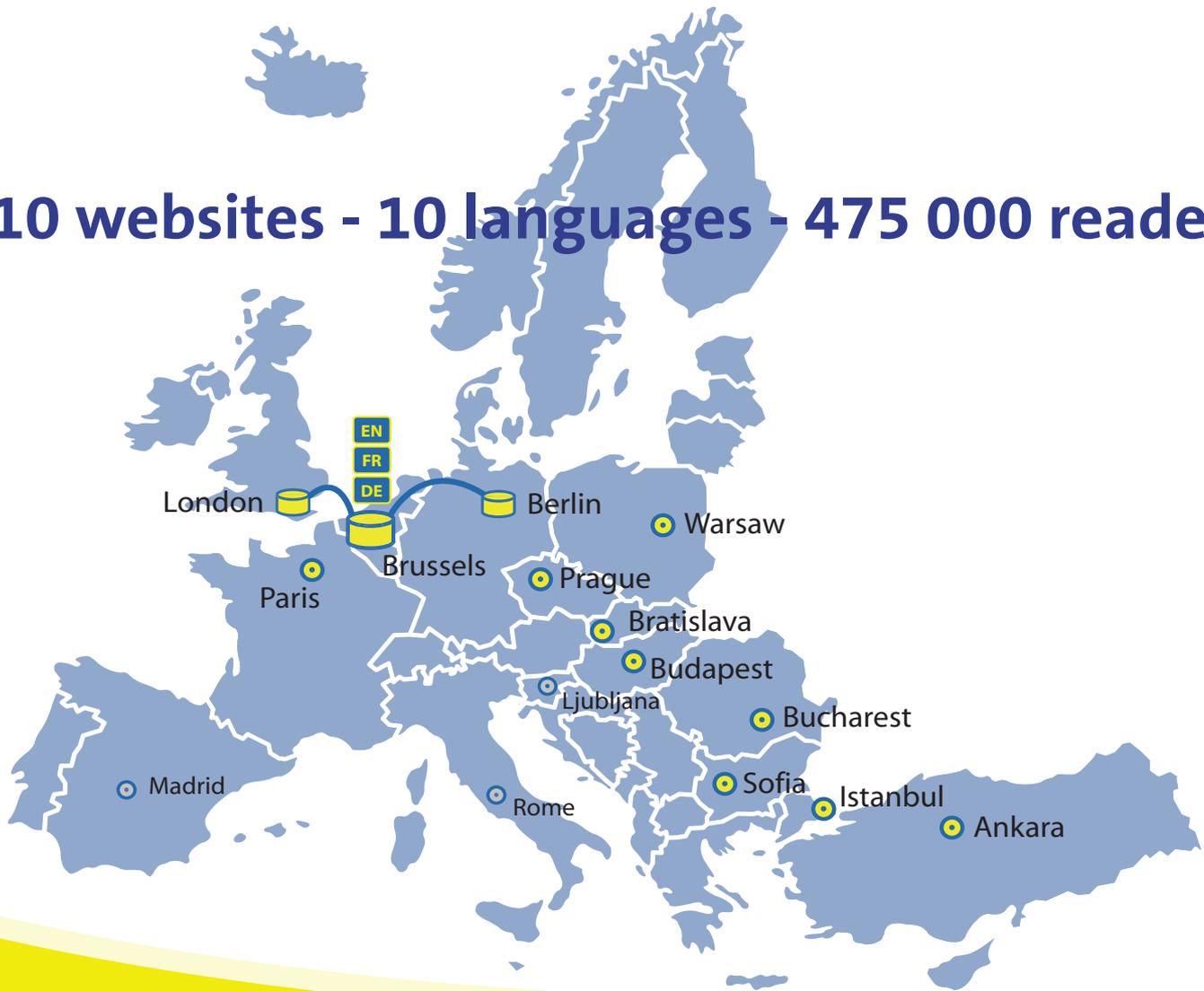


KEY TO EUROPE

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- Poland .pl
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- Slovakia .sk
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DR. DANILO TÜRK

THE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

For most of its history, the Slovenian nation managed to survive within the framework of wider political systems. Today we live as a sovereign nation in its own country within the European Union. Our independence was justified by the will of the people as expressed in a plebiscite. We experience the European Union as a friendly environment, which enables us to express our sovereignty while also taking part in broader integration processes. Intercultural dialogue is the basic element of our existence and our vision of our future.

4 Slovenia is a country, where culture is highly valued. Historically, the identity of the Slovenian nation is strongly linked to culture. However, we do not experience culture as something that separates us from other nations. On the contrary, Slovenia is a country where different cultures intertwine. It is the point where three major European cultural traditions – the Slavic, the Germanic and the Romance – intersect. Our landscape is marked by the architectonic influences of the Alpine region, Central Europe and the Mediterranean. In our recent history we have absorbed many elements from the cultural heritage of south-eastern Europe. In our cultural aspirations, we are open to international cultural dialogue and to the innovations which are the essential precondition for such dialogue. But at the same time, we are aware of our history.

This year we will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Primož Trubar, who was one of the greatest minds of the Slovenian nation, as well as an important sixteenth-century European intellectual. He wrote books in the Slovene language and thereby laid the foundations of Slovene culture and its position in Europe. His work proves that there is no contradiction between the best achievements of the European spirit and the most important interests of the individual nation.

Today, too, intercultural dialogue is not a self-evident fact but requires serious efforts. Of course, the challenges we face today are different. Besides bolstering dialogue within individual European cultures and within our shared European culture, we face challenges

brought about by the need for dialogue with non-European cultures. Part of this dialogue must necessarily take place within Europe, which is increasingly becoming an area of immigration. For Europe, this is historically a new position.

Intercultural dialogue continues to be a universal need. Europe must enter into it in a responsible manner. It must eliminate the impression that it is closing up, that it is becoming a fortress accessible only to the chosen few. This is precisely why intercultural dialogue depends vitally on the universal values it must promote. In addition to human rights, this category includes peace, progress and human solidarity. All these values are intrinsic to European intercultural dialogue and must be made clear to the whole world. This is important in our time, for the world has never been so connected nor at the same time so divided as it is today.

I am convinced that youngsters from all over Europe as members of AEGEE greatly contribute to expand the ideas of multicultural dialogue and to strengthen positive tradition and values for the mutual cooperation and understanding. In order to do so, it is fundamental to condemn all kind of prejudices and to promote tolerance and respect for human rights. The numerous projects and events, which will take place during your gathering in Ljubljana from the 30th of April to the 4th of May, will fortify the knowledge that mutual respect and consideration of diversities represents the key element of our common future.

In the hope that this gathering will bring fruitful results and will contribute to the enforcement of the European integration, I wish you to fill your hearts with joy and enthusiasm.



LAURE ONIDI

THE PRESIDENT OF
AEGEE EUROPE

It is a pleasure to welcome you to read through these pages. Key to Europe is our annual review and you will be able to read about our past projects and what happened in the last year.

AEGEE is active in more than 250 university cities, in more than 40 European countries. Our local groups are working together in order to develop local projects related to European matters and to further the integration of Europeans. Since its foundation, AEGEE has engaged students in the system of the European "politic". The word politic here is not related to political parties but is rather linked with the Greek word "polis" which can be defined as the involvement of citizens in the society.

Our students, as active citizens, exchange ideas and work together on different projects to make change in Europe happen. The outcomes of these local or European projects lead us, most of the time, to interesting discussions and conclusions that we are trying to share with the decision-makers.

Indeed the European Board of Directors referred to by its initial French name, Comite Directeur, has worked throughout the years in Brussels in order to have as much contact as possible with the relevant European Institutions, as well as interaction with civil society.

That is how in the past years, we got involved in projects having a visibility in Brussels, in the "Eurocratie" as it is referred to here in the European Capital.

The European Citizens' Initiative is a good example of this. Our project "Take Control: ways to democratise" in 2006 encouraged young citizens to have a direct say into the European legislation, as it is in the case in Switzerland. This proposal aimed to grant ordinary citizens the opportunity to initiate a law proposal, at the condition that they collect one million signatures. After two years of effective and determined campaigning, the European Citizens' Initiative has now been approved in January 2008, since the article is included in the Lisbon treaty.

After some years without any involvement in the educational matters, AEGEE finally took a stand in this issue. In 2007, our flagship project "Education Unlimited!" offered to inform students on the Bologna Process and exchange best practices in its promotion and implementation. This project also aimed at the recognition of Non-Formal Education.

We have shown a strong commitment in this topic, especially through the organization of the UNESCO conference on Non-Formal Education.

A lot of work has still to be done and AEGEE is working together with the European Institutions as well as with youth organizations and more specifically with the European Youth Forum. We believe that our involvement in the active society and the experience gathered through it should be recognized by the different stakeholders, may it be students, parents, universities and of course, future employers.

In May 2007, during our general assembly, called AGORA, AEGEE welcomed a new working group, Environment Working Group. This new group of high motivated people is now working on a new flagship project, "Changing Landscapes". Our involvement in this field is about informing young people in a non-formal way and makes us, young people, act in a responsible way towards the environment and the future generations.

We also conducted some internal reforms in order to allow the organization to grow from the past experiences. These reforms were concerning the structure of our strategic planning as well as the structure of our European board. We adjusted the election as well as the inauguration of the board to the academic year. We hope that this will lead us towards more quality and help more people to get the chance to candidate for the board and have an amazing experience in Brussels.

As you can read, AEGEE members are constantly working on improving their working environment as well as the society. At the end of the day, AEGEE is a playground. We are students, working together on projects, of various size and magnitude, experiencing new things along the way and most important of all, making mistakes, and taking note of them. That is how we learn and how we grow and how we try to make a change in the society.

I believe that young people need to express themselves and try to shape their perspective and their future. I hope that you will enjoy reading about our activities.

I would like to thank all the volunteers who have been working in the past years for the success of the organization. I am also very thankful to Gokhan Bozkurt and its team for working on this publication and deliver us these nice pages. Europeanly yours,

GÖKHAN BOZKURT

EDITOR IN CHIEF OF
KEY TO EUROPE 2008



Dear Readers,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to AEGEE's annual publication, Key to Europe which covers the last 1 year of our beloved organization. I would like to present this issue of Key to Europe on behalf of the editorial team and many other great people that have been working on editing this issue, without them I would not have anything to present you here. We did it together.

The success is not the publication itself but everything that stands behind, the voluntary work of more than 15.000 young idealists who make the Europe a better place to live in. Thanks to their efforts that the students' mobility is being promoted for years, that the stereotypes are being broken one by one though getting to know other cultures during the AEGEE exchanges or learn a bit of a foreign language at the European Days of Languages. AEGEE offers to its members possibilities and chances from dance workshops to diplomatic seminars and, for this reason, everyone can find their place to develop their talents. In this issue of Key to Europe, we tried to present you a good compilation of AEGEE activities that took place in 2007.

This year we have been focusing on the issue of Education. Bologna Process and students' mobility were in the spotlight. The Project Education Unlimited! - Improving European Education had a positive impact on society and reached a great success. Many activities were so successful that will for sure be continued. The topic is especially important for us, students who know how important and valuable the students' mobility is and how much easier life would be, if all the provisions of the Bologna Process were implemented. Therefore we – as an organization – decided to support this idea in that special way, by making it our yearplan project.

I hope that this presentation of the results of the work of AEGEE members will be an incentive and encouragement for the future to all the students already active as well as to the ones that have not tried to work for the NGO yet. We, the members of AEGEE, live in a wider Europe, we exchange our opinions and we discuss the shape of the Europe to come. Therefore, I also invite prospective members to share the ideas with us, to tell us about the reality of building a diverse, but united continent. It is a Europe of future generations; it is the Europe we are building. It is our Europe.

Enjoy reading.

WHAT IS AEGEE ?
WHAT DOES AEGEE MEAN TO ITS MEMBERS ?
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FIELDS OF ACTION
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WORKING GROUPS IN AEGEE
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AEGEE

WHAT IS AEGEE?

Short History

AEGEE stands for Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe. It takes its name from one of the birthplaces of democracy: the Aegean Sea, and from the first parliament established at the dawn of the French Revolution, Les Etats Généraux.

AEGEE is represented in 260 academic cities, in 42 countries and nearly by 20.000 students, and is therefore the largest interdisciplinary student association in Europe. Its activity is not linked to any political party, it is secular and characterised by the voluntarism and non-profitability of all projects.

AEGEE promotes a unified Europe without prejudices, striving to create an open and tolerant society of today and tomorrow by involving students and young graduates in valuable projects and discussions on topics of importance for the societies young people find themselves in. It promotes communication and integration in academic environments across Europe, and at the same time forms a network of European friends. AEGEE strives for cross-border co-operation among students. AEGEE promotes the idea of a unified Europe by trying to focus on four main fields, which are: Higher Education, Cultural Exchange, Peace and Stability and Active Citizenship. AEGEE aims to influence European youth in becoming part of an open and tolerant society.

Being truly European, AEGEE does not recognize the national level and does not use national administrative structures. The two levels officially recognized in AEGEE's structure are: the local level, providing the core for all activities and an opportunity for regular social meetings; and the European level, offering a basis for intercultural knowledge sharing by involvement in working groups and international Project teams. AEGEE members work for what they believe in. In return they get personal satisfaction and a trust that they will have a say in the course of events. The European-minded find in AEGEE a perfect environment to learn and act as a European citizen.



AEGEE enjoys support of the European Commission. It has a consultative status at the Council of Europe and the UN. AEGEE is a member of the European Youth Forum and enjoys operational status with UNESCO.

Short History: From Paris to Whole Europe

AEGEE was founded in Paris in 1985. Foundation of AEGEE was a result of the „EGEE 1“ conference, which was organized in cooperation with five Grands Ecoles in Paris. The aim of the founders was to create a platform for young Europeans to discuss European matters and present their ideas to both the European and national institutions. Due to the uniqueness of the idea, at that time, EGEE was able to stimulate many students to establish antennae in their cities.

In 1990, AEGEE had to face a major debate due to major changes in Eastern and Central Europe. The question of the debate was whether AEGEE should limit itself to merely the EC countries, or if it should open itself toward whole of Europe. The decision of the network was in favor of expanding towards whole of Europe and the involvement of EFTA countries. The decision taken by the East-West Working Group and the Comité Directeur – the „Quo Vadis“ team – led to an extensive growth of the network.

In 1980s AEGEE's external relations were mainly focused onto the European Union; AEGEE promoted the placement of the Erasmus project as well as the Tempus project. This self-restrictive approach was abandoned when AEGEE opened itself to the whole continent. Consequently, AEGEE became a candidate member at the Council of Europe as a non-governmental organization. In 1996, the AEGEE headquarters moved to Brussels, giving up their temporary domicile in Delft and bringing AEGEE closer to European Institutions, where it is today.

In 2000 - 2002, new successful projects are born: Education for Democracy; Eureka, a contribution to the design of a new education programme for the enlarging European Union. New tools are introduced - the Main Fields of Action and the Strategy Plan, which respectively define the main focus of AEGEE's activities, and the work and development of AEGEE-Europe as a whole over a four-year period. AEGEE decided to expand its activities beyond the traditional borders of Europe, introducing the Europe in the World year plan topic, organising the Caucasus Case Study Trip in August 2003 and the World Youth Summit on Globalisation at the European Parliament in Brussels.

Significant network growth has continued into the first years of the new millennium. Our 240 local branches organised 135 conferences and seminars and 99 Summer Universities in 2004. Two focuses in particular became obvious: AEGEE successfully offered its 15 year old experience in bridging East and West in the environment of the EU enlargement in 2004, for instance within the framework of the Yearplan Project "EU and Europe". The other focus regards conflict resolution in war-struck Balkan and initiatives to strengthen democracy and reconciliation in countries such as Ukraine and Cyprus. This was reflected by new projects which consisted of "Education for Democracy".

However, AEGEE members do not just talk about the problematic "Hotspots" - within the Yearplan project in 2005. Members of AEGEE were in the frontline during the demonstrations in Ukraine against the election fraud in December 2004, AEGEE took a firm stand for democracy as well as in the summer in Albania and keep on continuing its activities in this field. In 2005 the main focus of the AEGEE member is the 20th Anniversary of the Association. Series of conferences, celebrations are organised all around Europe, not to mention the biggest Gala event ever to be organised in Praha, in September 2005. Today, AEGEE has reached its largest network with the new locals in the Caucasus region.



What does

AEGEE

mean to its

members?

**Anita Bosneva – AEGEE Sofia**

Just Inspiration? AEGEE is far more than that for me! Something that started just as a persuasive way to meet young people from different parts of Europe, turned into an unconventional classroom. AEGEE changed me in a way I could never expect – slowly and smoothly it shaped me into a more professional, more confident person, not only sensitive towards cultural differences but knowing great deal of leadership, management, organizational work, HR handling etc. It's something you don't get in your usual university lectures but your future employer would want you to have .

**Meelika Jürisaar
AEGEE-Tartu**

AEGEE stands for seeing the world from thousand different sides at the same time, grasping hundreds of opportunities. It means a good amount of friends, idealism for me. And most importantly it changed me from an Estonian into a European.

**Christian Eichenmüller - AEGEE-Mainz/Wiesbaden**

AEGEE is the one unique possibility in your student life to enlarge your horizon and discover what it really means to be European. From Ireland to Azerbaijan, from Finland to Portugal, we all share the same eye-opening experiences: our first AEGEE event, our first AEGEE party, our first workshop, our first multicultural team we are working in and finally we will all arrive at the point where we drop out because we think it is time to leave and then we will recognize and admit how difficult it is to leave. But one thing is for sure: One day we might be spread all over the world, we might all work in very different fields and we might face diverse challenges in our lives, but for sure we will still have our friends coming from all over Europe and together we will always remember the times when we packed up for the next AEGEE event somewhere in Europe...

**Anja Sorsak – AEGEE Ljubljana**

AEGEE is a door to Europe. I stepped through it into an amazing world of AEGEE spirit and I have found lots of great friends there. It is such a good feeling to know that no matter where in Europe you are there is always someone around you can rely on.

**Kostas Voudouris - AEGEE-Athina**

"2.190 days of my life, 40 events, 10 Agoras, 17 countries, 35 cities, 7 languages, 25 AEGEE t-shirts, 274 train hours, 10 projects and Working Groups and countless sleepless nights, parties, heartbeats and of course friends! And the AEGEE life goes on..."

**Dino Margiotta - AEGEE Roma**

I always fear to be banal in describing something that changes your life, like AEGEE. Anyway to understand the importance of the dialogue and the comparison between an open and dynamic group of persons from every part of Europe, helps to discover the most deep meaning of this association where many persons from various countries have something in common that make them exceptional: to follow the same mission...

PATRONS OF AEGEE-EUROPE

As being one of the biggest and the most active student organizations of Europe, AEGEE has always enjoyed the support of a wide variety of statesmen and cultural personalities including the former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan, the former presidents of France François Mitterrand and Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister of Belgium Guy Verhofstadt, EU commissioners Günter Verheugen and Danuta Hübner, Secretary General of the Council of Europe Walter Schwimmer. These are just some examples of the names that support AEGEE.

AEGEE-Europe also enjoys the patronage of the distinguished European personalities such as the former Presidents of German Parliament Rita Süßmuth and Wolfgang Thierse, the former presidents of the conference of European Rectors Eric Froment and Dr. Kenneth Edwards, the former president of the Republic of Hungary Árpád Göncz, the former Secretary General of the Council of Europe Daniel Tarschys, a famous author György Konrád, the former Deputy President of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia Radmila Šekerinska. All those European personalities have declared their support for our association. Below you can see some more examples of well-known patrons of AEGEE.



Romano Prodi (born 9 August 1939) is an Italian politician and statesman. In September 1999 Prodi, became President of the European Commission. It was during Prodi's presidency, in 2002, that eleven EU member states abandoned their national currencies and adopted the Euro as their single currency; and in 2004, still during Prodi's presidency, the EU was enlarged to admit several more countries. Prodi's mandate expired on the 18 November 2004, whereupon he returned to domestic politics. Since 17 May 2006, he has served as Prime Minister of Italy.



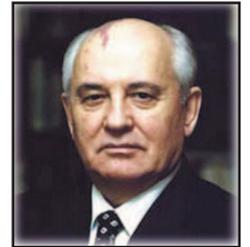
Professor **Bronisław Geremek** aka **Lewartow** (born 6 March 1932 in Warsaw) is a Polish social historian and politician and a former advisor to Solidarity Leader Lech Walesa. He served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1997 to 2000. He has also been Chairman of the OSCE. Since May 2004 Professor Geremek is an MEP. In the European Parliament he is a member of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.

Václav Havel, (born 5 October 1936) is a Czech writer and dramatist. He was the ninth and last President of Czechoslovakia between 1989-1992 and the first President of the Czech Republic between 1993-2003. In 2003, Havel was the inaugural recipient of Amnesty International's Ambassador of Conscience Award for his work in promoting human rights. In 2004, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He still remains actively involved in politics and runs the Dagmar and Václav Havel Foundation along with his wife.



Jacques Santer (born 18 May 1937) is a reputable politician from Luxembourg. He was finance minister of Luxembourg from 1979 until 1989 and Prime Minister of Luxembourg from 1984 to 1995. He resigned in order to become Head of the European Commission from 1995 to 1999. From 1999 until 2004, Santer was a member of the European Parliament. He also was on General Mediterranean Holdings' Board. He has also been president of the World Bank and governor of the IMF.

Catherine Lalumière (born 3 August 1936 in Rennes) is a French politician. Before her political career, she lectured on public law at the University of Rennes and the University of Paris. She served as the first female Secretary General of Council of Europe from 1989 to 1994 and became a member of the European Parliament in 1994 - reelected in 1999. She is currently Vice-President of the European Movement International where she chairs the Working Group on Enlargement.



Mikhail Sergeyeovich Gorbachev (born 2 March 1931) is a Russian politician. He was the last General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the last head of state of the USSR, serving from 1985 until its collapse in 1991. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1990 for "his leading role in the peace process which today characterises important parts of the international community. He is currently president of the Gorbachev Foundation.

