined to contribute to a Europe of cooperation and understanding,
Creating a network of young Europeans desiring to spread our ideals and ideas concerning Europe,

Hereby declare

Our belief that, while cherishing our diversity and respecting the character of our regions, we can find on the basis of our cultural and historical heritage the principles that unite us and guide us in our effort to strengthen the European conscience,

Our faith in a Europe symbolising liberty, democracy, and respect for human rights and the rule of law, and our will to cooperate with institutions that promote these concepts,

Our resolve to establish an open Europe which recognises the importance of all cultures in the shaping of its past, present, and future and which plays an active role in fostering peace, stability and prosperity throughout the world,

Our intention to promote unlimited access to education as being of fundamental importance to increase mutual understanding,

Our desire to encourage student mobility in order to fight prejudice and xenophobia by increasing people's awareness of different cultures, and

Our strong belief that our association is a unique platform enabling us to contribute to these visions of Europe.

THE NIGHT OF THE SEVEN ANTENNAE

This year AEGEE celebrated 30 years of success, great projects and development and the date itself could not pass by unmarked. A big and meaningful event was organised: The Night of the Seven Antennae. In order to recreate the conference that took place at the beginning of AEGEE, seven locals, AEGEE-Aachen, AEGEE-Bergamo, AEGEE-Catania, AEGEE-Eskişehir, AEGEE-Kyiv, AEGEE-Leiden and AEGEE-Sofia organised a connected event on the 18th of April under the motto: 7 cities, 1 event. The original event was a conference called Nights of Europe which took place on 7th March 1986 in seven cities, München, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Strasbourg, Brussels and Nice, when our organisations was still called EGEE. Like in 1986, the cities of The Night of the Seven Antennae were connected through live streaming and presented the results of two days of debates about the direction Europe should take.

AACHEN - WHERE THE POLAR BEARS DARE

We, AEGEE-Aachen, have a strong tradition for debating. We like to discuss, go into the details of each idea, and we also have a discussion group about politics and current matters in Europe. For us the Night of the Seven Antennae was a step further, bringing our love for debates and discussions to people from other locals and getting the opportunity to talk with highly qualified speakers, such as members of the German and European Parliament.

There is maybe a tendency to forget, but Europe changed a lot compared to a few decades ago. Some countries have reunited, you can travel without visa, we have the same currency. Of course it is not perfect, but this might show us the path to walk, especially in the recent climate of scepticism. That is what we wanted to talk about during our discussion: what can we do as young people in Europe nowadays? What are our opportunities? Inviting speakers and being able to directly debate with them was really a highlight.

Through this debate, we were hoping our participants would be able to imagine what Europe could become, for better or for worse, and get the motivation needed to try and improve it. The live stream between all our Antennae was probably a good way to do it. Uniting seven cities despite distance and technical problems, to share our vision and dreams was quite exceptiona. Just seeing the different topics each Antenna focused on, you could realise how different, yet still united we are in our desire to improve Europe for everybody.

Our participants formulated small quotes, some of which are published in the results booklet, and everyone wrote a letter to future AEGEE members about our hope

for the future of Europe. We then placed all the letters in a Time Capsule that will be opened only at the next anniversary event.

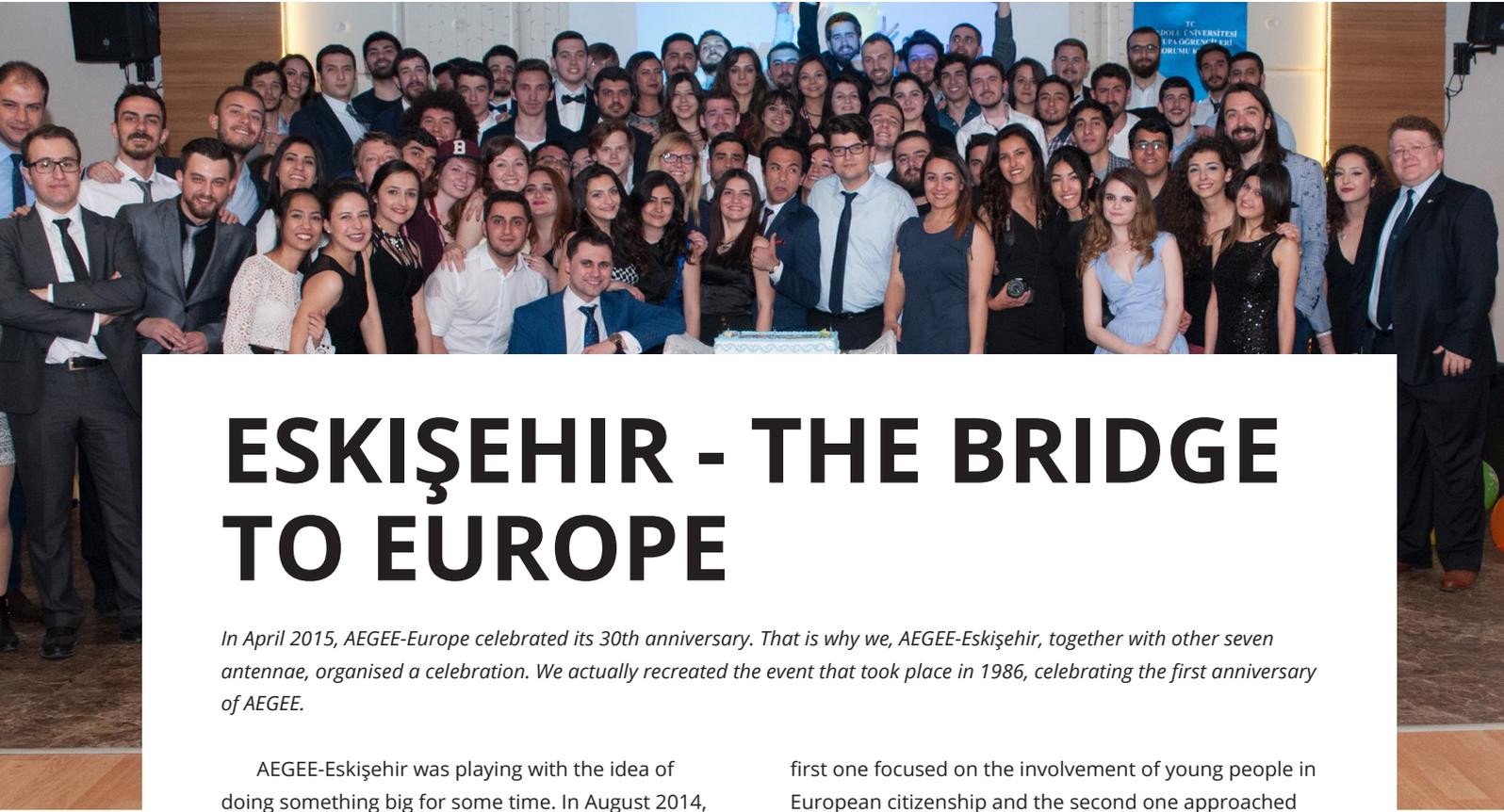
“There is maybe a tendency to forget, but Europe changed a lot compared to a few decades ago.”

Because it was indeed an anniversary event, in Aachen we had a delicious birthday cake, and you could feel in the general atmosphere that it was not only about discussing the future, but that we were also celebrating our accomplishments. Thinking, sharing, and enjoying, three ingredients for a successful event.

Now we can not only hope our wishes will come true, but also take action to realise them!

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Damien Latacz

AEGEE-Aachen



ESKIŞEHİR - THE BRIDGE TO EUROPE

In April 2015, AEGEE-Europe celebrated its 30th anniversary. That is why we, AEGEE-Eskişehir, together with other seven antennae, organised a celebration. We actually recreated the event that took place in 1986, celebrating the first anniversary of AEGEE.

AEGEE-Eskişehir was playing with the idea of doing something big for some time. In August 2014, the Anniversary Team was appointed by the Comité Directeur with the task to create a modern version of the Nights of Europe. It gave us the opportunity to reach out and include the rest of Europe in our celebration. Moreover, it also encouraged members of our local to be more active and help with the organisation.

On Friday morning, 16th of April, 35 young Europeans joined AEGEE-Eskişehir in celebrating the anniversary. It started with get-to-know activities. In two and a half hours the organisers showed them Eskişehir, a city full of students and modern architecture. Students from all over Turkey are coming to Eskişehir to receive higher education and they bring their cultures and talents with them.

Two workshops were prepared for the participants. Suzan Dilara Tokaç, an active member, covered the history of AEGEE and Alişan Kuloğlu from the Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri talked about Franck Biancheri, the founder of AEGEE-Europe.

Several important guests attended the initial dinner, including Mayri Tiido from the Comité Directeur, our university professors who are responsible for AEGEE-Eskişehir, and of course all the members of the local. The evening was made unforgettable thanks to a variety of contributions from our members, including traditional Turkish dances supported by live performing musicians. Later we had the joy of sharing one of the largest cakes in AEGEE's history.

On the next morning the participants woke up early to attend the conferences "The State of Turkish Democracy" and "Europe needs Youth". They were led by Perçin İmrek, former Project Director of AEGEE-Europe, followed later by two panel discussions. The

first one focused on the involvement of young people in European citizenship and the second one approached the state of Turkish democracy, especially towards the concerns of the "hegemony" of the leading Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey.

In the first panel, our speakers also mentioned the importance of European NGOs', such as AEGEE, that help develop young Europeans and the future leaders of Europe. Since the speakers for this panel were also young people, they managed to build a quick connection with the audience. In the second panel, active stimulation of the audience was not needed, since the topic was very close to the participants, who generally have strong opinions about the democratic deficit in Turkey. The participants generally stated strong opinions against the actions of the governments, asking the speakers, who were political scientists from universities, about possible solutions and resolutions towards the challenges that this government presents.

On Sunday morning, the anniversary celebration ended with a workshop from our project group called "Feel Europe" that aimed to dismantle prejudices about Europe and Europeans. Participants had to work together to come up with answers to questions related to European integration.

We now look back on a very successful event and we are proud that we could host it. We worked hard, and some of us had some sleep deprivation problems, but the Night of Seven Antennae showed us what is possible if Europeans come together and work together: greatness.

Evrin Emiroğlu, Floris Wolff and Perçin İmrek

AEGEE-Eskişehir

UNDER THE VOLCANO IN CATANIA

AEGEE-Catania was one of the locals that joined the Night of the Seven Antennae project in April 2015, when the Network celebrated the 30th anniversary of AEGEE-Europe and the original event of the Seven Antennae from 1986.

“We wanted to bring Catania into the amazing Night of the Seven Antennae project which really unites Europe and AEGEE by gathering people from all over Europe in seven key cities,” said Alfio Bonaccorsi from AEGEE-Catania, Main Organiser of the event. “It was great for us to involve our city in such a big project and connect also the south of Europe to it.”

Under the theme “Europe in Me, Me in Europe”, Catania welcomed 50 participants for four days in the middle of April 2015.



“The topic was about being active and aware of what Europe is, what it is becoming and also about facing our roles in building and shaping our continent,” said Alfio, stressing that apart from watching, it is also important

to be active, which is one of the main aims of AEGEE. Events like the Night of the Seven Antennae encourages participants to speak up and break the barriers.

The four days offered sessions and workshops, with two days dedicated to the core topics. Participants could also enjoy a one-day trip to the Etna Volcano, the highest active volcano in Europe, and to the Taormina beaches.

“Events like the Night of Seven Antennae encourages participants to speak up and break the barriers.”

Amongst the special guests was Caroline Lubbers from Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri and two university professors involved in international rights and mobility programmes. In Alfio’s words, “the top moment was the streaming of the anniversary, when we had a beautiful and tasty cake and we shared our enthusiasm live with every corner of Europe with other six locals”.

At the end, the organisers collected the materials produced during the “Night” and used it for a booklet that will sum up the event. “We definitely pushed our participants to rethink their role and participation in shaping a better Europe, also providing them with a lot of knowledge about our past and history, both of Europe and of the association,” concluded Alfio.

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Erik Redli
AEGEE-Bratislava

KYÏV - A PIECE OF A PUZZLE

We started discussing the idea of participating in the Night of the Seven Antennae at the knowledge transfer meeting between two boards. There were a lot of reasons to apply and to make this event happen, from the will to be a part of the 30th Anniversary of AEGEE, to challenge ourselves to organise a thematic conference and to reach a new level in organising an event, organisers who are good not only at parties and internal events like network meetings. The ambitions of the new board were very high, everyone wanted to make something big, important and useful for both Ukrainian and European youth.

“It was really inspiring to hear speeches from experienced members and non-AEGEE members.”

It consisted of four big events, and started with the Night of the Seven Antennae, whose tagline was “Stating Democracy”. It was an intro-

ductory event, the starting point of the big discussion, and our call for action. We invited young Europeans and Ukrainians to participate in a dialogue, to find out what democracy means for them and what their opinion about its values is. The second event was an exchange with AEGEE-Dresden, called “Exploring democracy” and we organised the Summer University “Sharing Democracy” and finally the Autumn Agora Kyiv 2015 with the tagline “Practicing Democracy”.

Coming back to the N7A, the main idea for us as organisers was to make a conference with an atmosphere for not just listening to the speakers but also with active participation in the process. So, our first

highlights were the workshops and group work. The Night of Seven Antennae happened with the support of the Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri; Marie-Hélène Caillol, President of the association decided to come to Kyiv. She held a workshop, talked about the lessons of Franck Biancheri and brought up some serious issues on the table to create debates. People



loved it! Another great thing was the inspire session – we gave an opportunity to every participant to share anything he or she would like to and they could join even in the last minute. It was really inspiring to hear ten speeches from experienced members and non-AEGEE members – by the way all of them are members now – who talked about languages, consciousness, active participation, communication and visas.

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Olga Marrero

AEGEE-Kyiv

LEIDEN: A HISTORICAL EVENT POINTED TOWARDS THE FUTURE

In 1986 the Nights of Europe took place for the first time and is still known as one of the most legendary AEGEE events ever. Seven cities were connected and together provided for something like an Eurovision show featuring prominent political guests, music and interviews. Now, about 30 years later, it was time to revive this event and let it take place once again, in



honor of our 30th anniversary. Aachen, Bergamo, Catania, Eskişehir, Kyiv, Leiden and Sofia worked together and simultaneously organised a

three-day event which had its peak on Saturday night: the live connection between the seven European cities.

On Friday night, it was time for our opening ceremony. Eduard Sloomweg, head of the Information Bureau of the European Parliament in The Hague, came just in time and when Henri Lenferink, Mayor of Leiden arrived, our ceremony could start. Besides the Mayor and Eduard Sloomweg, Diederik Smit, a Honorary Member of AEGEE-Leiden, spoke about the history of the local and everyone was welcomed on behalf of the Comité Directeur by Ivan Bielik. To top it all off, Jos Eikhout, a Les Anciens d'AEGEE member, held an inspirational speech about 30 years of AEGEE.

On Saturday morning, after waking up the participants we walked to Plexus, where the main program took place. The first speaker, Chris Aalberts the euro-critical writer, spoke about the extent to which European citizens have the opportunity to influence European policy and specifically the Transatlantic Trade and

Investment Partnership (TTIP), which stimulated quite some discussion.

In the second meeting, Kati Piri, Commissioner and Member of the European Parliament (MEP), on behalf of the Labor Party and Yvonne van Delft, Group Chairman of Groen Links-Leiden started the discussion together with the participants. Everyone was actively discussing the different theses with the general theme "The future of Europe", which was the central topic of the day.

We closed our last Expert Meeting with the presentation of Philippe Portalier, founding member of the organisation l'Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri (AAFB). The goal of the AAFB is to spread and pass on the intellectual ideas of the founder of AEGEE, Franck Biancheri. Philippe gave us a look on the first years of AEGEE and told us why Leiden is such a remarkable city to him: this is where he met Franck for the first time and it changed his life.

And then we were live! Even though the live connection was not always clear and the sound sometimes lost, it was very nice to see and hear what all the other six antennae had been working on during the other events. When Leiden was up for their part in the broadcasting, everyone jumped up and waved at the camera. During our turn, two of our board members, Job van der Wardt (former President) and Daniël Amesz (former Internal Affairs Officer), asked Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016, Svenja van der Tol, to speak about how she had experienced the event so far. Philippe told a short version about his meeting with Franck Biancheri in Leiden again.

That night, there was a lot to celebrate: the birthday of AEGEE-Europe, AEGEE-Leiden and, mostly for the organisers, that the livestream evening turned out great. We celebrated this with the indispensable European Night with drinks and snacks from all over Europe!

We closed the event in style on Sunday evening, 19th April, with a champagne brunch. Long tables

were filled with croissants, fresh fruits, juice and eggs. Olivier Genkin, Honorary Member of AEGEE-Europe, came especially for us on Saturday night to give a closing speech during the brunch about the history and future of AEGEE.

It was a successful event with a full program and a very nice group of people. Lots of thanks to the amazing

participants and all the members of AEGEE-Leiden that were present, always helped when help was needed and who made this event into a success.

Sandrine Lafay, Marieke van Brandwijk

AEGEE-Leiden

SOFIA - THE POWER OF INTERACTING

The Night of the Seven Antennae in Sofia took place from 16th to 19th of April. The intention was to organise something different from our previous events, which



would inspire and be important for young people. Plus, we contributed to two Focus Areas: Spreading Eurooptimism and Civic Education.

Our international participants spent four days in Sofia and shared their thoughts, opinions and views regarding Europe with young Bulgarians. They also had the chance to get closer to Bulgarian culture and lifestyle by interacting with local young people. The programme of the event was divided into three parts and included various discussions on topics concerning the youth and its role in the changing processes in Europe, sport activities and social events. The discussions were held

at the National Student House and gave local young people, members of other Bulgarian non-governmental organisations, to interact with local decision makers, members of Sofia municipality and representatives from AEGEE-Europe and Association des Amis de Frank Biancheri.

The results of the event were quite impressive. Although the ratio between Bulgarian and international participants was in favor of the host country, all of the discussions were productive. During the World Café, where the participants were asked to interact with local people in the city centre, many ideas were generated. In order to promote the great significance of health a football competition was organised. Four teams from different organisations had a contested tournament and even the rain could not stop them to show the importance of active lifestyle among young people. The culmination of the event, of course, was the streaming. It was a great symbiosis between the two thematical parts, where the activities during the event were presented to the other antennae and then a celebration of the 30th anniversary of AEGEE was held. Every single participant had the chance to share his/her impressions from the discussions and the outdoor activities with local people, where they have already shared good practices. The final findings and conclusions will be summarised in a booklet to be distribute to the Network.

Tsvetislava Staykova

AEGEE-Sofia

BERGAMO - BUILDING EUROPEAN CONSCIOUSNESS

To be a part of a youth organisation means that you cannot be an active member in every important step that it is going to make through the years. We, the current generation of AEGEE-Bergamo, were here working as much as we can, for the good of AEGEE, while it was turning 30.

We decided that we should do something big to celebrate AEGEE and the Night of the Seven Antennae seemed to be the best way to do it. We did it. We did it because it was useful for the new members in order



to understand the organization they are in because we wanted to bring more Europe into our city and to be one of the main actors of the AEGEE's 30th anniversary celebration.

We hosted 30 participants from all over Europe and nearly 10 guests from professors, politicians, honorary members, youth workers and entrepreneurs. Being a venue of the AEGEE history celebration helps you to reflect about the past, about what you have achieved as

an association and what more you can do. We followed conferences about Old Europe, New Europe, Europe Needs Youth and Mobility Programs shaping European identity. We participated in workshops about the history of AEGEE's projects and the life and legacy of Franck Biancheri.

During the conferences we were able to discuss our achievements so far and what more we can achieve as young Europeans. We talked about the pivotal role the youth has in creating a better and more equal Europe. We learned about the advantages of being able to move in a general visa free continent as young people in 2015. Listening to Georgeta from the Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri who talked about what our founder did and created made us even more proud of him as well as more part of AEGEE. Listening to Silvia Baita (former President and Honorary Member of AEGEE-Europe) who introduced all the projects that made AEGEE such a successful and impactful organization pushed us to do more in our organization.

