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'Youth in Action' Programme

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Editorial Foreword



Photo: Pinar Mert

Dear readers,

Twenty five years ago, the European Students Forum was established within the light of only creating a borderless Europe. Since that day, AEGEE has grown and witnessed the ground-breaking events such as fall of the Berlin wall, application of the Shengen Zone and one of the biggest gifts to the students all over Europe, Balkans and Caucasus: the Erasmus agreement. During all these twenty five years our society changed, new borders shaped, new countries were born and all these effected AEGEE as well.

While AEGEE spread around Europe, Balkans and Caucasus, its activities became more diversified, too. Previous years, our association touched upon global warming and its effects on cultures, countries and civilisation with the help of Sustaining Our Future Project. After various awards and successful events, Sustaining Our Future came to an end. This year, AEGEE is breaking down all the borders of Europe and reaching out the far away continents with its new flagship project Beyond Europe, which aims to find sustainable solutions to the problems of our more globalised societies by creating a dialogue platform for young citizens.

It is not true to say that by focusing on these project AEGEE lost one of its primary objectives: European Integration. Our association is still working on issues such as EU Enlargement, Multilingualism, Human Rights, Regionalism, Minorities and Democracy via Where Does Europe End Project with the help of their honourable patron Jerzy Buzek.

Only the educated are free said Epictetus. We also believe this motto and in order to set more minds free, save them from bias, stereotypes and prejudice, YOUrope needs YOU project organized action months for organizing workshops at high schools in numerous cities all over Europe, in order to empower local high school students.

Generations are changing and each generation brings its own perspective. Generation Y is more interactive and helpful compared to previous generations. This provides an endless enthusiasm and opportunities to cope with new problems of our changing world. While you are turning the pages of this edition of Key to Europe you can see how young people get over the problems they faced and how they took initiative instead of waiting for a savior.

Best Regards,

HAYAL YILDIZ *Editor in Chief*

Photos cover (from top left to bottom right): Michał Kasprzak, Wojciech Gajewski, Anita Kalmene, Michał Kasprzak, Wojciech Gajewski, Alexandr Povstyanoy, Michał Przybylski, Michał Kasprzak, Michał Kasprzak, Michał Przybylski, Wojciech Gajewski, Y Vote Team, Isaac Andela, Wojciech Gajewski, Wojciech Gajewski

Presidential Foreword



Photo: Michał Kasprzak

Dear readers,

Since 1985, European Students' Forum (AEGEE) has an ambition to encourage young people to contribute actively to its primary goal, European integration. Guided by the common faith in Europe and its values, current members of AEGEE are proactively joining not only European, but also world causes, taking bold steps towards changing the society that we live in.

Today, youth represent 18% of the global population. Vision, energy and ideals of this significant group of world citizens are the key elements for development, innovation and social change. Day by day, dedicated, enthusiastic and creative young people are addressing society's most challenging issues – full access to education and participation in public life, the employment opportunities, dialogue and co-operation between nations or work on sustainable development. Their involvement gives us a hope for the success of tackling the global challenges that are influencing the daily life of each one of us. This year was quite special for AEGEE, not only because of celebrating the 25th anniversary of the organisation, but also because of the fact that we have started a new flagship project entitled 'Beyond Europe – Perspectives for Tomorrow's World'. Bearing in mind that the challenges of today's world are more than ever before a matter of global nature, we call for developing sustainable solutions in a framework of global actions, while at the same time reaching out to young people beyond the European continent to develop a dialogue on the challenges that confront all of us.

As active citizens, AEGEE members are campaigning for youth activism to take stands on the most important social issues in Europe. At the same time, they are keenly taking all endeavours to work together with partners, on the current causes for students, namely the future development of the Bologna process, academic mobility, and engagement of young people in the structured dialogue on local, national and supranational level.

The stories in the Key to Europe, our Annual Report show myriad ways in which AEGEE members think outside the box, take creative risk and make connections when bringing their idealism and inspiration to bear on all their work as agents of the positive change in their communities, as well as join the quest to build a fully integrated Europe!

Best regards,

AGATA PATECKA *President of AEGEE-Europe 2009/2010*



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What Is AEG EE

AEGEE has 15.000 members in 217 cities in short it is the biggest student association of Europe. It has four Fields of Action (Cultural Exchange, Active Citizenship, Higher Education, Peace & Stability) and three Focus Areas (European Citizenship, Global Challenges and Intercultural Dialogue) in order to work efficiently in all these fields it has several Working Groups. In this section you can find what they do and how they achieve their aims.

Working Groups

Late 2009 and early 2010 was quite a busy period for the Working Groups of AEGEE and was full of various activities and projects. Although most of the activities of the Working Groups concerned planning future events and projects, elections of new Boards, and cooperating with antennae, project teams and other Working Groups, some of the activities had practical implications in their own right.

MARIA MOROZOVA

Each and every Working Group fuelled the AEGEE spirit with various ideas from a variety of thematic fields, which were implemented to provide AEGEE members with a feeling that this organisation is a place where the dreams of united Europe come true. Working Groups proved that an active European youth can respond to various events in Europe and beyond, and also share their interests with others by working together in thematic Working Groups.

A short overview of all the AEGEE Working Groups activities for the past months is found below.

AEGEE Academy

AEGEE Academy had quite a busy period of training for AEGEE members, who wanted to acquire new knowledge to use for career studying in the future and get more practical information about becoming active in AEGEE. It organised the following events:

- Summer University Project School (SUPS) Peiraias, 21-29 November 2009
- Public Relations European School (PRES1) Leiden, 23-28 November 2009
- European School 1 (ES1) Riga, 7-14 January 2010

During the SUPS, motivated AEGEE members learned how to become involved in organising Summer Universities and, at PRES1 in Leiden, they got to know how to manage PR activities in their locals. At the ES1 in Riga, 23 participants and 7 trainers worked together towards their goal of experiencing the Intercultural Transform Action in youth work – hard skills, soft skills, and a super intensive casework. This training was a useful collection of knowledge and practical experiences for a new generation of youth workers on local level. »

» BoBiGoSa

The BoBiGoSa Working Group is a virtual square, where people with common ideals meet for creating new and useful proposals, and spread their own visions of what AEGEE should be but is not. This Working Group continued its activities that corresponded to their aims, namely watching what was going on in AEGEE, and expressed its opinions and comments.

Culture Working Group

Just before the Agora-Kiev, the Culture Working Group organised a Culture Action Day (a one day event to raise awareness of the local culture) that took place in two locals on the first weekend of October 2009 – AEGEE-Piliscsaba and AEGEE-Baki. After that, the Culture Working Group travelled to the Agora-Kiev, where its representatives led the workshop ‘Where does Culture End?’ dedicated to cultures on borders. In winter 2009-10, the Culture Working Group launched a competition to find the best winter poem, with a goal of enhancing the poetic creativity of members of the Culture Working Group. Another competition for the best picture of culture for the promotional activities of the Culture Working Group aimed at developing the creativity of young designers within this Working Group.

The rest of the time was dedicated to planning further activities and arranging a number of events about alternative culture, culture on borders, and literature and theatre with locals for autumn 2010.

Dance Working Group

The Dance Working Group organised various dance workshops and flash mobs in the AEGEE locals all around Europe, as well as at the statutory events of AEGEE. Recently, the Dance Working Group was busy planning and organising further events, such as

an event about Bulgarian and classic dances in cooperation with AEGEE-Sofia in autumn 2010.

Education Working Group

The Education Working Group supported the European Day of Languages that took place in September 2009. This project aims at promoting the rich cultural heritage of Europe and fostering mutual understanding among different language communities all over Europe with a special focus on young people.

In spring, the Education Working Group launched a new project, “Higher Education Days” (HED), concerning higher education systems in the whole of Europe. The project will be implemented through conferences and workshops, aiming to identify current problems with higher education that students are facing and analysing higher education policies.

Environmental Working Group

The Environmental Working Group organised the sustainable travel competition for Agora-Kiev in October 2009. “USSR: Ultimate Survival – Sustainable Road to Kiev” rewarded the team of travellers, whose journey to the Agora was the most sustainable and fun filled. This competition was part of an Environmental Working Group strategy to promote sustainable ways of travelling to the statutory events of AEGEE. At the Agora in Kiev, the Environmental Working Group ran a joint workshop with the Sustaining Our Future project about the future of green projects within AEGEE: European Day of Environment 2010, Green Summer Universities and Sustainable SCANDINAVIA chapters 2 and 3.

At the end of April, the Environmental Working Group organised its annual European Day of Environment (EDE2010). More than 15 antennae participated, organising activities to raise awareness, clean some areas, or improve their knowledge on different topics (with special focus this year on Biodiversity).

Human Rights Working Group

For the past several months the Human Rights Working Group has been working on two publications that are still in progress:

- A publication on linguistic minorities worldwide that aims to present a good number of not well-known linguistic minorities in different parts of the world.
- A booklet on the better inclusion of disabled members that aims to show how disabled members could be better included in AEGEE.

Moreover, on 21st- 27th March 2010, the Human Rights Working Group, together with AEGEE-Budapest, organised the conference “Love Goes Beyond Tradition”. The aim of the conference was to exchange and gain knowledge about the situation of lesbians, gays, bi- and transsexuals in the different European countries present at this conference.

Information Technologies Working Group

As usual, the Information Technologies Working Group was supporting the Intranet of AEGEE and the websites of AEGEE locals, as it aims for a better performance of all electronic ways of communication and existence of AEGEE.