FIELDS OF ACTION

4 PILLARS

HIGHER EDUCATION

AEGEE has a long history when it comes to its involvement in the Higher Education matters. Since its very beginning in 1985, AEGEE has put a huge effort into its attempts to improve European higher education. A big step was taken in 1987 when AEGEE started to support the Erasmus program of the European Community. One of the key factors in the success of such a large educational system is student mobility. That is why

AEGEE has always dedicated a lot of effort to supporting mobility schemes. AEGEE insists on Mobility being one of the most important tools of developing Higher Education in Europe. One of our first and most remarkable successes was the lobbying campaign for the implementation of the Erasmus programme in 1986 and 1987. AEGEE representatives had a series of meetings with several government representatives. There is still not enough financial and academic support even within the Erasmus programme, and outside the Erasmus countries we still have a big mountain to climb. A key player within AEGEE is the Education Working Group (EWG). Since its foundation in 1994, the EWG has been working constantly to improve AEGEE members' knowledge of the European higher education scene, and has supported the implementation of projects concerning this field. At the same time, EWG has been supporting local Education Working Groups and Erasmus Working Groups in various antennae. These allow AEGEE to help integrate Erasmus students into the local student life.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

One thing is for sure: You cannot think of any AEGEE activity or event without cultural exchange. One of the best and the most successful example for these events is Summer University project. Every year more than 5000 students apply for around 150 AEGEE Summer Universities taking place all over Europe, to satisfy their curiosity about the history and people of the other countries of Europe.

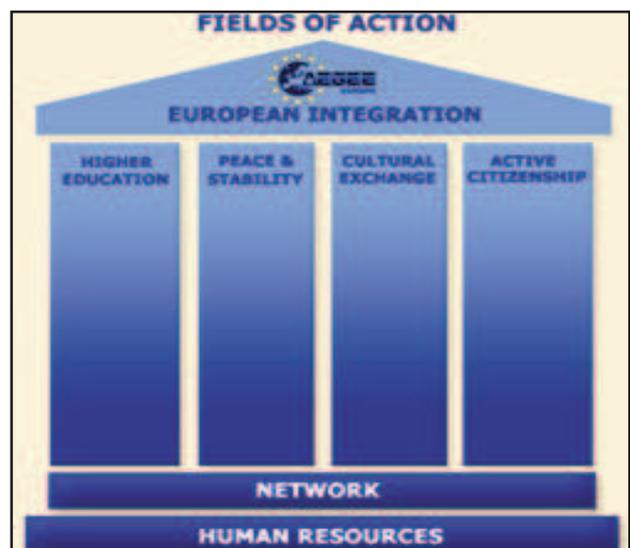
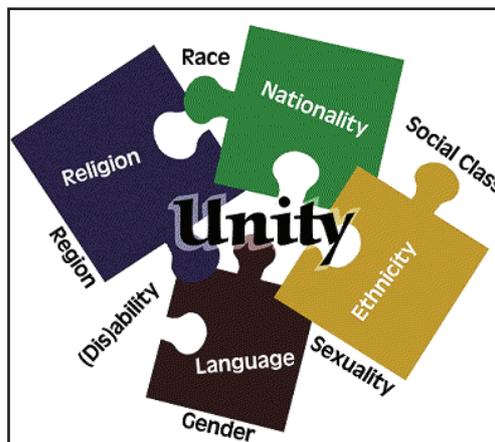
AEGEE's cultural Exchange idea a process, maybe a state of mind: being ready to give, receive, and change yourself by avoiding the pitfalls and temptations of misunderstanding and judging. Getting to discover cultures is a breathtaking adventure which fully involves body, mind and emotions. It is the only way to learn reality and break down all the prejudices towards other cultures around us. It is the only path to European integration.

PEACE AND STABILITY

Spreading knowledge on democracy, value of tolerance and openmindedness, AEGEE has always played an important role when it comes to Peace and Stability. AEGEE projects are the best example of how AEGEE has been working towards that particular goal. „Peace Academy“ dealt with conflict resolution, „Education for Democracy“ is bringing students from conflict areas into EU countries to study and develop an objective view-point on the conflict issue, and „Youth for South East Europe“ provides training in values we are trying to promote. The IPWG today is an integral and strong part of the network dealing with peace and stability. It contributed to all of AEGEE's Yearplan topics since then. Highlights were for example, the final conference of „Borderless Europe“, which included the simulation „The Union of 28“, or the yearly study trip „IPWG goes to the Hague“.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

AEGEE follows what is happening in Europe. If it touches one of the fields of our interest we, AEGEE members, feel the need to express our opinion and act accordingly. We recognize the need to be well informed about issues which shape our future. Whether it concerned strict VISA policies, Bologna process or some other topic, AEGEE has always kept the pace with the hottest topics on the European Agenda, and expressed opinion of the active youth. Active citizenship has always been a core field of action since the beginning of AEGEE. The related activities follow two main aims. One is to motivate young citizens to participate actively in decision making processes. The second is to lobby European institutions and other government structures for initiatives that support integration and citizen participation in decision making.



AEGEE'S STRUCTURE

NO NATIONAL LEVEL

One of the factors distinguishing AEGEE from other student associations is its unique structure. We do not have a national level, thus linking the European level directly to the locals, our individual antennae in European student cities. This structure gives AEGEE a truly European dimension, reflecting our ideal of a Europe without borders. There are many ways for AEGEE members to become active, such as joining one of the Europe-wide working groups and project teams, representing their local at Agorae, or even candidate to lead AEGEE at European level on the Comité Directeur or one of the Commissions.

Agora: AEGEE's General Assembly – the Agora – meets twice a year, usually in May and November. Up to 1000 AEGEE members gather for four days in one city to discuss and vote on proposals, projects, strategies and policies, and to elect new CD members and Commissioners along with any other vacant positions.

Antenna: Local AEGEE groups are called “antennae”, “contact antennae” or “contacts” when they are not yet fully registered. They usually organise at least one European event per year, as well as a number of local activities. The AEGEE network currently has 240 antennae and contact groups across 41 European countries.

Comité Directeur: The Comité Directeur (CD), often referred to as “AEGEE-Europe”, is the governing board of our association. It consists of up to seven elected AEGEE members from at least four countries. Every CD member has a particular area of responsibility, but as a team, the CD is the main coordinating and representative body of AEGEE. Among its responsibilities are contacts with the EU institutions, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, as well as other student associations and the media.

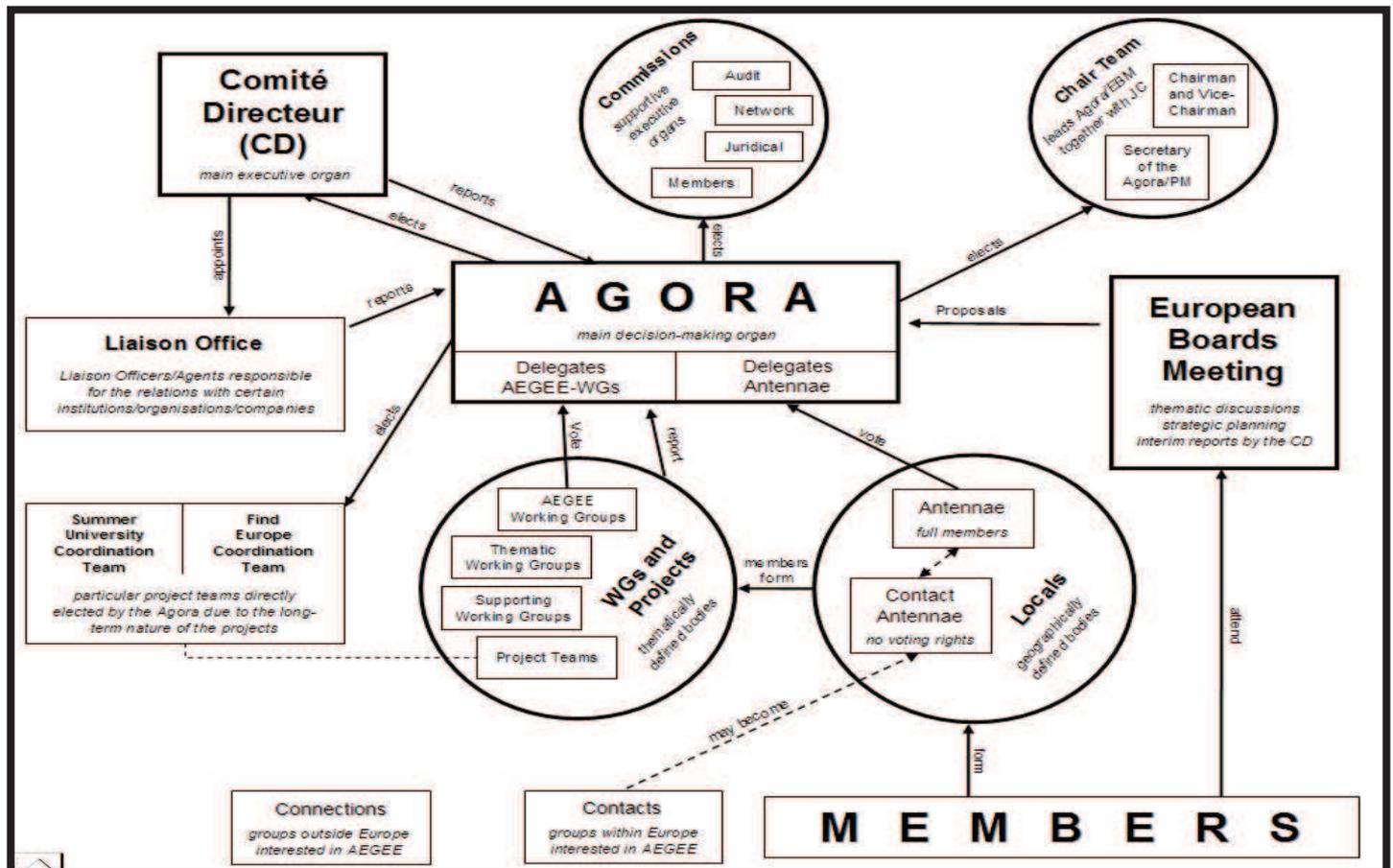
Commissions: The Commissions are elected to support and monitor the work of the CD. There are four in total: the Audit Commission, the Members Commission, the Juridical Commission and the Network Commission.

European Boards' Meeting (EBM): At the EBM, several hundred active members meet to discuss and learn about the future both of AEGEE and of Europe in general, through projects, workshops and other activities. Until November 2000 the EBM was known as the Presidents' Meeting and it was intended as a statutory meeting to prepare for the next Agora. Between 2001 and 2004 the Presidents' Meeting was replaced by the Planning Meeting, which served as much more of a think tank. The EBM is an ongoing attempt to combine both concepts.

Liaison Office: Liaison officers and agents are appointed by the CD as points of contact between AEGEE and other organisations, institutions and companies both on the European and national levels.

Project Teams: International project teams manage AEGEE's Europe-wide projects. The teams, consisting of volunteers from different participating locals, manage the conferences and other activities organised as part of each project.

Working Groups: Our Working Groups represent a foundation of knowledge – as well as continuous efforts to learn more – on various topics of importance to AEGEE. They bring together international groups of AEGEE members who are interested and often skilled in a specific field. Some focus on a noteworthy theme such as human rights, while others offer support to the network in a particular discipline such as information technology.



WORKING GROUPS IN

AEGEE

Working groups are the thematic backbone of AEGEE and can be considered as essential bodies of AEGEE. Similar to the local level of AEGEE, groups were founded on the European level of AEGEE. The first one was founded in 1988, three years after AEGEE was founded. Depending on latest developments and the need of the AEGEE-network, working groups are established or vanish.

On the contrary to the local level, working groups are thematically oriented and aim to connect members of AEGEE throughout Europe. Working groups are thus a European platform for young Europeans to meet and have the space to discuss different matters and to plan several activities on specific themes.

Every member of AEGEE can take actively part because these working groups are open for everybody. Hence, everyone can find a suitable place fitting to one's interest and skills.

But what are these working groups doing concretely and how does it feel working in an active working group? Last year an impressive amount of European events took place, initiated, planned and carried out by working groups. Often co-operations with local AEGEE-antennae took place to make an event become reality.

One of these successful events took place in May last year was initiated by the Cultural Working Group called "Get up! Stand up! Volunteering in Europe!". 32 European youth workers came together in Luxembourg City for finding different strategies for promoting (cultural) volunteering at national and international level in general, and European Volunteering Service in particular. They learned together about the importance of taking control in their own societies by participating in the social life of their communities.

Dealing with the issue of Diplomacy – the Diplomatic Seminar, organised by the International Politics Working Group and AEGEE-Ankara, took for one week care on this topic. In September last year, around 25 participants gathered to take part in a valuable experience explaining the importance of communication, questioning the challenges and encouraging young people. To take an active stand and most importantly expanding 'Peace and Stability' principle between the students by the help of conferences, panels and simulations, were the goals of the Diplomatic Seminar 2007.

Looking ahead in 2008, again very interesting and powerful activities are scheduled, like the conflict handling training "Overcoming borders – promoting mutual respect", organized by AEGEE-Passau and the International Politics Working Group. Next to that, a high-quality cultural event will take place in Kiev, dealing with art and painting in the Ukraine, named "Art in Kiev". Also the second edition of "Poetry & Youth - Your Key to hope", an international poetry prize in Trieste, is fixed part of the cultural calendar of AEGEE and will be coordinated by AEGEE-Trieste and the Cultural Working Group.

With a wide

range of different training courses, the AEGEE-Academy will keep up the high level of educational offers for AEGEE-members. A training for trainers is scheduled to equip future trainers of AEGEE with the necessary knowledge about trainings for European youth organisations. And together with other working groups, like the Public Relations Working Group, the tradition of trainings in the field of public relations will be continued.

But what is so special about being active in any of these working groups? Working in international teams, gaining intercultural communication skills, learning about distance communication via emails – these are not just empty phrases! The often mentioned and magical AEGEE-spirit easily comes over while working with motivated team-mates from all over Europe.

In a European student organisation with a high turnover of members these working groups play thus an active role in terms of continuity. Basically, they are the memory of AEGEE.

Overview over the Working Groups in AEGEE

AEGEE-Academy – Human Resources Working Group

Sustaining AEGEE's human resources and enabling its members to turn their ideas and dreams into reality has been the long-term vision of AEGEE-Academy since its foundation in 1999. The main aim of Academy is to develop and strengthen the human resources of AEGEE and to stimulate the motivation of its members. It strives to combine the capabilities of AEGEE members towards the achievement of the organisations' aims. AEGEE-Academy supports the personal development of AEGEE members by providing a diversity of training courses and co-ordinating a mentorship system. It maintains an overview of the personage and tasks in the organisation and empowers its members to find their place in the organisation



AEGEE-CwG – Cultural Working Group

The Cultural Working Group aims to enhance the knowledge, understanding and respect of the wide variety of cultures in Europe. CWG looks for the culture in theatre, literature, art performances, in our habits and our beliefs, in our daily life. CWG discovers the meaning of the word, “culture”, shows you that culture is closer to you than it appears. You can find it in the way you behave, the way you think, and the way you dress. You experience it in your every day life, in different ways. CWG is a platform which allows all of us to see that we are surrounded by culture.

AEGEE-IPwG – International Politics Working Group

The IPwG is especially for members who are interested in the theme of international relations and politics. Founded in 1997, it represents one of the biggest and most active working groups in AEGEE. The IPwG aims to provide a place for students and other young adults to get in contact with other students from all over Europe sharing their interests in international politics as well as debating their opinions. The IPwG helps to coordinate efforts of AEGEE-antennae in this field. Other events are organised and initiated by the IPwG itself to foster European Citizenship and European Integration.

AEGEE-EwG – Education Working Group

The EWG is one of the oldest and most traditional working groups of AEGEE. Founded in 1994 it represents one of the main pillars of AEGEE, namely about Higher Education. The Education Working Group strives for a European higher education area, promoting students mobility, foster discussion about the Bologna-process and Life-Long-Learning as well as the recognition of non-formal education.

Next to that it promotes and evaluates European educational programs such as Erasmus. Moreover, the EWG gathers and spread information about other educational and exchange programmes.

AEGEE-HRwG – Human Rights Working Group

The HRwG of AEGEE covers one of the most delicate subjects of today's world, namely human rights. The wG aims to create an international environment for young people who are interested in the field of human rights. Topics, such as immigration, racism and disability are only a choice of relevant topics for this working group. Workshops and European events are organised on a regular basis to promote this issue among the members of AEGEE.

ITwG – Information Technology Working Group

The Information Technology Working Group aims to support AEGEE in all matters of IT. Founded in 2000, it serves as a platform for all IT interested members of the AEGEE-network. The main task of the ITwG is to maintain the IT-infrastructure of AEGEE. This includes maintaining different servers, the website of AEGEE-Europe, managing thousands of mailing-lists and to assure a proper communication inside AEGEE – technically, of course. On regular basis visits in Brussels in the Headoffice of AEGEE-Europe takes place as well as training events for AEGEE-members.

VFF – Visa Freedom Fighters

Although Europe is getting closer, Visa is still an important and big issue. The Visa Freedom Fighters are a group of active AEGEE-members interested in this topic. They offer support in this issue as well as an updated visa-booklet. Workshops and international events are held on a regular basis, to inform members and to raise awareness for a problem which still put a lot of obstacles on AEGEE-members who want to travel throughout Europe.

DwG – Dance Working Group

Founded in 2001, the Dance Working Group is the right platform for all who loves dancing and thereby connecting cultures over Europe. The working group aims to animate AEGEE-members to organise Dance-events all over Europe in order to share a deeper insight and knowledge about European dance traditions. Workshops and events are organised on a regular basis, like during Summer Universities.

Bobigosa

Once founded, the Bobigosa Working Group worked differently than all other working groups in AEGEE right from the beginning. It aims to serve and to protect the transparency in all activities and bodies in AEGEE. To ensure this it uses the method of criticism and irony. Mostly experienced members of AEGEE are active in this working group.

PRwG – Public Relations Working Group

Four letters, expressing strong interest and support in public relation matters in AEGEE. The Public Relations wG is the meeting point for all AEGEE members who are interested in the large field of public relations. The Vision of the PRwG is to provide AEGEE with the best public relations. Additionally, the PRwG aims to assist the Comité Directeur in its specific task. Next to that the PRwG is taking part actively in prepare publications for AEGEE, for example the Key to Europe and the News Bulletin. Moreover, it strives and maintains specific public relation tools for AEGEE and to keep up a link between the European and local level of AEGEE.

EnwG – Environmental Working Group

The EnwG is the youngest and one of the oldest working groups in AEGEE at the same time – after a long break it was revived at the Agora Valletta in 2007. This working group is a perfect platform for all members of AEGEE who are interested in environmental issues. The EnwG aims to offer all members the possibility to share they points of views on environmental issues and how to overcome the increasing environmental challenges for AEGEE and Europe.

Nadine Karbach discovered AEGEE in spring 2005 and became active right away. First as vice-president of her local board AEGEE-Mainz/Wiesbaden, then in charge of PR for the European project, “Find Europe”. Currently, she is active in the board of the Public Relations WG, enjoying the speaker position.



SPREADING THE NEWS

PUBLICATIONS IN AEGEE

KEY TO EUROPE – the great publication you are currently holding in your hands. Having a strong appeal both to the external audience and the internal public is the yearbook of the association. Browsing its different issues, you can notice that the Key can be considered the most popular AEGEE history source since 1991 and each issue gives out a great overview of what AEGEE is. It is usually published every year in more than 20000 copies.



NEWS BULLETIN - the oldest publication of AEGEE and when it was first published in the late 1980s it was the only internal information source as the internet was not available to students. Now it is not the only source but is still the main publication addressed strictly to the AEGEE members with some entertaining articles. It is published by an editorial team with a support of the Public Relations Working Group, once or twice per year in several thousand copies.

ONE EUROPE MAGAZINE – a platform for discussions about the variety of different opinions on political, historical and cultural themes within Europe. It contains thematic articles showing AEGEE members' opinion on the widely issues. The magazine is published twice a year in about 5000 copies.

AEGEE GAZETTE – short and simple publication aimed at expressing opinions of AEGEE regarding current issues. It acts as a missing link between the students within the network and institutions, foundations and universities. Through this publication, such institutions can obtain an insight of the opinions and recommendations of students and act accordingly. It is prepared by the Comité Directeur and published several times a year in several thousand copies.



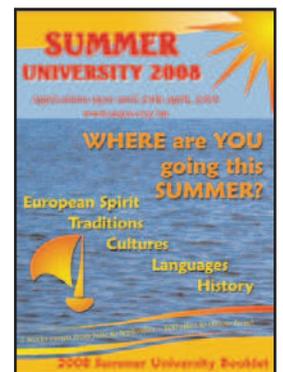
ADDRESS BOOK - strictly internal but very important and probably the most used AEGEE publication. It contains the contact data of all board members of all AEGEE locals, the European bodies - Commissions, Working Groups, Project Teams, the Comité Directeur and of the "Les Anciens", the Alumni Organization of AEGEE. It is published twice a year in several thousands copies by an editorial team working in close cooperation with the General Secretary of AEGEE Europe.



CD TELEGRAM - publications of the Comité Directeur aimed at making the information regarding the activities that take place in Brussels accessible to the members of the AEGEE locals and European bodies. Is released electronically several times a month via the main discussion list of AEGEE.

MONTHLY REVIEW - presents the endeavors of AEGEE every month. It is distributed electronically to all AEGEE external contacts and also to the AEGEE members via the main mailing list.

SUMMER UNIVERSITY BOOKLET - a very important promotional tool of the biggest project of AEGEE-Europe, the Summer University Project. Counting several thousand copies, the guide presents all the summer courses (over 100 every year) from sailing in Amsterdam to Archeology in Canakkale. Every course description is printed both in English, as well as in the native language of the organizing AEGEE antenna. On the basis of the information found in this booklet, distributed every March, more than 5000 students have applied to the summer courses of AEGEE.