We want to share a Silvia Baita's quote, because it was very impressive and enlightening "AEGEE people are the European army". If we deeply understand what we can do, what we can achieve and what is the impact we have on people and societies, we can be sure that we will be happy and proud to participate -as former members - at the AEGEE's 40th anniversary celebration. It's just a choice: do we dare to be creative, revolutionary, innovative and inclusive or traditional, institutional, exclusive and supportive to the status quo? It is our choice.

AEGEE-Bergamo



BLOW THE CANDLES AND MAKE A WISH FOR 2025!

We celebrate birthdays to celebrate our existence and to recall our past – to fill up with pride for the achievements and milestones, and to acknowledge the hard times. However, an anniversary is also an opportunity to reflect upon the future and to make our personal resolutions. While Europe is changing at a fast pace, the participants of the 30th Anniversary conference in Brussels embarked on the challenge of anticipating the main wishes for the next 10 years of AEGEE, collected in time capsules for 2025.

“Reflecting on where to go means reflecting on where we come from. Throughout the conference, the participants got acquainted with how the vision, the means, the identity and the outreach has changed: ranging from its enlargement to the East, its role in lobbying towards the European institutions and its intercultural dimension.”

Time to make a wish (or many)... The 60 participants, some of them coming from older generations, wrote their own resolutions. Many of them wished to break down language barriers and embrace multilingualism again, as well as to keep pushing for ‘grassroots’ advocacy and involve AEGEE members and locals in the political agenda. Some wished to



strengthen the external visibility and recognition of AEGEE. Many envisioned AEGEE-Europe turning 40 in a visa-free Europe where non-formal education is at last recognised.

They said that if you speak your wishes loud, they will not come true. However, a strong motivation and involvement from members and a dose of AEGEE spirit can make these dreams come true!

Anna Gumbau

Communications Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

AEGEE AND ITS ROLE DURING BALKAN

The Balkans have always been the war zone of Europe and a focal point of peace efforts, referred to in talks about the importance of mutual understanding. The wars and crimes still cast a big shadow on the European integration efforts. Certainly, the centuries-long mixture of European and Islamic cultures brought about multiculturalism and ethnical differences.

Luckily, most of the people from the Balkan did not agree with the splintering of the territory, often by means of violence, and took active part in the peace-building process. AEGEE also contributed by supporting the local antennae started by open-minded people and spreading cultural understanding and recognition – which is considered the foremost step towards a long-term relationship.

MISUSED RELIGION

Some of the main causes of the Balkan Wars were religious and ethnical discrepancies. In central Europe, including Slovakia, the perception of the Islam is biased due to the legends and stories from the times when the country suffered from the Turkish raids. Poets and authors, often belonging to Catholic intelligence, depicted Ottomans as faithless and rude conquerors.

On the other hand, Southern Europe perceives the Islam differently. It was a part of the Ottoman Empire for centuries and the heritage is deeply etched in the society. This is visible on the market places in Sarajevo, where people of different religions seek shelter from the sun in the shadows of mosques and churches. This also brings about stronger identification with the faith but also the danger of unnoticed radicalism.

“Religion and nationalism have been misused in the region as a reason for war mongering and, ultimately, wars,” says Vladimir Radunović, former member of AEGEE-Beograd. According to him, it was caused by suppression of national and religious feelings during communism as well as misuse of influence by the autocrats. Many people still do not understand the issues of religion and nationalism, which should develop towards help and support, instead of hate. “I think AEGEE successfully managed to build up a good and

positive mindset though exchanges and meeting other people”, says Vladimir.

COMMON HISTORY

Balkan countries have common history, their languages are similar and they share the same habits and dishes. People also still remember the complicated periods of their relationships. The different rules and regimes created a mix of minorities and majorities, and it all came to a climax after the death of Tito – the leader of the Republic of Yugoslavia. As with the freeholder in the absence of a king, the tension grew into conflicts that became known as the War in Yugoslavia.

“Balkan countries have common history, their languages are similar and they share the same habits and dishes”

In the 1990s AEGEE also opened up for Central and Eastern Europe. AEGEE-Ljubljana was founded in 1990 and AEGEE-Zagreb in 1991. The situation was more complicated in Bosnia, where a group of French students organized themselves in order to help their peers who were immersed in the war that broke out in 1992. They held lectures to inform the people and in April 1994, they got the support of AEGEE-Europe, as we learn from the white paper on AEGEE’s involvement in the turmoil (“AEGEE in Southeast Europe, an overview”) by John. M. Stienen.

“I joined AEGEE-Beograd in 1997, when the tension in Kosovo was rising, and when the wounds of the wars in other republics were still fresh,” said Vladimir. “Never-

IN PEACE-BUILDING WARS

theless, regional friendships never seem to have broken, on the contrary - in various AEGEE events across Europe the members of the antennae from ex-Yugoslavia (well, most of us) kept spending time together, singing and laughing," he remembered.

However, the AEGEE network did not manage to provide sufficient framework in the long-distance relationship. Activities were transferred to the locals. The antennae in former Yugoslavia organized the Case Study Trip Former Yugoslavia II, progressing through Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Macedonia. As Vladimir said: "Many of the European students that had a chance to visit the Balkans in these years have then fallen in love with the region, and kept coming back in the following years; some even decided to move here!" It also fuelled a pen pal project.

AEGEE SUPPORTS PROTESTS

The second edition of the trip took place in 1999, followed by the NATO bombing of Kosovo, which

interrupted the activities, reducing the ties into cooperation in formal education. Partnership with German and Dutch universities enabled 14 talented students from Serbia and Kosovo to study at European universities. After the Dayton Peace in 1995, Europe lifted the embargo on cultural exchange and students from Belgrade and Novi Sad could visit the AEGEE antenna in Eindhoven. However, they were facing financial difficulties with covering the trips.

In 1996, students joined the protests against the president Slobodan Milosevic, who refused to accept the results of the municipal election in Serbia and Monte Negro. Independent radio stations B-92 and Indeks gained international recognition for their reporting on the events. AEGEE enabled them to present themselves at a conference "Find Your Way" in December 1996 in Budapest, dealing with the democratisation of Eastern Europe. In 1997 the stations received the first AEGEE Award for the independent coverage of the events in Belgrade, handed over in Aachen, Germany.



In March 1998, AEGEE-Novi Sad organized a conference that dealt with the situation of national minorities in former Yugoslavia and the "Bridges to Kosovo" project. Despite the NATO bombing, a round table in Ljubljana was organized in order to find AEGEE's role in calming down the conflict.

STILL FAR FROM EUROPE

Vladimir adds that locals still have fresh memories – negative but also positive bits – about the war. "Most of them (again most, not all) have a common understanding that the war should not have happened, that we share the same culture and values and we should have stayed together - not necessarily in a single state, Yugoslavia, but in a friendly and partner relationship

“AEGEE certainly managed to open the eyes of many young people, to accept and praise differences, cooperation, mutual understanding, and to fight prejudice and hate.”

between states.” Many of them are still active in political and social life. “These days many of them, however, are becoming increasingly resentful with the role the European Union and EU countries have played in the years of wars,” Vladimir confirmed.

“AEGEE certainly managed to open the eyes of many young people on the key European values - to accept and praise differences, cooperation, mutual understanding, and to fight prejudice and hate,” declared Vladimir. He and many former AEGEEans still support these values that should, in his opinion, be prioritized to economy and political interests. However, the behaviour of the EU in the recent years alienates the people from joining the Union.

At the moment the people pick up the battle but there is a wave of scepticism in Vladimir's words for the long-term. “The thing that still keeps most of the pro-EU youth on the EU direction is only the belief in these values and that these values could be installed in our region as well, without a need for all of them (the young ones) to flee out to European countries searching for jobs, a system and life in which individual rights are the top priority; they still see EU as a possible guarantee for this, but their beliefs seem to be fading.”

Communism, he says, protected the public interest, and everyone had a job. Nowadays, there is a greater diversity of jobs and yet many people cannot find placement, which is also experienced by many AEGEEans. “A reformed society would enable for the benefits of the free market to be reaped, while drawbacks could be controlled; this region is, however, still far from reaching such a system (well, even European countries are, it seems),” he closes.

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Erik Redli

AEGEE-Bratislava

A LOOK INTO THE PAST

Former presidents of AEGEE-Europe Dorian Selz and Silvia Baita look back

One of the main themes of this year is for sure the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of AEGEE; several projects and events were organised in order to (re)value what we did and to remember our achievements. Just a few of the present members were already in the association to celebrate the 10th and the 20th anniversary, but Dorian Selz and Silvia Baita were there by that time.

Then again, this year's anniversary represents a good occasion to look back at their years spent in AEGEE and to ask them what is the direction we should take.

Now husband, father and internet entrepreneur, Dorian Selz, at that time member of AEGEE-Genève, was the President of AEGEE-Europe in 1994. He took



part in the 10th anniversary of AEGEE and the best memories of his term as a president were the anniversary events across Europe: "I remember events from Budapest to Aachen, to Groningen. Right across Europe young folks joined to celebrate 10 years of an unique experiment: building bridges across Europe without political, religious, ideological references", says Dorian.



Silvia Baita from AEGEE-Cagliari, now Events manager, was the president of AEGEE-Europe in 2005, in the year of its 20th celebration. Her year in the Comité Directeur was intense and she "grew up and got more mature", she continues. "My best memories in those years were our CD

meetings and the moment I wrote the Network status update speech the night before the Agora until three in the morning".

For both of them, their year as Presidents of the association, was not without any issues or problems. "There was no EasyJet, no RyanAir, no Meinbus or similar (except Alsa in Spain), but we used Interrail. There was internet, but most of us still did not have any email addresses, so the connection was established by phone at 1€ per minute rates. That's why we used letters (by post, yes). Technical communication and transport were

different, but the interactions between AEGEE members were the same as today: open, honest, curious, enriching, lasting", says Dorian.

As it happens nowadays, the happenings within the association were closely linked to the political ones. In 2005, in her presidential year, Silvia faced "the Orange revolution in Ukraine and the death of Pope John Paul II. But, we were also founding the first local in Greek Cyprus and we were striving for the European Union constitutional treat with Turkey's accession to EU". In Dorian's year "the challenges we faced were different comparing to the ones you face today, yet very similar. It was and it still is a continent in a decade, maybe a century-long struggle, to find its best form of coexistence. AEGEE contributed to this journey through its initiatives, such as the Via Egnatia, all the way from Athens to Istanbul at a time when these two countries were openly hostile to each other".

Giving a thought about what is the direction that AEGEE should take, Silvia affirms that we should go back to our roots: "Instead of trying to solve issues which are beyond our power, honestly, we should keep on doing what brought us to the top that is Fostering European Integration, trying to convince as many people as possible that a Europe of values is both possible and a must". Simple is better also for Dorian who thinks that the association should "focus on a few core issues where AEGEE really can make a difference such as education. For the rest, let the organisation flourish and test out new things".

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Erika Bettin

AEGEE-Verona

THE CHARLEMAGNE YOUTH PRIZE AND AEGEE

Charlemagne Youth Prize rewards the projects of young Europeans that promote Europeanism, education and overcoming cultural barriers. It is awarded every year in May in Aachen, alongside the Charlemagne Prize for an important European personality.

The prize is named after Charles the Great – Charlemagne, the king of Franks and the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The event is sponsored by the European Parliament and it should encourage and support the activity of youth – the future of Europe.

“AEGEE projects won the Charlemagne Youth Prize twice in the last 6 years, which proves that the members are active and interested in their future.”

Charles the Great - Charlemagne - is considered to be the first amongst the fathers of modern Europe. He became the first Holy Roman Emperor in 800 and managed to control most of medieval Europe. In the aftermath of World War II,

the founding fathers of the European Union decided to follow the ideal of United Europe and also celebrate its personalities. Therefore they started the prize ceremony, named after Charlemagne.

In the 50's, the prize was taken by the founding fathers of Europe. Later the laureates included personalities from the whole world, such as American president Bill Clinton, British Tony Blair; however in the early 90's it involved the people from behind the iron curtain (beating the communism is considered one of the biggest achievements of Europe), Václav Havel, the former president of the Czech Republic, and Pope John Paul II.

The 2015 laureate is Martin Schulz, and last year the prize went to Herman van Rompuy. In his speech, he said that we should not take it for granted. Instead, we

should actively pursue the improvement on our behalf, but also on the behalf of the whole community. These words capture the essence of the Charlemagne Youth Prize with dignity and justness.

This pursuit of improvement also actively engages the young people and in order to motivate them, the Charlemagne Youth Prize was started in 2008. Since, over 370 projects have enrolled in, many of them focusing on topical issues. The ceremony is attended by representatives from the European Parliament and the mayor of Aachen, whose speeches address the young Europeans without borders. To move one, we have to do away with stereotypes and encourage intercultural dialogue. Many projects focus on this and similar topical issues, such as youth unemployment, education and Europeanism.

The winner of the 2015 edition was a Twitter project from Luxembourg @RealTimeWW1. The prize confirmed its timelessness and orientation towards the world of the youth. Online platforms are the future of spreading information. Project like this can help to bring back some trustworthiness to education and reporting that suffers on the open access of web 3.0.

The second place went to Fronterras-European (border) line project, which narrates the tale from outside the borders of Europe. The third place was shared by three projects: Austrian Social Soccer Club, Entrepreneurship - the Solution against Unemployment from Cyprus and Spain - Infoactualidad.

AEGEE projects won the Charlemagne Youth Prize twice in the last 6 years, which proves that the members are active and interested in their future. Y Vote - a Europe-wide campaign that informed the young people about the importance of the European Parliament elections - ended on the first place in 2009. More recently, Europe on Track, won the first place in 2013.



“The main idea behind the project was to create a bidirectional communication channel between young people and the European institutions.” Réka Salamon, Vice-President & Projects Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016 - Europe on Track project manager. It aimed to introduce the young people to the 2020 Strategy of the European Commission.

Groups of volunteer travellers visited European cities and discussed youth mobility, unemployment, sustain-

ability and other topics that are important for the future of Europe with the young people.

The project found that the young people in general care and want to work for a better Europe. “They have high aspirations and passion but they feel like their voice is often not heard by the institutions. The complexity of the EU institutions makes it hard for them to understand how and where they can contribute and this is something that needs to be improved in the near future. The active citizens of tomorrow should be more encouraged by the decision-makers.” Réka closed.

Charles the Great, fountain at the Markt Platz, in Aachen reminds us of the father of Europe. Although modern Europe is different to the medieval establishment, his message of unity and integration is carried across the generations. Staged by the ceremony taking place in the historical centre of Aachen – where 29 kings were crowned, we hope that the legacy of the great man will outlive in these – by many experts described as critical – times for Europe.

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Erik Redli

AEGEE-Bratislava

WHEN LOCALS CELEBRATE THEIR ANNIVERSARY

Almost 200 birthday cakes

Most of the antennae have already organised magnificent events for the 30th anniversary of AEGEE where they shared the joy with their friends. But besides the general AEGEE celebration, antennae also celebrated their own anniversaries. "Flying" around Europe, let's take a look at the map of AEGEE and some events that were remarkable.

The first local we take a look at is located in the Netherlands: AEGEE-Eindhoven. Luc van den Elzen, the main organiser of the event, told Key to Europe about the big light art festival and the marvellous atmosphere their participants could enjoy: "We started our 25th anniversary year with a celebration weekend. It was an (unofficial) AEGEE event for approximately 40 AEGEE members from all over Europe. The theme for our anniversary year was Into the Light, since Eindhoven is the city of lights in the Netherlands", says Luc.

"The programme started with a tour at "Glow", a big light art festival that took place all over the city center of Eindhoven, followed by a sort of mini-European Night. The second night was the big anniversary party. The last day, we played some special Dutch games. Among the participants were people from Prague, Wiesbaden-Mainz, Aachen and Bratislava. We were really happy that they came to celebrate our anniversary together with us!".

“Undoubtedly, every year is different, full of new meetings, events, achievements and successes for each AEGEE antenna.”

Now, imagine a spacious university room with a big "Happy Birthday" banner, music, laughter and amazing, delicious food. Damien Latacz, President of AEGEE-Aachen, told us about their anniversary that had a special birthday menu and a real AEGEE spirit: "In Germany we eat a lot of potatoes and drink a lot of beer, so we tried to make a menu using these ingredients. We had Pierogi ruskie (dumplings filled with potatoes and cheese); carbonnade, which is a specialty from the northern part of France; a beef stew made with beer and gingerbread, served with spätzle and red cabbage for the German touch and, finally, pear and gingerbread rolls. Our birthday cake was made by ourselves and with a lot of candles on it", says Damien. For AEGEE-Aachen, it was the first time they organised such a celebration followed by their constitutional drink the next day for a true celebration weekend.

Now, let's move closer to the East of Europe. Anna Pykhtina, President of AEGEE-Kyiv, shared her story about their bright celebration of the anniversary, which was full of amazing moments: "2015 is a special year for AEGEE-Kyiv. Apart from hosting the Autumn Agora and the Night of the Seven Antennae, we also turned 20! The celebration was not a usual party, but a three-day event for which we invited the whole network. Together



with our participants, we had an amazing event where everyone could party, socialize and have fun”, says Anna.

The main party started with the AEGEE-crossword contest, where two teams had to guess famous words, then the memories of the first five boards of AEGEE-Kyiv were presented by sharing their memories about their first Summer Universities and Agorae, and at the end of all, there was a lovely speech. On the top of all these, the guests were offered cake, champagne and then the party started!

The fourth local that captured our attention is AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca. The President, Raluca Radu, admitted that her antenna likes organising great events and doing crazy things together with good friends: “This year we celebrated our 24th anniversary. Pretty much every year, we vote for the new board members, and at the same time we celebrate the anniversary of our antenna. We couldn’t do it differently this year. The celebration began in our office, which we tried to make it as cosy as we could, so we decorated it with balloons, pictures from our events, and some cute messages that we kept from our former participants”, says Raluca.

The dress code was very unique: every participant had to dress in order to show their AEGEE spirit. Another tradition of the Romanian antenna is the cake: “We like to pretend that when we are cutting the first slice of the cake, we are cutting a wedding cake, so it is not only one person who cuts it, but both the newly elected President and the former one”, Raluca continues.

AEGEE-Passau is the fifth local whose celebration was one of the most noteworthy. “The celebrations of our anniversary took place between the 12th and 14th of June. On Friday we started with our annual

Riverboat Party on the Danube. The theme of this year’s birthday party was the 90s Boat”, says the previous PR Responsible, Verena Meier. Around 100 people gathered in a theatre in Passau to celebrate the 25th anniversary, among them, former and current members, members of twin antenna AEGEE-Delft, as well as members of AEGEE-Bamberg, with the founder Marco Kalbusch giving a moving speech. On Sunday, the local organised a lunch for their alumni, to give them the chance to stroll down the memory lane and also to get them to know each other a little bit better.



Undoubtedly, every year is different, full of new meetings, events, achievements and successes for each AEGEE antenna. However, this year combined all of the aforementioned with double celebrations. Happy 30th Anniversary, AEGEE!

Anna Saveleva

AEGEE-Moskva

THE KEY: MAKING THE HISTORY

The story of Key to Europe dates 22 years back, and despite the different looks, it has stayed the same at its core: an annual review, which gives an overview on AEGEE, its structure, network, projects and main events of the past year.

The first edition, made in the spring of 1993, was actually planned as a one-shot. However, as it was very successful, it became an annual publication. A few things have changed over the years. The first edition had only 36 pages, but this number has tripled recently. Initially, the Key to Europe was black and white. This lasted for more than ten years, but now it is a truly colourful review of the association in every sense.

The work on the early editions was a bit harder than today. I was the Editor-in-Chief of five Key to Europe between 1996 and 2005 and I still remember the technical obstacles of the first years. I received the photos usually by postal service in envelopes. Most of them were of extremely poor quality – and many of

them featured the smiling antenna president or board instead of giving an overview of the event I asked for. Hardly anyone sent scanned photos and in the rare occasions that they did, the quality was still poor. Today one can search among hundreds of great photos on Facebook or Instagram and ask the photographer to send high resolution data.

Nearly everyone had an e-mail account when I made my first Key to Europe in 1996. My predecessor, Roman Noack (AEGEE-Mainz/Wiesbaden), received all the articles by fax or by letter. We also got floppy disks with articles occasionally.