International Politics Working Group

On 12th-18th October 2009, the International Politics Working Group and AEGEE-Thessaloniki organised the 3rd edition the European Citizenship Training Course to promote active citizenship. This event gathered 26 active AEGEE members. »



Photo: Isaac Andela

- » The International Politics Working Group responded to the election of the High Representative and the President of the EU with the second online debate among International Politics Working Group members on this issue. On June 3rd 2010, the International Politics Working Group had another online debate dedicated to the current crisis and political situation inside the European Union.

Public Relations Working Group

During the past months, the Public Relations Working Group has been working hard on communication and promotion within AEGEE Network. The Public Relations Working

Group team continued updating PR Wiki, the online platform of articles on communication and public relations, addressed to Youth NGOs.

Furthermore, the Public Relations Working Group continued to work on publications and visual identity of AEGEE. The work on the new edition of AEGEE publication Key to Europe has been launched, and the Public Relations Working Group team has started collecting logos and PR materials of AEGEE Working Groups and Project Teams to create a PR database.

Visa Freedom Working Group

The major activities of the Visa Freedom Group for the past months were writing position papers aiming to abolish or simplify visa application process for AEGEE-members from non-EU countries. Moreover, the Board of Visa Freedom Group gave advice to AEGEE members on invitation letters and visa issues as these problems arose at the beginning of summer, when a large number of AEGEE members started going to Summer Universities. ■

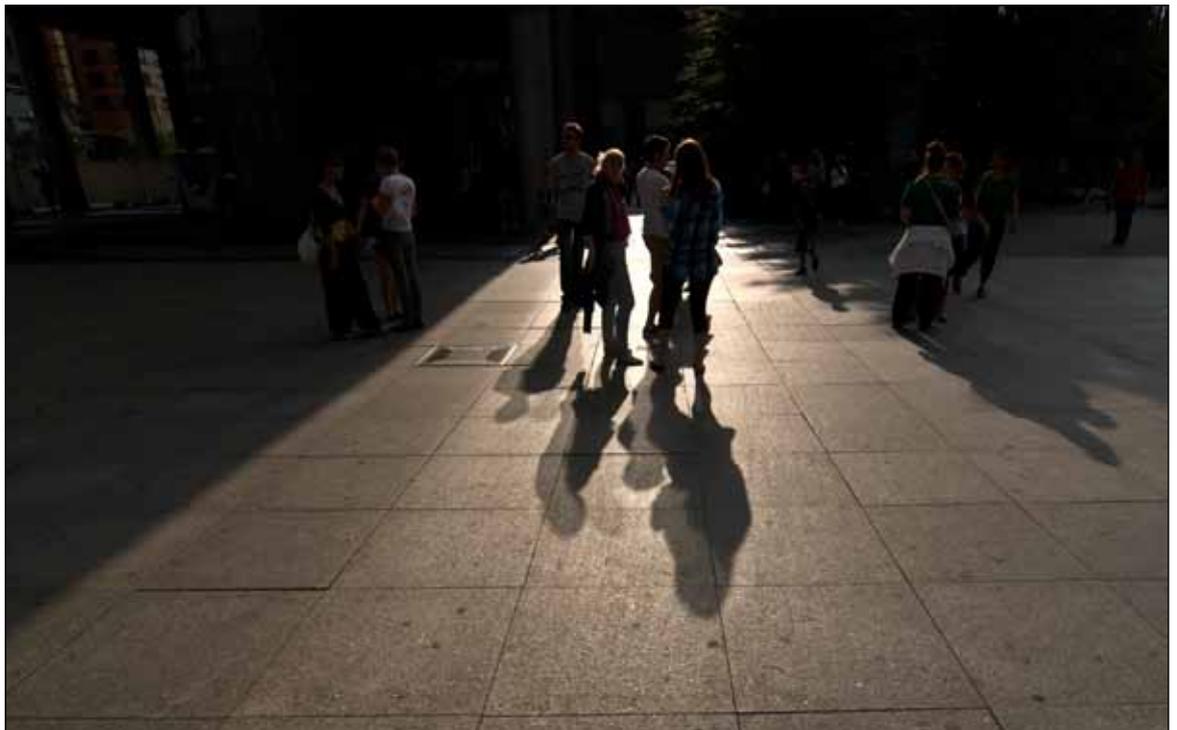


Photo: Michał Kasprzak

Position Papers

Democratic deficit and lack of direct political participation of citizens in the decision-drafting processes became one of the top legitimacy issues for most of the world's democracies. The European Union, for instance, considers long term increase of its legitimacy via broadening channels of citizens' direct involvement into initiation, discussion and expert evaluation of the EU prospective legislation. The European Citizens' Initiative, introduced by the European Commission, has its main objective in establishing sustainable infrastructure for further development of concrete measures towards effective tackling the so-called "democratic deficit" issue.

DENIS MAKSIMOV *Director for European Institutions AEGEE-Europe 2009/2010*

All-in-all, this process opens new horizons of political advocacy for active non-governmental organizations, expert bodies, etc. Having installed permanent channels of positions and initiatives delivery to the institutional hands, the phenomenon of "European civil lobbying" is emerging as the systemic component of political infrastructure of the European Union. At the same time the organizations, which are characterized being unique at the common surface and representing the opinion of a broad group of citizens are automatically considered as the ones having more influence and "weight", even though all the NGOs are enjoying the same rights to communicate to the institution

its opinion, complaint, proposal or another information valuable for prospective decision-making and decision-drafting.

Here comes the golden chance for AEGEE, still the biggest interdisciplinary European youth association, to realize the potential for influence in sphere of European youth policies. The procedure of drafting and communicating position papers of AEGEE was introduced in autumn 2009 to the network and till Summer 2010 three position papers were drafted.

Position papers have paramount importance for the future of the association's identity as the unique organization which provides on the constant basis expertise, feedback and "fresh looks" to the European institutions and »

for AEGEE it is the practical chance to become more political on the European level.

» other international organizations (Council of Europe among others). It is important to mention that AEGEE's potentials in youth advocacy work has no negative interrelation

in the position of competition with the European Youth Forum, the unique partner of the European Commission of which AEGEE is a member of. AEGEE is representing its reference group opinion – about 15.000 members from 42 European countries – and is not pretending to cover European youth as such. AEGEE also has its “profile” issues and interests, like increasing openness and youth mobility in terms of EU and non-EU travels, volunteering and studying; non-formal education concept development and regional cultures' promotion.

The institutionalization of the opinion delivery tools creates a very friendly atmosphere for NGOs to develop advocacy and for AEGEE it is the practical chance to become more political on the European level. A good cooperation between active and holding expertise members in the field of advocacy is crucial for having the sustainable basis built and developed fundamentally. ■

Youth Mobility

Position Paper on Youth Mobility

Simplified visa procedure for unremunerated trainees or volunteers

Today more and more young people from all over Europe choose the opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the development, promotion and spreading of common European values. However, most of the volunteers from European but non-EU countries coming to EU member states for managing projects aimed on promotion of European integration still have to pass through complicated, expensive and demotivating visa procedures.

For this reason AEGEE drafted a position paper on youth mobility, which addresses the situation of trainees and volunteers who serve projects funded by and in line with the values of the EU.

In our opinion young people fitting under these lines should go through a simplified visa procedure and their costs related to getting the visa should be covered by the fund their stay is financed from in the EU. Prove of financial status should not be asked for, medical check expenses be covered, invitation letters should be enough to be sent by fax from the respective EU institution or organization. the whole procedure should not take longer than 2 weeks and the visa should be automatically issued in C+D format.

Student Mobility

Position Paper on Student Mobility

Public transport discount card for European Union students

Many measures have been taken in past years to encourage students to study abroad – in order to widen their horizons and increase

their understanding of other cultures. However, students who choose to study abroad face a barrier of high costs for public transportation.

Most European countries have already some sort of discount scheme for public transportation for domestic students, making it viable for them to study at the most fitting university, instead

Languages in Europe

Position Paper on Languages in Europe

A clear European language policy, ensuring effective communication and equal rights for all citizens

As Europe is a highly multilingual continent, the process of European integration has also been multilingual from the start, in the same understanding, AEGEE has been a promoter of multilingualism from its founding. Over the past 25 years AEGEE organised hundreds of language courses within the Summer University Project and every year local groups organise dozens of events during the European Day of Languages. Although we highly value Europe's multilingualism, for practical reasons AEGEE has only two official languages (English and French) and in practice only the first one is used. This paradox between the theoretical equal rights of all Europeans to use their own languages and the practical need for effective communication is the core topic of our position paper.

We urge European policy makers to start an open debate on European language policy (currently hardly existent) to ensure that all citizens have the same language rights and chances, irrespective of their mother tongue and region of birth. We ask for the elaboration of a policy based on four pillars:

1. Equal for all citizens, prevent language discrimination
2. Protect minority languages
3. Enable transnational communication
4. Strengthen European identity

While formulating a policy that can satisfy all these goals, serious attention should be paid to the acquired knowledge and practical experience in the field of interlinguistics, as this can play a valuable role in a successful language policy.

We urge European policy makers to start an open debate on European language policy (currently hardly existent) to ensure that all citizens have the same language rights and chances

of the closest one. Because of this national discount on public transportation, people living in border regions will be faced with the choice of studying in a nearby foreign university or a national university, which is further away, but does offer the benefits of discounts on public transportation.

This position paper proposes to introduce a unified student identification card, which enables the possessor to benefit from discounts on public transport throughout the EU.