RESULT BOOKLETS of AEGEE Projects - great opportunity to disseminate the results of activities carried on usually for several years. Every year several result booklets are published. In 2008, the result booklet summing up 10 years of International Politics Working Group and of the AEGEE's flagship project 2007 – Education Unlimited are to be published.

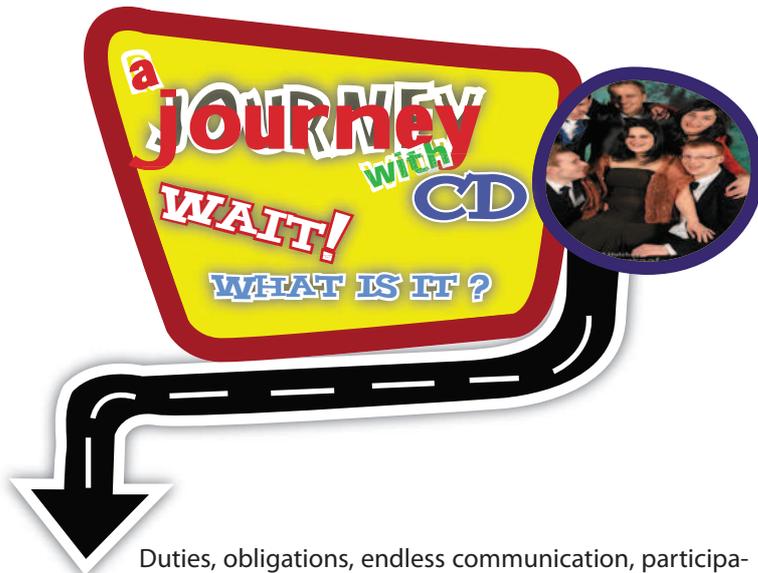
LOCAL PUBLICATIONS - wide variety of publications of AEGEE locals, ranging from sophisticated high-quality magazines to catchy newsletters, as for example the "MessAEGEE" of AEGEE-Bucuresti.

By Arleta Bojke

**A JOURNEY WITH CD
PEOPLE OF PRESENT
PEOPLE & THE PAST**



PEOPLE



Duties, obligations, endless communication, participation to many events, responsibilities, lack of time, heavy computer work, short days, long nights, business trips, planes, trains... s t o p... S T O O P! To put it in a nutshell – it is CD -The Comité Directeur, - inspired people who run AEGEE - OUR AEGEE. The Comité Directeur is the governing board of our association. It consists of up to seven elected AEGEE members from at least four different countries. Every CD member has a particular area of responsibility, but as a team, the CD is the main coordinating and representative body of AEGEE

Those unknown people have sooo much to do as these examples above, so let's travel a bit with them in order to learn more about them. Let's imagine that we are only hitch-hiking in their countries (with the backpacks, sleeping bags, mattresses and AEGEE spirit – four essential things of a real AEGEEan), meeting occasionally some of "mysterious" THEM in France, Georgia, Serbia, The Netherlands...We were waiting a bit for hitch-hiking and eventually a car picks us up...

In my CD team I learned to listen to the others "2004. University in Tbilisi. Right now is taking place something no one has ever heard of – a presentation of AEGEE. I go there!" – said herself Tika Tsertsvadze and did it. She went there and the meeting was enough to inspire her and get infected with AEGEE spirit. Simultaneously she was working with the National Council of youth Organizations of Georgia (NCYOG) and from that time became active in European Youth Forum (YFJ) events. Nonetheless, AEGEE prevailed. Tika took part in many events and being in the board of AEGEE-Tbilisi organized four international projects. Now she is a Vice President of the Comité Directeur 2007/2008. To be honest and transparent as a person and as a professional, to admit mistakes and learn from them, to be positive no matter what happens are the main principles she is guided by. "If not AEGEE, I would still live with stereotypes about other nations. In my CD team, I learned to deal with crisis situations, to listen to the others, to become tolerant towards other opinions. These are small but very important things that AEGEE gives me every day".



So we talked a bit and then the car stopped. I opened the door and saw the nameboard "Nancy". Then I thought: "We've just been to Georgia and it must be the city in... France?!" Yes, a strange car but I forgot that I'm on the board of AEGEE hitch-hiking CAR! Then I read further: "Soyons Realiste, demandons l'Impossible". I left the car and met a dark-haired open-minded girl who told me her story: "In fact, a few people know that I come from here. I have been travelling around France since I was one year old. Later I moved to Bordeaux, then to Pyrennees. This made me learn to adapt fast to a new environment. A childhood in the countryside and the mountains is a really nice life experience. I was hiking about seven hours



a day in the mountains and was sleeping in tents. That's why sleeping in a gym during AEGEE-events is for me almost a luxury". Laure Onidi, who is now a the President of AEGEE-Europe, studied applied languages sciences in Toulouse and Köln. She's been a member of AEGEE-Koeln, AEGEE-Toulouse and AEGEE-Mainz/Wiesbaden.

"AEGEE is the first youth organization I encountered. Since I am in Bruxelles, I met a lot of other student organizations. I met ESN, BEST, EMSA, ELSA, AIESEC, IASS and a lot of other acronyms. Honestly, I experienced that the youth organization are really similar. We offer different services and we all have different culture backgrounds but, at the end, what we learn and what we are is the same. I like a lot meeting other youth activists and sharing experiences with them". Then I asked her: "AEGEE is a mix of different cultures. Don't you loose your identity being AEGEEan?" And I got a fantastic answer: „ What is culture? Each of us has a unique culture because we all grow up in different environments with different people. Of course, people coming from the same country have more similarities but at the end, another person is always a stranger at first. For sure, I did not loose myself since it is part of what I am. AEGEE just enriched and shaped my identity".

The driver was in a hurry and didn't have time to wait for me. So I had to wait for the other car with a sheet of paper on its front window, where was written "Kaiserslautern". I was waiting and thinking. It is really awesome that so many people can unite in order to run common projects, organise such different events, having fun together. It is the best receipt for the cocktail called "AEGEE spirit".

At last I caught a car and could move forward. I was very tired as my trip from Georgia to France was quite long and not that easy. In the car, I felt so sleepy and immediately dropped off. I dreamed that I was interviewing project director of the CD Dragan Stojanovski. He said very many unexpected but true things to me: "I joined AEGEE quite accidentally, but when I think about it, it wasn't just a coincidence. Growing up in a country such as Serbia, marked with wars and terror of the 90s, I became concerned about social and community issues at an early age. It was in 1996 when I was born as an active citizen

if I can put it in such a melodramatic way. Slobodan Milosevic, Serbian dictator, liked to arrange elections from time to time, then forge the results and create some kind of legitimacy for his government. In November 1996 municipal elections took place and democratic opposition took a landslide victory in my home town – Nis. Ruling party decided to rig the elections once again, but out of their arrogance, they did it in such a silly way that even people on the streets could see them taking ballot papers



in the begs out of the polling places and destroying them. This caused a massive protest of ordinary citizens. For 100 days of winter 1996/97 people were protesting every single day just for their vote to be acknowledged. Students went on the streets as well and my sister was one of the student leaders. Together with here I joined the protests and realized the importance of social activism. The most important thing is that the dictator gave up in the end and first

non-communistic mayor of Nis held a post. I learned that citizens' actions work even in dictatorship. I continued being active at that movement, fighting for democracy and opposing war till the democratic changes in Serbia in 2000, and in the years after, when reconstruction of the new society began.

Learning to be an active citizen goes together with my strong cosmopolitan identity. I was raised in a multinational, multilingual and multi-religious family on the principle that I should never be proud or ashamed of whom I am but of what I did. I think that this is where my strong belief in European project comes from.

Somewhere in 2003 I became less active in the community field, and started working. Maybe I was too tired of Serbian turbulent democratic and economic transition, so I decided to start working. My field of study is Computer Science, particularly Business Intelligence. I started with small projects and ended with a full time job. I was working for two big multinational companies, and gained a lot of training and experience there. Apart of that I won a scholarship from one of the most prestigious institutions in the world, and through that programme attended a lot trainings and different development activities. I turned my interest back to the society and, since living the life of grown up professional at 23 was a little bit too much too early for me – I decided to do some volunteer work. So I ended up in AEGEE. What



happened next – I can't describe. A series of great events, wonderful friends, unforgettable experiences... I decided to give something back to the organization that is bringing so much to me. Why am I doing it? - Because I love it!"

Why can't I just do it? - Now or never!

"Wir sind gekommen. Weiter fahre ich nicht" – the driver said. These words woke me up. I was in the motherland of Stefan Wittwer, Network Responsible of the Comité Directeur 2007/2008. Let's give him a chance to say a couple of words. "My first contact with AEGEE was when a friend asked me if I would like to join him going to SU-information evening. I had no clue what it was but I went there with him.

The SU-info was quite interesting and they passed a list to subscribe for the mailing list. I did it. Few days later they were asking if somebody would like to join Regional Meeting in Munich as they would go by car and would have some places left. It sounded interesting so I just joined them. They were quite surprised that anybody answered. I became a member of AEGEE-Kaiserslautern on the magical date 02.03.04. I have always told the new members that if I had earlier become a member of AEGEE, I would have also left to Brussels. Once I asked myself: "Why can't I just do it? - Now or never!"

Then I hesitated deciding where to go further. The matter is that Vincent de Bruijn – the Secretary General of AEGEE – although is a member of AEGEE-Enschede, was born in Doha, Qatar, lived also in Tripoli. He says: "I will find myself there, where I need to be.

I was feeling like ending my AEGEE career before AGORA-Valletta, but I always had this feeling that I could do at least one more thing: CD. It was a sense of giving something back to AEGEE on the one hand and on the other hand I knew that it would be something that would suit me. Network Director seemed to be a logical step as I was in the Network Commission, but I was also thinking of Secretary General, as it's much more related to my real competences and my studies. I ran for the position of NetCom again, at least to have a full year as an elected person in the Network Commission, but in the end I was going more and more for Secretary General. It was a very strange time halfway Valletta and Eskisehir as I was just about to make a decision that would change my entire life". He still studies Computer Science at the University of Twente in Enschede, but it doesn't prevent him from being active in AEGEE-life. These were a great group of people working and living in the same house. So, I was just wondering how they are managing the financial issues. And then I was introduced to Tim. He also comes from AEGEE-Enschede. The main tasks of Tim Klifman as a Financial Director of the CD are the administration of AEGEE-Europe's finances, bookkeeping, financial reports, budget of the association, control of the financial reports of locals and Working Groups as well as control of the Summer University fees. All the duties demand from all the members of the CD full time occupation and sacrifice of their own time.

The history of AEGEE started being written in the twentieth century, in spring 1985. Since then thousand of novels, poems and even love stories have been fulfilling it. Millions of faces started smiling, eyes that saw the aim in the life and started sparkling, minds that understood what real active citizenship means and what results can be achieved when we are together. The Comité Directeur 2007/2008 are the offsprings and authors of the next huge volume of the book with the great name AEGEE.

Christina Pototska has been member of AEGEE-Lviv since 2003. She studies linguistics, literature and international law at Lviv National Ivan Franko University. She was the coordinator of SU-2007 in Lviv. She accepts life and people as it is and as they are and she is sure that God makes NO mistakes!



PEOPLE OF PRESENT



ASTRID SCHRADER – AEGEE PASSAU

A great presence and a lovely company have the name of Astrid Schrader. Well known for her endless energy and happiness, she is a member of AEGEE Passau since 2005. Studying Intercultural and Business Studies, she has 22 years and a strong motto: "The purpose of education is to replace an empty mind with an open one". Though a board member of her antenna for 2 years, she kept on moving towards the European level. Her passion for trainings and non-formal education grew more and more, due to several events: European School I in Passau, Local Training Courses, workshops at statutory events and occasions such as the Bologna Process Training School in Münster. In 2008 she is coordinating two Trainings Schools: "Noah's Ark", training for high school students on active citizenship and NFE in Athens, and one in Mannheim on student mobility. Outside AEGEE, she is now one out of two German Youth Delegates towards the United Nations General Assembly 2008. Following a wide-ranging national consultation process she will accompany the German UN Delegation to New York where her role is to lobby for youth interests and to consult on youth issues.

She believes in AEGEE for "the things it moves in people on a personal level. Youth should be the main group to be asked when it comes to building our future. I thank AEGEE for having proven me that ideas need people to implement them".



MILJAN RADUNOVIĆ – AEGEE BEOGRAD

The current president of AEGEE Beograd is 24 years old, studying Mechanical Engineering and he is called Miljan Radunovic. Member since 2002, he organised several events, joined the board first as a PR Director and now is dedicating his time to engaging his member to the European level of AEGEE and motivating them to getting involved in activities they like.

As his biggest achievement in AEGEE he proudly names the "support we got from our Ministry of Culture and Belgrade University rector. This proved that our work is valued and recognized by our country and its government".

At the moment Miljan is the Chair of the Liaison Agency, one of the most valuable bodies of AEGEE Europe, "a connection with every possible international (European or not) public or private body that can be of any assistance to AEGEE members" like he calls it. He considers it a big challenge to represent something this huge, with a long tradition, but he is very confident in his team and their skills.

As for what AEGEE means to Miljan "Besides meeting tones of people all over Europe, one of the persons I have discovered the most is ME; AEGEE gives you the chance to get to know you better, develop yourself and help others to the same".



KADRI KALLE – AEGEE TARTU



“What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger”, says Kadri Kalle, member of AEGEE Tartu and, lately, of AEGEE Valletta. She is now 23 years old and following her first year in Master.

As a typical AEGEE member, she broadened her view of life and she made many friends from all over Europe, “few of them closer to me than some Estonians could ever be – this shows that there is something else besides national background that unites us”.

Though she joined AEGEE in 2004, she never was in the local board, preferring to active on the European level. When she first visited an AGORA she said to herself “Imagine how much this huge crowd could change”. This is how she started giving workshops, knowing more people, being a workshop leader in Youth&Globalisation seminar and ending up in the 2007 Flagship Project Education Unlimited!

Together with some friends, she gave birth to the Environmental Working Group in spring 2007, of which she is the Projects' Responsible. This led to the creation of the 2008 Flagship Project Sustaining our Future, where Kadri is a content manager. Environmental problems are complex and they should be treated together with other social, economical, cultural ones. If we are an organisation that wants to have strong common European society, then we cannot look pass environmental issues”.



PATRICK HANCKMANN – AEGEE EINDHOVEN

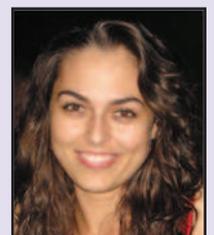
Patrick Hanckmann has been since 2004 a member of AEGEE-Eindhoven. He is now 26 years old and is currently writing his graduation thesis on a very interesting theme: Artificial Intelligence.

His AEGEE activity started with an exchange between AEGEE-Tbilisi, AEGEE-Minsk, AEGEE-Beograd and AEGEE-Eindhoven. This event was very motivating, got him active and pushed him into the European level. His first event he really organised was the Media School in Eindhoven in 2005. During that year he was also elected as President of his antenna and managed to work on smaller on bigger events, such as Travel Summer University, European Boards Meeting and the World Leadership Congress. As a true AEGEE member, he has been active in practically every task, from Incoming Responsible to planning or treasuring.

At the moment he is a Board Member of AEGEE-Academy and Speaker of the Dance Working Group. For the first one he is responsible for the human resources and its future strategy. Within Dance Working Group, he is currently evaluating its aims, objectives and activities for the next period.

In AEGEE, Patrick thinks that “the main thing I did was motivating people to become or stay active”. As for what he gained, he can quickly reply “my social skills”.

Violeta Joitoiu is active member since April 2005 in AEGEE Bucuresti, she has been a Project Counsellor in the local board, SU coordinator. On the European level, she is member of the PRWG Board Member and Secretary since Nov. 2005. – Her motto is “Future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams”.



People & THE Past

BETINA SZUDLAREK - "THE mix: brains, looks, wits, charm, ambition & finesse"

Dedicated, passionate, persistent - these are only some of the adjectives her friends use while talking about Betina. No one question her contribution to the organisations' life. Enumerating only highlights in her eventful career, the biggest success in her own eyes is Planning Meeting in Katowice - her mother antenna - in 2001 but many others cannot forget the brilliant European School 2 in Rotterdam in 2004. Many of its participants (including the chief editor of the publication and the author of the article ;) are still active on the European level of AEGEE. "I can safely say that this event was one of the best events the AEGEE network had seen in a long time", says Roel Visser who was both organiser and participant of the training.

"She is made to be a trainer", says Jaap Commijs, also very committed member of the Academy - AEGEE Human Resources Working Group. He adds and he is not the only one to say that her most important strengths are that she is well prepared, always knows what she is talking about due to her broad practical experience and is very approachable for participants. As Betina never does half job, everything she touches must be of a very high quality, her input in improving AEGEE European Schools concepts was inevitable. Her devotion for the organisation paid her back. She is often given as an example of the great development she made as a trainer since she was a Network Commissioner till she was the manager of the European School 2. And now as a PhD candidate in Erasmus University in Rotterdam, lots of her job is again teaching people. Seems like trainings got to her life forever.

Not being so much active in AEGEE, she is still there to be approached, to help with a training, to give a lecture or lead the training. "Whenever I need advice, feedback or AEGEE related help I know I can turn to her", says Roel. Making a big progress in her skills, she did not change as a person, she remained humble, she just remained herself. Sena Latif, former CD member and one of her closest friends summed her perfectly up in 2 sentences - „she has THE mix: brains, looks, wits, charm, ambition and finesse. The lady is one of a kind!"



SILVIA BAITA - "Every single step in her career has been a conquest"

Silvia is one of the best examples of success through inspiration and hard work. Starting in AEGEE-Cagliari, through the Network Commission to Comité Directeur (CD) and President of AEGEE-Europe. "Every single step in her career has been a conquest, every achievement has been a tremendous fight", says Nicola Rega who worked with Silvia in the CD and was her predecessor as the President. Getting to the top of the organisation, it's the final step for many people but not for Silvia. Becoming a member of the chair team of the Agora/EBM she committed another 1,5 year to the organisation - always fulfilling her duties with passion and enthusiasm. "Having her next to me during a statutory meeting was a relief, gave me a lot of comfort and security and last but not least - also fun", admits Wiebke Hahn who worked with Silvia first in the CD and then in the chair team.

Wiebke also admits that for what she admires Silvia the most is making 9 individuals in the CD work together as a board of AEGEE-Europe. One of Silvia's friends, Amadeo Ferrara recalls that at that time "she worked hard spending all her energy giving continuity to the work of her predecessors and it was not so easy." It was not always easy but her wonderful inner energy, contagious enthusiasm and always trying to find a solution helped her to overcome difficult moments. "In the CD whenever I felt I could not handle the issue anymore, there was always Silvia who cheered me up with her optimism and humour, who was taking over some correspondences and also made me believe that there was indeed a way to cope with the situation", Wiebke says.

According to Nicola "AEGEE on the one hand, let's call it the "direct way", helped her in developing several horizontal competences like intercultural learning, team work, crisis management, stress management, meeting deadlines, etc. On the other hand, the "indirect way", it gave her the chance to be involved in different kind of activities that allowed her have an understanding of what she really wanted or, at least, what she did not want at all to do in her life." Thanks to that she has a work she likes now. She is working in the marketing department in Humana Diseño y Comunicación. But the professional aspect is not the only benefit. Being helpful, optimistic, always trying to make people feel comfortable around her she gained many AEGEE hearts very quickly and she gained them for life.



MARK DE BEER - "Always there, reliable and helpful"

When Mark is to be described by his friends and people that worked or work with his words "THE MOST reliable" and "THE MOST trustworthy" are used by every single one of them. "I never had any doubt that he would not fulfill expectations or that he would not deliver what he promised. Even if that would take working during the night or a sacrifice any way", asserts Parcifal van Overbeek who knows Mark for year and who worked with him on several occasions. Mark is also very appreciated by his patience (some people say they NEVER saw him angry or stressed) and determination.

Some of Mark features - like self-confidence - came during his AEGEE work. It was especially during his time as the president when he needed to cope with many various and strong personalities. "For me as a very new AEGEE member at that time Mark was a silent power as we say in Greece. At some point I was convinced he is the right one. I couldn't criticize his work, I could just get convinced or not. And I was", reminisces Maria Nomikou who later on got to know Mark much better during many common AEGEE trainings. He was and is propitiating people with his attitude - never arrogant, always finding a great balance between responsibility and fun. As a goal oriented, hard-working and very dedicated person he also not missing the "relax" part and shows a great sense of humour. To get convinced about that it is enough to see one of the famous gossip papers he prepares every night at the European Schools.

What makes Mark even more special is devotion to the organisation. Working for his local in Enschede, the Academy board, then the CD was already a lot. 6 years passed since he finished his term as the president of AEGEE-Europe and "he is still the one to call for many people for different reasons. Always there, reliable and helpful", says Megi Chudzik who worked with Mark in the CD. During that time, for some time already being the General director at De Beer International - his family business, Mark was in the board of Foundation AEGEE Trust Fund, coming to many trainings, helping with the websites and when the IT-assistant of the chair team could not make it for the Agora in Izmir, he was also there.



SUSANNA RITALA - "When she gets involved in something, she does in 110%"

The story started 10 years ago when Susanna joined AEGEE-Helsinki and she is still around giving a hand to the young generation of the local what is very appreciated. "I'm very happy that she is still here. She's a great friend and also a living link back old times in AEGEE", says Juha Kännö, the current president. What she did during that time is difficult even to enumerate examples – being the president of her local, the Address Book coordinator, Secretary of the Agora, trainer and organiser of many events of which the biggest success for her was Planning Meeting in Helsinki in 2002. "Susanna was super active. She was often doing AEGEE really 24/7, sometimes being online early morning hours discussing with other AEGEE people", recalls Anni Keinanen, Susanna's friend from AEGEE-Helsinki.