Another problem was to get the layout delivered to the printing house. In 1997, when our layout computer



with 30 Megabyte RAM was a true sensation, you could not send big data files over the internet. We finished the Key to Europe in the first Head Office in Brussels

“Making the Key to Europe is among the hardest tasks in AEGEE but it’s also one of the most rewarding.”

and had to take it to the printer in Warsaw urgently. Warsaw was the place of the Spring Presidents’ Meeting, where we wanted to distribute the publication. Express mail would have been late, so I had to bring the files by a night train. While the computer was slowly writing the printing file, a taxi was already waiting for me. I bought a ticket to

the Netherlands with my last Belgian francs, paid the connecting train with my last Dutch guilders and the next two trains in German marks. It cost me a lot of nerves, but all worked out well. Today you just send a PDF file, but the rush of the deadline approaching stays the same.

On the upside, for some people, making the publication was a career boost. On my second one, I worked with a Spanish philology student, who loved creating the layout so much, that she decided to change career and became a graphic designer. And this for sure was not the only instance.

Making the Key to Europe is among the hardest tasks in AEGEE but it’s also one of the most rewarding.

.....
Gunnar Erth

Honorary member of AEGEE-Europe





SUMMER UNIVERSITY: A STORY STARTED IN 1988

Summer Universities provide AEGEE members with an opportunity to travel around Europe and to try new experiences. It is not just a holiday on a budget, as many people outside AEGEE perceive it, but it is aimed at non-formal education, mainly getting familiar with various cultures and developing skills that overlap with the attributes of modern Europeans.

Summer Universities (or SUs) take place during summer (June - September) in cities where an AEGEE local is present. Often, two or more antennae decide to share resources and organise a Summer University together. It usually lasts up to 14 days and the participants are selected according to their motivation letters submitted in advance. They are announced the results of the selection project in May, which gives the future participants enough time to purchase the tickets to the destination of their choice. Transport is the only thing they have to pay for, the rest is included in the SU fee.

SUs are organised by the AEGEE locals, coordinated by the Summer University Coordination Team (SUCT), a committee usually elected during the Autumn Agorae. Being part of this team is a good opportunity for the

young people to get expertise in the quality of a Project Manager, Public Relations Responsible, Publications Responsible and Information Technology Responsible.

Summer University is not unique only to AEGEE. Many other organisations and institutions organise similar projects or camps, usually centred on a single issue. The level of

“Summer Universities provide AEGEE members with an opportunity to travel around Europe and try new experiences.”

professionalism might vary from compulsory workshops held by professionals, to active problem solving or non-formal cultural exchange.

Unlike the Erasmus project, also supported by AEGEE, which focuses mainly on institutional education, Summer Universities have a mainly non-formal approach. Soft skills and social connections are often the missing elements when young professionals join the working environment.

Some workshops are compulsory and must be included in each Summer University project, for example the AEGEE Introduction course that helps strengthen AEGEE's identity and educate members based on the three pillars of civic education: human rights, youth mobility and sustainability.

Other workshops are optional and depend on the purpose, capabilities and abilities of the organisers. Antennae often use their connection and local facilities. For example, AEGEE-Bergamo is known for its sports SU, where the participants get familiar with the basic skills of various sports. "The SU is about sport and we chose this topic because, for the city of Bergamo, sport is very important and we have a good connection with facilities and sport teams which can help us", said Lisa Gregis, president of AEGEE-Bergamo.

Many antennae incorporate their culture and history in the workshops, by using topics like cooking traditional dishes, languages, or folk dance. This was one of the aims of the "Survive the Slavic Sun" Summer University organised by AEGEE-Bratislava, AEGEE-Maribor and AEGEE-Zadar. "By the workshops of our national languages that have many common expressions, we wanted to point out the common cultural heritage of the Slavic nations", the organisers said. "Participants have a unique opportunity to experience the culture in authentic environments".

Non-Formal Education (NFE) represents also one of the ways of raising awareness about the European projects and helping to beat Euroscepticism. AEGEEans are usually open-minded people who see opportunities where others might see borders and obstacles. Education and communication are within the interest of maintaining the economical and geopolitical competitiveness of Europe.

The Summer University Project was initiated in 1988. During the first year, it was purely language education-oriented, offering courses in Catalan, Spanish, German, Italian, Dutch and French. Greek and computer



sciences were added one year later. Still, language workshops are part of the SU programs, although they are not entirely language-oriented.



Apart from NFE, Summer Universities also offer fun and relaxation. Every night there is a thematic party, where the participants socialise until the early morning hours. On the other hand, socialising can also contribute to NFE. We should not forget about the fact that during those two weeks, the participants live in a group of young people from different countries that bring different habits and stereotypes. It all reaches the summit at the European Night - the only event where the AEGEEans are divided according to their countries. The participants from each country present their own culture with typical food and drinks; additions such as, folk dance or a workshop on Italian gestures, are always welcome.

Summer University offers a good opportunity for the young people to improve their skills and potentially make the first steps towards Europe. Apart from the organisers who should choose the program accordingly, it also depends on the approach of each participant how much one takes from this opportunity.

Erik Redli
AEGEE-Bratislava

AEGEE IN GLOBAL DISCUSSIONS: A LONG ROAD TO WALK

In recent times mankind has witnessed a proliferation of global challenges that requires the world to unite and tackle them. Creating a feeling of worldwide collaboration among young people is becoming increasingly important. Since its birth in 1985, AEGEE has taken an active role in promoting young people's involvement in global discussions through working groups and projects.

The Beyond Europe project focused on strengthening intercultural dialogue with youth organisations from all over the world as well as on building a culturally diverse work environment. Through its activity, it helped with the establishment of cultural diversity - one of AEGEE's core values.

Beyond Europe consisted of four sub-projects. One of them was EuroArab. Beyond Europe ended its mission in 2011, but similarly oriented EuroArab continued working independently from 2012. It was primarily intended as a means to bring Arab and European students closer together by breaking down prejudices and to increase the cooperation between them.

AEGEE helps its members to gain the values and knowledge needed to take part in global discussions through its projects. A good example of this is AEGEE Election Observation. The existence of undemocratic political regimes poses a threat to peaceful intercultural dialogue and this is only one of the reasons why it is important for young people to learn more about democracy and the need to fight for it.

AEGEE Election Observation helps achieve this aim through election observation missions to countries with established democratic political regimes. It has also reinvigorated the democratic culture on which AEGEE was founded by the establishment of a structure for internal election observation in the organization.

According to Thomas Leszke, Project Manager of AEGEE Election Observation, the democratic systems in Europe are facing many problems. He said: "Democratic systems are under great pressure worldwide and face great difficulties fulfilling the promises of freedom, equality and justice that legitimate them. In Europe, where most countries can still rely on more or less

stable democratic configurations, it is very important that young people understand the value of democracy."

"The first enabling condition for participating in a discussion is to know what it is about. And AEGEE can help gaining this knowledge."

Youth participation in global discussions faces growing challenges in today's multicultural society. Political instability, cultural prejudices and lack of respect for human rights, among others, are obstacles to intercultural dialogue. "Any project dealing with topics of global relevance has the potential to increase AEGEE's participation in global discussions," continues Thomas. "AEGEE should provide its members with the opportunity to gain the knowledge needed to participate in global discussions from a practical rather than a theoretical perspective." Continuing to do so while cooperating with other youth organizations is a great beginning but there is still a long way to go that can only be walked in a team.

Kimberly Townend

AEGEE-Valencia

AEGEE AND ITS ROLE IN HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights is one of the most important priorities in the world, especially nowadays when discrepancy in treatment appears in different areas. Regardless of nationality, colour, place of residence, sex, ethnic origin, religion, language, etc., all human beings are equally entitled to human rights without discrimination.

Undoubtedly, human rights are (and have always been) extremely important for AEGEE. The Human Rights Working Group was initially founded in 1996, having the main goal of raising awareness upon human rights issues in Europe and uniting all AEGEE members who were interested in human rights and would like to discuss about related topics, share and develop their ideas and organise events on human rights issues. It was a great success, because since 1996 there were a lot of events organised, solutions found and plans embodied. Moreover, there were many ideas and aims for a safe and successful Europe and the whole world.

“Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.”

After a period of inactivity, the Working Group was reestablished in 2012, with the help of Maria Arends (AEGEE-Groningen/AEGEE-Tarragona), among others. Giving the fact that AEGEE takes an active part in the

“Regardless of nationality, colour, sex, ethnic origin, religion, language, etc., all human beings are equally entitled to human rights without discrimination.”

consideration, discussion and solution of European problems and discords, the group organised a lot of activities to raise awareness upon these problems. For example, in June 2013, they launched the “Light up a candle for Democracy in Turkey!” initiative, inviting all the members to light a candle standing up for democracy during the Turkish unrests. At Spring Agora Patra 2014, the Working Group adhered to the No Hate speech movement of the Council of Europe that promoted the idea of fighting against racism and discrimination online. Although the working group is not active anymore, human rights are still an important topic for AEGEE members and will remain like that also in the future.

Anna Saveleva

AEGEE-Moskva

EUROPE AND THE EURO

From the late '90s to 2015

The late 90s are often associated with an agitated economic situation in the European Union. The reason is clear -the introduction of a single currency in 11 countries was not an easy task. The creation of the European Monetary Union did not only bring a huge monetary change, it also had economic, political and social implications.

The establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union brought a need to raise awareness, to be informed and to discuss in order to understand its consequences. AEGEE was the only youth organization invited by the European Commission to participate in the Round Table on the Euro that took place in early 1996. The objective of this political event was to discuss the strategy that would inform citizens on the following change. The Comité Directeur at the time put forward an awareness campaign with youth as the main target, called Europe and Euro.

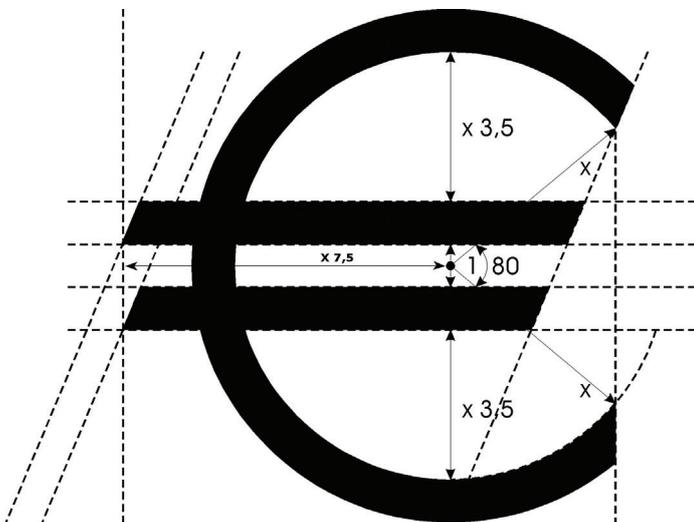
Several thematic conferences and seminars were organized in European cities -including Athens, Coimbra, Frankfurt and Lyon. In order to promote 'Europe and Euro' and its events, AEGEE used different means of communication, including internet. Back then using the cyberspace as a promotion ground was considered highly innovative.

Europe and Euro ended up being a great success. Approximately 2000 young people attended the conferences and seminars that were organized as part of the project, over 250 participated in an essay competition and more than 1,000 filled out questionnaires. According to the project manager Bart Neerscholten, "discussing how the change would happen and what consequences it would bring from various perspectives and with experts from many different backgrounds was a great experience for the young participants and a good way to get knowledgeable about such a crucial topic". Europe and Euro ended its mission in 1998, years before the implementation of the single currency, therefore all the discussions that took place during the project were based on hypothetical facts.

In regard to the challenges the European Monetary Union is currently facing, Mr. Neerscholten states that, "what has happened in the recent years in the Euro Zone, and is currently happening with Greece in particular, is a consequence of what some experts flagged as a potentially risky economic move. Introducing a single currency without a real political union, with relatively little fiscal coordination, few correction mechanisms and lack of genuine solidarity among member states would surely be difficult".

Kimberly Townsend

AEGEE-Valencia



Europe and Euro was based on the belief that young people had to be empowered in order to take part in the necessary promotion concerning the European Monetary Union. The project aimed to provide information, stating the positive and negative aspects of the change, and to start an open discussion among young people who would ultimately act as multipliers and spread the information they had received.

Y VOTE PROJECTS: A LEAGUE OF YOUNG VOTERS

AEGEE encourages youth development in a wide range of diverse spheres with its Working Groups, projects, events, etc. One of the most important goals of the association is to raise awareness upon the political situation, in order to push youngsters to have an active role in society. AEGEE is convinced that nowadays young people are not aware enough of the impact of the European Union on their daily lives and there is clearly a lack of interest of youth towards traditional decision-making processes. In this framework, the YVote project was established.

In 2008, members of AEGEE-Europe organised the first edition of the YVote project in order to raise awareness and to increase the youth's participation in the European elections. The first edition consisted in a series of nationwide actions, such as street actions and conventions taking place from October 2008 to June 2009. The first edition was a huge success and it was the national winner of the European Charlemagne youth prize.

“AEGEE is convinced that nowadays young people are not aware enough of the impact of the European Union on their daily lives.”

A second cycle of the project was established for the European elections of 2014, with Léa Charlet (AEGEE-Paris), as Project Manager. The reason to start a second edition of the

project was because the voter turnout among young people was dramatically low, with 75% of them not taking part in the European Parliament elections in 2009. In fact, as it was indicated on the project's website: “The development of this project regarding the European elections 2014 starts with a need: we believe that young people need to receive better information regarding the European elections, as well as different European institutions and the European Union, in general. Currently,



Europe is mentioned more than ever because of the crisis affecting many member states and the way the European Union is dealing with it. This information is often biased and unclear”.

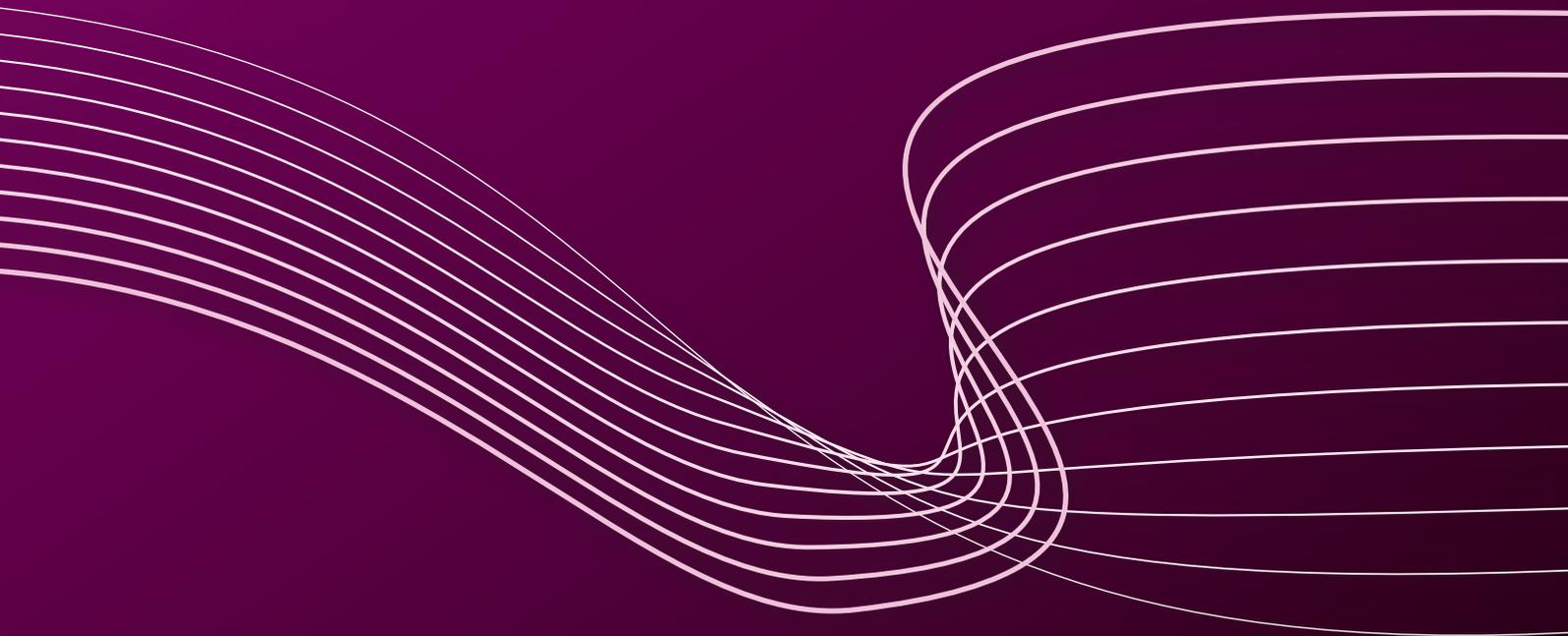
The project consisted, again, of many different parts, including youth conventions, bus tours in Spain and the United Kingdom, training events and local activities throughout Europe. Moreover, there is a special Voting Guide for young people, available online.

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Anna Saveleva

AEGEE-Moskva

FACES OF THE NETWORK

Behind an organisation such as AEGEE, there are people who believe in the vision and the mission of the association. These people devote time and energy to work in several layers, from the Comité Directeur to Les Anciens via members and locals. In fact, the members represent the true and real engine of AEGEE, because with their dreams, hopes, efforts and ideals they contribute to the realisation of events and projects every year. These members and locals are definitely the faces of our Network.





COMITÉ DIRECTEUR 2014-2015: A YEAR TO REMEMBER

I am always fascinated by the way memory works. Some moments are easily remembered because they represent milestones in your life. It is easy to recall your birthday celebrations, your first day in school, or your graduation ceremony, but what is more interesting is how sometimes moments that are seemingly ordinary remain vivid in your memory. Looking back, I realize that my year in Comité Directeur is full of such moments. Even the ordinary working days were exciting in their own way, as my team and I had the opportunity to see the organisation progress and to be a part of its progress.

Although AEGEE has matured in its 30 years of existence due to the hard work of our predecessors, there is always room for further development, which is precisely what we saw this year. We started several exciting projects, such as EUth and MY-WAY, which enabled us not only to work on interesting topics, but also to expand our secretariat with two new staff members. We increased our presence and contribution in a variety of platforms and continued good cooperation with our partners and supporters, as well as an active dialogue with policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders.

Our members have shown a proactive attitude by initiating discussions, both online and offline, on many different topics, such as Europe-Russia relations, the future of European integration, gender equality, and student protests. We witnessed an overall increase in participation and engagement of members in different European issues and the internal work of the organisation. Throughout the year, they were starting creative initiatives, questioning the status quo and debating interesting solutions to challenges Europe is facing.

Numerous structural improvements were also a highlight. We saw more coherence in the implementation of our strategic priorities, an improved system of

trainings, an improved structure of our thematic and policy work and developments in IT structure, financial management, and statutory events.

2015 will be a year to remember for AEGEE: we celebrated our 30th anniversary, with activities taking place across Europe. It was an occasion to reflect on many achievements of the organisation throughout its existence, as well as a boost to the current generation of AEGEEans to keep shaping Europe into the place we want it to be.

As Comité Directeur, however, we will remember this year not only for the big moments and milestones, but also for the little, seemingly ordinary moments: seeing new members get excited about AEGEE, reading discussions on the Forum or working late nights in the office. Each day was a part of an unforgettable experience. It is hard to believe this experience has come to an end, but we leave knowing AEGEE is in good hands, with members as innovative and driven

“Each day was a part of an unforgettable experience. It is hard to believe this experience has come to an end, but we leave knowing AEGEE is in good hands.”

as our previous generations. To all of them, we have to say thank you for being on this journey with us. Keep dreaming big and keep making history.