This proposition will ensure that equal rights, i.e. access to equal services and benefits schemes, are maintained for students, regardless of their choice to study in their own country or elsewhere in the EU.

Human Resources

A Human Resources group unaware of the constantly changing needs of the Network? Impossible Therefore we are taking the direction of closer cooperation with the Network Director and Network Commission. Two days of meetings between the Netcom and Academy took place in Brussels and in Katowice. The Academy board had a chance to brainstorm with Netcomies and get more insight into current challenges faced by AEGEE locals.

Closer cooperation between Netcomies and the Academy board could be visible also during the LTC support programme. Almost 30 locals, willing to organize Local Training Course, applied and received financial or content support. Academy trainers were traveling throughout the Network, sharing their skills, knowledge and passion towards AEGEE.

The Academy wouldn't fulfill its role without successful international trainings: European School 1 – Cosenza, Summer University Project School – Peirais, Public Relations European School – Leiden, European School 1 – Riga. Organizing the above trainings was even more challenging due to rejection of Youth in Action applications.

Also, in 2009 preparation for the upcoming year trainings started: Training for Trainers – Izmir, Human Resources European School – Budapest, European School 2 – Poznań, Summer University Project School–Palermo.

One of the biggest successes of the past year was ProTrain; a long-term programme dedicated to AEGEE-members dreaming to become trainers. Connecting mentors (some of the most experienced Academy members) with motivated mentees and permitting them to work together on personal development plans. Mentees are offered different training opportunities to enhance their skills. Success of the 1st edition of ProTrain resulted in the strong plan to continue with a second ProTrain cycle.

The decreasing number of active trainers it is also one of the consequences of the

AGNIESZKA STRYCHARZ *Speaker AEGEE-Academy*

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It all helped us to realize that with two levels of study, BA and MA degrees, (including high requirements at the Universities, internships and exchange programs), AEGEE length of involvement has shortened. Our members tend to dedicate 1-2 years to the association, whereas in the past numerous members were involved for 5-6 years. We need to reach our members much quicker with different HR tools, training offers and preferably with innovative IT tools.

One of the baby-ideas from the NetAca meeting was to organize, for the first time in AEGEE history, a European Human Resources School. Training would be aimed at fostering skills of an HR responsible, enabling them to better adapt to the specific, needs of our members.

Working Group



Photo: Michał Kasprzak

changing environment in which AEGEE exists. Very high requirements for employees starting their professional careers, high number of working hours, and travelling duties are the huge obstacles for many great Academy trainers to continue sharing their skills through international trainings. It is the reason why we are very happy to say that we have 14 new Academy members, helping us to keep our pool of trainers sustainable.

In addition, there is one more trend: a more visible Academy. Through workshops given during different statutory and Network meetings, HR games, AEGEE Fair, colorful and informative posters, flyers, and newsletters, Academy has tried to be closer to AEGEE members. This has resulted in knowing better the needs of AEGEE members, adjusting training concepts and being more flexible.

A changing environment also makes us more open to external cooperation. A real meeting with Tigro (equivalent of Academy

in BEST) took place. Not only exchange opportunities for participants, trainers and materials, but also the joint training project AEGEE-BEST ut for fundraising is currently under construction.

Luckily, there are still people with lots of commitment and passion towards the Academy: a new board, European School, LTC managers and trainers. In one word, people believe that the Academy can have positive impact on AEGEE; empower its members to join local boards, interaction at European level, create and lead projects. Empower to take a stand and “leave this world a little bit better than we found it”. ■

work network

AEGEE is a network spread all over Europe. To make sure the network keeps active the Comité Directeur manages it. Besides the Comité Directeur there are many members that are active within AEGEE-Europe. What do they do and how many are there? What are the new initiatives of our network? If you are curious about the answers of these questions, feel free to leaf through the network section.

Every spring they stand in front of the General Assembly - a bit afraid, a bit scared. Every autumn they start with high hopes and plans what to implement. Every year they have 365 days to realize their dreams and move AEGEE to the next level. They are our Board of Directors, the Comité Directeur (CD).

When AEGEE Is Your Full-time Job

ANITA KALMANE *Network Director AEGEE-Europe 2009/2010*

Sharing the idealism

It is not an easy decision to freeze everything one is doing – whether it is studies, job or anything else – and move to Brussels for one year, together with six other people sharing not only their ambitions and ideas, but also all the living space. 24 hours per day living and working in the same house with the same people – that is another challenge each CD needs to tackle.

However, every year there are enough people who are ready to take the risk, who are not afraid of commitment and who are doing it because they believe in AEGEE and they believe in themselves. For one year they are elected to be the highest administrative body of the association, both, to ensure smooth general running of AEGEE and come up with new ideas and improvements.

There is always a small dose of adrenaline

After the knowledge transfer between the outgoing and incoming CD which takes place all August long, the new CD needs to prove themselves to the rest of the AEGEE Network who has voted for them. It includes drafting an Action Agenda and setting the priorities for the next year, attending endless external meetings and presenting AEGEE to stakeholders, both, in Brussels and all over Europe; communicating with the AEGEE Network on a daily basis and providing them with any information needed and much more. There are not so many days when all seven CD members are in the office because of the amount of trips each of them needs to do. Whether it is a Network Meeting, project team meeting, training, appointment with possible sponsors or representing AEGEE in one of the European institutions, there is always something to hold them away from staying in Brussels.



Anita Kalmane

» **T**here are no boring days for CD members as every day brings something new and unpredictable. It can be anything – an e-mail, a delivery from the postman, an unexpected visitor or a phone call. Even if one has decided to focus on a certain topic in the next days, unforeseen circumstances and urgent things of higher priority can pop up at any time. Despite the need to act fast, that is one of the main beauties in this job – every day is different. It never gets boring or predictable. It gives always a small dose of adrenaline and just the necessary level of stress thinking how to manage everything in the given time frame.

Seven Positions for Nine Tasks

While in the statutes of AEGEE-Europe, known as *Corpus Iuridicum AEGEENSE*, there are tasks for nine board members of AEGEE-Europe, there are only seven positions, therefore some duties always get less priority than others. Three positions are the same every term – President, Secretary General and Financial Director, but the remaining four CD members need to divide six roles between themselves – European Institutions, Human Resources (Internal Education), Public Relations, Fundraising, Projects & Working Groups and Network Development. When comparing our structure to other organisations, we have understood that even the same positions can reflect different duties for the person behind it, therefore it is important to understand what really stands behind each of those positions in order not to mix them.

The President is responsible for the team as a whole and representing it to the external world. The role of the Secretary General is rather administrative – taking minutes of meetings, co-organising statutory meetings together with the Chair Team and maintaining the office. The Financial Director takes care of the bookkeeping, financial parts of the reports for different grants and reimbursements, which takes much more time than it sounds. If all positions are filled, then

the Director of European Institutions knows everything about the financial grants AEGEE-Europe is applying to and supports locals who are applying for Youth in Action, Council of Europe and other grants; the Human Resources Director is in close contact with AEGEE-Academy (AEGEE Human Resources Working Group) and takes care of AEGEE's training system. The Public Relations Director does everything in PR,

starting with preparing internal newsletters and finishing with contacting the printing house for different publications; the Fundraising Director (also known as External Relations Director) takes care of corporate fundraising from companies. The last two positions are in the closest contact with the internal world of AEGEE as the Project Director overlooks the whole European level of AEGEE, knows what each project team and working group is planning and



Photo: Michael Makowiecki

initiates and facilitates start-ups of new projects; the Network Development Director is responsible for AEGEE locals all over Europe as well as founding new locals and ensuring the smooth work of Network Commission.

Back to Normal Life

After an intensive year full of AEGEE, which from a hobby in the free time has become full-time voluntary work, it is not an easy task to get back to the “normal life”. During the knowledge transfer to the new CD it might feel like giving away a baby – all the job which has been done, ideas which have been realised and improvements which have been made. Apart from that, for some outgoing CD members a new job life is starting, but several others are getting back to universities to finish their studies. Few of them get a job and stay in Brussels to continue conquering European institutions, a number of AEGEEans apply for a position somewhere else in the world and use their gained experience and knowledge in the future life, other ones return back to the life they had before.

Comité Directeur 2009/2010

Agata Patecka - President
 Olga Basova - Secretary General
 Nico Huurman - Financial Director
 Anita Kalmane - Vice President & Network Director
 Àgnes Leyrer - External Relations Director
 Denis Maksimov - Director for European Institutions
 Manos Valasis - Projects Director

Whatever each of them decides and continues, for all of them it has been an unforgettable year, full of passion and happenings, where there is always something to learn from. ■

Exchange Ideas,

EXCHANGES MAKE ME A MORE MOTIVATED MEMBER

ELÇIN ÜSTÜN *Member AEGEE-Eskişehir*

Look at the world from the space. It is blue, isn't it? But, If you look closely at the world, you will see the riot of colours. These colours are made up of cultures. What is culture? If we describe it theoretically, culture is a kind of knowledge that is created by communities, but essentially culture is an only parenthesis of humanity. Sometimes this parenthesis may cause some disagreements. Then if these disagreements increase, this situation causes bigger problems. Because of all these reasons, today, the another term that we should describe is cultural exchange. It is inevitable that various cultures, which live in their natural environment, interact with each other. Cultural exchange is one of AEGEE's four fields of action. It represents the importance of building respect and appreciation between people of different cultures. This field of action is supported by many events in AEGEE. Let's take a look at some examples:

Summer University Project:

This is a program that gives a chance to students to travel to foreign countries. There are several types of Summer Universities from which they can choose. Within this programme, more than 5000 students participate every summer, in an adventure somewhere in Europe, to learn about the language and culture of another country, but also to exchange ideas among youngsters from all over Europe. During the two-week summer university (it varies to three weeks as well), participants from different cultures, not only have the opportunity to study the AEGEE theme of that particular year, but they also have the chance to participate in workshops, city tours, parties and familiarize with the local cultural, historical, artistic and social background of the place visited. So, this programme provides the opportunity for young people to understand different cultures from their own. When you attend this event, you live the experience of this diversity. In addition, thanks to this programme, you make a lot of new friends from all over the world. Also, this experience supports the increasing of self-development!