It was not only she was fulfilling all that tasks, "Susanna is very enthusiastic about things she does. When she gets involved in something, she does it 110%", adds Anni. She is professional, reliable, trustworthy and never gives up. She puts lots of effort in running AEGEE-Helsinki what is not very easy in Finland. She was elected a president for several times. Even after finishing her term in the CD. Many people admire her devotion and wonder where does it come from. According to what her closest friends say, she just deeply believes in AEGEE ideals. "She simply has a heart of gold. At the same time she has had this hunger for getting to know the world and take responsibility", as describes her AEGEE's honorary member, Gunnar Erth.

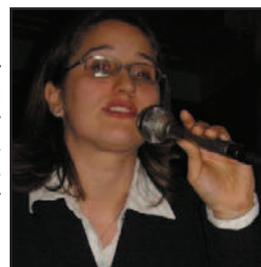
Susanna put a lot of heart and energy to AEGEE but it paid her back. She got friends that adore and admire her, she became first honorary member of AEGEE-Helsinki ever and the experience she gained helps her a lot. "She knows how to coordinate, how to handle complex issues, how to deal with different characters and cultural backgrounds", Olivier Genkin, other honorary member of AEGEE and her close friend at the same time explains. As Susanna is working at the Helsinki School of Economics as an Alumni Coordinator arranging a lot of seminars, conferences and parties, and is doing marketing, communications and networking this skills help her a lot indeed. She coordinates the alumni relations of the university, e.g. making sure that former students stay in touch with the university and come back as lecturers, cooperation partners, sponsors, mentors for students etc. She is arranging a lot of seminars, conferences and parties, and is doing marketing, communications and networking. She says it is her dream job and she loves what she is doing.

**Wiebke Hahn - "Reliable like a rolls roys"**

By many called the best Secretary General and chairwomen of the Agora for years. People who worked with her stress that it so due to her unprecedented professionalism. „Wiebke is reliable like a rolls roys. Always professional and on time, perfectly organised, effective and most of all - constructive. She taught me that deadlines not only should but really can be obeyed“, describes her roommate from the CD house Karolina Wysocka. For her the biggest personal success was the victory in a fight with a Belgian administration to get the visa for Jovica Karanfilov, her Macedonian CD-mate, things she is appreciated for in the network are numerous because "what makes Wiebke a special person is her contribution for several years", explains her friend from Mannheim and also flat mate for years, Patrik Reuter explains.

Wiebke joined AEGEE- Mannheim in 2001 and she held various positions in the board. What the best shows her loyalty and dedication to her local is the fact that even after being for a long active on the European level of AEGEE she is around to help like during the recent Mobility Training School. She was a big support for the organisers there. „Her devotion comes from the fact that she loves AEGEE and feels responsible for the work she has done for it. It is so natural as she is so tightly connected to the very concept of AEGEE. She has been a big part of it for years“, says Angeliki Boura from AEGEE-Athens, who worked with her in the chair team as the President of the Juridical Commission. She adds that this commitment gave her lots of experience, chances to test and measure her abilities and skills in various positions what will pay off in a long run.

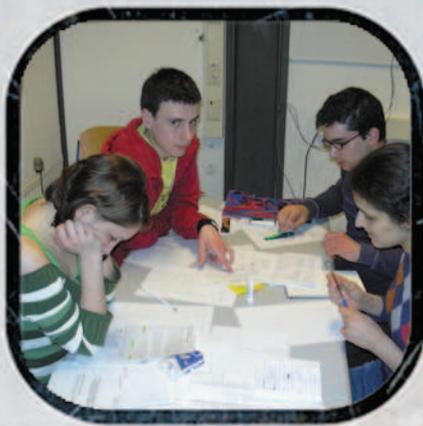
"The most important strength of Wiebke is that she has a proud and kind heart", says Angeliki. It's also other of her friends opinion that Wiebke is just a perfect combination of being strict and disciplined (being a true German ;)) on one side and sweet and loving on the other side. "She has a natural ability to call things straight by their name and people do not feel offended but inspired", says Karolina adding that one must remember to give her chocolates not flowers, because flowers are not useful... ;)



Arleta Bojke – since more than 4 years ago she joined AEGEE-Poznan, PR became her true love. She was organizing many local and international events – most of the time as the PR Responsible e.g. of the 1st edition of "Shooting Europe!" Short Film Festival in Karlsruhe, IPWG. She was also chief editor of "News Bulletin" and twice of "Key to Europe".



**HUMAN RESOURCES IN AEGEE
ES2 OVIEDO
TRAININGS IN AEGEE**



**TRAININGS OF
AEGEE**

Learning to make your dreams come true

Human Resources in AEGEE

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world - Nelson Mandela

IMAGINE ...

A European network of young volunteers, consisting of 15.000 members, spread across more than 40 different European nations, living in more than 240 university cities, studying a diversity of disciplines, investing their free time for volunteer work. All of them together are running one of the biggest voluntary student organisations in Europe, are organising more than 300 events per year in the quest for bringing Europe closer together, acting against obstacles like prejudice, intolerance and racism. Our members are the ones turning all ideas into action, turning dreams into reality. They are AEGEE's most precious resource - and one of the most difficult to handle.



Human resources in AEGEE strives to contribute to the achievement of the aims of the organisation by linking the personal aims of the members to the organisations' success. It is about empowering our members, finding out their potential and supporting them to further develop themselves.

Several actors are involved in human resources work: Next to the Comité Directeur, the European Board of AEGEE, the Network Commission is supporting local AEGEE groups and their members to develop further. The AEGEE-Academy as Human Resources Working Group is developing and implementing human resources strategies.

ROLE AND VISION OF AEGEE'S HUMAN RESOURCES

Sustaining AEGEE's human resources and enabling its members to turn their ideas and visions into reality has been the long-term vision of AEGEE-Academy since its foundation in 1999. The main aim of Academy is to develop and strengthen the human resources of AEGEE and to stimulate the motivation of its members. Thus, Academy supports the personal development of AEGEE.

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS – AEGEE's classical training tool

Since almost ten years, AEGEE-Academy organises around six international training courses per year, in one corner in Europe. These so-called European Schools are characterised by their basic features: European - All training courses assemble a group of participants and trainers from a diversity of backgrounds, cultures and nations. A truly European atmosphere with intercultural teamwork and understanding is created.

Interactive - European Schools are based on the participation of the young people attending.

Creative – The methods used in the trainings offer a wide variety of exercises and is able to adapt to a diversity of learning styles. Participants are encouraged to express their ideas and thoughts in creative ways.

Learner-centred – The curriculum is designed according to what the participants need in their NGO work back home.

Fun – All trainings are combined with a lot of fun, whether for participants, trainers or organisers. No matter if intercultural evenings, street actions, theme dress parties or other things – an exciting social



programme is always an included guarantee for the success of our trainings.

All that equals ... EFFECTS!

Participants of European Schools are "infected" with a virus of motivation and enthusiasm for developing their AEGEE-involvement! They are inspired by the truly European atmosphere achieved through such a training. They find friends coming all over Europe, friends they will stay in contact and work with in future, friends sharing their dream of a Europe, coming closer together. Through our trainings the AEGEE network is continuously being built on personal relationships of its members.



25

EMBARKING ON A NEW ADVENTURE A CHANGING APPROACH TO HUMAN RESOURCES

Academy has recently developed into another direction of Human Resources. Next to trainings, different Human Resources tools are being developed to adapt to the needs of AEGEE. These include the extension and intensification of the mentorship programme which shall be complemented by a coaching system. Other ideas include the renewal and constant updating of a Human Resources Database for AEGEE-Europe. A change in the membership structure is planned: Next to trainers, HR workers, eager to contribute to strengthen AEGEE's Human Resources, will complement our work.

Human Resources is and remains a most unique, changing and interesting field to be involved in! And one that never ends – learning to make your dreams come true!

Julia Hoffmann is Board Member of the Academy, AEGEE's Human Resources Working Group. She has been involved in AEGEE for four years: first in the work of her local in Mainz, later in the International Politics Working Group and the Caucasus Project.



ES2 OVIEDO

ES2: An event for the "Future of Europe"

Organizing a training course which is addressed to young and active Europeans who want to actively participate in the creation of knowledgeable and participative society without prejudices and discrimination is never an easy task.

The preparation...



After the European School 2 in Ankara it was very clear for all of us that as the youth work is being developed in Europe, the concept of the ES2 should follow this development as well. At that moment, the academy board decided to organize a Concepts Development Meeting with the aim to gather experienced AEGEE members to work on the concepts of FRES and ES2. Brave AEGEE-Karlsruhe, organized this meeting and finally with the great help

of Parcifal van Overbeek coordinator of the concept of ES2 we managed to collect many new ambitious ideas.

After a lot of work on looking for manager and local organizers, in May 2007 AEGEE-Oviedo agreed to organize it and we started working. At that moment it was a plan for the next year. So far...so optimistic... The first unsuccessful try to get some financial support made us even stronger and finally the 4th of January, the day our event was starting, we realized that we had: An amazing group of 22 participants, 6 trainers, a great group of organizers and the financial support of the Youth in Action program.

The event...

The next 9 days, the sunny room in the dormitory of Oviedo, was full of idealism, new ideas, questions, dreams. The 22 participants, the people who will lead the European level of our association had the chance to acquire knowledge on the European Institutions and Youth Platforms, partners of AEGEE and representation techniques, Youth policies, strategic planning and project development. Through a 2 days mini course on soft skills, they had the chance to work on their personal development, focusing on intercultural learning, conflict management, team work and leadership, giving and receiving feedback and after the introduction of the portfolio of youth workers and youth leaders they worked on their self assessment and they created their personal development plan. The last days of the event were dedicated to the development of their own real projects such as Cyprus project, the involvement of the network in the flagship project, the creation of a democratic society on line, and the European Dimension of high schools that hopefully you will see them being implemented soon. All these were done through different methods such as lectures, workshops, discussions, creative exercises, mentoring and case work.

The participants came really close, they created a real network and this is going to be reflected soon in our organization. They shared their visions on AEGEE and they tried to see beyond the practical organizational issues...to the ideals and beliefs. This is what makes this event special and this is what makes all of us to believe that this ES2 was not just an event for transfer of knowledge but a platform for discussion and thought.

The people...

Many people worked for this European School 2 and I would like to thank them a lot for making it so special for all of us...

The trainers of AEGEE Radu Racareanu, Asia Piskunowicz, Julia Hoffmann and our external trainers Zara Lavchyan and Sabine Klocker from the European Youth Forum and the Council of Europe pool of trainers who worked before, during and after the event day and night for managing to deliver the information and facilitate the development of the participants...

Burcu Becermen for travelling to the other side of Europe to share with us her knowledge on project development...

Silvia Baita and Kim Zwitserloot for sharing with us their experience and spirit...

Parcifal van Overbeek for working so hard before the event, for supporting me and the team always and not being able to be with us...

The supporters...

A big thank you has to go to the supporters of the ES2 as well...

AEGEE-Academy, the CD, the network commission for helping us to gather these 22 great persons, all the bodies that replied to our participants or our requests

The panelists of our reception:

Antonio Masip Hidalgo: Member of the European Parliament

Francisco Javier Mato Diaz: Vice Rector of the University of Oviedo and Responsible of International Relations

Enrique Pageda Reinlein: Responsible of Documentation and European Affairs

Trinidad Lopez Carrasco : Representative of the National Agency of Spain

AEGEE-Oviedo...

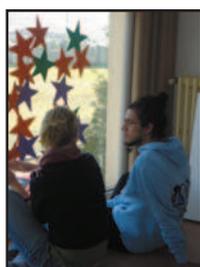
The rumors say that European School 2 has to be organized by big and strong locals...

The rumors say that for the European School 2 the local organizers are there just to work and nothing more...

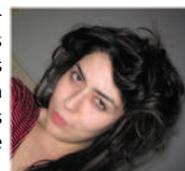
The experience showed us that a small local, with 10 great and smiley people, under the coordination of Virginia Paneda, managed not only to organize a European School 2, but to organize it professionally with a lot of enthusiasm.

I would like to thank them for making it so easy for us, for saying always yes to our demands, for staying calm even the stressing moments, for all the presents they gave us, for the great social program which was respecting the needs of a ES2, for keeping me motivated since May 2007...

Lastly, I would like to wish good luck to this great group of participants that managed to motivate us so much and showed us their spirit with their endless groups hugs!



Maria Nomikou graduated from Theatre Studies. She is now working in Fair Trade Hellas as Youth and Education Coordinator and she is member of the pool of trainers of the European Youth Forum. In AEGEE, at the moment she is the Manager of the book on NFE and in the past she has been AEGEE-Academy speaker, President of the Members Commission, Coordinator of the Performing Arts Summer School 2 and project team member of the Shooting Europe '05 and the TR-GR Civic dialogue.



TRAININGS IN AEGEE

by Nadine Karbach

Strengthen the education of AEGEE-members became a crucial point already in the mid nineties of the last century by setting up an own working group who takes care about this topic, the AEGEE-Academy. Since then, training in AEGEE became an important mean of passing knowledge and experience to every new generation. However, they also serve other purposes. For example, to empower AEGEE-members in their voluntary work in AEGEE and to make them aware of their role as European citizens in youth work. Depending on the topic, trainings are conducted also by different working groups in AEGEE who take care on the content. Together with a local branch of AEGEE, these events are successfully put into practice. Read here about a selection of AEGEE trainings and get attracted by these great opportunities in AEGEE!

European School 1 Canakkale

The European School 1 is a one-week training course for people who want to discover AEGEE and learn how to run an AEGEE local and organise successful projects. Experienced AEGEE-members pass their experience and knowledge to the next generation of AEGEE. A balanced mixture of lectures and casework in mul-



ticultural teams offers the participants the chance to gain hard skills such as antenna management, event organisation, public relations, fundraising, information technologies as well as soft skills such

as intercultural teamwork and communication, leadership, presentation, interview and motivation techniques.

The AEGEE-Academy in cooperation with AEGEE-Canakkale organised this successful training for new AEGEE-members. It took place in March 2007 and gathered 25 participants from all over Europe who were all motivated to learn about how to run a local AEGEE-branch. The environment provided by AEGEE-Canakkale influenced also much the input to the training and supported the aspect of intercultural learning among the participants.

Mediation Training

2007, the International Politics Working Group of AEGEE celebrated it's 10th birthday. Among their events in 2007, the most important and successful one was the Mediation Training "Striving for diversity – Fighting intolerance", which was held in April in Zielona Gora, Poland. Granted by Council of Europe in the frame of the "All Different – All Equal" campaign, the Mediation Training gathered 25 young Europeans, who learned how to solve problems and cross all ethnic, religious and national boundaries. A description and a selection of photos of this event will be printed in official results booklet of "All Different – All Equal" campaign.

Let us intercooltourtrain you

Intercultural learning, learning about cultural theory as well as deeper insights into the wide field of culture were the aims of the training "Let us intercooltourtrain you". It took place in the city of Istanbul, organised by the Cultural Working Group of AEGEE in cooperation with AEGEE-Istanbul. Supported by a grant of the Turkish National Agency this high-quality intercultural training gathered 25 participants who experienced different parts of intercultural learning and the issue of culture. The Cultural Working Group initiated the idea of the training seeing the need for more and deeper knowledge about culture in AEGEE. After this first edition of intercultural training, a second edition is planned.

European Citizenship Training

In October 2007, a 6 days training course was co-organized by IPWG and AEGEE-Köln and gathered 24 young people who were actively involved or willing to get involved into youth work and support the development of youth NGOs in Europe by extending knowledge and competences to integrate European Citizenship within projects. With this training course "You and Europe: European Citizenship in Action", the IPWG wanted to examine citizenship through the exploration of values, identity and perception and also provide opportunities, skills and knowledge to the participants to run successful projects within European Youth Programmes in the future. The programme consisted of workshops, debates, study visits, lectures, group works, simulations and exercises linked to European Citizenship. The most important focus will be citizenship, European integration, youth policies, youth work and democracy.

Public Relations European School 1

Learning about the issue of Public Relations, the Public Relations European School 1 aimed to provide the participants with the necessary tools and theories to design a sound PR strategy for an AEGEE branch as well as inspiring them for successful and creative Public Relation activities. Together with the AEGEE-Academy and AEGEE-Augsburg, the Public Relations Working Group of AEGEE organised this seven days training course in the beginning of October 2007. The PRES1 targets at potential and present PR activists on local level of AEGEE. During lectures and



workshops the participants were provided with the theoretical background that they will be able to use during simulations. Participants of the event got trained in both internal and external public relations becoming qualified to handle the public relations activities

needed in an AEGEE branch. The next PRES1 is already in the making and looks forward to motivated and enthusiastic participants!

European School 1 Gdansk

In December 2007, 27 motivated participants and ten experienced trainers of AEGEE gathered in Gdansk, Poland. Their aim: learning on local organisational management for an AEGEE-branch. A European School 1 is the ultimate intercultural experience for open-minded and adventurous characters as well as the perfect event for idealistic and motivated young AEGEE members who still need to improve themselves to successfully start their activities in- and outside AEGEE.

Experiencing a balanced mixture of lectures and casework in multicultural teams this ES1 offered the participants the chance to gain hard skills such as antenna management, event organisation, public relations, fundraising, information technologies as well as soft skills such as intercultural teamwork and communication, leadership, presentation, interview and motivation techniques.

All participants and all trainers spent an entire week together and felt empowered and full of energy when returned to their AEGEE local groups. The ES1 in Gdansk offered also a valuable insight into Polish culture for all involved and thereby passed even more learning experience to everyone!



Travelling on Board of citizenShip

In the beginning of February 2008, the "Travelling on board of citizenShip" training, a five days long training course in Kosovo on active citizenship took place successfully. It gathered 20 youngsters from 3 Balkan and 3 European countries, involved or willing to be involved in the youth work and to support the development of youth NGOs and youth participation in Balkans, by extending knowledge and competences to integrate European Citizenship within projects. Most important points of focus were the issues of democracy, active citizenship such as Election Monitoring, participation in civil society and voluntary work as well as different other forms of activism available to young people to influence the society they live in. Next to that participants were trained in youth participation, European integration, youth policies and youth work.

This training course was organised in cooperation of AEGEE-Europe with the International Politics Working Group of AEGEE.

Mobility Training School

The overall aim of this training was to significantly improve the quality of student counselling and consultancy in promoting mobility at their home university. Unlike the usual training the MTS goes way beyond lectures, workshops and simulations, but challenges participants in real life situations which will be evaluated in small peer groups in order to maximise the personal learning outcome. Debates with representatives from university administration, political institutions and companies as well as the planning of a "real" European project on mobility were part of the training. In cooperation with AEGEE-Mannheim, Germany, the Education Working Group initiated this training for AEGEE-members. It aimed, for example, to increase the participants' knowledge on: European education policies, mobility benefits and obstacles, chances and drawbacks of the existing grant schemes. The entire training took place in the beginning of March 2008 and offered 25 participants the great opportunity to broaden their horizon on the topic of mobility.

Thanks to the financial support by the German Ministry of Education and Research, a high-quality training event could be offered to the participants from all over Europe!

ES1 Enschede

This time the ES1 took place in the Netherlands, namely in the city of Enschede which is located in the eastern part of the country touching the border with Germany. 25 participants and ten experienced trainers of AEGEE came together to learn one week about organisational management and event management for a local AEGEE-branch. This ten days training course was set up by the AEGEE-Academy in cooperation with AEGEE-Enschede and took place in the beginning of March 2008. Located in wooden houses, the participants experienced dutch culture live, for example, when taking the bike to get to all locations. The balanced programme with a mixture of lectures and casework in multicultural teams offered the participants the chance to gain insights and skills such as antenna management, event organisation, public relations, fundraising and information technologies. Naturally, also important soft skills such as intercultural teamwork and communication, leadership, presentation techniques, interview and motivation techniques were fixed part of the programme. All involved in this training course enjoyed this week very much and it will stay a valuable memory for all!



**SUMMER UNIVERSITY
LANGUAGES IN AEGEE
CYPRUS PROJECT TEAM
NEW WAVE IN CAUCASUS
SUSTAINING OUR FUTURE
EDUCATION UNLIMITED**



PROJECTS

SUMMER

UNIVERSITY

2007 was a very special year for Summer University in AEGEE, last year Europe's longest lasting mobility Project celebrated its 20th anniversary.

We all know that Summer University is the most important, the biggest and the longest lasting project of AEGEE and ever since its starting it enjoys great support and popularity from and within the Network. This entire success story started in 1998, and since then SUs took place in 42 countries, in 265 cities and had more than 50 000 young people participating.

A Summer University is usually a two-week event organized by an AEGEE local where between 20 and 50 young people come together from all over Europe and organized by young people for young people. It has influenced the lives of young people in Europe for 20 years now involving more than 6000 persons, 150 AEGEE locals each year from more than 40 European countries; from Portugal to Azerbaijan, and from Finland to Malta.

Keeping all these in mind, the whole story for us (Kamala, Leon, Fabrizio and Virag) started in a charming restaurant during SUPS Maribor 2006 where we all had been trainers. Working for AEGEE is always great, working for the biggest project is even better and more challenging, but working in a team of friends is the best – we thought. And since the four of us are good friends for more than 4 years, we could do the job easier and really smoothly. There we go, decided to join forces, and candidate in Napoli as a team. At that time it seemed an excellent idea, we had years of experiences in AEGEE and SU project, we have been friends for several years... so all in all it seemed it was going to be a task with full of pleasure and fun.

It actually started like this, candidating in Napoli, where none of us was present, having contra candidates, one of them coming from the Agora organising local, we did not expect to win actually, but that just happened. There was no way back, we were ready, we were full of enthusiasm and ideas in mind waiting to be realised during this special year of this very special project.