Yours,
Comité Directeur 2014-2015

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Antonija Parat

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2014-2015

COMITÉ DIRECTEUR 2014-2015

Paul L. Smits	AEGEE-Enschede	President
Antonija Parat	AEGEE-Zadar	Secretary General
Ioana Duca	AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca	Financial Director
Aleksandra Kluczka	AEGEE-Kraków	Vice President and External Relations Director
Holger Schmitt	AEGEE-Berlin	Network Director
Mayri Tiido	AEGEE-Tartu	Projects and Communications Director
Ivan Bielik	AEGEE-Brno	Human Resources Director

EMPLOYEES

Madalena Sousa	Policy and Advocacy Coordinator
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ASSISTANTS

Anna Gumbau	AEGEE-Barcelona	AEGEE 30th Anniversary Event Coordinator
Fabrizio Bellicano	AEGEE-Genova	Lead Developer and Headoffice IT Assistant
Ander Guerrero Ruiz	AEGEE-Zaragoza	Corporate Relations Officer

MEMBERS OF THE MONTH

Every month, *The AEGEEan* - AEGEE's online magazine, elects a Member of the Month, rewarding them for the work they did for AEGEE. Based on input from the Network and AEGEE Bodies, the editorial team choose, with difficulty, the member that did an outstanding job in contributing to the work of the association.

MATTIA ABIS

AEGEE-Cagliari, Member of the Month of August 2014

AEGEE changed my life in many different ways. It allowed me to discover and explore Europe and my own country from an innovative point of view, it changed me into a more open-minded and easy-going person, open to dialogue and to different opinions. When I joined the organisation, I was just a guy coming from Europe's outskirts who could never imagine to be active in a youth organisation, work in an intercultural environment with people from all over Europe, accept more and more responsibilities. It has definitely made me more self-confident and optimistic than I was before, able to accept a challenge and achieve a goal, able to understand when I have to take a choice that is not the easiest one. I definitely think what I learned in AEGEE will be fruitful during the next years!



ARSENIS TSELENGIDIS

AEGEE-Thessaloniki, Member of the Month of September 2014



Thirty years of AEGEE seem to be a short time, compared to how many opportunities and friendships this NGO has created and offered to the European youth. I consider myself lucky for having the opportunity to be a member of this organization

and be able to contribute with my work at local and European level.

Being part of the different "life-journeys" that AEGEE offers is not always easy or funny. That's why at times you need something to boost you up, to motivate you. For me the most inspiring thing of being part of AEGEE were the members, their energy and commitment that are the main components of empowering your efforts for a 24/7 involvement with the European Students' Forum. AEGEE is its members and their inspiration for creating a better, more fair and sustainable world. The present belongs to them!

SABINA GUJA

AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca, Member of the Month of October 2014

AEGEE opened my eyes to the cultures of Europe. The events I took part in and the people I met, they all helped me better understand who we are and where do we come from. As to where we are going, that remains to be seen. Beside just knowledge, AEGEE also allowed me to take part in projects that fitted my interests and meet like-minded people, with whom I managed to build strong connections. My only regret is that I didn't discover AEGEE earlier.



ANNA PYKHTINA

AEGEE-Kyiv, Member of the Month of November 2015

For me the most inspiring part is discovering: AEGEE is a perfect possibility to discover new places, to discover how different and similar are the attitude towards life of the people from other countries and, what's most important, discovering what you really are when you are going through all the roles you can cover in this association: from participant to organizer, from project manager to traveler!



PABLO HERNÁNDEZ RODRIGUEZ

AEGEE-Alicante / AEGEE-Thessaloniki, Member of the Month of January 2015

AEGEE has many sides and I can hardly pick one special. My motivation comes from the empowerment that this association gives me, from the amazing people that I have



met and I have the opportunity to work with, from the cool projects that we are running, and many more places.

I believe that we can achieve something if all of us make a small effort in the same direction. In this sense, maybe the most inspiring thing to be part of AEGEE is that we can really make a change and we can actually change the reality in the way we envision it.

The current focus of AEGEE in mobility, employment, eurooptimism and civic education shows that we are ready to take an important role in shaping Europe and be active agents of improvement.

SVENJA VAN DER TOL

AEGEE-Nijmegen, Member of the Month of December 2014

I'd like to quote a description I heard before that I think suits my personal feeling about AEGEE quite well: "AEGEE is a playground." For me, AEGEE, just like a playground, is the place



where I discovered new things (and the world), acquired new skills and met new people. Thanks to AEGEE, I did things I would have never imagined myself doing before. This time, I do not mean sliding down from the highest glide in the playground, but presenting in front of 800 people, moving to Brussels or creating a magazine from scratch. Thanks to AEGEE, I saw many new places in Europe and met a lot of people I like to call my friends on the way. I discovered not only the world, but also myself. AEGEE is a lot of special things, but most of all it's the playground that I love going to.

RUBEN NAVARRO

AEGEE-Tarragona, Member of the Month of February 2015

I am really happy with the work AEGEE-Tarragona and I did last year within the Erasmus Team, during the time I was in charge of it. We managed to organise four trips to other Spanish cities for more than 50 people each and we had local activities almost every week. With these activities we reached more than 350 people. This might not be much for other antennae, but taking into consideration that we were only seven people and all of us were working, studying or both, I think it's quite impressive. All the international students were really happy and some of them are even coming back this year just for our activities.



MAARTEN DE GROOT

AEGEE-Amsterdam, Member of the Month of March 2015

What do you do when you are seated in an airplane from 6 to 8 a.m., flying from Rome to Amsterdam, having had an average of 4 hours of sleep over the previous six nights? Normally, I would say, I would have slept just like the rest of the passengers. Yet, I did not sleep. In fact, I felt more awake and more sharp-minded, than ever before, as if I had used some kind of fancy

hard substance. That was not the case.

What was the case, however, is that I had just attended my first European event in AEGEE – Autumn Agora Cagliari 2015. Agora and the following AEGEE

events that I attended made me realize that the simple fact of bringing together so many people, from so many different backgrounds can create a sense of inspiration, empowerment and determination that no theory, however ingeniously constructed, can equal. I cannot yet fully predict the impact that these experiences (will continue to) have on my life, but the impact will be lasting and substantial – no doubt.



DAMIEN LATA CZ

AEGEE-Aachen, Member of the Month of April 2015

When I moved from France to Germany, I knew I was going to face a new culture, new languages, new people. It was difficult at first, but then I started to like it. After a few months, I was looking for something to do besides my studies and I found it in AEGEE. Getting the possibility to organise events, to broaden your view on the world and to meet people directly, all of these you can experience in AEGEE. This kind of opportunity is something I was always looking for.

AEGEE now allows me to go further, to travel all around Europe, to meet new people and to share opinions. It didn't change much in my life, but it improved the good sides, making them even better, giving me new opportunities. That is how AEGEE really affected my life: I had dreams, passions which I tried to fulfil and AEGEE gave me a mean and a boost in motivation to actually do it.



LISA GREGIS

AEGEE-Bergamo, Member of the Month of May 2015

AEGEE has been a playground for me. I met a lot of friends and I met a different myself. It has broadened my mind and it has given me the courage to set myself a challenge, to develop new ideas and life paths.

When I think about AEGEE, naturally I think about the people and the time they spend on their projects and on doing something what they believe in because AEGEE people are the ones who keep the flame alive. AEGEE gave me a new perspective about Europe and a deep sense of belonging somewhere. Thanks to AEGEE, I saw how democracy can work at its best and it has helped me to see how young people can strive for a better place to live for everybody - no one excluded. AEGEE is a place where magic happened and it could continue.



LOCALS OF THE MONTH

Every month, The AEGEEan - AEGEE's online magazine, elects a Local of the Month rewarding locals that stood out with some remarkable activities. A new prize was established in collaboration with the Action Agenda Committee: the ACTIVE Local of the Month. The recipients of this award are the locals which distinguished themselves from the others, by doing a remarkable activity in applying the Action Agenda.

AEGEE-NIJMEGEN

Local of the month of August 2014

Your social life has probably exploded within and beyond the borders of your city or country since you became a member of AEGEE, within and beyond the borders of your city or country. More than half of your Facebook wall is now filled with updates in foreign languages, you may never have to book a hotel or hostel again in an European city, as you'll always have someone to stay at. You have a wishlist of countries to visit, just to hang out with your friends without borders. Your friends at home drop their jaws as you tell them how you traveled to Cagliari, Gijón, Gdańsk, attended the Night of the Seven Antennae and a Network Meeting just in this single year. Your social environment has probably changed, but it's certainly for the better. You've made new friends, and they are here to stay. This is what AEGEE means to us, see you somewhere in Europe (or in Nijmegen).



AEGEE-BRNO

Local of the Month September 2014



Traditionally, AEGEE-Brno is organizing a SU, but also other activities. During the year, we are doing regular meetings, but also informal meetings

for our active and new members. We are always enjoying our LTCs (Local Training Courses), birthday parties and visits of other antennae. We have also decided to resume with Czechoslovak weekends on November, where we can exchange our knowledge with AEGEE-Prague, AEGEE-Pilsen and AEGEE-Bratislava.

AEGEE-BARCELONA

Local of the Month of October 2014

We are very happy with the activities and events that we have organized during this year, and the goals that we have reached. For example we prepared Agoraphobia, the pre-event for Autumn Agora Zaragoza, with lot of success. Also we have done our usual Travel Summer University, in this case with AEGEE-Valladolid. In order to put an end to a great year, we wanted to organize a serious and formal event as Fundraising European School. But AEGEE-Barcelona doesn't focus only on organizing events! We work everyday to maintain our members happy and help them with all they need. Also, we try to be present in different universities and make AEGEE more visible. So now we wish for the new board of AEGEE-Barcelona a bright future during this year and to keep working with our aims.



AEGEE-CAGLIARI

Local of the Month of November 2014



To us, AEGEE means Europe. It is our chance to finally feel part of our continent as a whole. It means thinking outside of your own country, it means feeling part of something greater. AEGEE is the place where every voice is heard, every opinion is considered, every new idea is discussed and put into action. AEGEE also means passion. Sharing interests, personal views and solutions aimed towards bettering the European ecosystem.

AEGEE means experience, working hard to fulfill a greater goal, gaining knowledge on subjects that would not be tackled outside of the association.

AEGEE means being constantly challenged, stepping out of your comfort zone, confronting yourself with new ideas, people, languages, cultures and countries. AEGEE means personal growth.

AEGEE means family. Knowing that everywhere you go you will find people ready to welcome you, is the best feeling in the world.

AEGEE means fun, friendship and love, it means creating bonds that will last a lifetime. AEGEE means home.

AEGEE-CHIȘINĂU

Local of the Month of December 2014

The secret for a small local to succeed in a Summer University is first of all the belief that everything is possible and that we can do it. Secondly, a big wish to make a great Summer University. Thirdly, knowledge, experience, a good concept of SU, a team and, last but not least, positive participants. Without all this you cannot manage!



AEGEE-SANKT-PETERBURG

Local of the Month of January 2015



AEGEE Sankt-Peterburg is the most northern-located one, that's why the NWM was called winter NORDIC magic. Also we're active despite a few number of members and quite distant location. We live in the most beautiful city in Russia and we are open to all new ideas. We understand that there are probably few locals which can raise awareness about visas and spread information. Usually, AEGEEans only have common idea about visas.

AEGEE-LYON

Local of the Month of February 2015

In the past years, we really gain institutional credit and it's important. We are seen working hard on projects. The city of Lyon, the Goethe Institut and the Region Rhône Alpes are always willing to work with active youth in a European perspective.

Local students are always hard to approach, whether it be for the European thematic that doesn't seem to mean something, or because French curriculum is pretty dense and students aren't encouraged to get involve extra. Though, we do have more credit as we are now working with various associations.



AEGEE-BURGOS

Local of the Month of March 2015

There is no doubt about how much AEGEE can bring to the community we live in. Burgos is a small city, a second capital and thanks to the association more people know where to locate it on the map, not only for its beautiful cathedral.



Burgos starts to be an Erasmus destination and there is no doubt that it has something to do with the word of mouth of the students. For sure, it is not the cold responsible for that!

In fact, what is certain is that we talk about AEGEE. The European Planning Meeting (EPM) was our greatest success and it was definitely the one that helped us the most in building our group. Not only now every AEGEEan knows where Burgos is or has heard something related to the city, but also, AEGEE-Burgos despite being a really young antenna, it is able to grow up, to organise events and to have a spot in the network.

AEGEE-ATHINA

Local of the Month of April 2015



The success of the antenna this year is due to team work. It has to do with other things more substantial. It has to do with understanding and respecting one another through the process of voluntary work, where you have nothing to gain and nothing to lose. There, you get the chance to approach the others selflessly and accept them for what

they are. Then, you get the meaning of real friendship, you get to enjoy the real company of others. This is when you can create bonds that cannot be severed and with this strength you can build all things from nothing.

AEGEE-ESKIŞEHİR

Local of the Month of May 2015

We have a thematic project 'Feel Europe' which aims to take prejudices about Europe and Europeans away from Turkish youth. The project has two steps.

At the beginning, the content will be prepared for university students and people who are living in Eskişehir. Then, we

intend to spread all those reflections, all around our country.



AEGEE-PASSAU

Local of the Month of June 2015

The Antenna consists mostly of girls studying cultural studies. We get along very well though and are very happy that there are no cat-fights within our group.

Almost all of us are motivated outstandingly and invest a lot time in AEGEE. However, the relationships among us go far beyond the weekly meetings. We develop close friendships among AEGEE-Passau and also with other antennae. Our Twin-Antenna from Delft are also like AEGEE-Passau members for us, even though distance separates us.



AEGEE-HERAKLIO

Active Local of the Month of December 2014



AEGEE-Heraklio is a fairly young local. It was found in 2005 but was not active at all till 2010, when it was reanimated by new members and started being active by organizing a Summer University every year. It was always a small local when it comes to the number of members and it still is, but

since last year most of our members are new because almost all older members went overseas or back to their hometowns. So, 2014 marked a change in our antenna, where we started doing a lot more than just a SU every year. The best part is that we're growing with motivated and active members who want to do great things and believe in teamwork.

AEGEE-ALICANTE

Active Local of the Month of February 2015

You join AEGEE because you want to be able to travel on a budget. You travel, get to know new cultures and meet people all over Europe. So you decide to get active in order to become helpful within the association. At first, you think you are contributing to the development of the association without realising that



in fact, AEGEE is contributing even more to your personal development.

We will take the liberty of quoting Miguel Gallardo, AEGEE-Alicante member and former Comité Directeur member, who explained it perfectly: "Sometimes you take a step without knowing the impact it can

have on your life. I joined AEGEE to travel cheaply around Europe. But the journey took me much further: self-development, growing as a person, changing my life and the lives of other Europeans. Best decision in my life!"

AEGEE-UTRECHT

Active Local of the month of March 2015

What is the most inspiring thing about AEGEE? It is a hard question to answer. AEGEE is inspiring in so many ways. Firstly, why do people actually join AEGEE? Mainly because of the international environment. But why do they actually stay? We think it is because of the people. Everyone is so open to meet new people and to try new experiences! No matter if you stay in your hometown, or travel abroad, this will always be the main reason you stay in AEGEE. The beautiful thing about it is that we can all learn from each other.

In March 2015, we organised the Self-Development European school. This event was an amazing example of the AEGEE spirit: twenty AEGEEans getting together to learn from each other, to party together and to become friends for life. Also, for AEGEE-Utrecht this event was a nice occasion to bring the spirit close to our members and to show them how amazing AEGEE is by presenting both its learning and fun aspects.



AEGEE-AMSTERDAM

Active Local of the Month of January 2015

For many of our members, joining AEGEE is the first step they take towards creating international friendships, new experiences and unforgettable memories.

I'm Iris van den Oord, European Affairs Officer of AEGEE-Amsterdam and for me the Summer University that I was a part of opened my eyes to the many

awesome things that AEGEE can do. It was the first time that I'd been part of a group that bonded so quickly despite



coming from very different backgrounds.

This is what is so powerful about AEGEE: finding unity in the diversity that we represent and creating great things from that. AEGEE-Amsterdam, for example, started out as a small group but has grown to include a large number of people that increasingly use the opportunities that this organisation offers. It's cool to see both new and more experienced members enjoying events such as Agoras and EPMs and seeing them grow as AEGEEans because of the people they meet and the experiences they have. That is, to me, what is most inspiring about AEGEE: seeing the way that people develop after they start actively taking part in what the organisation offers.

AEGEE-KRAKÓW

ACTive Local of the Month of April 2015

AEGEE-Kraków organises two very big projects, open for students of all Universities in Kraków, targeting languages and soft skills. The "Language Conversations with AEGEE-Kraków", taking place every term, gives 350 students an opportunity to learn for free one of



10 different foreign languages (eg. English, German, Spanish or even Chinese and Arabic). Thanks to "Let's Get Better" project taking place 3-4 times in a month, around 15 students can attend a free training course connected to soft or hard skills.

Both projects are very popular and give young people a chance to learn skills that are crucial for their career. Every year around 1000 people attend these courses and we still strive to improve our trainings. AEGEE-Kraków wants to give everyone equal opportunities; therefore most of our activities are free of charge. What is more, we are planning to open an English language group for older people. In Poland only young people speak English because during the Communist regime people were taught Russian at schools. Nowadays elderly people would like to learn English in order to be able to communicate with the foreigners and the young generation. We would love to help them and we will do as much as possible to make our ideas come true!

AEGEE-SOFIA

ACTive Local of the Month of May 2015

It is not an easy task to identify the most inspiring thing among the variety of opportunities and excitements that AEGEE could possibly offer. One of the reasons is the fact that every person has a unique perspective and attitude towards the surroundings, and different factors could be considered as inspiring and influential on an individual's life. AEGEE combines plenty of possibilities and options for its members and the most important is the ability of each member to find inspiration and make a change in his or her life and future. Moreover, AEGEE gives an opportunity to meet and communicate with many youngsters from a different cultural and national background who want to take an active role in shaping their own future. Some of our members find exactly this part highly inspirational: the chance to interact with other young people who are concerned with similar topics and could share their personal previous experience in various fields. Being part of AEGEE could change your entire perspective and give you valuable lessons, an indispensable experience and unforgettable memories with people who are worth keeping around.



AEGEE-ZAGREB

ACTive Local of the Month of June 2015

AEGEE is a group of people with whom you travel a lot, see new places, make friends for life and even fall in love or find your soulmate. Moreover, these people are all volunteers and most probably they just met at some event somewhere in Europe and they are already making these plans – for you. Why would anyone care about you? Well, you know, these people have realised long ago that by helping others grow you are also helping yourself and the community constantly learning from each other. And, these people also want YOU to learn, to share your knowledge and they want that this legacy continues. The same people take care of you like a really, really big and great friend.

In one sentence - AEGEE people are trying their best to make Europe a better place for everyone. What is more inspiring than that?



LES ANCIENS D'AEGEE: THERE IS LIFE AFTER AEGEE!

As AEGEE celebrated its 30th anniversary, so did Les Anciens d'AEGEE! This did not imply only partying along with other AEGEEans, but also celebrating its own 25th birthday during the annual Les Anciens meeting, organised by the great people of AEGEE-Skopje.



By the time AEGEE was becoming mature, some first-generation-members were embarking upon their new careers, leaving their student lives behind and feeling the need to create a life after AEGEE, but still with the desire of being connected to the good old times and

“We also looked ahead to see how Les Anciens can still grow stronger and tighten the bond with nowadays AEGEE.”

growing, from having just one annual event to approximately six events per year, nowadays. At present, everything is a bit more tranquil than in the old days, but nevertheless with the same vibe.

Now, 25 years later, we marked the occasion not only by looking back and by celebrating what we have achieved, growing from a handful of people to a 750-members-alumni organisation. We also looked ahead to see how Les Anciens can still grow stronger and tighten the bond with nowadays AEGEE; there

feeling the AEGEE vibe. For all of these reasons, Les Anciens was born in 1990.

Since then, Les Anciens has been continuously

should be more emphasis on supporting and removing barriers for current AEGEEans, in order to make the transition from an active AEGEE member to an alumnus, as smooth as possible.

To achieve the latter, during this year's general assembly in Skopje, we have changed our statutes, enabling (former) members of AEGEE to become a Les Anciens member without the necessity to be recommended by two members. Becoming a Les Anciens member, it has never been so easy before as it is now.

Our Secretary General, Nicole Joesch, explains how it works: “If you want to become a member of Les Anciens, you just need to go to our website www.anciens.org and fill in the membership form under the join section. Membership costs 40 euros per four years.”