Photo: Wojciech Gajewski

Exchange Yourself

Fun Factory for Film Fans:

AEGEE-Piliscsaba hosted many people through the event called “Fun Factory for Film Fans (FF4FF) event”. This event was a part of Culture Action Day (CAD), which is a project of the Cultural Working Group. It brought together people who are interested in the world of films. As far as the activities of the event are concerned, they lived an experience of creating new things and exploring themselves. They also learned the theory of film and film analysis. Besides all these things, participants got to know the Hungarian culture, cinematrics, gastronomy etc. The topic of the event was “Europe Without Borders – Language Borders” Also, intercultural dialogues could not be absent from such an event.

Art in Their Eyes:

This event was an another part of the CAD, and it was organised by AEGEE-Baki. They exhibited their handicrafts, and showed their talent to people. There were more than 100 guests at the exhibition and most of them were not AEGEE members. The acquaintance between the participants and the guests was amazing. In this event, participants and guests had a chance to share a lot of things. To sum up, this exhibiton was another proof of the representation and the importance of cultural values.

A One Day Excursion:

AEGEE-Toulouse organised an excursion. Participants visited the city of Carcassone, and tasted the local and traditional foods of France. Moreover, they visited a wine cave accompanied by a guide. They tasted the historical white wine called “la blanquette de Limoux”. This event helped the participants to become familiarized with the french culture and they all shared a great experience together.

To conclude, there are many projects and events regarding culture and cultural exchange involved in AEGEE. These projects raise awareness of the importance of sharing ideas, of cultural exchanges, associations, outgrowing prejudicements and peace among cultural diversity. Every culture is a colour and with cultural exchange, all these colours form a huge rainbow. With sharing ideas, memories and experiences we can make this rainbow happen. If we learn to walk a mile in someone else’s shoes, we could live in a better world. ■



Since the very first days of AEGEE, the friendship among the members is one of the fundamentals of our organisation. It started in Paris in 1985 with a small group of friends who had big ideas and today there are 217 antennas in 44 countries spread all over the European continent.

Twin Antennae

22

NETWORK

YAHYA GÖKCAN KIZILSÜMER *Member AEGEE-Eskişehir*

After 25 years, as the means of communication expanded, the relationships are getting stronger and stronger. Accordingly, members and even entire antenna want to learn, share and work together with their friends to achieve a more productive way of working while having more fun than usual. To arrange this activities in an order, some AEGEE members came out with a Twin Antenna Project. A Project that allows “twins” to share their knowledge, their ideas and their human resources by becoming twins in many ways such as: Thematic twins (through thematic working groups), Technical twins (support in HR, PR, FR etc.), Agora twins, Exchange twins, Project twins or Event twins. So as you can see, your creativity is the boundary for the way of twinning.

Pioneers of the Project

The great heritage of friendship in AEGEE grew bigger day by day and when we came to the Autumn Agora 2008, held in



Photo: Ola Junga

Aachen, Germany, two antennas, AEGEE–Valletta and AEGEE–Kyiv, have decided to take their friendship a step further by becoming siblings; in other words they became twins. They have signed a Twinning Agreement to solidify their long-existing friendship.

As a result of the agreement, at first, seven members of AEGEE–Valletta had visited Kyiv and there they had found an excellent hospitality that provided the best means through which to explore and experience the culture, the people and the Ukrainian way of living. A few months later AEGEE–Valletta had rolled out the welcome mat for their friends from Kyiv. The highest level of Maltese bureaucracy had joined them on their week-long trip around the island and they organised a workshop in order to discuss matters about AEGEE’s future.

What will AEGEE get?

This first example of Twin Antenna Project went well for everyone but a question stands before us: will the twins provide benefit for the future of our organisation? According to the Valletta–Kyiv example, everything is positive for now and also for the future of the friendship of these two antennas. It was an exchange twinning and it provided a proper opportunity to realise the means of exchange for both antenna. As this example provided an alternative for existing Exchange programmes, other kinds of twinning agreements may provide alternatives for sharing the technical

knowledge and ideas between members and antennas. As the knowledge database grows larger, the strength of information will offer a greater power to AEGEE for the future.

With the success of the pioneers more and more antennas decided to sign twinning agreements recently. AEGEE–Oviedo became twin with AEGEE–Budapest, AEGEE–Leon became twin with AEGEE–Peirairas and AEGEE–Tallinn became twin with AEGEE–Groningen. It seems that in the future the list of twins will be longer and therefore our future is bright while the friendships are strong. ■

How to become a Twin Antenna

“If the idea of a twin-antenna winds you up what you have to do is to publicly sign a certificate with your twin at a Statutory meeting (EBM or Agora) or Network Meeting. In it you state that you become official AEGEE twins, and describe how you plan to co-operate. Contact the NetCom at the Agora for further information and get home with a new sibling.”

Agnes Leyer

New Generation, Second Generation

LILIYA BUYUKLIYSKA *Member AEGEE-Sofia*

I met Maria Ivanova at one of the liveliest places in Sofia. Upon her arrival, she already starts telling me about her Summer University in Italy. She had a European Night, poor lodging, Italian love and the AEGEE spirit of course. But how did the story start? “It was my mother who told me that this is something I shouldn’t miss”, says Maria and starts to remember her childhood. The story started 10 years ago, when her mother was 33 and studying for her second Major. Maria’s mother – Teodora Bojilcheva – found AEGEE in her last year in her late university. Even in such a short time, she has enjoyed AEGEE to the fullest. Maria was eleven when her mother went to Summer University in Kraków and Warsaw. Maria says: “I wasn’t so young but I didn’t want to let her go. It was so long – two weeks. Now I completely understand her. I didn’t want to come back from my Summer University. Actually I am only physically here. I keep chatting with people from our Summer University and exchanging pictures all the time. It was our Summer University where I understood what real AEGEE spirit means”. But her AEGEE memories are also connected with other typical things about the organization, for instance the hosting. “We have hosted so many people. Once we didn’t have extra beds and

they slept like caterpillars on the floor. But this is cool, and my mother is 100% in favor of hosting AEGEE members.”

When I ask her about her antenna, she just becomes even more inspiring. “They welcomed me just awesomely. From the moment I arrived, they were so kind, the atmosphere was so calm and their hospitality made me feel like we had known each other for ages. I became member shortly before the application deadline for the Summer Universities. I really wanted to go and the local members helped me a lot. I didn’t know how to apply and the website kept on rejecting my application, but our local board helped me and my documents were accepted on time.”

But the word “party” is not the only one that describes her well enough. Maria is also very ambitious. She studies two subjects at two different universities: Political Science at Sofia University and Business Administration at International Business High School – Blagoevgrad. For now, her plans regarding AEGEE are to become active on local level and to help her antenna with everything she can. On the question whether AEGEE can contribute to her future job or orientation she answers: “For now I don’t know so much about the activities on European level. But what is certain is that AEGEE helps to create contacts. Moreover, all these experiences strengthen my knowledge about the world, my understanding for the different cultures, for the people, my mentality and open-mindedness and many more...” ■

AEGEE Photo Stock

WOJCIECH GAJEWSKI *Project Manager AEGEE Photo Stock*

Last month we started to run a new initiative in AEGEE-Europe, which should fulfill all needs of photography for every project in our organization. AEGEE Photo Stock gallery has gathered the best photographers from all over Europe. The group is limited to public access to make our group most effective, but we do have never-ending open calls for new potential photographers

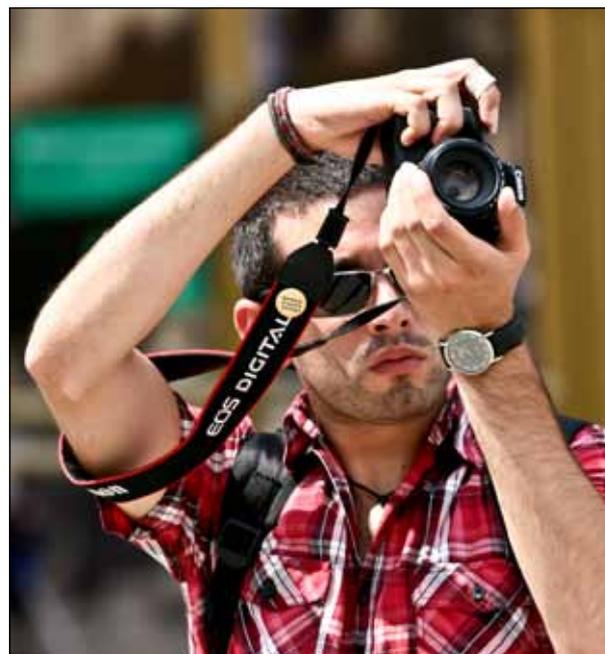
An Initiative For a New Way Of Presenting Ourselves

who can provide the best quality photos for our galleries. Even if you do not feel professional, just prepare your photography portfolio and send it to us.