Being SUcholics after receiving some kind of knowledge transfer, we started organising our first SUCT meeting. We found a very convenient place - Bojana Brankov's apartment – and a proper date, New Years Eve. Despite the rumours by that time, we did not go to Beograd for having fun on AEGEEs account. This way was the cheapest option because two SUCT member

D'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers Trying to Make Europe Happen

Diary of SUCT 2007

2007 was a very special year for Summer University in AEGEE, last year Europe's longest lasting mobility Project celebrated its 20th anniversary.

was living in 250 kms away, and Kamala found really cheap ticket, and the only proper date, since 3 of us has already started working 8 hours a day professionally and those days the SUPS Beograd organisers were also able to meet us. Anyhow, we were extremely productive during those days. We described all the goals we wanted to achieve and all the reforms needed to be done that year, we were acting like „first grade AEGEEans”, reality sank into childish idealism. I say childish, cause it really was, having no bad intentions in mind, just not being aware of our limits, well do admit, it sometimes happens with everybody.

During the SUCT meeting we drafted an action plan for 2007, which contained far more than ever before, we undertook a lot. We wanted to make the selection procedure easier, the media outreach broaden, having much more thematical SUs, more places for people with disabilities, fundraise as much money as its possible – for not depending only on the amount coming from the CD, organising a huge celebration on the occasion of the 20th anniversary and of course a SUPS as well. As you can

see we aimed really high.

But still, some of these plans, actually most of them, we could manage and they unbelievably came true.

From the SUCT side one of our main wish was to see more locals taking part in organising more thematic SUs and offering the possibility of learning more languages during these events. We so much wanted to turn back the SU project to its roots, and pushing more for the content and have a bit less of “lets have fun and let's get drunk” events. This initiative was welcomed by the Network, as most of the people realised that AEGEE, thus its biggest project as

well, should take itself more seriously, should act as a responsible and visionary organisation. In 2007 we had more languages courses offer, covering several smaller but still beautiful languages. This was a great success, especially seeing the number of thematic SUs arising too. Events touched hot issues in Europe, this year events really offered things far beyond a simple, cheap holiday; we had event dealing with environmental and climate change problems that is still on the top of the EU and AEGEE agenda. The 20th edition of AEGEE's Summer University project included the first multilingualism Summer University in München (Germany). Furthermore several events hosted disabled people and the impact of the Bologna Process on Non Formal Education activities were also topics of discussion.



But our other plan, to reform and ease the application process was not really popular among certain bodies. What could have been the problem? People do not want to apply easily, or want to see more applications rejected only because of the complexity of the process? I do not think so, what I saw at that time active AEGEE members wanted to demonstrate their power, wanted to overrule things that are not into their competences. Probably I was wrong, at least partly. SUCT could have consulted much more, could have informed the people interested earlier and incorporate their wishes into the new system, but still I believe it was SUCT business to manage the SU applications. I don't know if that system will be changed or kept in the future, but in 2007 we clearly saw its advantages, most of the people applied were accepted. Compare to other years, 2007 was the year when most of the people applied could actually participate at an SU.

Besides the above mentioned changes we of course kept on organising SUPS. The Summer University Project School 2007 took place in Beograd, with dozens of motivated and ready-to-work-for-AEGEE participants and several experienced trainers from all over the Network. During the one week long training we covered all the aspects of organising a successful SU, with all its troubles, possible crisis situations and best practices.

After this annual training, we started organising an event to celebrate officially the 20th anniversary of this project. Hand in hand with AEGEE Istanbul, the CD and some friends, we started drafted a programme that absolutely suits the occasion and meets all the aims from every side. We organised a youth congress to celebrate the Summer University Project's 20th Anniversary as a pre-event of the Agora Eskisehir. The event dealt with the topic "European Mobility" in all its aspects. Apart from workshops, panel discussions and presentations we presented a perfect mixture of serious event and celebration. Just as the Summer Universities are. But without having enough time and one person dedicated as event manager, it was so extremely difficult to get everything done on time.

But at the end, with approximately 100 participants, representatives from the EU, from other international youth NGOs and AEGEE trainers all together we managed to commemorate the success of our beloved project, SU. Reviewed the history of the project and its achievements to date, and discussed its future development.



2007 was a very controversial year for SU, and for us as well. SUCT was not the apple of everyone's eye, but that team, achieved more than our opponents expected, did all what the SUCT generally does and more. We fundraised \$1000 for the SU20 event and for the upcoming SUPS, we had our press releases translated into 16 European languages, thus reached several national media hits, we started working on the SU20 book, co-operated in organising SUs with more than ever AEGEE bodies, reformed the application system, organized two events within one year, while not spending even the half of our central budget. Still, due to the fact that we did not meet our own expectations, I do not consider that year a success. Much more could have been achieved, but all those are waiting for the current SUCT to deal with.

Summer University project is all of us, together we shape, make it better throughout the decades in spreading summer energy all over the Network. We wish 20 and many more years for this great project and for the upcoming terms, we hope to see idealistic, enthusiastic and creative people working in the SUCT to ensure the success of this great project.

For us, Summer Universities are meant to promote cultural exchange, mutual understanding, language skills and their importance in personal development and active citizenship by removing national divisions, overcoming prejudices and upholding a European feeling. If you share this vision, continue making Europe happen in every young person's life in the next generations.

Virág Szabó
On behalf of SUCT 2006-2007

Languages in AEGEE

European Day of Languages

„Language, our first love!“ was not only the title of a workshop held during Spring Agora Valletta 2007, but it can also be considered the motto of a great number of AEGEE members. Whenever there is a call for translators within AEGEE, you will meet some members who can speak four languages fluently but still are not satisfied with it. They want more. More languages. More fluency. More multilingualism. AEGEE events are a nice places to practice languages. AEGEE covers countries hosting more than forty languages, so, even though English and French are the official languages, you can hear a lot of other languages in any event you participate in.

Not for nothing does AEGEE have a project which is focused on languages: the EDL project, with EDL standing for European Day of Languages. The idea for this project came up in 2001, during the European Year of Languages which was initiated by the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Ever since, AEGEE locals throughout the network have been celebrating their enthusiasm for languages on 22nd of November. To coordinate all those events, AEGEE has a special coordination team that helps the local organisers by sharing their experiences, giving hints about what activities they could do, or handing out PR material. In 2007, around thirty locals joined the project and organised different events. Many of them are already quite experienced, as they have organised some European Days of Languages before. Once a local is infected with the language fever, they start organising an EDL every year. The events usually take place on 22nd or 23rd November. Most events last for one day, but in some cases – for example in Tübingen 2007 -, it lasts a whole weekend. The size of the events also varies from seven members up to more than 400 participants.

Content-wise, the events can vary a lot- starting from participants teaching each other their mother tongue to lectures, contests, photo exhibitions, language fairs, concerts and countries' presentations or language tandems.

However, the EDL project is not limited to this one day each year. Moreover, there are some more project which are coordinated by this project team: There is the Teacher Exchange Programme, multilingual Summer Universities, Language Partners and a Travel Dictionary.

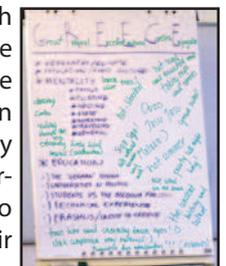
Additionally, the team published a result book in 2006. With all these additional activities, locals have the change to organise events dealing with languages throughout the year.

The Teacher Exchange Programme, TEP, is the latest subproject running in EDL. It consists of an online database of teachers who want to teach their own mother tongue to other AEGEE members in other countries. The first step was to promote this database within AEGEE, before the EDL team decided to propose the TEP to universities, so they could organise language courses for outgoing Erasmus students. Two Italian locals, Cagliari and Salerno, were the first to put the TEP into practice. In July 2007, Cagliari offered a Romanian language course, while Salerno organised language courses in Spanish, English, German and French from 27th of August to 8th of September. In both cases the courses were successful organized by the locals and all the participants appreciated a lot the idea to organize language courses with young teachers who could understand better their needs. Nowadays the team is working to enlarge the project and involve more locals.

Another important innovation within AEGEE are multilingual Summer Universities, which are co-organised with the SU Coordination Team. The aim of Multilinguistic SU's is to organise more language courses and to give a more cultural approach to summer universities. In 2007, AEGEE München was the first local to organise this form of Summer University. During the first week, four teachers from different universities of Europe gave some lessons about linguistics. During the second week, some language courses were held by foreign students. A lot of activities and games related to languages were organized during these 2 weeks, which were very much enjoyed by the participants.

“Language Partners” is a web-interface which started in 2001 as “Sprachduo” outside the EDL project, but was renamed “Language Partners” and included in the project soon afterwards. It gives students the possibility to register and search for language-partnerships online. The idea behind this is that two students can meet, and teach each other their mother tongues, so both can profit from it.

Another online activity of the EDL team is the Travel Dictionary, which was updated and extended last year. The team is working to create a definitive version and as soon as possible to publish it. The idea behind this Travel Dictionary is to enable its users to go abroad to another country and to be able to say and understand the most important words of the respective foreign language.





TO FOSTER AND ENCOURAGE CIVIC CYPRIOT DIALOGUE FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

TO INCREASE THE KNOWLEDGE AND CONTACT WITHIN THE COMMUNITIES OF CYPRUS

TO FACILITATE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE NGOs IN CYPRUS

TO INFORM AND STIMULATE THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTIVE ROLES IN SOCIETIES, AS ACTIVE CITIZENS

TO STRENGTHEN THE AEGEE NETWORK IN THE ISLAND

STUDENTS & ACTIVE CITIZENS
TARGET GROUP



Why AEGEE Cyprus Project Team ?

Instead of the picture that is sometimes drawn in the public discourse, the Cyprus problem has not only one conflict line, but several; between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, between Greeks and Greek Cypriots, between Turkish and Turkish Cypriots, between elder and younger generations, between left and right.

AEGEE has never been and most probably will never be a place of one ultimate history and truth especially when it comes to such a difficult case as the Cyprus conflict. For some critics this constitutes one of the main problems of our network, because this would mean to represent nothing/nobody. Even though there had been attempts to do so by various sides, it is not possible to link AEGEE to a political ideology.

In reality this is the strength of our network and the unique opportunity to contribute. AEGEE is not the platform of one truth, but the platform of dialogue between them. In Cyprus – and perhaps in politics generally – there is no right or wrong. There is no universal truth, but many. To accept this is difficult and for those who suffered and still do, it is even worse. Nevertheless it is the first step to improvement. The real problem is not the presence of different identities, histories and truths, but the little possibility of dialogue between them. Cyprus is a part of our network where a lot remains to be done. AEGEE should just dare to do it!

written by Christian Eichenmüller, Edited by Kim Helder - Sander Kahveciler

new wave in Caucasus

The year 2007 has been an interim period for Caucasus Project – the shift from Project phase 2, focusing on the network, to phase 3, focusing on the common society, with new team and new directions. Back in 2003 the Caucasus Project started with aims of creating bridges between youth leaders in Caucasus and Europe, providing the background knowledge, building the AEGEE network in the region and connecting it strongly to the whole AEGEE through actions.

By year 2007 we have 4 locals in Caucasus, all full of activities, plans, motivated members and smaller or bigger, but surely a lively position in their own societies. The locals in the Caucasus have become a stable and active part in the network.

Karolina Wysocka (former manager of the Caucasus Project Team): “It is not anymore about discovering and

contact building. They are not ‘poor strangers that need help’; they give example of activism, idealism and professionalism”

AEGEE-Baki has been one of the best examples of activism. This goes equally for daily activities, participation and events. Last year events include Novruz Holiday with its cultural traditions for revival of nature; training courses “Make it better” for increasing youth work initiatives in the region and “Towards Europe! Exploring together citizenship, identity and culture” on European society and citizenship; two (!) incredible summer universities “Azerbaijan Language Course” and “Legend about the Caucasus” together with AEGEE-Tbilisi ... and don’t forget the local activities of Education Action Week (including unforgettable “In Education We Trust” party) – awarded as the best ones in the whole AEGEE network.

AEGEE-Tbilisi youth exchange “All Different, ALL European, Let’s Talk About You and Me” focused on intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity, conflict behaviour and the implementation of conflict management tools. 36 young participants from Mainz/Wiesbaden, Tbilisi, Moscow and Nantes spent ten days in the mountainous Georgian village of Bakuriani. A project that emerged from personal relations and dissatisfaction with politicized world and ended with even stronger ‘personal friendship of nations’. This exchange was also from few events Caucasus Project Team carried out as the last result of work in previous years. “The Legend about the Caucasus” was a summer university of AEGEE-Tbilisi and AEGEE-Baki, one week in Georgia and one week in Azerbaijan. In Georgia they visited historical and cultural sites and learned about local traditions, culture and cuisine. Hosting in AEGEE-Tbilisi members’ families provided them with the

opportunity to learn firsthand about Georgian family life. The adventures were documented by local TV journalists and were later shown on most popular Georgian TV programs, “Droeba.”

AEGEE-Lenkoran, having intercultural exchange “Discover Lenkoran” as their biggest event 2007, is by itself an example of AEGEE reaching not only big centers, but also provinces.

An important event for AEGEE in Caucasus was certainly the official birth of AEGEE-Gyumri at autumn AGORA Eskisehir. It’s the first local in Armenia joining the AEGEE network thus opening new fields of action for AEGEE Caucasus Project team. But building the network is just the beginning.

Having a part in making the Caucasus locals to be strong, active and involving people to have AEGEE in their everyday life is certainly the best part of the Caucasus Project. But for the Project team itself, 2007 has been a period to gather a new team – getting new people, finding common inter-

ests and planning the future – asking oneself what next? Where should the Caucasus Project go? What is the Caucasus Project, why is it and what is its place in AEGEE?

With a thorough planning, the Caucasus Project Team has started its new phase. There are strong locals with motivated members and the networking and (regional) support from the NetCom. Having today 4 locals and activities in each, the “Caucasus” can now be seen in AEGEE as a complicated field, where we can support intercultural relations and communication on topics that matter for organisations and young people personally. Not so much influencing the politics, but changing the practice with talking to your neighbour is the approach that makes a society, the Caucasus. Through upcoming activities, events and interactive blog the Caucasus Project Team will focus on supporting active cooperation inside the Caucasus and make sure the rest of our network and partners are informed and involved in topics about Caucasus.

Being at the borders, Caucasus is the place and topic where AEGEE can learn and discover itself anew.

Tiit Remm, a member of AEGEE-Tartu since 2003, has been in AEGEE-Tartu all, the president, the Father of the Year and the ‘not-responsible-at-all’. Besides being the manager of Caucasus Project Team, he is also a PhD student in semiotics.





SUSTAINING

OUR

FUTURE

Everywhere you go, you can see some negative effects of our unsustainable way of living: ecological problems like climate change, loss of biodiversity, scarcity of natural resources, but also social problems such as social injustice, threats to human health or poverty. Additional threats and themes are inequality and shortage of resources, diminishing of nature, water shortages, global warming or international tensions. These problems do not care about any national level, and neither does AEGEE. This is why AEGEE sees it as another motivation, to tackle these issues.

During Spring Agora 2007, AEGEE decided that we cannot turn our faces from these issues. So, this agora made AEGEE 'greener' in two ways: the Environmental Working Group was re-established, and the topic "Sustaining our future" was chosen as the next Flagship Project. This topic will provide the frame for various projects dealing this concept of "sustainable development" which is defined by meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The pronounced importance of this topic becomes evident when considering that also the European Union and the United Nations are dealing with it presently.

As many high-level organisations are dealing with sustainability, the Flagship Project Team strives to cooperate with high-level partners such as World Conservation Union IUCN, European youth network Youth and Environment Europe (YEE), and hopes to get e.g. supportive information and co-organisers for their events.



AEGEE strives to realise activities in this field which all focus on education and training to provide all citizens with the key competences needed to achieve sustainable development, and to teach them a sustainable use of energies and transport systems. Additionally, there will be information provided about sustainable consumption and production patterns, health, media competence and responsible global citizenship.



With this, the flagship project fits to the general aims of AEGEE to raise general awareness and to help people become more active citizens. The Flagship Project also strives for an open and integrated Europe with a common sense of identity, not only in our network, but also in society as a whole. The activities of "Sustaining our Future" will take place in various places in Europe. Additionally, the core team behind the project – people of different origins and with different fields of studies are involved here – are a source of strength, as we become more open-minded and take various perceptions and viewpoints into consideration when planning and implementing all the activities linked to the project.

Furthermore, AEGEE believes in building democracy and civil society, informing and educating young people about European values, cultures and heritage, which is also reflected in the planned activities.

AEGEE can have a real impact with this Flagship Project, as we all have experience in intercultural learning, non-formal education methods and cross-border cooperation in the field of youth work. These qualities can be very useful to promote international understanding towards problems and best practices in different European countries. With this project we are putting these skills into practice in order to move towards more sustainable Europe.

Additionally, as a non-political, mainstream youth and student organisation we think we can better represent the needs of the mainstream young people in Europe than politicians, governments, lobbyists and pressure organisations do.

To develop the project, about twenty AEGEE members from the whole network met in Estonia in December 2007, where they formed the core team which will coordinate all the sub-projects taking place within the Flagship Project, and discussed possible actions. Some experienced AEGEE members, who had been involved in former Flagship Projects, helped with their knowledge and ideas. During this meeting, but also before and after it, the core team of twenty-one people was formed. Coming from various countries and regions of Europe, such as Spain, Estonia and Turkey, and studying all kinds of subjects, they reflect AEGEE's intercultural and interdisciplinary approach to tackle big projects. With this variety, we can make sure that various viewpoints are taken into consideration. The main coordinators will be Martien Van Gool, AEGEE-Nijmegen, as project manager, and Kadri Kalle, AEGEE-Tartu, as content manager. Both are already very experienced with environmental projects. Like many other team members, they are members of AEGEE's Environmental Working Group. In case of Kadri and Martien, they are indeed board members of this AEGEE body.

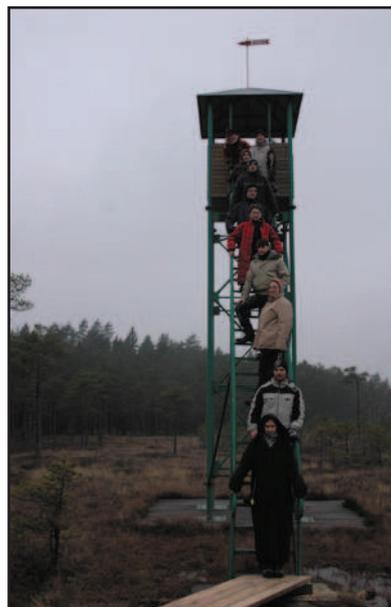
During the development of the project the topics of particular interest to AEGEE were identified. In the end, three main sub-topics remained: the shortage of natural resources, sustainable travelling, and living environment. With "shortage of natural resources", we will focus on the way our future will develop with limited resources available, including nature, oil / gas, water and other natural resources. "Sustainable travelling" will cover activities focussing on making alternative ways of travelling more available,

visible and attractive to European youth. Instead of low cost airlines, young people should be aware of and attracted to more environmentally friendly ways of travelling. As many AEGEE members are very much interested in travelling through Europe, this will be the part which is the most obvious link to AEGEE. The third topic,

"living environment" refers to the way we interact with other people, cities and the basic environment we live in, and how we can influence them. Our activities in this field aim to empower people to make our living environment better.

Planned activities include a Sustainability Action Day, which will serve as the project kick off on June 5th, 2008. This day was chosen as it is also the World Environment Day. Locals throughout the network are encouraged to celebrate this special day by informing young people about the cultural, social and natural aspects which affect their living environment and by collecting opinions on possible solutions for sustainable living. Different kinds of actions could be chosen, including informational street actions, various educational formats in the neighbourhood and at campuses, community dialogue and emblematic acts.

As AEGEE sees potential to improve itself with regard to its ecological impact, the Flagship Project selected the biggest event of AEGEE – the Agora, our semi-annual general assembly – as the event which will be improved to set an example for all the other AEGEE events. During the Autumn Agora 2008 in Aachen, the Flagship team will collect information about the Agora's ecological impact. The results will be used to make the next Spring Agora as sustainable as possible. Considering the high number of participants – which can range from 500 to 1000 – this will be a challenge, but one which we are really looking forward to.



Right after the Autumn Agora, in November 2008, around hundred active young Europeans will gather in Brussels. Divided into 10 groups, they will draft a Youth for Sustainable Development policy. The best group will be rewarded and papers will be presented to policy makers. High-profile panel discussions with representatives from authorities, businesses, academia and civil society will be also organised.

In 2009, many more outstanding activities will follow. For spring, the Flagship project plans a case study trip to Scandinavia, where participants will have the chance to learn about the good and sustainable practices of these countries, which set an example when it comes to environmentally friendly policies. The main focus will be on natural resources' conservation, sustainable consumption and sustainable mobility. By the end of the visits, a report on Nordic best practices may be published.



On June 5th, 2009, the Sustainability Action Day will be repeated. This year, locals have the chance to build on previous experience and take their actions further. Even after the Flagship Project, which will end in spring 2010, the initiative may be picked up by the Environmental Working Group, so to give it a rather long-term perspective.

For summer 2009, the team prepares a major event along the Danube, the "Blue heart of Europe", taking place in Romania, Serbia, Germany and many more locations around the Danube, the second longest river in Europe, seconded only by the Volga. Different smaller activities will be organised, which will explore Danube's influence on the culture, nature and societies around it. So, events could be traditional music and gastronomy festivals, youth exchanges, seminars on ecosystem management and local economy, council simulations.

In December 2009, the focus will be more on communal planning. The plan is to organise a conference about sustainable urban environment in Spain, which will examine the living environment's impact to the individual and social life and citizens' rights in communal planning.

All these activities will help us to realise the aims and objectives that go with this Flagship Project: The overall aim is to keep our world, our living environment a nice and interesting place to live in. This especially includes the long-term aspect of sustainability, as we want to make sure the future generations have the same kind of possibilities and chances as there are now.

The Flagship Project will end in spring 2010. Though we know that we cannot solve the social and environmental problems ourselves, especially not ourselves, we still have some expectations about the results. We want to see increased knowledge, interest and participation of European youth in issues connected to sustainable development; Increased social and environmental responsibility of European youth organisations, AEGEE in first hand; improved access to information and participation options concerning sustainable development for European youth and their communities; new, simple and innovative ways and possibilities for more sustainable functioning for European youth organisations and communities.