Going forward Les Anciens will be more vibrant, more thematic in its approach and with diversified activities that enable to have all different age-groups and interests under one umbrella: the AEGEE alumni organisation.

.....
Jos Eikhout

Coordinator of Les Anciens d'AEGEE

OUR ALUMNI...

95% says that AEGEE has **prepared them for the job market**, with 72% saying that it has had a **substantial influence**

80% says that AEGEE has **helped them to get a job**, with 51% saying that it **helped them substantially**

31% works in a **managing position**, 31% is **leading a team** and 46% worked in a **European Institution** or a body closely connected to it

Source: AEGEE's Impact Study 2013

FOUNDING AEGEE PROJECTS WITH FATF

One of the things AEGEE is the most proud of is organising events, spanning from statutory meetings, summer universities, conferences, etc. But it often happens that locals have not got the right liquidity or they lack finances to support their ideas economically.

In 2003, Foundation AEGEE Trust Fund (FATF) was founded in order to help all the locals facing financial difficulties. FATF is a separate NGO from AEGEE-Europe that was born essentially with three aims. The first one

“FATF was founded in order to help all the locals facing financial difficulties.”

is to ensure that good ideas and projects can be realised by lending the necessary money to the locals. This is extremely useful in case a project or an event would be funded

by a grant, but the financial aid has yet to arrive with the event approaching. The second one is to provide liquidity support for European projects, but also to improve their quality by providing project management support, e.g. training by FATF-members to a project team, coaching for the project managers. FATF offers

support also in reviewing applications or report before their submission in order to increase the quality of applications to obtain grants.

FATF is ran by a board of four members, with a mixture of past and current knowledge of AEGEE. In September 2015, the board was composed by Anita Kalmane - Secretary, Theijs van Weilij - President, Pablo Hernández - Board Member, and Ander Guerrero Ruiz - Treasurer.

With the agreement of returning the money as soon as the grant arrives, in the past year, only two locals were granted with FATF's help, namely: AEGEE-Dresden for their RTC - Develop Yourself and AEGEE-Cagliari for their Autumn Agora 2014.

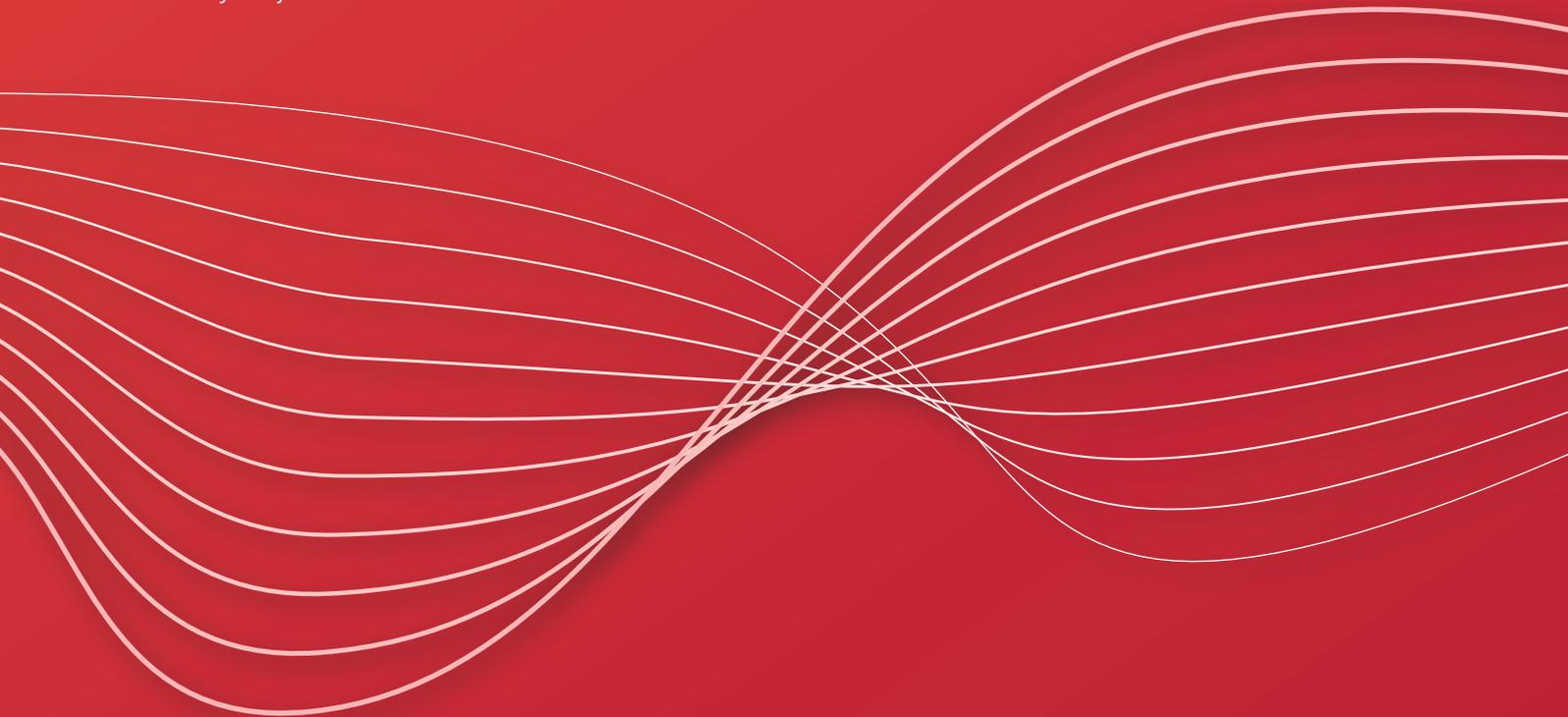
Erika Bettin

AEGEE-Verona



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Just like some actors on a theatre stage, some events and happenings in AEGEE got into the spotlight during the last year. As usual, statutory events are the most wanted, the most waited for and the most discussed. In November 2014, we had the first Agora in Italy in the past eight years, followed in February, by the European Planning Meeting in Burgos where we discussed about the intricated and delicate relations between the European Union and Russia. Another Spanish local hosted the Agora in April 2015, where we elected the new generation of Comité Directeur. Last year, we saw how the Network expanded towards East and how young Ukrainians lived after the unrests in their country in the year of 2013.



AUTUMN AGORA CAGLIARI

AEGEE-Cagliari brought back the Agora in Italy (after eight years)

Last time it was October, 2006, in Napoli. That was the moment when an Agora, our statutory event was hosted by an Italian local. It might seem a foolish statement for a person who is not from the Italian and Maltese area but, since we joined AEGEE years ago, all the Italian locals have had many discussions about this possibility, without making the bravest and the final step towards it. On its side, AEGEE-Cagliari always had a skeptical position: all the boards considered it logistically impossible, not convenient for the time needed in order to organise such an event and financially risky. A position destined suddenly to change in 2012-2013 with the election of a new board, who perceived that nothing was impossible and, as the biggest Italian local, that it was our responsibility and honor to bring this event back in the Italian peninsula after years. At the Autumn Agora Zaragoza 2013, while we were still discussing about hosting it with the delegates there, during a



plenary it was communicated that there was no hosting local for the Autumn Agora 2014 and an open call was going to be launched: it was our great occasion!

In Zaragoza we made a deal: go back home, meet the mayor of our city and see if there was any possibility to find the locations. We couldn't imagine that in a simple 30-minutes meeting we were going to get them. I think our future main organiser Simone Ruscica, still remembers our excitement to spread the news at the

AEGEE-Cagliari office. Every member of the future Core Team still remembers those 10 days spent locked in the office writing our 60 pages candidature (plus an addendum of 30), and by the time we had received the news, we would have organised it: most of us at the office, some at home, others while travelling around Europe.

From that day on, we slept less and drank more coffee, because one year is not enough to organise a perfect Agora, especially if you have to fundraise a lot of money, find materials and means of transportation, create emergency plans for locations, make assurances for millions of Euro, face the internal and external bureaucracy and so on. But at the same time, once we overcame those difficulties, we realised the satisfaction you get is the best reward. And we realised it when Stefano Corsini, the opening ceremony host, went on stage and set free his mind saying to the plenary "Welcome to Cagliari, welcome to my Island". A moment that merged together the importance of doing something you believed it was out of reach, of doing something never experienced with bravery and strength, of doing something that most of the people will never experience. Something that gives energy and self-awareness, something that involves a continuous growth process and makes a volunteer almost a (better) professional worker.

Last but not least, grasp the meaning of collaboration between people, solidarity between locals, what is a team, what is the respect for the others' work, what is something you make with passion; in other words, to be a Network.

Good luck to all the future Agora organisers!

.....
Mattia Abis

Vice-main coordinator of Autumn Agora Cagliari 2014



EPM BURGOS 2015: THE REVENGE OF SMALL LOCALS

For the first time, one planning meeting took place in Spain and it was the historical city of Burgos in the northern part of the country, close to the cold mountains, to host it. However, the temperature was anything but cold.

Nearly 300 young people coming from all over Europe had the honour to take part in interesting debates at the first European Planning Meeting, that

“It was a very rich dialogue, with a lot of international guests, with people from the countries more involved in this situation, and with participants with very different perceptions.”

came to refresh the European Boards Meeting, after the decision to change the name, at Spring Agora Patra 2014. The first experience made all people go back home with a smile upon their faces. It was a really successful event without any doubt: the congress took place in a Middle Ages style Auditorium where you could always find helpful organisers, there was a great cooperation with Health for Youth, a lot of Mediterranean Cuisine, milk products and fruits.

The topic was delicate: the relation between European Union and Russia, with the Ukrainian crisis in the background. It was exactly the AEGEE spirit, the idea that all of us are equal and youth problems



in one side of Europe can be debated in the opposite corner, because nowadays, the problems in some areas represent global problems with consequences that affect all of us.

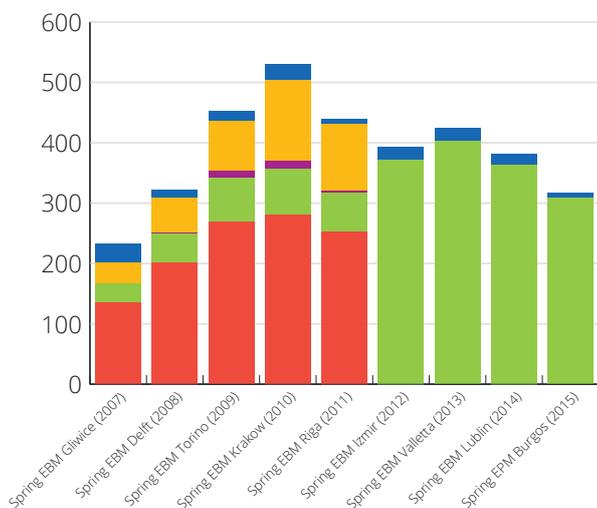
It was a very rich dialogue, with a lot of international guests, with people from the countries more involved in this situation, and with participants with very different perceptions. Participants agree that it was one of the best organised events, all the core team had long greetings the last day and the local was later awarded with the Local of the Month by The AEGEEan magazine.

After more than one year preparing it, the whole organising team can be really proud of the EPM. It was considered one brilliant example of how small antennae can do big things.

Rubén Sanz Martínez

Main organiser of EPM Burgos 2015

STATUTORY EVENTS IN THE PAST



◀ TYPES OF APPLICANTS PLANNING MEETINGS

From Spring EBM Izmir on, the greatest part of the participants were not delegates anymore, but envoys. This decision was made because no actual votings took place there, but only planning. EPMS haven't always had the same name; it started as 'Planning Meeting', but it was changed to 'European Boards' Meeting'. At Autumn Agora Cagliari 2014, the decision was made to change it to 'European Planning Meeting', because the meeting was not only meant for board members.

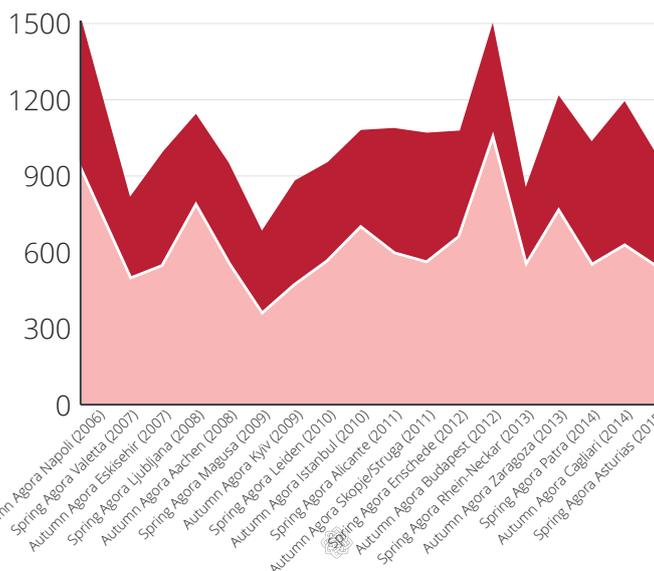
- Other
- Visitors
- Observers
- Envoys
- Delegates

Source: AEGEE Statutory Events website

▶ APPLICATIONS VS. PARTICIPANTS AGORA

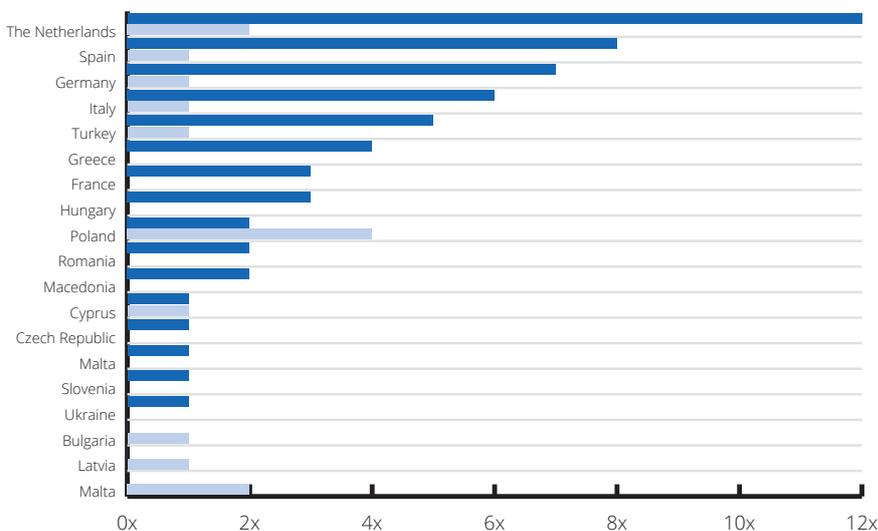
Twice a year members apply to be participants in our statutory events. Unfortunately spots are limited (usually around 800 places) and the Chair Team is in charge of evaluating all the applications and select participants. Even if in the past years applications for the Agorae are decreasing, in 2012 for Autumn Agora Budapest about 1700 members applied. With only 785 accepted, many rejected participants decided to come to Budapest anyway creating the so-called Dark Agora.

Source: AEGEE Statutory Events website



▼ AGORAE & PLANNING MEETINGS PER COUNTRY

Source: AEGEE Statutory Events website



- Number of Planning Meetings
- Number of Agorae

SPRING AGORASTURIAS 2015: NEVER STOP DREAMING

Organising an Agora is not an easy task, it's a year of preparations, lots of never-ending meetings, phone calls and bittersweet moments, but in the end all the effort pays back. The satisfaction of being able to welcome hundreds of AEGEEans at home, gathering together not only to take part in the most important event of our association, but also to show them that your region is

organisation that started as a dream of a better and a more united Europe, breaking stereotypes and cultural barriers. A dream that we've also helped to become true. Demonstrating how the willingness to change, to improve, to continue developing is much more powerful than any limitations, geographical or political borders they may want to create. Showing how youngsters from all around Europe can manage to work and cooperate in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect, giving a better example than governments and institutions of what Europe means.

“Organising an Agora is not an easy task, it's a year of preparations, lots of never-ending meetings, phone calls and bittersweet moments.”

So no matter if your dream is to organise an Agora, a thematic conference, to be in the board or to find a new local, never stop dreaming and keep working, as we said in the closing ceremony, AgorAsturias was an example of how dreams come true if you work hard for it. Thanks to all my team, organisers, helpers and supporters for helping my biggest dream in AEGEE come true.

Alberto Cuesta Noriega

Main Organiser of the Agora



far from the predefined idea foreigners usually have about Spain; moreover, to show them that, with a huge effort, even a small remote region of Spain, like Asturias, can find the resources - human and economic - to host a great youth conference like our Agora is. This Agora has been a real dream come true and it demonstrates that no matter how big you dream, if you work hard, if you are committed, dreams come true. We in AEGEE are a proof of it. It's even more meaningful as it comes at the same time when AEGEE-Europe is turning 30. An

EUROPEAN UNION AND RUSSIA: A DELICATE RELATIONSHIP

From a historical point of view, there has always been a close interrelation between the European Union and Russia and it has been constantly developing in order to achieve convergence of the economies of the two, the deepening of mutual cooperation in the fight against organised crime, terrorism, illegal migration, and much more.

However, this relationship sometimes brings some sort of confrontation. There were different political points of view, disagreements in the discussion of certain issues and diverse ways of implementing the objectives.

It is universally known that today the relations between Europe and Russia are deadlocked. Unfortunately, the existing misunderstanding is deteriorated

“Russia has its own place in Europe – it is up to its society to decide to which extent it is achievable.”

by media which aggravates the environment surrounding the two. Each party presents the side of “reality” which is politically convenient to them alone. This has a huge impact

on citizens who do not have an objective conception of what is happening. However, it is extremely important to come to a mutual assent and to find a way out of the current situation.

AEGEE is actively involved in this issue. Between the 18th – 22nd of February 2015, the European Planning Meeting (EPM) took place in Burgos and it focused on the relations between the European Union and Russia. The EPM consisted of two parts which were represented by a thematic conference and a planning part. There were some panel discussions, round tables and workshops with the participation of guests from Russian and Ukrainian institutions. The two core topics were Europe and Russia of tomorrow: Role of the youth in peacebuilding processes and Causes and consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict: politics, civil society

and youth. Furthermore, there were raised themes, such as: Europe and Russia: How much do you really know?; Human rights regulations and violations in Europe and Russia; Youth participation in conflict transformation process in Caucasus; Europe-Russia: a brief history of mutual representations, and much more.

During the meeting there were many issues elucidated and then the Content team - Nikolay Kazantsev and Adrian Browarczyk – presented some outcome-drafts for the topic:

- ▶ Russia has its own place in Europe – it is up to its society to decide to which extent it is achievable;
- ▶ In order to understand the current situation and growing tension we must know our past;
- ▶ Common initiatives such as cross-border projects or conferences are key solutions in peacebuilding processes;
- ▶ Social media plays a vital role in democratic processes and has to be digested with a certain dose of criticism;
- ▶ We cannot be afraid of the confrontation of different points of view and values – confrontation-based discussions are valuable and important in terms of valid outcomes' drafting;
- ▶ The booklet with the final results will consist in a deep analysis on the EPM's outcomes.

Despite the current difficult relations, it is impossible to discontinue the prevalent cooperation. Our mutual aim is to overcome existent disagreement and to start creating a common successful future.

Anna Saveleva

AEGEE-Moskva



REBUILDING DEMOCRACY

Rebuilding Democracy: a six month-long project by AEGEE-Kyiv

The ReBuilding Democracy project, launched in April 2015, was created by the members of AEGEE-Kyiv and the entire AEGEE network, with the aim of boosting cooperation on youth policy matters between the Ukrainian and European youth organisations. It started with the Night of Seven Antennae conference "Europe in me - Me in Europe: The role of youth in the construction of the future of Europe" that gathered participants from Europe and Ukraine, to discuss what democracy is, what European values are today and what they stand for. The exchange with AEGEE-Dresden (future twin antenna) in May became the second event of the project, where Ukrainians could explore the difference in the framework of the local authorities and share their opinions with local students.