Galleries of AEGEE Photo Stock are going to grow step by step and will be filled by the group of selected photographers. We do not want to have millions of photos, but we do want to gather and publish the best ones to give every project coordinator a chance to make promotions materials, flyers etc. with best quality pictures. Our group is at the beginning of a long way to prepare useful photo galleries, but we are willing to do it and we are searching for more talented photographers in our network. ■

For more, write to: photo@aegee.org

Photo: Wojciech Gajewski

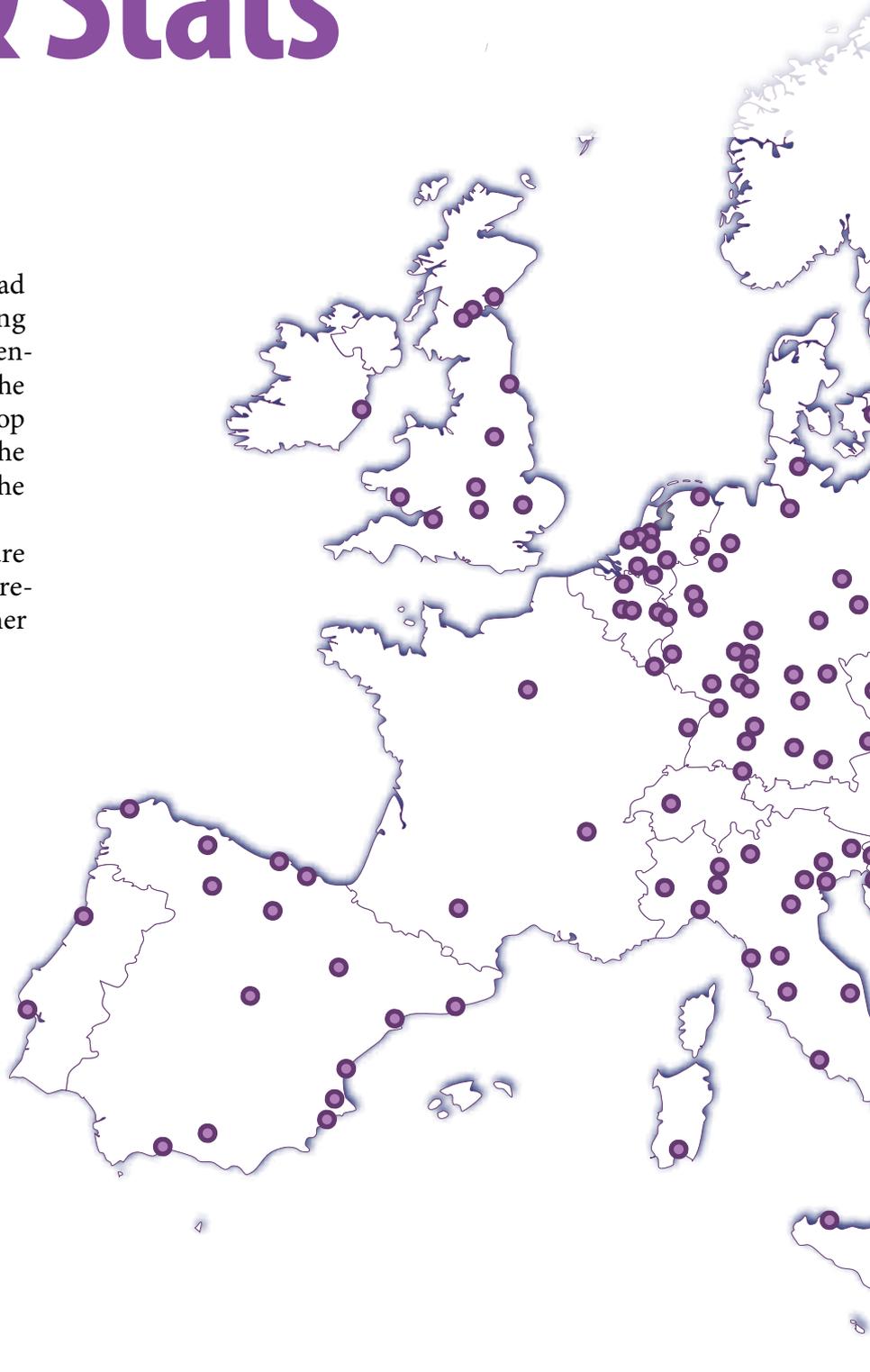


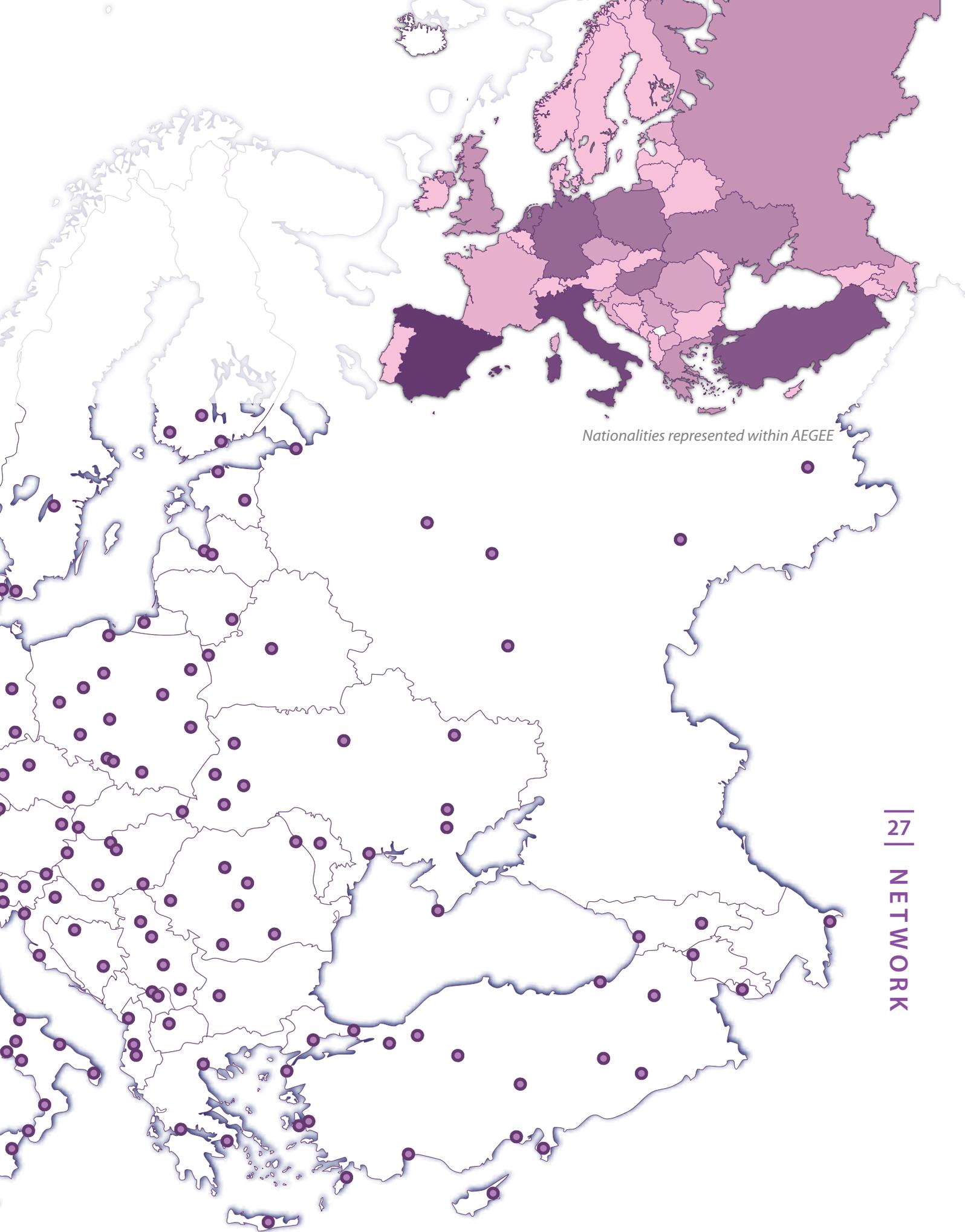
AEGEE

Facts & Stats

AEGEE has 217 antennae spread all over Europe servicing more than 1500 members. The antennae are located all over Europe as the map on this page portrays. In the top right corner another map shows the nationalities represented within the network.

On the next few pages there are besides the list of Antennae represented in the AEGEE network, other network statistics depicted.





Nationalities represented within AEGEE

Antennae Index 2010

The 217 antennae of AEGEE are as depicted on the previous page. Every antenna is located in a city throughout the European continent. The name of an Antenna is her city name with the AEGEE prefix. The cities that do not have the AEGEE prefix are still in the status of being a contact antenna and are candidating for becoming a full AEGEE antenna.