For more information, please go to www.aegEE.org/sustaining

Verena Schmidt became member of AEGEE Tübingen in October 2006. In June 2007, she started to work in the European level of AEGEE by becoming EnWG board member. K2E 2008 is the second AEGEE publication she is involved in, after the internal publication Newsbulletin 2007



EDUCATION UNLIMITED!

STUDENTS' CONTRIBUTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT IN EUROPE

By Dragan Stojanovski

"Your organization deserves the highest commendation and congratulations ... I have found your project very well planned and it augurs well for the prospects of higher education in Europe when organizations of students such as yours take the initiative."

Nikos Kokosalakis, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens

(on the BPBP initiative of the Education Unlimited!)

To be present in the center every relevant debate on higher education in Europe – that is the driving imperative for AEGEE since the founding days in early eighties. To try to contribute to historic replacement of centuries old paradigm of teaching to learner-centered approach to education and the biggest integration in the history of Europe – European Higher Education Area – was a challenge AEGEE decided to take on with all its resources, experience, expertise and enthusiasm, under Flagship Project 2007: Education Unlimited! – Improving European Higher Education.

Launched in January 2007, project aimed at a greater involvement of young people in designing their learning experience - expressing and implementing ideas on what and how they want to learn through their education, focusing on the Bologna Process implementation, inclusion of basic European values and foreign language courses in curricula all over Europe and promotion of interesting, attractive and involving educational methods. Focusing on the impact of reforms within the Bologna Process, Education Unlimited! was designed to emphasize the complementarities of non-formal and formal education, creating a bridge between the world of professors, lectures and exams and the world of youth activism, learning by doing and sharing values.

Project was implemented through series of activities at both European and local level: conferences in Stuttgart (Germany), Niš (Serbia) and Paris (France), training courses in Poznan (Poland), Munster (Germany) and Athens (Greece) and Education Action Week in 16 cities across Europe. Case Study Trip to Iceland and publication of the book on "The Best Practices in Non-formal Education in Europe" will bring the project to its end in June 2008, when its results will be presented at a conference in Brussels and in a results booklet.

One could ask: Why now and not earlier? Since the launch of the Bologna Process in 1999 AEGEE was welcoming progress and continuing determination of the European governments on the cre-

ation of the European Higher Education Area, bringing European societies, in their diversity and common values, closely together in an endeavor to create both attractive, competitive and efficient and democratic, open and inclusive higher education system in Europe. As written down by our founders in organization's mission – one of our aims is to foster democracy, human rights, tolerance, cross-boarder co-operation, mobility and European dimension in education sphere. We were active in the field of learning mobility throughout nineties, with special emphasis on less fortunate regions – Southeast Europe and Caucasus. But, as the new, historic wave of EU accession was getting its momentum, our main focus was to good extent shifted to the final step in the project of lasting peace through understanding and cooperation in Europe.

Centering all our activities first and foremost at university settings, AEGEE acknowledges the important role of institutions of higher education for European economic, social, technological and cultural progression and their fundamental role in educating responsible and active citizens and competent and competitive professionals. Launching Education Unlimited! we sensed that it is the crucial moment to stress our determination to work for European Higher Education Area development build on vision broader than structural changes and instrumental issues.

AEGEE sees the Bologna Process as the historic reshaping of European education, and believes it shall be implemented with maximum contribution from all interested stakeholders, from Ministries of Education to first-year students. Moving away from recommendations for formal to concepts of substantial changes in higher education development will bring better results, but will also take more time and energy, as complex challenges are being tackled, as we still recognize extensive challenges in implementing structural changes.

EHEA recognition instruments, ECTS, Diploma Supplement and Qualifications Framework, although now widely in use, are often used unsystematically. Incorrect use of ECTS doesn't measure student workload properly and doesn't facilitate flexibility and mobility, with Diploma Supplement inadequate use failing to serve commonly agreed learning outcomes oriented approach in education. National qualification frameworks, being implemented at very slow pace, are often failing to serve as instruments and promoters for transparency, mobility and employability.





Further more, degree structure reforms are still not followed by sufficient level of curricula restructuring and courses and modules design based on student-centered concept of proactive and participative education process with major emphasis on partnership with businesses and connection to the European Research Area and increased mobility within fields of studies, institutions and geographical areas.

Therefore we will continue to work on raising awareness about the essence of the recognition tools and study cycles and increased cooperation between major stakeholders, especially at the grassroots level, for their correct implementation and restructuring.

With structural reforms often failing to show expected outcomes, it is finally acknowledged that mobility and other key aspects of the EHEA are closely connected with the social dimension of higher education.

If higher education reforms are aiming at education and scientific excellence and beyond – competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy within democratic and coherent knowledge-based society – their socioeconomic perspective has to be constantly considered, after being neglected for long time.



In the same way, strong focus on putting EHEA in global context has once again brought forward the issue of the European dimension of higher education. Giving substance to the European dimension, as Ministers call it, one of main action lines within the Bologna Process framework, is still highly underestimated and taken as something to be resolved ‘on the way’. Educating student to efficiently respond to the opportunities of globalization has to include European values and European experience in education, which will, together with quality, transparency and flexibility represent the key factors for the global competitiveness and attractiveness of the EHEA.

AEGEE is determined to work for putting social dimension of higher education in concrete terms and policies and improved and extended dialogue on social aspects of higher education reforms and for profound and coherent incorporation of European values in higher education.

Developing lifelong learning strategies and putting them into practice are issues to be considered in the future, as Ministers also acknowledged that there is a rather modest improvement in this field. This means putting institutions of higher education in the context of lifelong learning and delivering education services to facilitate both continuous education and training for graduates and comprehensive education catch-up for individuals and particular social groups, including fair recognition of prior knowledge and offering flexible and continuous learning paths to students.



Education within an institution of higher education, in context of lifelong learning, should be strengthened by the concept of life-wide learning - promoting, improving and recognizing skills and competences acquired within non-formal or informal environment. AEGEE believes in unique complementarity of formal and non-formal education in providing students with skills and knowledge necessary for their success in the global setting, in spectrum of generic competences and beyond, as we welcome Ministers’ statement that recognition of non-formal and informal learning is among essential components of the EHEA, both internally and in a global context.

AEGEE will continue to work on one of organization’s main focuses for many years to come – development of flexible lifelong learning policies and fair recognition of non-formal learning by the institutions of higher education, based on learning outcomes and quality oriented approach.

Looking back at a tremendous year of Education Unlimited! and the dynamic aftermath of all its activities – we can proudly say: It’s good to be back in the center!

BOLOGNA PROCESS – CHANCE OR OBSTACLE

By Jonna Sijl

Education Unlimited! had its kick-off in Stuttgart, Germany, 25-28 February. Around 22 participants from all over Europe took part in the event that was filled with presentations, workshops and discussions concerning the Bologna Process (BP).

The first day the participants arrived and enjoyed a welcome ceremony.

The second day started with a presentation about the BP and an example of the impact of this process at the University of Stuttgart. Then there was a presentation by Education Unlimited! about the project. The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) presented their work, what the BP means for them and the impact of the Bachelor Master system on student exchange. The International Affairs Office of the University of Stuttgart spoke about mobility programmes like Erasmus and Socrates. At the end of the day there was a discussion between the DAAD, the International Affairs Office, participants and organisers, in which was pointed out the resistance to change and the different interpretations of the Bachelor Master system in the various countries.



In the morning of day three there was a discussion about the BP in which various Youth Non Governmental Organisations (YNGO's) took part, together with participants and organisers. It became clear that the participating YNGO's agree on many points concerning the BP, but not all. In the afternoon participants took part in workshops.

The last day started with a presentation about the point of view of employers concerning the BP. An important conclusion was that having an international career will be the future, even though (especially smaller) companies at this moment can't interpret degrees that differ from the traditional ones. The closing activity was the presentation of the outcome of the several workshops. The participants taught each other about the history of the BP (1999-2007), how to promote NFE, the leading role of AEGEE in the BP and the difference in status of the BP in some countries. After the event the participants and organisers went home satisfied.

EDUCATION ACTION WEEK

By Kadri Kalle

The most wide-spread activity under AEGEE flagship project 2007 „Education Unlimited!” was Education Action Week, taking place in 16 cities all over Europe during October 21-27, 2007. AEGEE locals were encouraged to organise different actions to introduce and explore lifelong learning, non formal education, student mobility and Bologna Process.

Education Action Week aimed to inform about these aspects of education, about youth NGO's dealing with non formal education, foster cooperation between active students and university stakeholders and promote interactive study methods.

Just as diverse as the locations of Education Action Week - from Spain to Russia, from Estonia to Malta - were also the organised activities. Students in Tallinn had the chance to participate in a photo exhibition about non formal learning, in Alicante they could test their knowledge about student mobility. Education info desks were out in Tübingen, Leuven, Ljubljana, Stuttgart and Messina, workshops and seminars organised in Tartu, Athens, Torun and Ivano-Frankiv'sk. In Moskow students had discussions with Erasmus Mundus experts, in Valletta they enjoyed a movie about exchange, selected participants took part in a week long diverse education programme in Ganja. Conference, seminar, forum and party were organised in Samara, where for example 21% of the participants heard about Bologna Process for the first time.



Awarded with the best Education Action Week title was AEGEE-Baki, who during 5 days held information desks and workshops in 5 different universities. Most of the info materials were translated into Azerbaijan in order to reach students more easily. The culmination of the week was roundtable discussion about recognition of non formal education, that was shown in TV and party, attended by 500 people, which also served as fundraising event. The enthusiasm of AEGEE-Baki organisers paid off well, as during this week their antenna gained 50 new members.

It can be estimated that in whole around 700 students were more directly influenced by Education Action Week, and possibly more than 3000 young people found out something new about education and the diversity of learning opportunities.

This action proved that all over Europe among most of the students terms like „non formal education” and „Bologna Process” are still quite little known and more Education Action Weeks are needed.



AMBASSADORS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

By *Julia Hoffmann*

The international seminar « Non-Formal Education – Its impact and outcomes » gathered 25 participants from eleven different non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from 30 November until 4 December 2007 in the French capital. Being part of AEGEE's Flagship Project « Education Unlimited! Improving European Education », the event was co-organised by AEGEE-Europe and the AEGEE branch in Paris. Overall, the seminar aimed at equipping participants with multiple ways of thinking of Non-formal education (NFE).

NFE as learning approach, other than formal or informal learning is prominently used in the field of social youth work. The differences to other forms of education are determined by the principles of NFE: The learner is the main focus of the education process. Learning is designed in a way that it is based upon the needs of the learners. It takes place in different speeds and in different ways. The voluntary involvement of young people in this process hereby prevents any fears of assessment of personal achievements and no blockages to learning are built. The contents dealt with in NFE are close to real-life concerns and at all times, flexible in planning and in structure. Foremost, NFE is open to all young people.

The components of the seminar addressed a diversity of issues around NFE: While trying to find common ground of their understanding of NFE, participants discussed keywords and definitions of NFE. NFE methods were shown and shared, impact and effects



of the specific methods were analysed. At the same time, the development of new methods was stimulated.

Emphasis was put on the question of values of NFE and its impact on society: Participants discovered the roles and responsibilities of youth in today's society. They shared their experiences on how NFE is shaping a person to become more open towards other people and one's environment. A closer look was taken on youth leaders as « outcome » of NFE: By looking at real competencies (attitudes and values, skills, knowledge) gained through NFE, participants reflected on their per-

sonal development through this special learning process.

A highlight of the seminar was the participation to the « Day of non-formal education » at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Here, participants shared the results from the seminar with representatives of International NGOs and participated in sessions and workshops.

Eventually, participants left as « conscious ambassadors of non-formal education », being aware of the processes they are initiating in their society through NFE and taking note of the impact it has on the young people involved in it:

Understanding NFE: Even though it was a challenge to agree, a common perception of NFE was found. Despite the variety of backgrounds and experiences the participants

brought in, NFE is seen in similar ways by the young people involved in it.

Sharing « Best NFE Practise »: The means and methods of doing NFE can be shared between different organisations. Through this enriching experience, participants concluded that the same methods can be used to achieve different goals, set by the profile of their organisation.

Impact of NFE on society: Participants found that problems in today's societies can be addressed with NFE methods. They determined the rights and responsibilities young people bear in their communities and realised that there is still a big need for social change within Europe. NFE should be one of the means used to address it. Despite the differences in backgrounds of the participants, they agreed on one common aim to achieve through NFE: the development of humanity. However, there is still a mission ahead for many youth organisations - to make their members and educators conscious of the role that NFE plays in society.

BOLOGNA PROCESS TRAINING SCHOOL

By Jan Tolkien

The Bologna Process, being the idea for shaping a common European Higher Education Area until 2010, is nowadays dramatically changing universities in all European countries. It is mostly known for by the introduction of Bachelor and Master studies and the ECTS – the European Credit Point Transfer System, measuring the workload of students.

Because there is a lot more to know about this huge change on how learning in universities is thought of in Europe nowadays, a group of 18 students from 13 different countries came together in Münster, Germany for four days in late February 2007. Becoming an expert (multiplier) to be able to reasonably argue on this topic was the main goal of this event. The scope of this event went from learning about details of the ongoing process and exchanging experiences in the participants' respective universities to developing ideas how to better spread information on important issues.

During the four days there were many different sessions scheduled. Beginning with workshops with two so-called “Bologna Process Promoters”, professors (Prof. Gehmlich and Prof. Moerschbacher) that are actively involved in creating new curricula that meet the ideas of the common European Higher Education Area. A speaker from “BASF Coatings” talked about the aspect of the labour market perspective. After that discussions continued about possible inclusion of learning experiences outside regular classes in the curricula (non-formal learning) in workshop led by Asia Piskunowicz and a workshop by Martina Schwarz on “how to use promotion tools” for passing on information to students and other stakeholders.



The aims of this event were, last but not least, accomplished by active work on the subject in small groups, an “open-space session” and a role-play during which the work of local initiatives were simulated. The sentence of Prof. Gehmlich saying that it is of highest priority to create a creative dialogue between students and professors to ensure the quality of the new studies was highly agreed on and certainly met the central idea of this event.

42 ACADEMIC MOBILITY FORUM: INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION INTO EDUCATION

By Iryna Rud

The need of attracting Ukrainian youth' attention to their possibilities within academic mobility programs arose long ago. As AEGEE-Europe's flagship project – 2007 is Education Unlimited, the idea about “Integration into Education” event came to our AEGEE-Kyiv mind.

Few months before this event there had happened the discussion entitled “What's up, students?! What's going on with our mobility?” where students from National Polytechnic University of Ukraine “KPI” (NTUU “KPI”) and AEGEE members concerned about educational problems. There was agreed between AEGEE and Student's Science Association NTUU“KPI” to organise Academic Mobility Forum and Integration into Education like the same big event - in such a way AEGEE could stick to university's community and does not bother with some organising arrangements (e.g. rooms for workshops, dormitories).

Both the Forum and “Integration into Education” lasted 3 days on May 24-26, 2007 and included 1) workshops: Formal and non-formal educational opportunities. Ukrainian education from the viewpoint of European Standards. Academic exchange programs and European career; 2) Information Fair where various exchange student's programs were promoted; 3) Debates about advantages and disadvantages of Bologna Process; 4) Cultural night with showing Ukrainian traditions through the songs, cartoons and movies, and so on. During the event took place presentations of some organisations and programs e.g. TEMPUS, Chevening programme, BEST and, of course, AEGEE with its Project «Education unlimited!»

The event itself gathered AEGEE-participants from Ukrainian regions (Odessa, Lviv, Kharkiv, etc) and around 100-150 students from Kiev (it is the total number of student who attended the forum during 3 days). In this event were involved students, PhD students, university's officers and professors (Ukrainian as well as European and American).

In conclusion, Academic Mobility Forum and Integration into Education was quite a successful event. Participants discovered the new possibilities of studying abroad within a number of exchange programs; they got practical advice on applying and studying abroad. The stress was made on presenting academic mobility programs initiated by European Commission.



BOLOGNA PROCESS BEST PRACTICES

By Dragan Stojanovski

Under general patronage of the President of Serbia, with the support of the Council of Europe, the European Commission, UNESCO-CEPES and a series of institutions and experts from across Europe, and under patronage of rectors of the universities of Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš, with 34 speakers from 17 countries packed in 3 long days - Bologna Process Best Practices Conference was AEGEE-Niš's biggest and brightest initiative in ten years long history of AEGEE local branch in southeast Serbia.

This international conference on higher education reform and extended and improved dialogue on socioeconomic objectives of education advancement, took place at the University of Niš from May 7 to 11, 2007. The conference was aiming to bring together government officials, faculty members, students and experts from across the European academic community to introduce, analyze and develop "best practices" for practical implementation of the Bologna Process (BP) and create a continuous dialogue on instruments capable to provide the intellectual and creative energy required to improve the continent's economic performance and transform its universities into world-class centers of research and teaching excellence.

Much more than onetime gathering of BP stakeholders, Bologna Process Best Practices was a busy eight months long set of activities informing and promoting the content of the BP and discussing the problems that arise in its implementation both in Serbian and the European academic community, trying to form and amplify students' say in higher education reform. This meant being present at dozens of relevant gatherings and actions on the topic in Serbia and across Europe, as well as initiating widespread debate on higher education – from students' dorm-rooms to corridors of the Parliament.

The conference program was organized in two streams: the first stream, consisting of lectures, panel discussions and workshops led by experts experienced in the implementation of different components of the BP, and involving faculty members, students, authorities and NGOs; divided in six thematic segments: Curriculum Design (2/3 cycles system and curricula reform), Quality Assurance and student participation, ECTS and Qualifications Framework, Diploma Supplement, Lifelong Learning and social dimension of higher education and Mobility and European dimension of higher education; and the second stream, consisting of lectures, presentations, debates, workshops, meetings and other forms of sessions, involving the widest number of stakeholders concerned, to examine the issues of higher education reform in a broader view and give the process a socioeconomic perspective; divided in three thematic segments: Governance and Funding, Openness and Non-formal education.



Key-note lectures were given by some of the leading experts in the field, Professor Dr. Per Nyborg, Head of Bologna Secretariat from Berlin to Bergen, Professor Dr. Norma Ryan, University College Cork, Dr. Peter Wells, UNESCO-CEPES, Dr. Gerhart Rott, European Forum for Student Guidance, Professor Dr. Volker Gehmlich, University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück, Professor Dr. Søren Ehlers, Danish University of Education, Copenhagen, Professor Dr. Stefan Dukianjiev, European Commission, Mr. Gerhard Amundsen, Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, Professor Dr. Steve Quarrie, Newcastle University, rectors from the major Serbian universities and pioneers in introducing and implementing the Bologna Process in Serbia and the region, and international student representatives from AEGEE, ESN, EMSA and BEST.

Conference was very much focused on the quality of student-centered higher education process with strong emphasis on students' competences and learning outcomes. What was recognized as main achievement in designing QA instruments are acceptance of quality review process, appreciation of need for self-reflection and embedding of a quality culture in all areas of the university. Strong emphasis was put on efforts to develop and promote the idea of putting European values in higher education and focusing on motives, expectations, needs, opportunities and benefits of students engaged in academic mobility programmes. Main principles, structural elements, new paradigm and the legacy of the Bologna Process were examined and curricula, funding and governance reform brought forward as key areas of improvements once the process is over in 2010. What was also acknowledged is that recognizing the value of student's non-formal learning is of benefit to both the student and the institution and that recognition of non-formal learning should be positively encouraged, with positivism to be applied on a case by case policy.

Finally, the Bologna Process Best Practices Conference raised many important points for future discussions. Moving away from recommendations for formal to concepts of substantial changes in higher education development will bring better results, but will also take more time and energy, as complex challenges are being tackled. With structural reforms failing to show expected outcomes, it is acknowledged that mobility, the key ingredient of the EHEA, is closely connected with the social dimension of higher education. In the same way, strong focus on the internationalization of the "Bologna trademark" has once again brought forward the topic of the European dimension of higher education. Quality assurance and enhancement with strong student participation will also continue to stand high on the agenda just as a need for an extensive social dialogue on the issues of the education reform until and beyond 2010.

The project was funded by the Institute of International Education, world's leading provider of education services, and Serbian affiliate of Philip Morris

CONNECTING EDGES

By Anita Bosneva

On 7th of March 2008 29 young people from 12 countries gathered in Reykjavik to explore Icelandic youth reality, participation and non-formal education. Organizing this Case Study Trip in cooperation with BEST, EMSA, EYP, JASMA, YEU and ESN Reykjavik, without support of a local antenna, was an intriguing challenge which AEGEE managed to turn into another story of success. Having this diverse group with its different organizational background assisted in transferring good practices and served as a strong base for future cooperation.

Of course, participants had the chance to discuss youth participation, active citizenship and non-formal education within the Icelandic context by meeting different stakeholders. Representatives from AISEC Reykjavik, National Students Union, Icelandic Youth Council, the Other House, Government youth support center, and the University of Iceland gave us useful and priceless feedback in terms of Icelandic young people situation. Participants conducted informal interviews with University of Iceland students that led to an insight what are the main fields of interest to youth in Reykjavik, how they feel about voluntary work and what meaning stands behind the phrase “feeling European” for them. Visiting the Icelandic Parliament introduced us to local policy and decision making and ordinary people’s impact on it.

It appeared that volunteers can easily benefit of a strong financial and administrative support from local companies and authorities. In terms of NFE recognition Icelandic students are rather lucky since they have the option of receiving ECTS for their volunteer work. Yet again the very specific social and economical situation somehow makes native youth not that active in non-profit activities. It’s a matter of perception – for them being involved in organizations only brings something extra to add in one’s CV. Due to the extremely low rates of unemployment most Icelanders don’t really perceive voluntary work as a necessity and they would rather find an ordinary part-time job to support their student loans than involving themselves into “un-paid jobs”. It’s important to not mistaken this as lack of interest but more as certain misunderstanding of the concept of volunteer work and all the skills and personal development it brings. Not to mention the aspect of active citizenship and its benefits towards society.