The Travelling Summer University "Across the UAniverse", organised by five Ukrainian locals, namely: AEGEE-Dnipropetrovsk, AEGEE-Kharkiv, AEGEE-Lviv, AEGEE-Ivano-Frankivsk and AEGEE-Kyiv, gathered 25 participants from different European countries, who were able to compare life in Ukraine with life in their own countries. Together with the members of Ukrainian

locals, the participants met with the local authorities and representatives to share their vision on democracy. What is more important is the fact that they could see the real situation by themselves and compare it with the stories broadcasted in foreign mass media.

In fact, Ukraine went through terrible events: the peaceful protests turned into an armed conflict and the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. It has been almost two years since the Euromaidan started and Ukraine is still in the news as the war continues in the eastern part of our country. In spite of such little time - comparing to usual historical periods - the feeling that the wind of change has come is present in the daily life of Ukrainians more than ever. The society is becoming caring and active, not letting the people who are in charge of our future make another mistake and play with our rights, dignity, money and ourselves. Ukrainians, who finally do

not wait for someone at the country's top management to act, started to make changes.

The Young Ukrainians Conference marks the successful conclusion of the six-month-long project ReBuilding Democracy. The conference engaged its participants in a dynamic debate that included three panel discussions, attended by the representatives of diplomatic missions in Ukraine, the Government of Ukraine, the Members of Parliament of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the researchers of independent think-tanks and other public figures. Three topics were at the core of the panel discussions:

- ▶ Safeguarding European Values in Ukraine and in the Eastern Partnership Region,
- ▶ Investing in Ukraine: a good deal?
- ▶ Role of youth in the political transformation of Ukraine

And last but not least, there is the final event - the Autumn Agora Kyiv 2015. It is the most popular and meaningful event of AEGEE, which took place in the capital of Ukraine this year. With more than 600 members coming, it was probably the most daring decision to apply for hosting it and the most controversial decision to choose Kyiv. However, it's not only time for Ukrainians to reevaluate the present, but also time for Europeans to remember what they call European values. It's time they see the real Ukraine, break the stereotypes and get an explanation of what independence means to us.

Anna Pykhtina
AEGEE-Kyiv

“The ReBuilding Democracy project was created with the aim of boosting cooperation on youth policy matters between the Ukrainian and European youth organisations.”

YOUTH STILL ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT EUROPE

A closer look at how AEGEE has expanded this year

It is interesting to observe how AEGEE has expanded through the years. Initially, AEGEE consisted only of locals in European Community countries, but this changed in 1989 with an event that shook up Europe and challenged its former divisions: the fall of the Berlin Wall. This was a turning point not only for Europe, but also for AEGEE, as its members had to face the question on whether to open the organisation to the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. Looking beyond preconceived notions and traditional borders, AEGEE decided to open up to the East, becoming one of the first European organisations to do so.

Since then, AEGEE has questioned the borders of Europe, generally having a more open-minded approach to what Europe is and which countries constitute a part of it. For example, Turkey was a part of AEGEE already in 1992, although its belonging to Europe is still contested and debated today. Sometimes, AEGEE even looks beyond geographical borders of Europe, as it is the case with including cities such as Vladivostok, which was a part of AEGEE in the past, or cities like Yekaterinburg and Tyumen that have joined AEGEE this year.

The expansion of AEGEE has been particularly interesting in 2015. From the 14 cities that have become AEGEE contacts throughout the year, over half of them come from two countries: United Kingdom and Russia. In the context of recent developments in those two countries, it seems peculiar that AEGEE's presence there is increasing. While Russia's relations with Europe have been strained throughout the year, the UK has seen a rise of Euroscepticism and calls for leaving the European Union.

Yet, we have seen that there is still enthusiasm for European integration among the youth of those countries. In Russia, the economic situation has been difficult and there are numerous mobility issues, but our members remain optimistic about Europe. In the UK, voices of eurosceptic politicians and media sources seem to be getting louder, but there is also a movement of people who do not see the so-called 'Brexit' as a solution.

As we have witnessed many times in our organisation, young people and ordinary citizens can have an extraordinary power as drivers of change and creators of space for a constructive dialogue. The expansion of

“In the context of recent developments in United Kingdom and Russia, it seems peculiar that AEGEE's presence there is increasing.”

AEGEE to countries where Euroscepticism has been constantly rising, provides an excellent opportunity for debate. Although the European Union has its share of issues, which can and should be criticised, this criticism should be constructive. Just because European integration is a challenging process, it does not mean it should be stopped altogether.

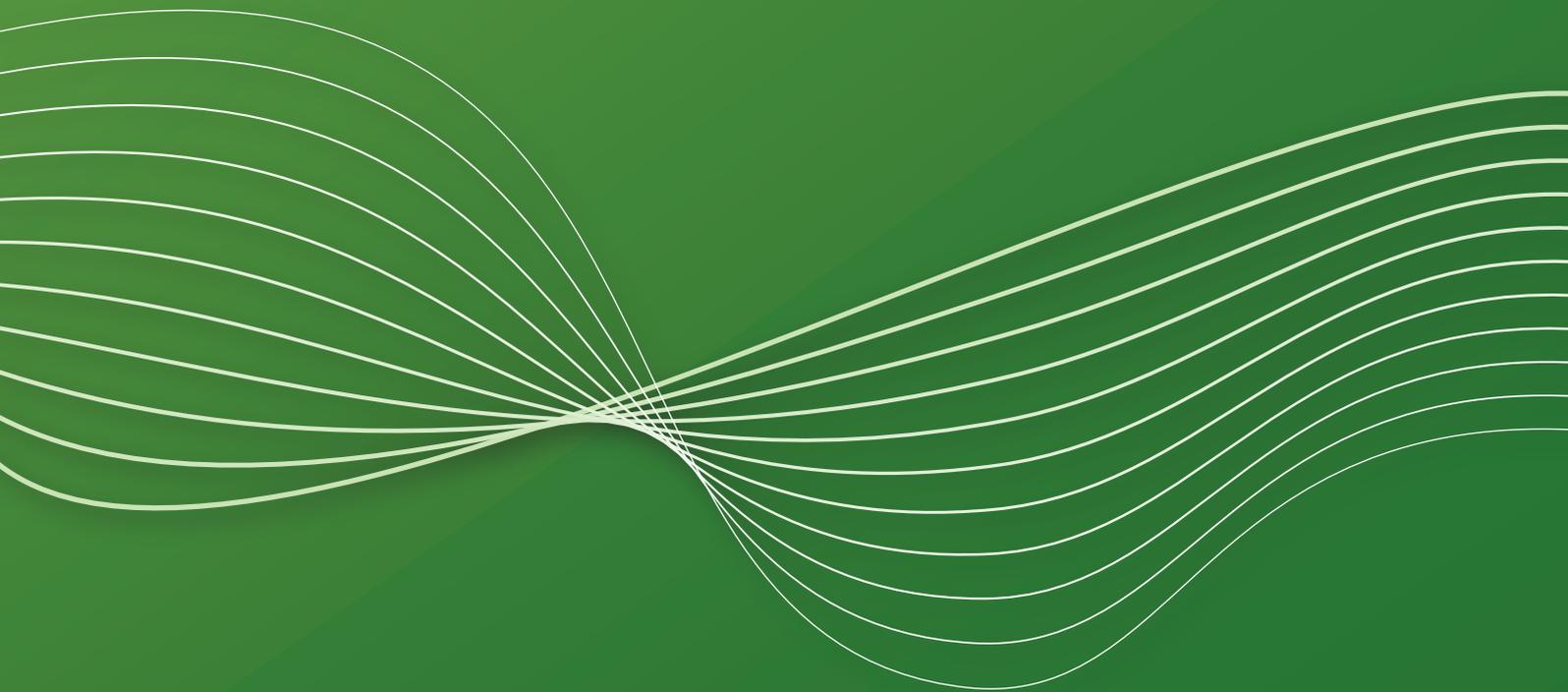
It is also interesting to see that AEGEE gained a new contact in Ukraine, despite the turbulence the country has been going through. Furthermore, the organisation expanded in Turkey, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Belgium and Luxembourg.

Antonija Parat

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2014-2015

PROJECTS

All the projects start from an idea. And it is due to the amazing ideas that we have all of the current projects in AEGEE. The oldest one is the Summer University which has allowed thousands and thousands of youngsters to travel all over Europe and to discover new cultures since 1988. Election Observation, Democracy in Practice and Eastern Partnership all focus on the political aspects of our society, from the democratic processes to human rights and the importance of respecting democracy, establishing a dialogue and building a strong relationship with the eastern part of Europe.



TO DEMOCRACY AND BEYOND

The New Project on Human Rights

Democracy in Practice aims to show that democracy is more than just having a vote, more than just having your voice heard. Democracy also involves respect for human rights. Many people interpret human rights in the context of displaying extreme cases of torture, harsh imprisonment where dignity is shifted. Nevertheless human rights affect our everyday life.

In 2013, Policy Officer Lucia Sobekova (AEGEE-Bratislava) presented a report on how aware young people were of their rights and the institutions that protected these rights. The research revealed that only half of the respondents had seen the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and AEGEE's work in this field was very much encouraged.



This is how the idea of the Democracy in Practice Project was born, to support the vision of the organisation as stated in the Statement of Principles:

“AEGEE strives for a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe, which is socially, economically and politically integrated, and values the participation of young people in its construction and development”.

An important human right is the right to civic and political participation, the rate of turnout to elections is lower amongst youth than amongst other ages. The Council of Europe, in a resolution published in 2012 on the “changing face of youth political engagement” acknowledged that young people are disillusioned by traditional political processes and their power to have any influence in this field. Many are detached from economic and social life, due to high levels of youth unemployment and lack of opportunities to acquire skills and training.

The resolution outlined the following trends. Rather than take part in traditional forms of political participation, young people increasingly turn to online social movements, such as e-petitions, public demonstrations

and consumer activism to make their voices known. Young people also have a broader outlook than previous generations had: they can connect, react and relate quicker to domestic and international matters that happen all around the world thanks to the internet. The tools and channels mentioned above serve an effective method to encourage their participation.

While these methods often gain widespread media attention and support on social media, which can shift collective patterns of thinking, such actions do not always gain sufficient support from those with the power to effect the desired outcomes.

Therefore, the goals of Democracy in Practice trainings are to make

young people aware of the various channels through which they can not only voice their opinions and find like-minded people, but also understand and influence established power structures in order to see tangible results in their lives and society. It goes hand in hand with the Council of Europe's drive to encourage local authorities to share “social, economic and political power” with young people, by increasing work, volunteering and entrepreneurship opportunities, and dialogue with local authorities. Democracy in Practice trainings will culminate in projects at a local level and a wide network of support from trainers and teammates from all over Europe.

So far, the Project's activities include workshops at Network Meetings, Agorae and EPMS, a theme week in collaboration with AEGEE-Erfurt and a Summer University in collaboration with AEGEE-Ploiești.



Lia Tuska and May Lee

Democracy in Practice Project Team

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP YOUTH CONVENTION

How Young Leaders Can Shape the Future of Europe

"It is important that cooperation transcends borders, that creativity and deep sense of responsibility for the future is present in minds of young people". The words of Mr. Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Member of the European Parliament, perfectly reflect the idea behind the AEGEE Eastern Partnership Youth Convention. The event organised by the AEGEE Eastern Partnership Project (EaP) in cooperation with AEGEE-Kraków took place from the 20th to the 24th of May 2015. It gathered 15 young leaders from the European Union (EU) and the Eastern Partnership countries in the beautiful city of Kraków, Poland, with the aim of discussing the relations between the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries and empowering the youth to become involved in policy-making processes.

Mr. Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, who is Special Rapporteur of the European Parliament on Ukraine and Vice-Chair of the European People's Party (the EPP Group), officially endorsed the event and in a video message for the participants encouraged them to "go abroad, learn, acquire new skills, knowledge and a new perspective and then go back and change your countries for the

better. Make sure your potential serves a wider European community."



The Youth Convention was focused on foreign policy and the process of European integration with regard to the current international situation. Participants took part in workshops in which they both gained basic theoretical background and had the possibility to discuss different aspects of the current integration in more details. They were introduced to the Eastern Partnership Programme and main features of the EU's foreign policy, as well as they covered the situation of all of the six EaP countries (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan), not forgetting about Russia and its external relations too. Participants also took part in the simulation of the European Council meeting on the Ukrainian crisis. Topics such as youth involvement or media mapping appeared in the agenda as well.

During the sessions participants were not just mere listeners, but they contributed significantly as they were considered an equal expert along with the trainers, which was a unique feature of the event. Each of them brought their unique experience coming from their national background, as well as their own

broad knowledge. Participants managed to identify the challenges the European continent is currently facing in its Eastern parts, build an understandable image around them, and worked on a common approach towards them.

The final result of the Convention was a set of recommendations drafted by the participants towards the EU officials on how the EaP programme should be improved. The recommendations included, among other things, providing a clear membership perspective to Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, granting the first two countries visa free-regime as soon as the required conditions are met and introducing a year of joint cultural initiatives that aim at educating societies from both the EU and the EaP states. There were also more specific recommendations that were categorised into general support for democracy and the rule of law, trade and economic relations, civil society and youth mobility. A video was also made in which the participants read out the recommendations.

The Convention can be called, without any doubts, a successful one. The participants and the organisers were proud of their work and they felt inspired by each other's contribution.

The full list of recommendations can be found on EaP official page: <http://mail.aegEE.org/eap/2015/06/aegEE-eastern-partnership-youth-convention-krakow-2015>

Theresa Leppert

AEGEE-Passau

Marta Wnuk

AEGEE-Warszawa

AEGEE ELECTION OBSERVATION

From 0 to 100 in one year

Summer 2015: time for a short review. One year ago, we were a small group of AEGEE members who just had a very exciting experience. After coming back from our first Election Observation Mission (EOM) to the presidential elections in Ukraine of 25 May, 2015, we were full of motivation to continue. But we barely had any experience or relevant knowledge, and an uncertain path lay before us.

And today? We are looking back on eight EOMs with nearly 200 young European observers. We have a strong team of 14 experienced members who all have an amazing commitment to the project. We just received 100 applications for our Election Observation Training coming up in October, 21 from AEGEE members and 79 from other young Europeans. And in parallel we are working on our next EOMs to Catalonia and Ukraine. Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Election Observation and Democratic Support (EODS) officials are joining our training, we were contacted by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs who wants to propose a cooperation, and we have more than 1000 followers on Facebook alone. Remembering where we stood in the summer of 2014, it is hard to believe that all of this is real.

How did we get here? AEGEE had occasionally been organising election observation activities in recent years, but unfortunately this is scarcely documented. It was not before the 2013 edition of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) in Warsaw that the idea was born to get involved more systematically in this field. Encouraged by ODIHR officials at the HDIM, some members of the AEGEE delegation decided that they would like to give it a try.

In May 2014, a group of 21 AEGEE observers was accredited by the government of Ukraine to observe the presidential elections that were held in consequence to the political turmoil in Kyiv. It proved to be a magnificent experience, though a very improvised one, omitting even the most fundamental part of any EOM: writing a report. We realised that there was still a lot to discover, improve and that we could do much better. With an exciting “electoral calendar” to choose from, we decided to observe the Scottish referendum on independence and the Bosnian general elections in early autumn

2014. Especially the success of the EOM to Bosnia and Herzegovina convinced us that this project would have a future. We just needed two things: a hard-working team, and the support of AEGEE-Europe.

The Autumn Agora 2014 in Cagliari, just two weeks after coming back from Sarajevo, was another milestone. Signing the contract with AEGEE-Europe and receiving the whole Agora’s cheerful applause gave us a lasting boost, but it was (and is) not just the moral support that matters. Perhaps it is only from a perspective like ours that you discover the real worth of AEGEE. This organisation is a phenomenal resource: a forum and a platform with many channels and contacts, and at the same time a network of enthusiasm. In here, every idea gets a chance. And if it works, it will be supported - not just in your own city, but all over the continent.



AEGEE Election Observation

Without this network, we would never have managed to crowdfund our EOM to Moldova, or to have an amazing accommodation for our observers in Estonia, or to find the many great people who joined our team in June 2015. Therefore our great gratitude goes not only to all those who have supported and cooperated with us, but also to those who founded and have kept AEGEE alive throughout the 30 years of its existence that we are celebrating in 2015.

Thomas Leszke

Project Manager of AEGEE Election Observation



SUMMER UNIVERSITY PROJECT

Changing lives since 1988

The Summer University project is the subject of many discussions and the heart of many memories. It is only possible because it keeps developing since then, with the contribution of the whole network: past, present and future members of AEGEE.

The Summer University project in 2015 was very successful, despite being held in the middle of a financial and political crisis that has resulted even in humanitarian crises in certain places in Europe. The Summer University project was there, being held despite all hardships, to prove that a united Europe is still

“The Summer University project has been changing lives for nearly three decades, due to the great effort of young people who volunteer. “

possible because we make it so. The vision of AEGEE is one of a borderless Europe and this year, like every year since the project began with that aim, 2000 more young Europeans have learned about their cultural similarities and differences and they have developed bonds of solidarity among them through non-formal education methods and games, making Summer University one of the most important projects of AEGEE towards fulfilling its vision, as well as, the largest independent youth mobility project in the world.

After the selection of the new team, with the new needs and updates, changes have taken place. The first thing was to enhance sustainability. Being one of the most important topics nowadays and also part of the organisational aims of AEGEE, Summer Universities have

to be environmentally friendly. A new thematic category, "GREEN SU", was presented and eight out of 68 Summer Universities have chosen to provide activities fitting that category.

In 2015, Summer University Coordination Team (SUCT), in cooperation with AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca and the Academy, organised Summer University Project School 2015. In the context of it, 19 participants from 16 different locals in 12 countries, gained theoretical and practical knowledge on how to organise a great Summer University, from an amazing team of 5 experienced, skilled and funny trainers.

Organisers always need motivation for raising their limits and higher evaluation points are there for them. This year they will collect a lot of bonus points, having ACTION Agenda activities in their schedule, holding extra compulsory sessions (more than just two), being green, being accessible to disabled members, cooperating with a European Body of AEGEE. Before this Summer ends, feedback from the participants has shown us that organisers had good reasons and intentions to give their best to their open-to-learning participants.

The impact Summer Universities have had upon AEGEE members throughout the years has been immeasurable, yet SUCT has decided to measure it. So, the impact measurement survey on the SU website has been improved and the evaluation form for SU participants has been updated to match it. People always want to have a piece of their greatest memories, something to remind them of those good days. This year SUCT presented newly-designed Summer University t-shirts and pins with our logotype, which can be purchased and warm the hearts of AEGEEans till next Summer.