Antenna
AEGEE-Aachen
AEGEE-Adana
AEGEE-Agrigento
AEGEE-Alicante
AEGEE-Amsterdam
AEGEE-Ankara
AEGEE-Athína
AEGEE-Augsburg
AEGEE-Avellino-Benevento
AEGEE-Baki
AEGEE-Bamberg
AEGEE-Barcelona
AEGEE-Bari
AEGEE-Beograd
AEGEE-Berlin
AEGEE-Białystok
AEGEE-Bilbao
AEGEE-Bolu
AEGEE-Bratislava
AEGEE-Brescia
AEGEE-Brno
AEGEE-Brussel-Bruxelles
AEGEE-Bucureşti
AEGEE-Budapest
AEGEE-Cagliari
AEGEE-Çanakkale
AEGEE-Castelló
AEGEE-Catania
AEGEE-Chişinău
AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca
AEGEE-Coruña
AEGEE-Cosenza
AEGEE-Craiova

Antenna
AEGEE-Darmstadt
AEGEE-Debrecen
AEGEE-Delft
AEGEE-Dnipropetrovsk
AEGEE-Dresden
AEGEE-Dublin
AEGEE-Eindhoven
AEGEE-Enschede
AEGEE-Erlangen-Nürnberg
AEGEE-Eskişehir
AEGEE-Ferrara
AEGEE-Firenze
AEGEE-Frankfurt am Main
AEGEE-Fribourg
AEGEE-Gdańsk
AEGEE-Giessen
AEGEE-Glasgow
AEGEE-Gliwice
AEGEE-Grodno
AEGEE-Groningen
AEGEE-Hamburg
AEGEE-Hatay
AEGEE-Heidelberg
AEGEE-Helsinki
AEGEE-Istanbul
AEGEE-Ivano-Frankivs'k
AEGEE-Izmir
AEGEE-Kaiserslautern
AEGEE-Karlsruhe
AEGEE-Katowice
AEGEE-Kiel
AEGEE-Köln
AEGEE-Konstanz

Antenna
AEGEE-Kragujevac
AEGEE-Kraków
AEGEE-Kyiv
AEGEE-Las Palmas
AEGEE-Lecce
AEGEE-Leiden
AEGEE-León
AEGEE-Leuven
AEGEE-Ljubljana
AEGEE-Łódź
AEGEE-Lublin
AEGEE-Lund
AEGEE-Lutsk
AEGEE-L'viv
AEGEE-Lyon
AEGEE-Maastricht
AEGEE-Madrid
AEGEE-Magdeburg
AEGEE-Mağusa
AEGEE-Mainz-Wiesbaden
AEGEE-Mannheim
AEGEE-Maribor
AEGEE-Milano
AEGEE-Minsk
AEGEE-Moskva
AEGEE-München
AEGEE-Münster
AEGEE-Napoli
AEGEE-Nijmegen
AEGEE-Niš
AEGEE-Nova Gorica-Gorizia
AEGEE-Noví Sad
AEGEE-Odessa
AEGEE-Ogre
AEGEE-Osnabrück
AEGEE-Oviedo
AEGEE-Padova
AEGEE-Palermo
AEGEE-Paris
AEGEE-Passau
AEGEE-Pátra
AEGEE-Pavia
AEGEE-Pécs

Antenna

AEGEE-Piliscsaba
AEGEE-Pisa
AEGEE-Plzen
AEGEE-Porto-Invicta
AEGEE-Poznań
AEGEE-Praha
AEGEE-Prishtina
AEGEE-Rīga
AEGEE-Rijeka
AEGEE-Rodos
AEGEE-Roma
AEGEE-Ryazan
AEGEE-Salerno
AEGEE-Samara
AEGEE-Sankt-Peterburg
AEGEE-Santander
AEGEE-Sevastopol
AEGEE-Sheffield
AEGEE-Sibiu
AEGEE-Siena
AEGEE-Skopje
AEGEE-Sofia
AEGEE-Stuttgart
AEGEE-Szombathely
AEGEE-Tallinn
AEGEE-Tartu
AEGEE-Tbilisi
AEGEE-Thessaloniki
AEGEE-Tilburg
AEGEE-Timişoara
AEGEE-Tiranë
AEGEE-Torino
AEGEE-Toruń
AEGEE-Toulouse
AEGEE-Treviso
AEGEE-Trieste
AEGEE-Tübingen
AEGEE-Turku-Åbo
AEGEE-Udine
AEGEE-Urla
AEGEE-Utrecht
AEGEE-Uzhgorod
AEGEE-Valencia

Antenna

AEGEE-Valletta
AEGEE-Vilnius
AEGEE-Voronezh
AEGEE-Warszawa
AEGEE-Warwick
AEGEE-Wien
AEGEE-Wrocław
AEGEE-Zadar
AEGEE-Zagreb
AEGEE-Zaragoza
AEGEE-Zielona Góra

Contact-Antenna

AEGEE-Abertawe
AEGEE-Antalya
AEGEE-Antwerpen
AEGEE-Banja Luka
AEGEE-Bath
AEGEE-Bayreuth
AEGEE-Bergamo
AEGEE-Burgos
AEGEE-Cambridge
AEGEE-Diyarbakır
AEGEE-Durham
AEGEE-Düsseldorf
AEGEE-Elbasan
AEGEE-Erfurt
AEGEE-Erzurum
AEGEE-Granada
AEGEE-Gyumri
AEGEE-Heraklio
AEGEE-Iaşi
AEGEE-Kaliningrad
AEGEE-Kayseri
AEGEE-Kharkiv
AEGEE-København
AEGEE-Kosovska Mitrovica
AEGEE-Linköping
AEGEE-Lisboa

Contact-Antenna

AEGEE-Luxembourg
AEGEE-Macerata
AEGEE-Malaga
AEGEE-Messina
AEGEE-Naxçıvan
AEGEE-Oxford
AEGEE-Sakarya
AEGEE-Sarajevo
AEGEE-Shkodër
AEGEE-Stirling
AEGEE-Strasbourg
AEGEE-Szeged
AEGEE-Tampere
AEGEE-Tarragona
AEGEE-Tekirdağ
AEGEE-Termoli
AEGEE-Tirgu-Mureş
AEGEE-Trabzon
AEGEE-Trier
AEGEE-Venezia
AEGEE-Zaporizhia

Contacts

Dundee
Elâziğ
Genova
Leipzig
Ozurgeti
Ploiesti
Ternopil
Ufa
Yerevan

Members' Studies

Since members make up the network, this page shows fields of studies represented within AEGEE as well as the age and gender distribution of our members.

Around 25% of our members have a Humanities study, another quarter studies arts. Then Engineering, Applied Sciences and Languages are all represented by around 10% of our members.

Considering age, the majority of our members is between twenty and twenty six five old. Eighty percents belongs to this group. Around 15% is older, and only 5% is younger than 20 years old. The gender distribution, however, is rather in balance. AEGEE has slightly more female members than male.

Applied Sciences	1345
Computer Science	556
Political Science	547
Other Applied Sciences	201
Food Science	41

Medicine	680
Medicine	352
Paedagology	134
Other Medical Studies	104
Pharmacy	62
Veterinary	28

Communication	711
Communications	385
Tourism	178
Public Relations	118
Publicity	30

Humanities	4011
Economy	2121
Law	801
Other Humanities	376
Psychology	281
Sociology	174
History	130
Geography	70
Philosophy	58

Languages	1132
Languages	986
Literature	146

Political	789
International Relations	596
European Studies	193

Nature Sciences	813
Biology	196
Maths	165
Physics	151
Chemistry	135
Other Natural Sciences	115
Agriculture	51

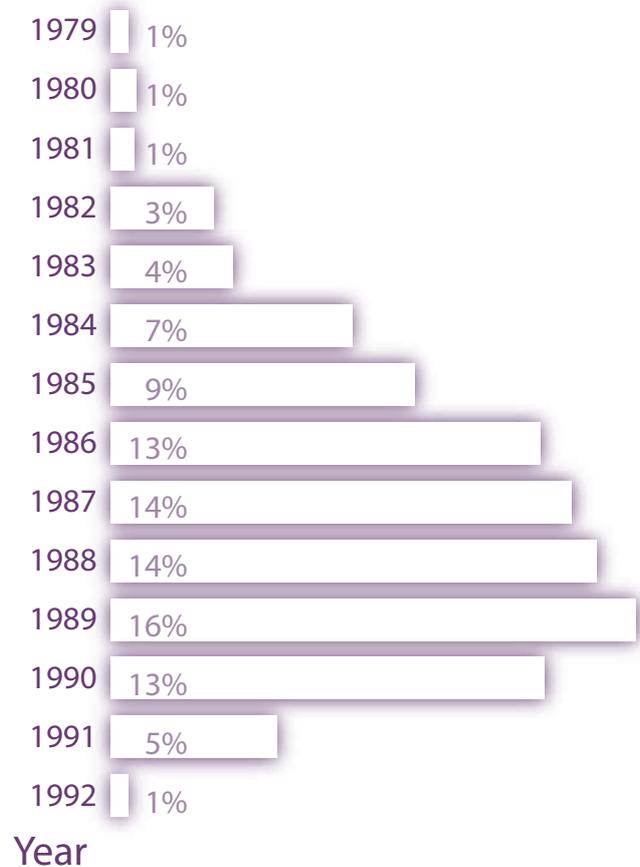
Arts	3943
Arts	3807
Design	96
Music	40

Engineering	1684
Other Engineering	557
Architecture	349
Electrical Engineering	285
Mechanical Engineering	273
Civil Engineering	220

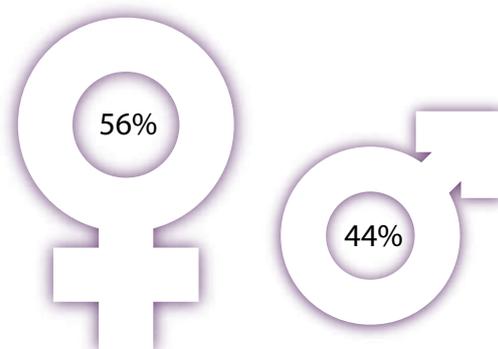
Other	67
No studies	67

Total members: 15175

Member's Age



Gender representation



Proj ects

AEGEE is a project driven organisation. From educating high school students about the European Union, to fighting for a free press, AEGEE has it all. AEGEE'ans are never narrow minded, AEGEE'ans are active in a myriad of fields. This is reflected in our projects. They are never the same, never boring and always European.