Then, of course, comes the question – how to get more people involved? We faced a strong sense of individualism within Icelanders which even has its very own historical background and has become one of the puzzle-pieces constructing their very culture. Being a part of the Danish Kingdom for so long and struggling towards gaining power over their state has deeply carved a solid concept of independence in each Icelandic. Also the economical reality makes them somehow utilitarian and profit-oriented. People are definitely prone to involve themselves if only the topic would be of their strong interest. Thanks to the surveys we conducted, we were able to define that students are mostly interested in environmental and gender equality issues. This brings the conclusion: if volunteer work and maintenance of active citizenship position are well promoted as tools for personal enhancement and they operate in Icelandic youth fields of interest, we can easily say “Start now! Icelandic people are waiting to be asked”!

**AEGEE NETWORK
STARRING ANTENNAE
AEGEE AND WEB 2.0
YOUNG PEOPLE IN ACTION
EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM
AEGEE IN CRISIS?**



**NETWORK
&
YOUTH**

GETTING BIGGER AND STRONGER AEGEE NETWORK

If someone ask what is the biggest strength of AEGEE the answer should be – the network. With more than 230 local branches all around Europe, AEGEE is one of the biggest structures combining youth NGOs in Europe. What is also unique and important, the geographical spread of this association is really astonishing - from Samara to Porto, from Tampere to Valletta. At every Agora new groups of young Europeans decide to join this network of friendship and idealism by signing the Convencion d'Adhesion.

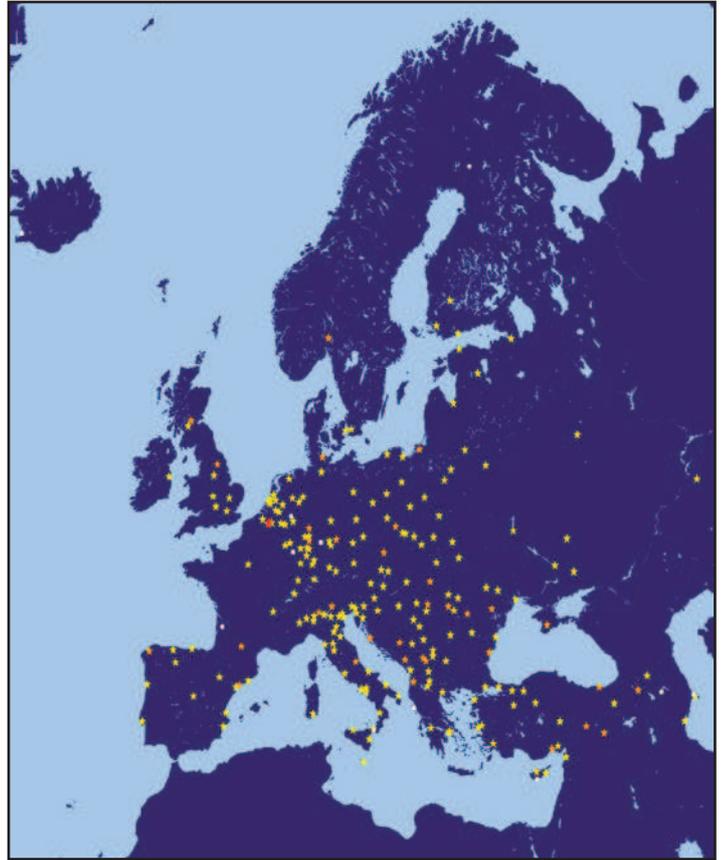
Of course there is always question about the relation between quantity and quality – how good are we at managing such a big and still expanding network? For sure it is not an easy task. AEGEE locals are not homogenous organizations and they work under different circumstances.

First of all the university systems and university culture differ very much in European countries. Those differences apply to average time of studies, amount of work required from students, or general approach towards the students activism. In some countries young people are encouraged to take active role in the society and enrich they experience by being part of students projects.

Second thing is the perception of Europe and European integration. It is significant fact that there are many strong locals in Central Europe or Turkey – places where due to historical reasons people know what does it mean to feel excluded from Europe and function on its edges. Organization that brings Europe closer as AEGEE does, can be much more desirable and attractive for them, that for those already born and brought up in united part of Old Continent. On the other hand AEGEE locals are still rather weak in traditionally more euro-skeptical Scandinavia or British Isles.

What is also very important are the cultural differences. AEGEE is present in more than 40 countries all over Europe. AEGEE-members have different religious beliefs, cultural background and historical experience. During AEGEE events people from conflict areas may sleep next to each other on the gym or work together while workshops.

How to make such big and diverse network to function well, considering that the uniqueness of AEGEE is also lack of national level? Surely there is not one answer for this question. Probably the most important is work of the Network Commission – the team of 11 people spread around Europe whose task is to ensure the good communication flow and good work of AEGEE-locals. Another thing is increasing level of professionalism of the AEGEE-locals. Thank to different trainings, both local and international people active in the organization are simply better prepared to achieve its goals in more efficient way.



However there is something that is common for all AEGEE-locals in every part of Europe. The combination of passion, creativity and enthusiasm that is usually called “AEGEE-spirit”. This is the power that motivate AEGEE-members to overcome barriers of distance, culture and languages and work together in European-wide network of friends – young people who want to change a bit world around them.

Marek Urban is 24 years old member of AEGEE-Lublin (Poland). He has joined AEGEE in 2003. During his AEGEE life he was active in the board of AEGEE-Lublin and then jumped into European Level as a member and later also speaker of the Network Commission. He visited countless number of AEGEE-events. Currently he is active mainly as AEGEE-Academy trainer, finishes his studies and developing his own company.





AEGEE Çanakkale: The real AEGEE Spirit

After 5 years, AEGEE-Çanakkale's star is still getting brighter and brighter. The members worked so hard in the past years and organized a lot of successful events. So, here is the result: AEGEE-Çanakkale is the biggest and the most well-known student organization in the city of Çanakkale. AEGEE-Çanakkale officially has 80 members and weekly meetings of the local host at least 50 motivated active members.

In the last years, AEGEE-Çanakkale organized 4 local conferences, 6 international events together with 2 Summer Universities and hosted more than 400 persons from all over Europe in the city of Çanakkale. Also, AEGEE-Çanakkale members participated in the last 9 consecutive AGORAs, all the EBMs and many European Schools.

AEGEE-Çanakkale was selected as the most active student club in Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. AEGEE-Çanakkale offers free dance and English lessons to university students at weekends. They visit orphanages, give presents to children and involves in social issues of the city. They also have ordinary meetings with the municipality of Çanakkale to discuss future activities in the city. Today if you visit Çanakkale, you can see AEGEE posters in city-buses.

They have a media partner and they are broadcasting AEGEE radio program every weekend which covers around 250.000 people. Their PR responsible is also a DJ in radio station of the university. Today if you come and visit Çanakkale, just stop a man in the street and ask "What is AEGEE?". Nearly half of them will answer correctly and show you the office which is located in the most famous and most expensive district of the city that is exactly in the center by the sea. These are just some good examples of their professional structure. On the other hand, AEGEE-Çanakkale deserves to be starring antenna of our network because of their successful events. The local organizes a traditional youth festival called TroyFest and they hosted more than 300 young Europeans in the city in the last 4 years. This year they are going to celebrate their 5th anniversary with TroyFest 5. Last year in 2007, AEGEE-Çanakkale was the host antenna of European School 1. This ES1 was organized in Faculty of Education and gave a training of a high quality to the active AEGEE members all around Europe. Also the members of AEGEE-Çanakkale take active part in European Level of AEGEE and serve not only to their locals but also to whole AEGEE network.

AEGEE-Çanakkale enjoys the full support and the patronage of the distinguished personalities such as the Dean of Faculty of Education, Prof. Dr. Dinçay Köksal and the Rector of Onsekiz Mart University Prof. Dr. Ali Akdemir.

AEGEE-Krakow : Not bananal but inspiring

Once upon a time there was a bunch of enthusiastic students in Kraków who were highly motivated to foster European cooperation right after the breakdown of the Soviet Union in 1991. Students from the University of Technology and Science and the Jagiellonian University organized successfully several international conferences, but unfortunately in the mid-nineties the early attempt to establish AEGEE-Kraków disbanded till 1998.

With the help of Tadeusz Kolodziej, the head of the Interuniversity Association for European Integration, the students managed to overcome bureaucratic obstacles and founded AEGEE-Kraków. Since this moment the antenna has run through an impressive development in the AEGEE network. It has not missed any summer with an own Summer University since 2000 and can count 150 cheerful and highly motivated members till now.

Besides a successful SU, the highlight in 2007 was the Network Meeting in November with more than 100 participants. The slogan of this event "Don't be bananal- Find your own inspiration", which is known all over the network through their successful bookmark banana campaign, has become reality and has even excelled the organizers' dreams.



But the Network Meeting was not the only red marked date in AEGEE-Kraków's event calendar. Another highlight in 2007 was an exchange between AEGEE-Kyiv, AEGEE-Madrid, AEGEE-Moskva and AEGEE-Kraków with the slogan "Art in the round". It covered nearly the full dimension of Europe's east-west scope. The idea behind this exchange was to let students with different cultural backgrounds get to know each other through art. Therefore members of all antennas spent one week preparing their performance with the help of professional actors. The concept worked out and Olga Chelebaeva even found her missing piece in life: „When I was young I visited dance classes, but now I stopped. After this workshop I realized that I miss it. I will start it again when I come back. Thank you very much for helping me to realize it.”

In addition to several European events every year, AEGEE-Kraków never neglects its local activities. While offering seminars about IT, soft skills, volunteering, HR and PR once a month held by professional external trainers, AEGEE-Kraków seeks to offer high-level services for other students and is meanwhile gaining new motivated members for their antenna. Moreover, in order to celebrate Europe's diversity in full scale, the antenna has established a language course system offering 8 languages taught by students for students in small groups which have grown more and more- the latest course is Arabic....so we can be excited what will come next from this innovative Polish local.

AEGEE-Leuven: The thriving desert dawn is becoming an oasis

What do Leuven and Passau have in common? Believe it or not, but both AEGEE antennas were founded by the same person: Marco Kalbusch, Passau in 1990 and Leuven in 1992. Unfortunately, most historic tales about AEGEE-Leuven's history were lost over the time, because the local never really lifted off until a bunch of international students revived it in 2005. Since then, the antenna has become very active and does not stop growing. In 2007, they had already counted 50 members and a long list of activities. Right now, inspired by the big faculty clubs in Leuven, they pursue a professional FR strategy to gain enough funds for running their local and are very close to a breakthrough on local level.

In the early stage of their existence, a series of conferences were held in cooperation with the former working group "Europe of the Regions Academy". In 2007, they have tied in with this tradition. Having the advantage of proximity to Brussels, they managed to attract some famous speakers from the European Union for a debate on "Europe of the Regions". The intention of this event was to discuss this topic in an area with serious political tensions in 2007.

The Travelling Summer University "Endangered Countries: Belgium, Proof of Existence" in 2008 with AEGEE-Brussels and AEGEE-Gent will be a continuation of this topic. In addition to several co-operations with antennas nearby, AEGEE-Leuven successfully applied the first time for a Youth in Action grant for an exchange with AEGEE-León, AEGEE-Peiraias and AEGEE-Kraków, which started in 2007 and will be continued in 2008.

Besides these European events, the members of AEGEE-Leuven don't forget to have fun at member's weekends, Christmas Dinner or at the Ukrainian Theme Night. Last year, there was twice a "Cantus", a traditional student fest in Belgium, where they sing old songs in various languages and drink beer. It is led by the Senior, the president of the association, and everybody greets each other with "Prosit Senior, Prosit Corona" and then "Ad Fundum!" (to the bottom). It often leads to many drunken people, as the participants of SU remember or maybe not, but the Belgium proved their drinking ability confidently.

AEGEE-Leuven's local members can enjoy a wide range of activities, starting from Project Management Training Courses, debates or movie nights to lodging 30 crazy Dutch hitchhikers from Enschede.

Not only do they have good contact with Enschede, but also with other Dutch locals. The last TSU in 2007 "CSI Benelux" was done in cooperation with AEGEE-Eindhoven, AEGEE-Gent and AEGEE-Luxembourg. This event made the organizing locals "Summer University Kings" as they won the participants' evaluation with an unbelievable score of 6,0 out of 6,0. The organizers in Leuven and Gent have been inspired by Eindhoven's manpower and experience, hence a new generation stood up in Leuven to take over the good work of their predecessors.

Facing some difficulties for a European oriented organization in the Belgian student climate, AEGEE-Leuven is developing impressively and who knows; maybe they will be one of the top candidates for best Activity Report at the next Agora again, after winning it already in 2007.



AEGEE-Ljubljana: A never ending success story

Awarded as second best Antenna in the whole AEGEE network in 2006; "Europe's (torn?) Identity" became best AEGEE Event of the year 2003, excellent human resources... This characterizes AEGEE-Ljubljana, one of the biggest and most active antennas in the AEGEE network. It has all started in 1991. Today they count 130 official members, 70 of them actively involved. But why is AEGEE-Ljubljana so successful over many years?

First of all, there is a good mixture of experienced members and newcomers, so that an efficient knowledge transfer is assured. The highly motivated members transfer their AEGEE spirit and knowledge to the new ones, who get encouraged to organize events themselves. So the secret recipe is the ominous AEGEE virus, which infects the new members and reaches wider circles.

Let's take the year 2007 as an example: To expand their excellent inter-network relationships, AEGEE-Ljubljana did an exchange with AEGEE-Hamburg in April. But not only do they have good contact to foreign antennas, in Slovenia itself there is a strong connection between the locals and the Summer University "Indiana Janez 2007" was proof of it. The 35 participants were travelling around Slovenia and got to know the customs and habits.

Besides these annual events, AEGEE-Ljubljana took part in the "Erasmus 20" celebration. Erasmus people travelled in a van around Europe and stopped by in Ljubljana where they were welcomed by AEGEE members. In addition to the European events, it has become a tradition that AEGEE-Ljubljana organizes educational seminars for their members, as well as local fun events like sports activities or motivation weekends.

AEGEE-Ljubljana also took part in European Projects like the European Day of Languages. They prepared a "street of languages" in bars all over the city and therefore gave locals the chance to participate in language courses while enjoying a drink.

In this way, the antenna has found a good balance between internal, local, regional and European level, which deserves high respect. Last but not least, there is an event with a long tradition: The "Traditional Slovenian Drinks and Habits", taking place right after the Summer University every year. Participants get to know Slovenian customs and culture during 3 unforgettable days, depending on what they can remember after having tasted borovničke.

In 2008, they will face a new challenge: Spring Agora will take place from 30.4. to 4.5.2008. It is AEGEE's most important statutory event with more than 600 participants and probably the biggest task a local can take over. But having such experienced and motivated members, what should go wrong?!



AEGEE-Nis: 10 years of fostering a multicultural unified Europe

The Balkans have been very present in the media all over Europe the last years- not only for unification but mostly for separation and lasting conflicts. These problems make it even more important to have motivated young people who strive for a more unified Europe. One place where you can find this kind of people in Serbia is Nis. They gathered together in 1998 and founded AEGEE-Nis. From that moment onwards, they developed from a small antenna to an active organization with several high-level events and it seems, that they will never stop going for their goal: A contribution to the promotion of Europe and its values in Serbia and their environment.

The members of AEGEE-Nis can be really proud of the achievements they made last year. They have not only contributed to AEGEE's last Flagship Project, but they have also organized a Summer University and took part in AEGEE's Project European Day of Languages.

In May 2007, AEGEE-Nis has welcomed more than fifty highly esteemed speakers and panelists from universities, representatives from European youth and student organizations from all over Europe to "Bologna Process Best Practices". The aim was to promote the content of the Bologna Process and its benefits among local students, faculty members, decision makers and the society at large during the five-day conference.

Just two months later, the next highlight in AEGEE-Nis' schedule took place, although it was an event in absolute contrast to the serious conference before. During their Summer University "Discover Serbia in AEGEE way" at the beginning of August in cooperation with AEGEE-Leskovac, they wanted their participants to get a sense of the multicultural diversity in Europe. Therefore, they went to South-Eastern Serbia where traditions, customs and culture from East and West coexist harmoniously. While enjoying an impressive countryside and delicious, traditional food, having fun with river rafting and trekking, the 25 participants from all over Europe and organizers got a sense of their own cultural differences and similarities while spending two relaxed weeks with each other.



- The last big event in 2007 aimed high: "Wolfs and Squirrels are Learning Serbian". With four November days full of language-related activities, AEGEE-Nis celebrated the European Day of Language with European and local members for the fourth time. In order to raise awareness for the linguistic diversity in Europe, the 25 participants learned about Serbian language, history and culture in workshops and in reality.
- It is amazing what AEGEE-Nis has achieved till now and they never forget their big goal: to promote a unified Europe for the sake of all Europeans.

AEGEE-Samara : Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

If you have a look at our AEGEE map with all the stars, one for each local group, there is one star in the very East of Europe which belongs to AEGEE-Samara. It is one of the youngest and most promising locals in the AEGEE network. The president of the antenna, Elena Solomatkina, got inspired to found an antenna in Samara by her friend Elena Mordvinova, who got to know AEGEE before.

After handling all the difficulties, which occurred while writing the statutes for the new organization and obtaining the European NGO status in Russia, they were officially approved as Contact Antenna at Agora Valetta (Malta) in spring 2007. Although there are many difficulties for Russian students, especially to gain a Visa, the first members of AEGEE-Samara are highly motivated to spread AEGEE's ideas in their city and even wider. The president compares their development with the Latin proverb "Per aspera ad astra", which means "through difficulties to the stars". They have the vision of opening a door for Russian students to Europe and of breaking stereotypes by travelling through the continent, getting to know other Europeans and learn essential skills for the future.

Elena wants to give her fellow students the chance to experience what it means to discover the European stars: travelling through the continent, getting to know other Europeans and learning essential skills for the future.

The first step on European Level in AEGEE was "Join Samara in the Grushin Festival" in July 2007. This international music festival attracted participants from Macedonia, Germany, Turkey, Poland and France. Dimitri and Bojan said: „We suggest making this event traditional of AEGEE-Samara. Only your local can provide such an opportunity for European students to participate in this wonderful festival!“

In October, the Education Action Week took place in Samara for local students. They wanted to promote academic mobility by introducing the Bologna Process, study abroad programs and youth NGO's to the students in Samara with great success.

Finally, AEGEE-Samara finished their first successful year with The New Year event "Make it Russian!", which was so good, that they already have the first applications for "Make it Russian! -2".

As you can see, the founders of AEGEE-Samara are full of ideas for projects they want to realize. Although at first the way up to the European stars seemed to be quite hard, the members of AEGEE-Samara are now becoming real AEGEE-stars themselves that glow in the very, very east of AEGEE's Europe but are shining so bright that they can be seen in every corner of the network.



AEGEE-Santander: From SU fast forward

“What is a Summer University? Boring lectures during holidays?” Jorge Pérez Hidalgo from Santander asked his friend who had just joined AEGEE-Alicante in spring 2006. “No, AEGEE gives you the chance to spend two weeks in a European country. It’s very cheap and everything is already organized” his friend answered. So Jorge decided to join this association and went to Poland for an AEGEE Summer University. AEGEE-Lublin organized an amazing SU and spread their AEGEE spirit among the participants. After coming back home, Jorge thought: “It was the best summer in my life!” and he continued to participate in further AEGEE events all over Europe and developed the idea of founding an own local in his hometown Santander, as he always regretted to lack the profits of a “home” antenna. So step by step he arranged with the help of other Spanish antennas and members from all over Europe to settle AEGEE-Santander which became a contact antenna at the Spring Agora 2007 in Valletta and an official antenna at the Fall Agora 2007 in Eskisehir.



In the beginning there were only four friends running the local. Jorge was elected as the first president. They started a massive PR campaign in the whole city and in one month they gained more than 75 new members, 60 of them went on a Summer University. They established good relationship with their University rectorate and got a lot of support from them. As Jorge had already gained experience in event management in former activities for exchange students, he wanted to take over the Erasmus student’s social programme as many other antennas do. So the members of AEGEE-Santander negotiated with their University the frame and since then there are several activities, trips, language exchanges and parties with the support of University International Relations Office.

As it all started with a Summer University, it was a must to organize one themselves. Last year they cooperated with AEGEE-Madrid and AEGEE-León in the “Cats and Lions III” Travel Summer University and this year they organize the “From the siesta to the fiesta: breaking stereotypes” Travel Summer University together with AEGEE-León.

Besides being very active on local level, AEGEE-Santander was also the organizer of the Autumn Network Meeting where they welcomed more than 80 participants and have fostered cooperation among the local organizations in Spain and Portugal.

Moreover, they are planning to have two YOUTH exchanges, one with AEGEE-Lublin, AEGEE-Baku and AEGEE-Tbilisi, and another one with AEGEE-Pisa and AEGEE-Kyiv.

“This is the story of how just a couple of friends in a couple of months built a strong antenna from nothing, thanks to 14 days in a Summer University.” President Jorge described the development of this local and for sure it is not the end.

AEGEE-Mağusa: Nothing is impossible

Established 10 years ago in North Cyprus. AEGEE-Mağusa has always been a shining star of this beautiful island. But the year 2007 was one of the most valuable and important years for them. Local has reached its most crowded level in 2007. Today, AEGEE-Mağusa has around 60 members and most of these members are quite active in their local. The star of the local is rising with its members and successful activities. The new members of the local are getting courses from Management Centre of Cyprus to increase their personal skills and put them into practice in the club. It also helps the local to use professionals to solve problems. AEGEE-Mağusa is the first local of AEGEE in North Cyprus. With this experience, AEGEE-Mağusa has always been a pioneer local in the island and helped other university students to establish new AEGEE locals in other university towns of Cyprus. The first and very good example for this achievement is AEGEE-Güzelyurt. This new local of North Cyprus was officially recognized in AGORA-Valletta with the support of AEGEE-Mağusa members. Since then, AEGEE-Mağusa and AEGEE-Güzelyurt have always been working together as partners.