68 SUMMER UNIVERSITIES



100 ORGANIZING LOCALS



2045 AVAILABLE PLACES



5 SU'S READY FOR DISABLED PARTICIPANTS



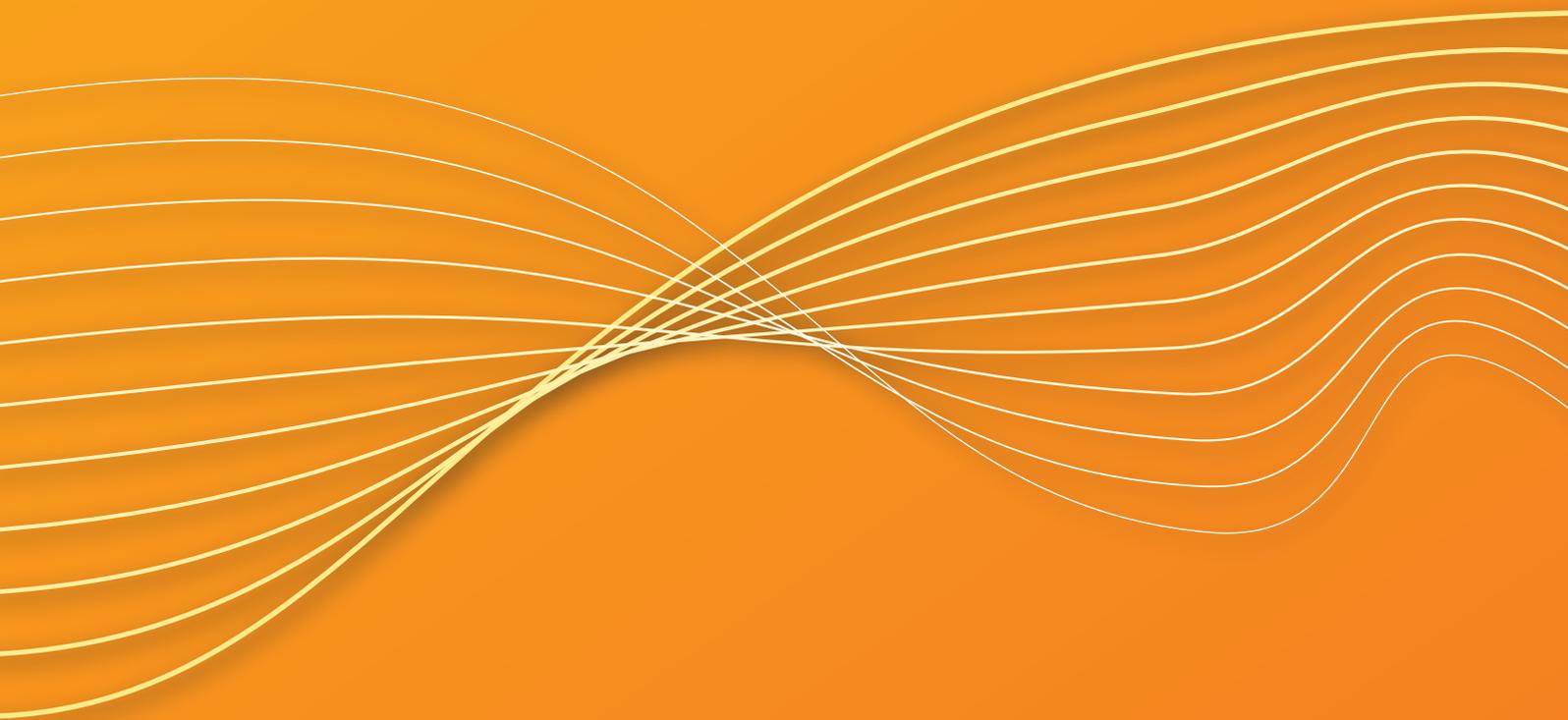
3289 TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS



Source: Summer University Coordination Team 2014-2015

THEMATICS & INTERNAL EDUCATION

AEGEE has a strong vocation in the thematic and policy processes, becoming more and more involved in them. With the help of Policy Officers and the newly established Working Groups, the organisation aims to gather opinions from members regarding the Strategic Plan's fields and to represent them towards stakeholders, in order to have those topics put very high in the political agenda. Moreover, AEGEE gives significant importance to Non-Formal Education, field where the association has a lot of experience. Providing learning opportunities for members is one of our most important aspects.



YOUTH MOBILITY

Steps towards European Integration

All the young people in Europe should have opportunities for mobility. This stands for physical mobility, when the young person can stay in another European country to study, do an internship, volunteer or training. In the educational context, “virtual mobility” may also contribute to the mobility of young people. Through this mobility, young people may develop their skills and competences, thus improving their versatility and employability.

The concept of Europe should be not only the European Union, but rather a wider region embracing 47 countries with all the possible varieties of religions and cultural background. It represents a perfect diverse playground to gather different uses and habits in a comprehensive learning process.

Even though the European Union finances several projects (the most known is Erasmus+ - a programme funding mobility projects for higher education, volunteering and youth work), the youth in Europe faces constant challenges in order to be able to further freely enjoy this right and improve via experience and learning in both the personal and professional life.

AEGEE-Europe has always advocated for the right of free movement in Europe. With a strong belief in a unified, diverse and borderless Europe, AEGEE has been among the first pan-European associations promoting youth mobility as the core action to empower students and young people in Europe to take an active role in society.

During the past year I have been appointed as Policy Officer on the topic, and a specific Working Group has been created, following the indications of the Agora to include Youth Mobility as one of the aims in the current Strategic Plan. As the Policy Officer, my role has been mostly to investigate the current situation, to propose a coherent Policy Paper to be adopted by the Agora as a valid tool to advocate for youth mobility rights towards European institutions.

During my term, together with the Policy Paper, I had also the opportunity to cooperate with the Comité Directeur regarding the “Visa Directive” proposal (“Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research,

“With a strong belief in a unified, diverse and borderless Europe, AEGEE has been among the first pan-European associations promoting youth mobility.”

studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing”), issued by the meeting of the Council of the European Union in December 2014. Considering the importance of taking a clear stand in advocating for a fair and equal right to all young people in Europe, I wrote the AEGEE-Europe reaction to the proposal, adopted by the Comité Directeur to properly lobby during the consultations round at the European Parliament following the proposal itself.

Thanks to its purpose and its structure, AEGEE acquired a sound experience in the field, and will therefore keep on lobbying towards youth mobility rights, which are considered as one of the core processes fostering European Integration, Intercultural Learning and Civic Dialogue. European Citizenship belongs to us, but only working hard and together we can make sure that what we feel today will correspond to Europe we'll live in tomorrow.

Alfredo Sellitti

Policy Officer on Youth Mobility

COMBATTING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE

For some years now, Europe has been facing a very challenging situation due to the direct and indirect effects of the crisis. Youth unemployment rates are over 50% in some European countries, which means that young people are not having the opportunity to enter the job market, gain relevant experience and develop their personal and professional life.

AEGEE as a pro-European Youth and Student Association has the responsibility to advocate for a better employment framework, especially when it comes to the transition from education to working life. In this sense, AEGEE has established Youth Employment as one of its focus areas, developing several actions on this topic. Concretely for this year, one of the main goals has been consulting the network and understanding what young European students think should be changed

“AEGEE as a pro-European Youth and Student Association has the responsibility to advocate for a better employment framework.”

regarding the transition from education to working life. The results of the consultation have been used to write a position paper that has been approved during the Spring Agora in Gijón, in which there are some really interesting findings. Firstly, the members of AEGEE believe that there is a skills mismatch between what the formal education institutions provide and what the job market asks for. One of the solutions given is to include transversal skills at school and high school. As a result, when students leave these institutions, they have acquired a set of abilities that might be applicable to a wide range of activities, instead of textbook knowledge that can only be applied to specific tasks.

Secondly, internships are seen as a very efficient way of gaining the skills required by the labour market - if they meet the criteria of quality internships. In order to do so, AEGEE stands for paid internships that allow

young people to have a basic and sustainable income. Additionally, in every internship there should be a learning plan with clear objectives and learning methodologies, so the person can get a full understanding of the responsibilities of a regular worker.

Thirdly, AEGEE members believe that entrepreneurship is another solution to the high unemployment rates.

In order for that to happen, it is needed to create a sustainable atmosphere that provides support to young Europeans who want to start their own business. AEGEE is carrying out a project called MY-WAY project that enhances the young web entrepreneurs by creating supporting tools for gathering all the necessary information and resources that these people need.

These results show the big importance that Youth Employment has for AEGEE and the commitment that the Network, the actual members of the association, have towards finding a solution to the high unemployment rates. Initiatives that are taking place now, such as the introduction of the Working Group in Youth Employment under the new structure and having a well-qualified Policy Officer ensure a great contribution of AEGEE in this matter in the near future.

Pablo Hernández Rodríguez

Former Policy Officer on Youth Employment



CIVIC EDUCATION

PARTICIPANTS

3276

52

AVERAGE NUMBER
OF PARTICIPANTS

33 ORGANISING
ANTENNAE

EXAMPLES

Month(s)	Event	Antenna	Participants
August-September-October	World Down Syndrome Day	Magusa	250
December	Charity Christmas Concert Live	Osnabrück	275
March	Workshop about the differences between poor and rich	Enschede	39
April	Kharkiv active citizenship actions	Kharkiv	500

Source: Action Agenda Coordination Team 2014-2015

SPREADING EUROPTIMISM

PARTICIPANTS

1726

69

AVERAGE NUMBER
OF PARTICIPANTS

22 ORGANISING
ANTENNAE

EXAMPLES

Month(s)	Event	Antenna	Participants
August-September-October	Lecture about the situation in Ukraine	Nijmegen	40
August-September-October	Magazine about democracy	Groningen	500
January	ISIS and Europe: Danger at the Border	Leiden	300

Source: Action Agenda Coordination Team 2014-2015

AEGEE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RECOGNITION OF NFIL AND YOUTH WORK

An investment on the recognition of AEGEE's work, the impact and quality assurance of its practices on our members' lives has been one of the priorities of our organisation. With its expertise in the field of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (NFIL), AEGEE has been following and participating in policy and technical processes related to the recognition of NFIL.

These involvements gave us the opportunity to enlarge our vision, to acknowledge the political trends in the field, to analyse constructively our internal practices, to actively participate by bringing AEGEE's perspectives into discussions, to establish contacts with stakeholders, to influence political agendas and to make our voice heard.

One of the steps done was bet internally, with our members, creating awareness of NFIL and creating the necessary means to validate and to recognise competences that our members acquire through their pathway in AEGEE. This was possible with a top-down bottom-up approach, meaning promoting our organisational expertise externally and bringing the knowledge acquired throughout the external processes into the organisation. Several measures and initiatives have been implemented during Spring Agora Patra 2014, as it follows: the approval of the Internal strategy which already covers several actions and clarifications on the topic, the design of the internal validation tool for the recognition of competences, the improvement of the quality assurance within AEGEE events, the development of the concept of Youth Work and the formation of new synergies.

Several reasons have pushed AEGEE to develop Recognition of competences acquired through NFIL. The first reason is the need to validate the competences of our members. The second reason is based on the fact that the validation and recognition of the skills and competences were manifested as a priority by the European Union.

An internal system to validate competences acquired throughout the AEGEE experience was designed and at this point, it is waiting for the results of Guidelines for

Recognition-European Advanced Tool project (GR-EAT) and the resources to be improved and finalised.

GR-EAT is a two-years project founded by ERASMUS+ which aims to create guidelines to support youth organisations in creating their own tool for validation and recognition of the competences acquired through NFIL.

“The concept of Youth Work has been recently developed in AEGEE with the involvement in some projects, processes and scientific research.”

The concept of Youth Work has been recently developed in AEGEE, with the involvement in some projects, processes and scientific research where it was understood that what we call trainers, project managers and leaders can be also considered as Youth Workers and the work we do can be identified as Youth Work. There is no common definition that fits all contexts of the Youth Work and AEGEE still does not have, at this point, a clear internal definition acknowledged by the members. A proposal to create internal awareness and to consult members on this matter was drafted and we believe that it will be further developed, providing the organisation with the real internal means on the topic.

Madalena Sousa

Policy and Advocacy Coordinator

RECONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE EUROPEAN PROJECT

In August 2014, the new Strategic Plan of AEGEE came into force, with spreading eurooptimism as one of the focus areas. The topic could not be more timely, seeing the current developments in Europe, with the Greek crisis, UK renegotiation of their terms in the EU, refugee crisis, conflict in Ukraine and high rates of youth unemployment as a few examples. Does eurooptimism only mean emphasising positive aspects of the European community and the work of the European Union in particular? No, it does not. In AEGEE, we understand eurooptimism as the willingness to work on improving and strengthening the European project, rather than rejecting it because of the challenges that appear on the way.

AEGEE strives for a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe, which is socially, economically and politically integrated, and values the participation of young people in its construction and development.

“30 years after its establishment, AEGEE will continue its efforts to connect European citizens, to the European project and empower them to contribute to its development.”

Strengthening the ownership of Europe by students and youth has been at the core of the organisation since its foundation in 1985. The current strategic focus of AEGEE strives for reconnecting young people to the European project and creating solidarity bonds among them. The annual objectives included in the Action Agenda 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 call to ensure space for youth's participation in the debate about the future of the European project, discussing and informing about the advantages of being a European citizen and supporting young people's understanding of the functioning of the European Union.

Spreading Eurooptimism proved to be a topic of high interest among AEGEE members, as many activities related to the topic were and are organised across the Network. In order to start developing AEGEE's policy paper on the topic, a Policy Officer on Spreading

Eurooptimism was appointed in order to research the opinions of the members and to monitor policy developments externally. Additionally, the Your Vision for Europe project was kicked off in order to educate young people on the impact of the European Union on their daily life, raise discussions about the future of Europe and gather youth's input. An important event related to the topic was the 'Schuman declaration 65 years later – wishes of the young generation for Europe' conference, taking place in Brussels in May 2015 as part of AEGEE's 30 anniversary celebrations. During the conference, we managed to gather ideas and wishes of young people related to topics like social, political and economic integration, democratic innovations, active citizenship, jobs and growth and education and mobility.

In the future, spreading eurooptimism will continue as one of the focuses of AEGEE. With the newly established system of Working Groups, also the Spreading Eurooptimism Working Group will start working to ensure that we as an organisation reach the objectives set related to the topic and that AEGEE continues educating youth on the impact of the European Union on their lives and raising constructive discussions on the challenges of the European project. 30 years after its establishment, AEGEE will continue its efforts to connect European citizens, especially the young ones, to the European project and empower them to contribute to its development.

Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVIC EDUCATION CANNOT BE OVERLOOKED

Civic education is at the core of many activities of AEGEE, as we have seen generations of our members develop into responsible and active citizens through our projects, trainings and events. In the last few years, civic education has become a particularly important topic of discussion in our organisation. We have observed the lowering rates of youth participation in democratic processes which poses a big challenge for Europe and, while actions are being taken to improve the current situation, we see there is a need for more effort.

AEGEE has defined civic education as one of its Focus Areas in our Strategic Plan. On one hand, we are aiming to increase the civic competences of our own members and, on the other hand, we are striving to put the topic of civic education on the political agenda at all levels. Although these are ambitious goals, we believe that the importance of this topic cannot be emphasized enough and in line with that, we have been working hard on it this year, which yielded some interesting results.

In our organisation, we have been working to empower our members through activities of projects such as Election Observation and Democracy in Practice, as well as through stimulating and increasing participation in online discussions. Externally, we have actively participated in activities of platforms such as the European Civic Forum. Furthermore, we have been monitoring policies and working on developing our official position on the matter, a process that will be completed by the newly established Civic Education Working Group.

The Working Group will also participate in fulfilling the ambitious objectives that we, as an organisation, have set for the upcoming year. Internally, we will keep focusing on empowering young people through trainings and Summer Universities, our longest-running project that reaches thousands of young people across Europe every summer. Externally, we aim to start a European Citizens' Initiative or an equivalent petition on increasing the topic of civic education in the curricula of institutions of formal education. This will surely be an exciting process for our organisation. Furthermore,

we aim to conduct a research to define challenges in the legislation and implementation of formal civic education, which would enable us to develop proposals

“While rates of youth participation have been lowering, this generation of young people is still full of ideas and potential.”

for improvements in the future.

If citizens are not informed about their rights and their responsibilities and they are not empowered to participate from an early age, our society will face more and more challenges, as all democracies depend on active participation and contribution of their citizens. While rates of youth participation have been lowering, this generation of young people is still full of ideas and potential, which is why it is crucial to turn them into truly active citizens.

Antonija Parat

Secretary General of AEGEE-Europe 2014-2015

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

PARTICIPANTS

2709

44

AVERAGE NUMBER
OF PARTICIPANTS

35 ORGANISING
ANTENNAE

EXAMPLES

Month(s)	Event	Antenna	Participants
November	Language Conversations Project	Krakow	400
March	Training on Social Media Literacy	Hatay	95
April	Young entrepreneurship	Valleta	300
May	Leadership, Branding & Entrepreneurship	Eskisehir	200

Source: Action Agenda Coordination Team 2014-2015

YOUTH MOBILITY

PARTICIPANTS

3032

37

AVERAGE NUMBER
OF PARTICIPANTS

72 ORGANISING
ANTENNAE

EXAMPLES

Month(s)	Event	Antenna	Participants
August-September-October	Erasmus+ WS	Adana	300
April	EVS Information meeting	Gdansk	200
April	SU promotion	Osnabrück	500
February	Exchange	Utrecht, Budapest & Barcelona	25

Source: Action Agenda Coordination Team 2014-2015

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY OUR MEMBERS

Being a member of AEGEE has helped me to develop my skills in....



Source: AEGEE's Impact Study 2013

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A NEW STRATEGY FOR LEARNING AND TRAINING

The Strategy for Learning and Training is a document that creates a framework for learning and training processes in AEGEE. Approved in Spring Agora Asturias in April, it outlines the vision on our training focuses. In the strategy, you can find definitions of various trainings, their hierarchy, different purposes and learning objectives. The strategy is not binding for individual locals, but can facilitate cooperation between antennae.

Every successful organisation depends on the people who are capable of doing their tasks right. A consistent effort to educate is a trademark of success, and AEGEE is not an exception in this case. A great need for internal education arises, because we face a constant change of membership. Therefore, it becomes difficult to keep our initiatives and knowledge. The strategy tries to tackle this problem.

The Strategy also sets out different means how to achieve its goals. First, there are newly created text-based materials to help locals with the organisation as well as the content of trainings. The materials were made and uploaded on Members portal (section Internal education).

Second, AEGEE needs to adapt to the current trend of online learning. Online trainings can bring a different perspective on how we approach training in AEGEE. The strategy gives an important meaning to these types of training. However, it is quite demanding to implement it among volunteers, which should be one of the focuses of AEGEE for the upcoming year.

Real-time training events have undergone some changes as well. The Agora approved changes in the definitions of Local and Regional Training Courses (LTC and RTC), together with the LTC as the new antenna criterion. These changes are binding for all locals. The

newly created materials help to adapt to these changes. Altogether, it creates a structure where learning and training processes can flourish.

Except of the above mentioned improvement of learning processes, the proper implementation of the Strategy gives more resources to

the local antennae and more opportunities for self-development. These are all useful benefits that the recent changes in learning and training inside of our organisation can bring about.

Such a huge task is not the domain of few individuals. The Comité Directeur, the Academy, the Network Commission and antennae need to coordinate the change process to be successful. It is fundamental for AEGEE that these bodies cooperate together. It will be neither easy nor quick, but it might have a great impact for the future generations of AEGEE members.

.....
Ivan Bielik

Human Resources Director 2014-2015

“Every successful organisation depends on the people who are capable of doing their tasks right.”

AEGEE CONTINUES WITH THE STRUCTURED DIALOGUE

Structured Dialogue on Youth is a participatory policy-making process between young people and policy-makers from 28 EU Member States. During one cycle of the process, lasting 18 months, policy proposals are jointly developed on a particular field of youth affairs. During the process, national working groups and international non-governmental youth organisations conduct consultations with European youth to gather their input on the topic. Based on these consultations, during EU-Youth Conferences policy proposals are formulated, which are supposed to be reflected in the Council Conclusions of the Council of European Union.

Since youth participation is at the core of AEGEE's identity, our organisation was actively involved in the Structured Dialogue on Youth in the past years and was striving for greater involvement of our members, as well as other young Europeans in the process. We



have contributed to the Structured Dialogue since 2011, and cooperated with other international non-governmental Organisations and European stakeholders on

bringing the truly European perspective to the process and making the voice of youth heard.

The current cycle of the Structured Dialogue started in July 2014 and focused on the theme of youth empowerment for political participation. In October 2014, AEGEE was represented at the EU Youth Conference in Rome, where thanks to joint efforts of youth representatives and policy-makers the questions for the consultations of the IV cycle of the Structured Dialogue were developed. Based on these questions, the European-wide consultations were initiated. AEGEE kicked off the discussions during Autumn Agora Cagliari 2014, which were followed-up in the next months.

Afterwards, the time to formulate policy proposals came with the EU Youth Conference in Riga, where AEGEE was present as well. The draft recommendations referred to topics like civic education, structures for youth involvement in decision-making, the role of youth

work in political empowerment, youth-friendly tools for participation, local and direct democracy, and cross-sectorial cooperation on youth.

An important follow-up on the process was the organisation of the Structured Dialogue Round Table

in the European Parliament in June. It aimed at providing space for feedback on the draft recommendations, as well as for discussion on the role and cooperation of European stake-

holders in the Structured Dialogue. The event was co-organised by AEGEE-Europe, JEF Europe, CESI Youth and EEE-YFU and hosted by Member of European Parliament Eva Paunova. Among the guests of the round table were Antonio Silva Mendes (European Commission), Pavel Trantina (European Economic and Social Committee), Lucille Rieux (European Youth Forum) and many representatives of European youth organisations. The event was another important milestone for the cooperation between European stakeholders in the Structured Dialogue. We look forward to the continuation of the process in the months to come.