YOUrope Needs YOU 2

After an incredibly successful first cycle, we are now rocking a second cycle, with a brand new team and many more locals involved.

MIROSLAVA GANZARCIKOVA *Project Manager*

Yourope needs YOU is a project dedicated to empowering high school students. It shows them how easy it is to become active citizens, how they can gain satisfaction from successful projects, and how to enjoy the beauty of being a volunteer and contributing to society. We have all experienced this, thanks to AEGEE, but now we can share it with high school students through interactive workshops. We wanted to increase their knowledge of Europe, European values, and European matters, and then motivate them to take action. We wanted to get them to do something for their schools and their communities, and to keep them informed about all possibilities that Europe can offer them.

When this project started, nobody knew just how successful it was going to be. However, the people in our network proved to us that they were interested in this topic, and that they wanted to help inspire high school students and to take an active part in this project. So after the 1st cycle finished, there was no question about it...we had to start a second cycle and rock our network with yourope needs YOU 2.

First cycle

Five training-courses were organised in spring 2009 and, during our Action Months 2009 (May/June), thirteen different locals organised yourope needs YOU workshops in high schools. At the end of it all, there was an Evaluation Meeting in September 2009.

Yourope needs YOU was the winner of the European Charlemagne Youth Prize Competition in 2009 – an award for projects that promote a shared sense of European identity and understanding among young people. The prize was presented to the project team by the President of European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering.

We also made a Result Booklet of yourope Needs YOU This publication contained information about everything that was achieved during the first cycle.

Second cycle begins

After the amazingly successful first cycle, it was obvious that we couldn't end it there. There was still such a big interest in the network and so many people still wanted to become involved and help us to empower high school students. So, during an evaluation meeting of the first cycle in Krakow, it was decided to go ahead with a second cycle. One brand new team and a slightly different strategy later and yourope needs YOU 2 was born. »

Sabrina Ehmann

"I am so happy that YOUrope needs YOU started another cycle with new motivated and dedicated dreamers! How can I describe the two workshops I did? It was really fantastic and easier than I thought. The interest and the active participation of the pupils, who already waited impatiently in front of the class room before my second workshop, were overwhelming. The positive feedback from their teacher, the headmaster of this school, was also encouraging and I hope that other members of AEGEE-Toulouse will continue to go to schools!"

Sabrina Ehmann, AEGEE-Passau who has held a workshop in Toulouse

- » After a fruitful project development meeting in Brussels in February 2010, new strategies and plans for the upcoming year were made and the most important part – the 2010 action months – could start.

Action Months 2010

In April and May 2010, we had an active period, during which many AEGEE locals involved in YOUrope needs YOU 2 were able to organise workshops at high schools in their cities, in order to empower local high school students. For this, we created the "YOUrope needs YOU workshop guide", which contained lots of useful advice about organising workshops for high school students. This publication is available to download online from our webpage (www.projects.aegee.org/youropeneedsyou).

And how were the 2010 Action Months? There were many locals participating in the Action Months this year and they all did

Felipe Gonzalez Santos

"YOUrope Needs YOU is not a normal project. It is a different way of thinking. That's the reason why I decided to join. The focus is not thinking about ourselves, it is thinking about others, it is giving people the possibility that maybe some of us did not have as soon as we would like to: discovering the meaning of Europe by themselves and building their small contribution to this big reality that every day is getting further and further from being only a continent."

Felipe Gonzalez Santos, FR responsible

Faristamo Leis

"I found this project very useful and inspiring. It was very interesting to prepare it and think what would be the most valuable for students to talk about. And of course I enjoyed doing workshops the most, especially when others are interested...and those students were, for sure! With whole our team we are waiting for next action months and of course thank you to all who made it possible!"

Faristamo Leis, AEGEE-Tallin

Deniz Ozhan

"I have to say that I was surprised by the students' reaction since I was even not sure about whether they were going to listen to us or not. However, when we presented the topic and aims, most of them made great contributions to our words and shared their own ideas about the topic. High school pupils are aware that they should follow, participate and organise international events in order to improve themselves in a much better way. In brief, they were really pleased to be informed about the things like student organisations and active citizenship from now and they became more eager to get to university and be active more and more"

Deniz Ozhan, AEGEE-Urla

something amazing – they organised workshops in high schools and through this they empowered high school students and showed them how to become active European citizens, just as we all are in AEGEE.

Together ten people in ten different locals have so far held twenty-one workshops. But obviously this was not enough to satisfy their hunger, because they are already preparing several more at other high schools.

Reading all the messages from people who were inspired by YOUrope needs YOU 2 and its aims makes me very happy to see that there is still huge interest in our network to work on this issue. By empowering high school students, we are also preparing the next AEGEE generation. Young people in Europe, they are our future.

So if you find this interesting, don't hesitate. Contact us, find out more about this amazing project, and join in. Don't forget that YOUrope needs YOU 2 needs you too! ■

Workshop leaders

Name	Antenna	Workshops
Benni Battke	AEGEE-Aachen	1
Sabrina Ehmann	AEGEE-Toulouse	2
Melinda Kiss	AEGEE-Budapest	2
Deniz Ozhan	AEGEE-Urla	2
Patricia Hrubá	AEGEE-Bratislava	1
Faristamo Leis	AEGEE-Tallin	3
Camelia Bereanu	AEGEE-Sibiu	6
Gabriela Motroc	AEGEE-Bucuresti	1
Catarina Bastos	AEGEE-Porto	1
Liliya Buyukliyska	AEGEE-Sofia	2

Gabriel Motroc

"I simply love YOUrope needs YOU 2, because now that I have organised a workshop myself, I have found out how rewarding it is to give back what I received from you. I felt great and I hope this project will continue, as it is the best way to express what we are doing in AEGEE and how friendships bond. Seeing the high school students so anxious to be part of this experience makes it all worth it"

Gabriel Motroc, AEGEE-Bucuresti

Perspectives for

Active citizens aware of global challenges – this is what AEGEE's current flagship project Beyond Europe wants to see as its legacy. Its aim is to empower young people to tackle global challenges – and this should not merely be a European effort, but rather a project of and for very different people around the world. For this purpose AEGEE joins forces with organisations from Egypt, India, Palestine and South Africa and thereby runs youth projects beyond the European continent

CHRISTIAN EICHENMÜLLER *Project Manager*

PROJECTS | 36 |

Why going beyond Europe? Today's world is plagued by multiple crises. The by now infamous term of the Bottom Billion stands for misery of a billion people on the planet that don't have access to clean drinkable water and suffer from extreme poverty and hunger. The climate and sustainability crisis caused by industrialized countries living on account of future generations doesn't know geographical boundaries. A population of now seven billion people – with average estimations by the United Nations projecting an additional two billion people until the middle of the century – raises serious doubts on the way how human beings currently

inhabit and exploit the planet. The bill will be paid by the future generations. At the same time today's benefits of globalization are unequally distributed. Connecting the dots brings to mind the gravity of these global challenges.

What needs to be done? This was the question that the group of committed enthusiasts focussed on while drafting the project. Their answer was ostensibly simple: Building upon young people as future stakeholders and decision-makers in an increasingly interconnected world. Simultaneously an understanding grew that global challenges require global action. Indisputably, a dialogue on student level on the

challenges we are all confronted with is needed more than ever before. The project subsequently became known as Beyond Europe – Perspectives for Tomorrow's World.

In order to empower young people to tackle global challenges the project follows four major objectives: raising awareness, stimulating participation and encouraging multiplication while at the same time

About the Project

Beyond Europe is the flagship project of AEGEE-Europe in the years 2010/2011. Its aim is to empower young people in and outside Europe to tackle global challenges. The project website: www.beyondeurope.eu

Tomorrow's World



Photos: Beyond Europe Team

cherishing diversity and a truly inter-cultural work environment. Currently there are numerous efforts to achieve these objectives. At the heart of an ambitious agenda is the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Case Study Trips to India in June, South Africa in September and a conference in Utrecht in November assemble European, Indian and South African students to take up the cause of above mentioned objectives with regard to the MDGs. At the same time, global

challenges such as climate change and energy will be addressed in so-called One World Conventions in Europe. Youth exchanges with partners from Egypt and Palestine will broach the issue of migration and inter-faith dialogue. The question of sustainability and arising conflicts will be at the heart of conferences assembling European and US American students. In more than a dozen events the project brings together students from very different backgrounds and world regions to discuss, understand and develop further initiatives.

Though this particular initiative can only be a small component in light of ongoing and wider efforts, it is nevertheless a crucial first step trying to set an example. In an increasingly interconnected world, it's on young people and associations like AEGEE to open up to the outside world by building bridges across and beyond the European continent. ■

...a conference in Utrecht in November assemble European, Indian and South African students...