Currently, AEGEE-Mağusa gives its all support to help students in Girne Universities to establish new local there. Day by day, the star of Mağusa shines better and brighter in Europe. AEGEE-Mağusa feels the honour of being a part of beautiful island of Cyprus and becomes a good model for new locals all around Europe. The delicate situation of the island gives them much more responsibility and importance and AEGEE-Mağusa recompenses this with its successful and significant activities. AEGEE-Mağusa members also get active on European Level of AEGEE and serve to the whole network. For instance, Sander Kahveciler is the sub-commissioner of Network commission and use his experience and knowledge to help other locals in the neighborhood. Milhan Beysoylu, the current president of AEGEE-Mağusa, also joined job shadowing visit and stayed in Head office of AEGEE-Europe in Brussels. It is sure that AEGEE-Mağusa is apparently a big chance for people in North Cyprus. The local destroys all borders and prejudices between the people of Cyprus and serve for the peace and stability in the island. Although the obstacles and strict isolations towards North Cyprus, people of AEGEE-Mağusa never give up AEGEE ideals, learn everything out of their experiences and share the information with other European people. The local organizes Summer Universities as a tradition. It’s the biggest event of the local and every year members gives their best to organize the best summer university of that year. And they are very successful in doing this. Because summer universities of AEGEE-Mağusa have always been evaluated in the top-5 events among the all summer universities. Last year, local got the honour of being evaluated as the second best Summer University of the year. And it is not enough for them. Watch out and follow AEGEE-Mağusa activities carefully for the upcoming years. This small local of the small island is getting ready to achieve bigger things than anybody can ever expect to see!

Isabell Schroeder was born in 1986. She started her studies in Passau, joined AEGEE there in spring 2005 and soon became PR Responsible for one year of her local board. After spending one year in China, the little AEGEE bug was still alive and kicking in her, so she became AEGEE’s Publications responsible at PRWG board.



AEGEE AND

WEB 2.0

AEGEE and Information Technologies (IT) have always been hand in hand. We cannot think of an AEGEE Project or event without using the support of information technologies. Until recent years this support generally was meant as technical support. But The world and web keep changing everyday.

Since 2000 World Wide Web (also known as "The Internet") evolved to enter our houses and everyday's life. A new generation of websites with modern design and functionalities appeared. They aim to facilitate creativity, collaboration, and sharing among users. Web 2.0 is a generic term introduced in 2004 that describes this new wave.

Web 2.0 launched a lot of innovative services like mail services (Google's free Web-Based e-mail service), social networks (MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn...), photo albums (Flickr) and many others.

Since then, as a pioneer NGO in society, AEGEE has been using this new and great way of communication at utmost level. AEGEE Photo page on aegEE.org is a simple but very good example of this usage. For more than 8 years, AEGEE members use this platform to update, download and exchange the photos they took in AEGEE events. Currently there are nearly 60.000 photos taken from 400 different AEGEE events on this webpage and it keeps growing.

Now, let's talk about Facebook, the most popular social network which made a big Buzz these last months after Microsoft invested \$240 million in it. It already seduced about 50 million people (half of daily visitors). This is not a dating website, on the contrary, it is a very effective communication tool among people. Not only teenagers are using Facebook as average age of members is constantly growing.

--== So, what's exactly Facebook ? ==--

It defines itself as a "social utility that connects people with friends". It is mainly a personal space where you can store your photos, add your friends and share everything with them. The good thing is that as long as you do not approve, nobody can add you to their lists and see your personal space. Moreover, it provides a lot of optional application that you can "install" in your personal space to add more features.

--== And how can it help us in AEGEE ? ==--

First of all it can be used to keep all your AEGEE contacts and friends. In comparison to your old paper address book, Facebook has the advantage of staying up to date as your friends change their contact details (if they update their Facebook ac-

count, of course). But more than being just an address book, Facebook is also a real communication tool. You can advertise an AEGEE event and invite people to join. This can be done using the Events application in your account. Once you created the event you can publicize it in your Networks (groups which you belong to) and start inviting people. They will have the opportunity to answer if they plan to come or not and discuss about the event, post photos and videos. Thanks to the network, lots of people will hear from your event. And it will appear on people's page. To help managing your event, you will also be able to send messages to all people what's useful in case of last minute changes for example. So, in addition to being a communication tool, it is also an effective PR tool for your activities. Today, there are currently more than 50 AEGEE events page on facebook and organizers keep in contact with their participants via this way. The other thing is groups. There is an AEGEE group on facebook with more than 2500 registered member. So, that people

can meet with other AEGEE members easily. There is not only one AEGEE group, but also many other groups for AEGEE Locals. Currently more than 100 AEGEE locals set up a facebook group for themselves and keep communication among their members there. This can be also used as an online address book for AEGEE members. Imagine that you are travelling to Barcelona and you need a place to stay there. Going to a hostel or contacting to an AEGEE member in the city? Which

one would you prefer? Of course our AEGEE spirit does not let anybody stay alone in a hostel. But you do not know anybody from AEGEE Barcelona and don't have any contact information. Don't worry anymore. You can make a search for the group of this local on facebook and here it is, all the members of the local are ready to be your host.

Similarly, Myspace, Flickr Photo albums, blogs and discussion forums are being used by AEGEE members for a more effective communication and public relations. It is not only good for AEGEE but also for the rest of your life. As we are growing up you might have to work one day... Web 2.0 applications will be there to support you managing your professional network, getting introduced to new people, keeping up to date contact information and lot more.

To conclude, AEGEE will be using these advantageous web application and keep watching the AEGEE agenda for Web 2.0 public relations as training courses about Web 2.0 PR are still on their way in the action plan!

AEGEE ITWG & Gokhan Bozkurt





Youth Policy across Europe

AEGEE works in many directions. We strive to encourage young people to take stand as active European citizens, to ensure their active participation in society, to foster intercultural dialogue, promote voluntary work, etc; And to put it all in one sentence, it is all about Youth Policy. There are several papers created by European Commission [White Paper on Youth, Open Method of Coordination] to explore needs of young people in Europe; and opportunities offered to them.

What is Youth in Action?

Youth in Action [YiA] is a successor of the “Youth for Europe” (1989-1999), the European Voluntary Service and the YOUTH Programme (2000-2006). The programme is created by the EU for young people in order to foster mobility of young people within and beyond European Union, Intercultural Dialogue among young people, inclusion of young people despite their educational and cultural background and to say it in one phrase to shape Youth Policy in Europe; and all these is done in Non Formal Learning settings.

Objectives of Youth in Action:

- promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular; develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- Promote European cooperation in the youth field .

What are the opportunities within Youth in Action?

The programme is divided into 5 actions and each of them provide financial support for different types of activities: Youth Exchanges, European Voluntary Service, Training Courses, Thematical Seminars, Study Trips, Job Shadowing Visits, etc; Apart from the financial support the programme offers priorities and objectives. Activities implemented under Youth in Action should comply those objectives and priorities.

Youth in Action - tool for learning or for fun?

The programme is designed to respond the needs of young people, and help them to acquire competencies through non formal learning. It gives opportunity to young people from different cultural and educational background, to think, to work, to create, to make change within the European dimension. Learning process within non formal learning settings is based in learning by doing, discovering how young people can get motivated to become Active European Citizens, Actively Participate in European matters, accept cultural diversity and create society which is ready to accept young people with fewer opportunities.

Why do we need in AEGEE to use Youth in Action Programme?

During last years AEGEE considerably expanded to the Far Eastern and the Caucasus region and fully acquired Western Balkans. In order to ensure inclusion of young people from all over Europe there is a need to bring young people together, create for them space to discuss issues of European Identity, European Citizenship, discover cultural diversity, etc; For this purpose the programme best responds AEGEE member's needs today, How AEGEE is using the Youth in Action Programme?

3 times per year we apply for the grant at European Level [to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency], for several activities at a time, however our locals can apply 5 times per year at National Level to National Agencies [February 1, April 1, June 1, September 1 & November 1] for the financial support for

their activities. Most activities that AEGEE applies are: financial support for European Schools, for different training courses, seminars, study trips to Malta to meet young migrants, Iceland and the Caucasus to meet young people from those geographically remote regions. One of the most widely used actions is Job Shadowing Service.

Job Shadowing Service [JSV]

3 times per year in the Head Office we host trainees from various countries, mostly from geographically remote countries or relatively new antennae. During the 3 weeks intensive training programme ensures:

- To train and provide the trainer with skills and attitudes how to work in multicultural team;
- To get familiar with with details of organizational management;

- Institutional Fund Raising – Community Programmes;

The trainer spend 1 day with each CD members and get detailed explanation about task. The trainer becomes shadow of the CD members. **Trainers hosted in the Head Office so far:**

Tamuna from AEGEE-Tbilisi, January 2005 [current Bureau member of European Youth Forum];
Najla from AEGEE-Baku September 2005;
Alena from AEGEE-Grodno January 2006;
Pedro from AEGEE-Lisboa October 2006 – Member of Cometé Directeur – Napoli-Valletta;
Milhan Beysoylu from AEGEE-Magusa;
Hovhannes from AEGEE-GuyMRI;
Milan from AEGEE-Nis.

However it is possible to implement Job Shadowing Visits between locals. Already implemented:

Tika from AEGEE-Tbilisi – to AEGEE-Athina;
Chinara Mirzayeva from AEGEE-Baku – to AEGEE-Krakow;
Tural Mammadov from AEGEE-Baku – to AEGEE-Passau
Nino from AEGEE-Tbilisi – to AEGEE-Mainz/Weisbaden;
Eka from AEGEE-Tbilisi – to AEGEE-Groningen;
Tural Mammadov summerizes his JSV experience as it follows below;

‘During my 2 week JSV I got chance to get acquainted with the activities of each board member, took active part in organization of different local activities, met with different partner youth organizations, participated in board member discussion and also went to the members meeting of AEGEE-Munich.

This 2 weeks was full of new experiences, learning and networking. I got insight to the vast experience of AEGEE-Passau, which has been in youth work for 17 years’

This is time for you to start ACTION, this is time for your local to ACT! Take the chance and use Youth in Action!!!

Tika Tsertsvadze is 26 years old, active youth worker from AEGEE-Tbilisi. She was the organizer of the 1st Travel SU in the Caucasus and other several international projects in 2006 in Caucasus region. She currently lives in Brussels and works at the headoffice of AEGEE-Europe as Director for European Institutions.



YOUTH; AS DIVERSIFIED AS A POMEGRANATE

How to describe youth has been and is still one of the hot discussion topics in almost every environment including academia, civil society as well as politics. Leaving all previous definitions behind, one can compare youth to a 'pomegranate.'

The pomegranate has been one of the most common symbols and it symbolizes fertility, abundance and good luck in many cultures such as ancient Greek, Jewish, Armenian, Persian and Islam. It comprises more than 600 seeds that vary in size and divided into layers under its outermost red shell.

As the pomegranate, the youth consists of harmonized diversities. The former contains seeds with different sizes and colours in a shell, whereas the latter embraces young people from various races, nationalities or backgrounds, who come together under a common identity. This is to say, youth is the pomegranate gathering several individuals. In other words, it is the umbrella under which diversified youth crowds walk side by side.

Since its beginning in 1985, AEGEE has been aware of and respectful to the youth diversity in addition to becoming a platform, where approximately 15 000 members in 242 locals assemble. However, coming to 2008, AEGEE is not the only international youth NGO that tries to give voice to its diversified members at the local and European levels. There also exist other organisations such as OBESSU, JEF, ESN or ESU*. Currently, these European wide associations unite under the umbrella of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) (1996), which aims to be the common voice of European youth towards the European and international institutions.

Independently established by youth organisations, the YFJ is made up of more than 90 National Youth Councils and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations. It is located in Brussels and performs functions that are complementary to those of its member organisations (as AEGEE) and its main focus is on articulating and voicing the concerns of its membership into the political agenda of governmental institutions, namely the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

AEGEE has been a member of the YFJ since 1999. Youth policy in general is the major field of cooperation between these two organisations. AEGEE is mainly involved in the fields 'Participation and Youth Empowerment, Non-formal Education and Training', whereas the YFJ provides AEGEE information, speakers, seminar and trainers as well as training materials.

AEGEE is represented by a Liaison Officer towards the YFJ, who is responsible for keeping the AEGEE network updated with the work of the YFJ, and building a bridge between the two organi-

sations. Since AGORA-Valletta in 2007, this task has been executed successfully by Julia Hoffmann.

In addition to having the possibility to send members to the YFJ trainings, seminars and meetings, AEGEE is also represented in the YFJ structure. Asia Piskunowicz is in the Working Group on Non-formal education quality indicators, while Vaggelis Monoguis is a member of the Working Group on Youth Work Development. Furthermore, Maria Nomikou and Dijan Albayrak are in the YFJ Pool of Trainers.

Recently, under the framework of Youth Policy Consultation of the European Commission on a "New Approach to European Youth Policy", Julia Hoffmann and Tika Tsertsvadze, the European Institution Director of AEGEE-Europe, worked on a paper, in which they emphasised the important role of International Youth NGOs in youth policies and prominence of recognition of non-formal education. Furthermore, through the YFJ, AEGEE is regularly sending participants, thus, contributing to the 'Structured Dialogue' events that are organized by the European Commission in order to form a dialogue with young people.

In 21st century, the European youth is seeking for more participatory actions as well as an increase in its role in the decision making processes. On one hand, there exists its diversity, and on the other, it requires a common language to communicate and come together. Hence, while young people and we, AEGEE members, are asking for respect to our diversity, a single voice, spoken by the YFJ, is used. It is the harmony of several seeds in a red shell that makes a pomegranate attractive, whereas it is the unity of voices of youth that makes it heard by policy makers. And, they both stand for fertility and good luck that the future needs...

* OBESSU: Organising Bureau of European School Students Unions

JEF: European Young Christian Workers

ESU: European Students' Union

ESN: Erasmus Student Network



Gülece Şenel is member of AEGEE-Ankara. She is the manager of "Understanding Europe" Project, an Academy member and the chief editor of News Bulletin Fall 2007. She studies Conflict Resolution and dreams to spread Peace Journalism all around the world.



AEGEE IN CRISIS?



Writing this words I still have in mind amazing weekend that I have spent with AEGEE-Torun. They had been organizing Local Training Course and invited me to lead workshops for their fresh members. 25 young people willing to be active and to change a bit the world around them, all of them crazy about AEGEE. On the other hand I am reminding myself many conversations with people from older generations of AEGEE members who did a lot for this organization in the past. Usually the tone of those talks was a little nostalgic or even sad. Often I have heard that AEGEE lost something, that it is not what it used to be in the past. Sometimes I even heard word "crisis".

So what is the truth? Which picture of AEGEE is real – that from Torun, or that from the talks with oldies? Does AEGEE has chance to celebrate "AEGEE 50" anniversary in 2035? Let's try to analyze how close or how far are we from crisis.

First of all every organization need well functioning structures that make the organizational management possible. How does it look like in AEGEE? Not to bad! We have well developed structures starting from Comitee Directeur, Commissions and statutory meetings that take place regularly. All of them function well, even though sometimes we can complain about them.

A sign of crisis would be decreasing number of local branches and people interested in being part of the organization. The point is that for already long time the number of AEGEE-locals is increasing. What is more – from my point of view it is not only higher quantity but also quality of AEGEE-antennas, that more and more often are developing towards professional NGOs, rather than small student clubs.

Organization in crisis is organization without activities. This is for sure not the case of AEGEE. Just quick look at calendar of events on AEGEE-Europe web page shows how many projects is organized all over Europe by AEGEE-members and this is not including local activities, very often organized on a very professional level. Apart from that we have Flagship Project, activities done by working groups and last but not least Summer Universities – one of the biggest intercultural education projects in Europe. It does not look like crisis either.

Of course I do not want to say that AEGEE is perfect. We have a lot of challenges that we need to take in order to make work of AEGEE more efficient and to achieve our aims better. We have to analyze our activity and improve it. We need to change things that have to be changed. But we cannot complain or demotivate ourselves by talking about possible crisis of our organization. All in all AEGEE is us, and on us is the responsibility of its shape. So let's work hard to make our dreams true.

By Marek Urban



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LATVIA:

"Ceturtdien, 22. novembrī, Ogres 1. vidusskolas telpas bija atvērtas visiem, kas vēlējas piedalīties Starptautiskā Studentu foruma AEGEE Ogres kontakta rīkotajā Eiropas valodu dienā un no attiecīgās valsts pārstāvjiem gūt priekšstatu par valodu daudzveidību un līdzību. Valodu diena noslēdzās ar vjetnamiešu valodas prezentāciju, ko vadīja Ogrē dzīvojošais Kao Viets Ngujens."

"On Thursday, 22nd November Ogre Secondary School No. 1 was opened for everybody, who wanted to take part in European Student Forum Contact Ogre's organised European Day of Languages and get an idea about the diversity and similarities of languages from representatives of different countries. The European Day of Languages finished with Vietnamese language presentation, which was lead by Cao Viet Ngujen, who is living in Ogre."

Source: Ogres Vēstis, November 2007

TURKEY:

AEGEE-Ankara, Avrupa'yı Anla(t)mak Projesi'yle lise öğrencilerinin Türkiye ve Avrupa gündemine duyarlılıklarını artırmayı, onları araştırmaya ve eleştirel düşünmeye yöneltmeyi amaçlıyor. Mart 2007'de Ankara'daki orta öğretim kurumlarında eğitimler gerçekleştiren proje takımı, 2 Nisan 2007 itibarıyla İzmir, İstanbul, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Antalya ve Samsun'da Gezici Eğitimlere başlıyor. Proje grubu, gençlerin "Avrupa nedir?" sorusu üzerinde düşüncelerini sağlamayı hedefliyor.

With the Understanding Europe Project, AEGEE-Ankara aims to increase awareness of high school students on Turkish and European agenda, while directing them to critical thinking and research. The Project team realized trainings in high schools in Ankara during March 2007 and from 2nd April 2007, they are beginning the mobile trainings in İzmir, İstanbul, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Antalya and Samsun. Project team intend to make the participants think on the question "What is Europe?"

Source: www.bianet.org, 2 April 2007

GREECE:

Η 'Κιβωτός του Νώε' ήρθε απο το παρελθόν για το μέλλον της Ευρώπης!!!

To Education Working Group της AEGEE ήδη έχει αρχίσει να δουλεύει πολύ σκληρά για μία μελλοντική εκδήλωση που θα φιλοξενηθεί απο την AEGEE-Αθήνα το καλοκαίρι του 2008. Η 'Κιβωτός του Νώε' είναι ένα εκπαιδευτικό σεμινάριο για παιδιά λυκείου απ'όλη την Ευρώπη. Ο στόχος του είναι να να τους εκπαιδεύσει να γίνουν ενεργοί πολίτες. Με την ποικιλία των μεθόδων που περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα, η 'Κιβωτός του Νώε', σκοπεύει να παρουσιάσει στους νεαρούς τη μέθοδο και σκεπτικό της άτυπης εκπαίδευσης, εξοπλίζοντάς τους με τα απαραίτητα μέσα, που θα τους βοηθήσουν στην μελλοντική τους ανάμειξη στο δίκτυο της νεολαίας.

Μαθητές του λυκείου, εξασφαλίστε γρήγορα τη θέση σας! Η 'Κιβωτός του Νώε' ήρθε απο το παρελθόν για το μέλλον της Ευρώπης!!! 23-31 Αυγούστου του 2008, στην Αθήνα!!!

Noah's Ark is back from history for the future of Europe!!!

AEGEE Education Working Group is currently working on an upcoming event, which will be hosted by AEGEE-Athens in summer 2008. Noah's Ark is a training for high school students all around Europe. It aims to train them as active citizens. With the variety of methodologies that will be included in the program, Noah's Ark intends to introduce nonformal education concepts to youngsters, while equipping them with necessary skills that will guide their further involvement in youth work. High school students, save your place in advance! Noah's Ark is back from history for the future of Europe! 23-31 August 2008 in Athens!

Source: ένθετο εφημερίδας 'Καθημερινή', Φεβρουάριος 2008

THE NETHERLANDS:

Internationale studenten proeven van Nederlandse cultuur

Dertig studenten uit verschillende Europese streken afgelopen vrijdag op de campus neer. Onder de vleugels van de studentenvereniging AEGEE-Enschede volgen ze in gebouw Langezijds workshops en lezingen boordevol praktische informatie die ze helpt om zelf, na thuiskomst, AEGEE evenementen te organiseren en sponsors binnen te halen.

International students taste the Dutch culture

Thirty students from different European regions arrived last Friday at the campus. Under the wings of student organisation AEGEE-Enschede they follow in building Langezijds workshops and lectures full with practical information that helps them to, after coming home, organise AEGEE events and find sponsors.

Source: UT Nieuws, 13 March 2008

GERMANY:

ISD ist Sponsor der Studenteninitiative AEGEE Academy in Mannheim

Mannheimer Mobility Training School (05.-12.03.08) mit 25 Teilnehmern aus 11 Ländern/Europa wird in Zusammenarbeit mit der AEGEE Academy, dem Kompetenz- und Ausbildungszentrum der Initiative, und der AEGEE Education Working Group, der Arbeitsgruppe zur Förderung der allgemeinen Bildung über Europa, ausgerichtet. Die finanzielle und ideelle Unterstützung des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung und der ISD- Industrie Service für Datenverarbeitung GmbH aus Ludwigshafen machen die Veranstaltung möglich.

ISD Sponsors Student's Initiative AEGEE-Academy in Mannheim

The first Mobility Training School in Mannheim gathers 25 participants from 11 European countries and is organised by the AEGEE-Academy, centre of education and competencies of the student's initiative, in cooperation with the AEGEE-Education Working Group, the pool of experts supporting general education about Europe. The financial and ideally support received by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research as well as from the ISD - Industry Service for data processing Inc. Ludwigshafen just make this event possible.

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