“Our organisation was actively involved in the Structured Dialogue on Youth in the past years and was striving for greater involvement.”

Aleksandra Kluczka

President of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016



YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND AEGEE MEET IN VALLETTA

AEGEE-Valletta and Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Miriam Dalli recently started a joint project to promote youth entrepreneurship in Malta and abroad. “The main aim of the project is to reduce youth unemployment in the European Union (EU) by focusing on youth entrepreneurship as a tool to improve both the local and the European economic situation”, explains Joanna Incorvaia, PR Manager of AEGEE-Valletta. “Our mission is to write a proposal with solutions for the problems that we are finding during our research and events”, she continues. “The team is closely collaborating with several other organisations in order to achieve its goal”.

Apart from MEP Miriam Dalli, the project owes its success to MEPs Theresa Griffin and Carlos Zorrinho. The Maltese Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry played a crucial role too. Among the conferences’ speakers were representatives from Malta Enterprise (MITA) and several Non Governmental Organisations (NGO). Entrepreneurs and established businessmen from different backgrounds also participated in the events. “AEGEE provided us with everything we needed for a great project. Other antennae should not hesitate to take up the challenge of starting their own project –in the end it will be worth all the hard work”, Joanna said.

The project was introduced to Maltese youth through a series of conferences and events. The first of them took place at the University of Malta. The participants in a panel discussion explained how they achieved success by creating their own businesses. The meetings ended with an interactive discussion between speakers and students.

The second conference was held in Brussels, consisting of workshops, discussion panels and a seminar on entrepreneurship led by foreign professionals and young politicians. It was attended by over 100 students and representatives from student organisations.

The third event took place in Malta, and was partly funded by the country’s Ministry of Finance. Among the attendees were representatives from the Maltese government, including the Minister of Education

Evarist Bartolo and the Minister of Economy Chris Cardona. AEGEE-Valletta and MEP Miriam Dalli got together to explain the problems they had encountered in the European system of youth entrepreneurship. They also presented a proposal with possible solutions.

AEGEE-Valletta projects in this field are not over and the members are currently planning a conference that will include members of the European Commission as speakers.

Similar projects have been carried out successfully also in other countries, such as the United States. The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship recently conducted a survey of high school graduates who had participated in their training programs. Its results were clear: those who received entrepreneurship training stayed in school for a longer period of time, had better employment prospects and enjoyed higher salaries than their counterparts. Bringing this approach to Europe could greatly benefit young Europeans.

“The combination of theoretical and practical viewpoints is what resulted in the positive outcome we have today.”

Kimberly Townend

AEGEE-Valencia



AEGEE AS A MEAN TO OVERCOME LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Being able to communicate in different languages makes building relationships with people from all over the world a lot easier. Learning a new language greatly enhances one's knowledge of a different culture. Gaining cultural awareness is always enriching and can lead to incredible new experiences.

AEGEE has always promoted language learning among its members through its thematic projects. The Language Interest Group started out as a working group

“Becoming a polyglot is one of the best –but less commonly taken– paths to self-development.”

in Autumn 2012. Its main aim is to make AEGEE members realise the benefits

multilingualism can bring to them as individuals and to society as a whole. It provides a valuable tool for young people to learn different languages through its events.

The most important event regarding language learning promotion in which AEGEE takes part is the European Day of Languages. AEGEE has participated in this celebration since 2001, when it took place for the first time, under the patronage of several European institutions, including the Council of Europe. On this day AEGEE celebrates Europe's rich cultural heritage and the linguistic diversity among Europeans.

AEGEE also encourages language learning through cultural activities, including contests and language fairs. A lot of locals offer its members the opportunity to participate in a language tandem scheme which is usually made of two partners who are native speakers of two different languages and are interested in learning

each other's mother tongue through regular meetings. Language tandems are a great way to improve one's language skills whilst meeting new people.

The Summer University Project is one of AEGEE's most emblematic initiatives regarding multiculturalism. It started in 1980 and it continues working today as one of AEGEE's most powerful tools to promote Europe's multicultural dimension.

Summer Universities are held in most cities where AEGEE is present. During one to four weeks, participants take part in all sorts of activities, including language learning courses. Some Summer Universities intend to increase the knowledge of their participants on a particular issue that is relevant for AEGEE as an organization. Human rights and protection of the environment are good examples; however, the majority of them aim to provide AEGEE members with a thorough knowledge of certain country's culture. Participating in a Summer University means living with people from all over Europe for up to a month, a great chance to practice any language with native speakers.

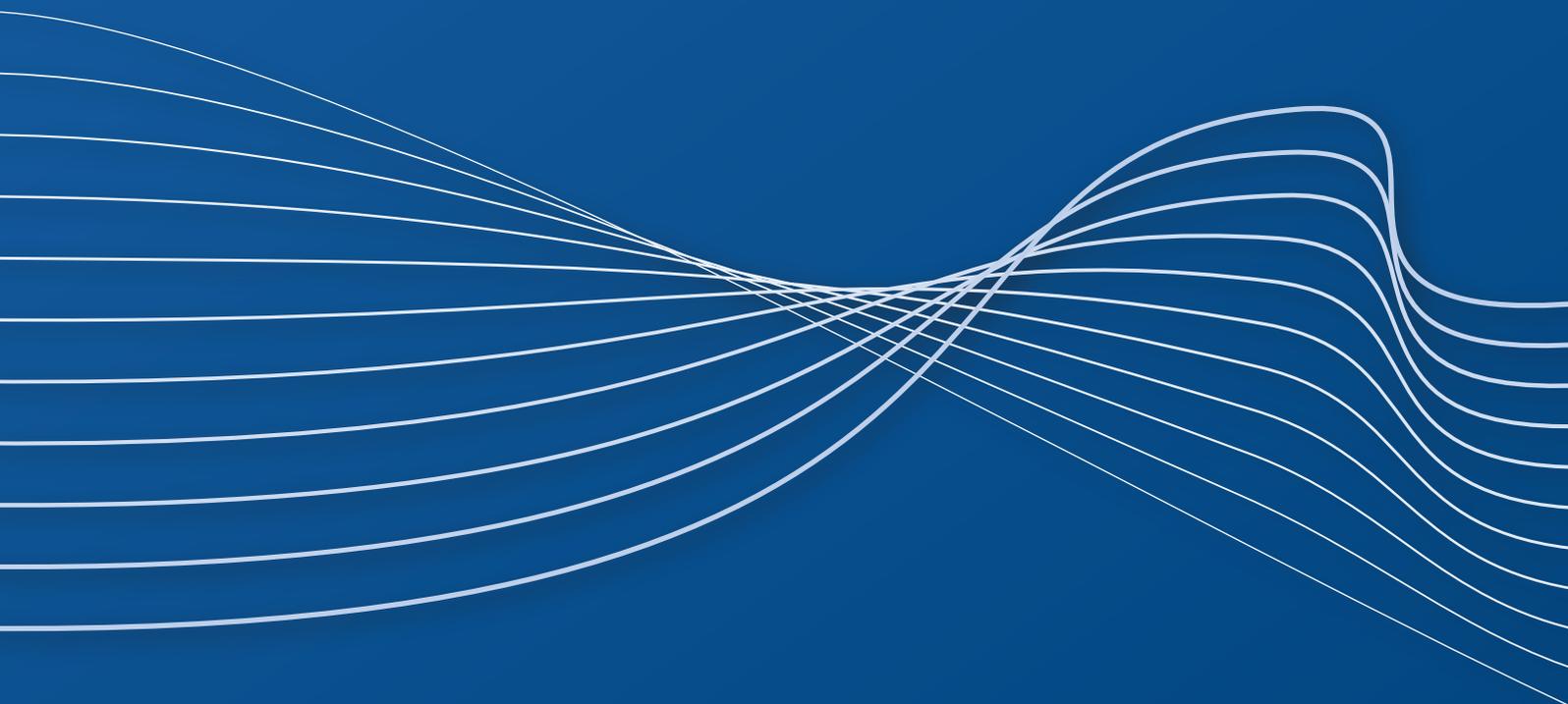
Learning a new language is becoming increasingly important for young people who are trying to get a head start in the job market. In recent years, language skills have greatly increased their value among employers from all sectors and being able to interact with people from different cultures can be the key to landing a dream job. Now it is the time to give language learning a try!

Kimberly Townend

AEGEE-Valencia

LOOKING FORWARD

Looking Forward introduces the new members of the Comité Directeur and offers some insight into their plans and expectations for the following period, which is marked by several European challenges, such as: Spreading Eurooptimism, Youth Mobility, Civic Education and Youth Employment. Also, we cannot forget about the fire burning on the eastern and southern borders of Europe. The slogan of the Agora in Kyiv "ReBuilding Democracy" is a spark of Europeanism that should encourage young Europeans to come and see the reality with their own eyes. Another opportunity to reinforce Europeanism will be the European Planning Meeting 2016 in Leiden and we can "Fly Forward" in May 2016 in Bergamo.





COMITÉ DIRECTEUR 2015-16

A Life-Changing Journey Ahead

Getting to the head office of AEGEE-Europe as an elected member of the Comité Directeur is like taking a train to an unknown destination. Even if the journey is full of uncertainties, you know it will lead you where the magic happens. Even if the pressure on you arises, working for such an inspiring Network is one of the most rewarding things ever. Moreover, even if the path might get rough at times, you are certain you can count on the help and the encouragement of your six travel companions.

The journey started on the 1st of August and in these first weeks we are getting used to working with one another, to a new office, to having a never-ending list of messages to read and reply. However, most importantly, we have been drafting our activity plan, seen which objectives, goals and hopes unite us as a team - and fitting the pieces of our seven individual puzzles together for a common vision.

We are strongly determined to strive for transparency, for communication with our members based

“Our members will play a pivotal role, as we want to keep their involvement in advocacy processes, training them and empowering them.”

on a true dialogue, where we can discuss the most pressing European challenges under a real culture of participation. Our members will play a pivotal role, as we want to keep their involvement in advocacy processes, to train them and to empower them. Union means strength and AEGEE-Europe will keep up its active involvement in several umbrella organisations. Internally, we will also bring the discussion of our organisational culture, the meaning of being a volunteer and we envision the establishment of the AEGEE Day as a

powerful initiative that can bring our local organisations together.

Talking about European challenges – we will proactively get involved in some of the most crucial matters that our continent is currently facing, matters

“We are seven people in this journey, but we will certainly not be alone.”

which determine our thematic focus: Spreading Eurooptimism, Youth Mobility, Civic Education and Youth Employment.

We will actively support the newly-established Working Groups, in order to ensure continuity and a proper implementation of the new structure.

However, this will not be possible without the strength of our members. Our organisation has become home to generations of intrepid and committed young Europeans - it is something that we have reflected upon during our 30th Anniversary year, proving that we

have been at the forefront of the main challenges and initiatives for the last three decades. Nevertheless, this is not only a thing of the past, but a part of our DNA – demonstrations of solidarity and brilliant initiatives of activism for a united Europe, fundamental rights and democracy are still taking place in the different corners of our Network, keeping the AEGEE spirit up.

The engines are running and this train is going at a faster pace. We are seven people in this journey, but we will certainly not be alone. We are there to support our Network in each of the stops and make sure that the trust we have been entitled to won't be let down. Now, it is time for this new adventure to start!

.....
Anna Gumbau

Communications Director of AEGEE-Europe 2015-2016

COMITÉ DIRECTEUR 2015-2016

Aleksandra Kluczka	AEGEE-Kraków	President
Svenja van der Tol	AEGEE-Nijmegen	Secretary General
Ander Guerrero Ruiz	AEGEE-Zaragoza	Financial Director
Réka Salamon	AEGEE-Aachen	Vice-President and Projects Director
	AEGEE-Debrecen	
Pablo Hernández Rodríguez	AEGEE-Alicante	External Relations Director
	AEGEE-Thessaloniki	
Anna Gumbau	AEGEE-Barcelona	Communications Director
Maryana Semenyak	AEGEE-Lviv	Interim Network and Human Resources Director

EMPLOYEES

Madalena Sousa	Policy and Advocacy Coordinator
Andrea Ferrara	Project Manager
Ioana Duca	Project Officer

AUTUMN AGORA KYÏV 2015

A courageous step forward

After the announcement of the hosting local of Autumn Agora 2015 in Cagliari, AEGEE-Kyiv, participants applauded this important step forward, showing the desire of the members of AEGEE to stand united behind their friends in Ukraine, who experienced a challenging year. Autumn Agora Kyiv 2015 will be the 60th general assembly of AEGEE.

It all started from an idea. As usual, if the idea finds people who will be there to support it, it gets transformed into reality. Organising the most important and biggest event in AEGEE requires not only efficient planning and experience, but mainly a team of people whom you can trust just like you trust yourself. Having a team of dedicated, inspiring and incredible personalities from different parts of Ukraine and Europe makes this event even more special.

The preparation for the Agora is a big challenge for our team, our local and our country, but we dared to face that challenge. The words we said in Cagliari still apply: this Agora is a reason to unite. Having members from locals all over the Network, from AEGEE-Moskva to AEGEE-Valencia, from AEGEE-Heraklio to AEGEE-Bergamo and locals situated in Ukraine, makes us feel proud.

The official slogan of this Agora is "ReBuilding Democracy" which is also the name of the six-month European project, the longest in the local's history, involving more than 1000 participants. The Agora itself will start on the 14th of October, but all AEGEE members and Ukrainian students interested

re|building
DEMOCRACY

to participate in discussion on active citizenship, European values and investment were welcomed to join

the "Young Ukraine" conference that takes place one day prior, the 13th of October.

After a successful cooperation with Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University during the Night of the Seven Antennae event in April, it was decided that the general assembly and the conference will take place in the buildings of the university in Kyiv - Institute of International Relations. The participants will sleep in the

university gym and will be taken by bus every day to the plenaries. So, the tradition of early wake ups continues.

The city itself is a reason by itself to come - everything is special in Kyiv. It's another part of Europe and still an absolutely

unknown place for the majority of people. The media turned its image into a destroyed battlefield, but the population of more than 3.8 million is enjoying the life

there. It is a place you will easily fall in love with and that will break a lot of existing stereotype. Especially if you have not been to this part of Europe before, it will be an absolutely new experience. It has two UNESCO heritage sites (St.Sofia Cathedral and Kyiv Pechersk Lavra Monastery) and the architecture is eclectic showing all the historical periods the country went through. It is a must to come and feel the traditional Ukrainian hospitality and Kyiv's unique atmosphere.

Around nine months of preparations went by so fast that it feels like it all happened in one day: Skype conferences, Facebook chats, shared documents, e-mails, numerous actions, and day-long meetings in Kyiv and outside the city. Now, Autumn Agora Kyiv 2015 organisers are ready to welcome all friends from the Network in the capital of Ukraine! Don't be afraid to come to Kyiv to join us, but instead be afraid of being stuck in the virtual reality that the media has been showing them in the past months.



.....
Anna Pykhtina

Main Organiser of Autumn Agora Kyiv 2015



AGORA BERGAMO

Fly forward!
#agoraofthe1000

AGORA BERGAMO - A *REVENGE IN THE MAKING*

A revenge. That's what we feel is happening in Bergamo. The revenge of the dreamers who decided that this tiny city will host a 1000+ young people event, helped by determination...

You don't just turn into a dreamer; time has to forge intuitions and put patience to the test. The sparkle of this dream started some years ago and the original core of hopeless dreamers have been working stealthily since then... Here we are: 2016 will be the year where AEGEE-Bergamo will show how far you can go when you collect the right people with the right ideas and you're ready to buckle down.

Organisation has become our closest mate: it is only the very beginning, but we already have one official email address each, shared folders, rigorously labelled, and a strict schedule. No time for laughing - although we had laughs anyway.

Agora Bergamo 2016 will be called "Fly Forward!", accompanied by the hashtag #AgoraOfThe1000. The hashtag is easily explained, because we will be with 1000 people and because in 1860 the "Father of the fatherland", Giuseppe Garibaldi, led 1000 people from

Bergamo to Sicily, starting the historical process which led to the unification of Italy.

1000 young people were the main ingredient for cultural unity and now we add a pinch of passion for the willingness to be part of the decision making process of our organisation, and of course a love for cheap travelling. We can support these passions with a great location for the sessions and an airport served by the main low cost carrier in Europe and it's not just an airport: the one in Bergamo is one of the most used in Europe!

Long story short: fly forward to Bergamo from the 18th to the 22nd of May 2016 and you, dear dreamer, will have your own revenge.

Go dreamers!

Laura Iacofano

Member of the Core Team of Spring Agora Bergamo 2016

EPM LEIDEN - UNLOCK YOUR LIFE IN LEIDEN

It was a dark, cold night, somewhere in Europe. However, for some lucky friends in Leiden, the day would soon become a lot nicer. The only thing it took was one e-mail from the Comité Directeur, which was titled: "Selection of your Local as Host Local for EPM 2016". Our friend Samantha sent us a very cryptic message in the WhatsApp group, "!!!!!!", but we all knew what it meant. Our dreams were realised: we were officially organising the European Planning Meeting in Leiden. Not that it came as a complete surprise, because we had been secretly meeting with university and municipality officials, ensuring ourselves of their

“From the 25th to the 29th of February 2016, Leiden will be all yours!”

the session locations, sleeping location and some of the party locations. For those who remember Spring Agora Leiden 2010, tents will be left out of the equation this time. We have a perfectly located University Sports Centre available to all participants. To ensure that they

will be able to explore the city of Leiden too, we are preparing an interesting programme for the arrival day for those who come early. Moreover, to make sure that our participants are introduced to the student life in Leiden, we will have different party locations throughout the city.

We are excited to organise this event for around 300 AEGEEans. From the 25th to the 29th of February 2016 (yes 2016 has a leap day), Leiden will be all yours!



.....
Boudewijn Steenhof

Main Organiser EPM Leiden 2016

.....
Casper Renting

Vice Organiser of EPM Leiden 2016

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WORD OF THANKS

When, in late June, I told Antonija “I’m in!”, I was scared. I had already been Editor-in-Chief of this publication for the 2013-2014 edition and it was an amazing experience, but I had another special person near me to help. This year I was the sole Editor-in-Chief and I was afraid that I will have too much work to do and I would feel alone throughout the process. It took me less than one week to understand that I couldn’t be more wrong, because I had a strong team with me.

Antonija and Svenja, my Comité Directeur appointed members, to start with. We had already worked together last year on the Key to Europe and also in other projects. Beside being the ideal link with the CD, they both are very efficient and organised, helping me to ease the process. A special thanks goes to Svenja, because her speed and her efficiency do not cease to amaze me.

Anna, Kimberly and Erik worked a lot to write some ambitious articles, often fighting against technology to deliver the materials on time. Your effortless writing was a pleasure to read and edit.

Simona, Sabina, Erik and Maria proved to be able to work under very tight deadlines, helping me and the publication to maintain an excellent level of English. Maria was also in charge of statistics, digging out numbers and figures to put a lot of words into images and graphics. Thank you for graciously offering to cover that position.

Mr. “Boss” and Mr. “Flower”, Vincent and Philipp, were the best creative team an editor could ask for. You made me laugh with your refined sarcasm and you managed to create some magic when the only directive you had was: “I want it clean and sober”. Indeed not very helpful! I haven’t had any editors but you were more precious than you can imagine. And Tedi, our “picture hunter”. Thank you for not giving up when the quality of pictures was just terrible.

Dear Key to Europe Team 2015, it was an amazing ride and it was a pleasure making this journey with you all. I owe you big time.

I would like to also thank all the members and locals who shared their stories and their time with us. This publication is dedicated to you all.

Ad Maiora,
Erika

Dear Erika,

Thank you for hunting down people when deadlines were close, for writing and proofreading articles until the middle of the night, for keeping up with the Dutch-German creative minds and above all: thank you for being our great, enthusiastic editor in chief.

xxx

*Antonija, Svenja, Anna, Kimberly, Erik,
Sabina, Simona, Maria, “Boss” and “Flower”*

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