AEGEE in Frontline



Y Vote 2009 is at the same time the AEGEE project that gained most visibility among the media and policy-makers in recent years and the AEGEE project that dealt most explicitly with solely European Union affairs. This was inevitably made possible by the grants of the

European Commission fund Youth in Action for youth projects. In brief, Y Vote 2009 aimed to encourage and empower young people aged 18-24 to cast their vote for the European Parliament elections taking place 4 to 7 June, 2009. In the 2004 European Parliament elections, 67% of the people aged 18-24 did not vote. We focused on elevating this rather bad achievement. Of course, voter turnout rate can, and should, be higher at all times, but here we talk about the first-time voters, the future electorate, and the future leaders of Europe.

So at the end of the day, was the project then not successful? I am absolutely convinced that such a question is impossible to answer objectively. One has to bear in mind that we dealt with possibly the biggest conundrum of those interested in the future of Europe. AEGEE turned towards the very essence of EU integration – that European decision-making is not only for its citizens, but also with its citizens.

From the outset the Y Vote 2009 project resembled the heart and mind of its founder, and later project manager, Dragan Stojanovski. It was first of all a genuine product from young, idealist students. One can see this unmistakably in the final manifesto, the Youth Agenda 2009, that rounded up the outcomes of a real cycle of one-week conferences. Furthermore, it was a product of

THIJS DE WOLFF *Content & Formats Manager*

Details about how did we work this out in practice will follow, but let's first look at the actual voter turnout rates and compare them to previous EP elections. In 2004, the previous elections mobilized 45.47% of the EU voters. We detect a spiraling trend, because in 2009, in total 43% of the voters headed to the polls, and every single 5 years the turnout rate falls by on average 3%.

for EU Voting

young people that truly care for the European story, and who believe in active contribution to society for the sake of democracy.

The whole campaign started with a launching conference in Vienna, September 2008. On some 15 big one-week conferences thereafter we visited student cities across the EU. It was stimulating that in each city we were welcomed by local members. So, the campaign

moved completely within the realm of possibilities that AEGEE offers. Every such conference tackled a specific theme, for example, Creativity and Innovation, Education, or EU on the world stage, and on each of these

conferences the experts in our network were invited to lead workshops for participants (who were, by the way, both members and non-members). In the workshops (small group work) and panel discussions with Members of European Parliament, university professors, and other leaders the participants got plenty of room to share their thoughts.

What is more, it was a time to have ferocious Oxford debates, display their uncertainties about a lack of knowledge about a topic, ask questions to panelists, develop communication skills... Thanks to the social program and cul-

tural, touristic activities everybody had the chance to feel comfortable enough to make all these things happen.

Participants got to know Y Vote 2009 in various ways, mainly through our blog, e-social networks, and following sound cooperation with other International Youth NGO's like BEST, and the European Youth Forum (umbrella organization AEGEE is a member of). Aside of this participant-empowerment dimension of the project, the other paramount challenge we had to square up to was to find people, young and old, EU citizen, and then to engage in dialogue with them or simply to catch their eye with our message 'Y Vote? Why not?'. One way or another you have to find those voters, which can be hard if you planned a street action in the open air just when it starts raining.



Photo: Y Vote Team



Photo: Y Vote Team

» More importantly, a street interview, or ‘canvassing’ in jargon, is also a reality check. Talking to random people made us realize things and learn about the increasing complexity of a globalizing world, its impact on individuals, and the environment in which young people are growing up, fully with its own values. We learnt quickly that you have to meet them further than halfway—the message of voting is important, and so is the means of getting attention. This came out as well during the UK Tour, a special part of the project dedicated to the United Kingdom, widely known to be by far the most eurosceptic EU member state. While getting attention about EU affairs is assumed to be most difficult in eurosceptic countries, this did not entirely

ring true for our efforts in the UK. There we could tour the city centers in our mobile Y Vote van, drawing the attention of all passers-by as we blew balloons with our slogan, we screamed, and the van’s speakers boosted loud music.

To highlight one last aspect of the campaign is not difficult to chose. Campaigning in the 21st century cannot do anymore without presence on the internet. Millions of people have a profile on social networks like YouTube and Facebook – and it does not take a genius to see that these are opportunities that

can generate extremely high levels of interest with a relatively very small effort. All year long, from different parts of Europe, from different Y Vote events, material was gathered to be uploaded little time later, video-editing, funny and thought-provoking video clips that make democracy truly reach out again into households. And it was marvelous to see Facebook statuses of hundreds of friends show ‘I voted for European elections’, not to mention the on line comments on the Y Vote 2009 performance on Europarl.tv’s Election Night broadcast. Yet still not everybody has replaced older-fashioned communication for e-social media. One sunny spring day in 2009 the president of AEGEE, Dragan Stojanovski, got a best wishes message from the president of Italy, Giorgio Napolitano. By telegram.

By the way, the Youth Agenda 2009, the manifesto that outlines all that young people desire from the presently sitting members of European Parliament, can be sent to you by the author upon request. Working diligently on Y Vote events, together, towards the biggest democratic happening on our continent, being increasingly more excited during the last three weeks leading up to the elections, has something fantastic about it. Something that voluntary work deserves. ■



Photo: Y Vote Team

Freedom of Press

Freedom of speech has been a substantial problem since the beginning of humanity, for opposing opinions have forever existed between individuals. Contemporarily, the level of maturity reached by a society is described by the freedom people have to express their opinions.

PETRE FLUERAȘU *Project Manager*

ALEKSANDRA WIŚNIEWSKA *Public Relations*

Can we talk today about a free press in Europe considering there are very few media institutions able to finance themselves, through sales and publicity, without depending on a messianic financier or a big media trust with all its pressures?

Through our project, we aim to create a common platform where one can discuss the extent of Freedom of Press in European countries today and propose solutions to improve



Photo: Marc Wathieu

it where necessary. We want to organize debates all over Europe between young Europeans about the future of the media and encourage them to get more involved in producing and using media as a way of fighting for their rights, promoting citizen journalism and active citizenship, which are the powers of democracy. We want to see all the involved parties (from the politicians to civil society and media owners) brought together in order to compare the difference in their opinions in this field. Ultimately, we envisage producing a position paper to be presented to European institutions as a common voice of youths' concerns about freedom of press in Europe.

We are looking forward to the year 2011 in which we will organize events all over the continent, a year in which we will bring together different visions of free press, trying to understand which one works better and why it is worth to follow its pattern. Young people, students, will be motivated to travel and discover together what freedom of press really means and how it is understood across Europe. We will lobby for the changes, we want to have a concrete effect, and assure that the project is followed by panels of further discussion involving many other actors of the stage.

These are the main coordinates of the project which struggles to change the way freedom of press is perceived today in Europe, the project which will help shape the Europe of tomorrow. Because only together can we change the world... AEGEE style! ■

Books Are Breathing

For more than 10 years, AEGEE-Ankara has focused on human rights in Turkey and in Europe. The Human Rights Working Group of AEGEE-Ankara has carried out many events locally and internationally for years in order to increase human rights awareness in society. In 2009, this focus stayed the same but a new project, which has been seen several times in Europe, was decided upon and AEGEE-Ankara took the lead to implement it for the first time in Ankara: The Living Library. But, what is this Living Library? What is the difference between a real library and the living library?

Moreover, prejudices cause not only discrimination but also hate crimes. The Living Library aims to show that different people have different beliefs, genders, ethnic identities and different ways of life. Nothing is more important than living together as a society and respecting each other's thoughts.

The project is organized to create a platform for conversation between society and the people ostracized from society, which we call the 'books'. The Living Library

has the same mechanism as a normal library. It contains books (people ostracized from the society), readers (people who think they have prejudice for one of the books or just want to chat or ask questions to one of the books), organizers (people who organize the whole library, reading sessions etc.). What is more, there are catalogues that contain the titles and some prejudices faced by the books. The readers come; choose the book from the catalogues towards whom they have a

SEZIN KABASAKAL *Thematic Responsible*

The Living Library is a human rights project whose concern is to reduce the prejudice shown by society towards some people who are not considered appropriate. These prejudices create discrimination and isolation. According to society, there is a normal way to be a man, a woman, a child or a family. Because of these stereotypes, if a person does something other than 'normal', society labels him/her as inappropriate and does not let him/her live as the rest do.

"I wouldn't have the chance to chat with this person for thirty minutes in society."

in This Library

prejudice or about whom they want to learn more, read the book, which means talking to the book for a specified time, and leaves the area of the library with the pleasure of meeting a new person and sharing the experience with a total stranger.

The Living Library was first suggested in Roskilde festival in 2000 by a NGO called Foreningen Stop Volden which is composed of Danish youth. Later, this project was put into practice by the European Youth Centre Budapest (EYCB) of the Council of Europe at Sziget festival in 2001. The Living Library at Sziget festival has been kept open by the EYCB for 7 days every year since 2001. Because the libraries organized at this festival are international, it showed that borders could be crossed. Every year in many countries, the Living Libraries are organized by various NGOs.

In Turkey, the Living Library project was first organized between 24th and 26th August 2007 at Rock for Peace Festival (Barisarak) in Istanbul by the Youth Studies Department and Community Volunteers Foundation. Then, it was organized at GapGenc festival and in Rock for Peace Festival one more time in 2008.

The Living Library project was realized for the first time in Ankara on 6th-8th May, 2009 at METU (Middle East Technical University), Spring Festival by the Human Rights Project Group of AEGEE-Ankara. The Living Library, with 24 books

“It was a nice experience to see the world through the book’s eyes.”

and 17 different book titles, met with readers during 3 days. It reached 370 readers and 504 reading sessions were carried out. It is observed that these 370 readers, whose ages are between 16 and 60, belong to different occupational groups. Some of the book titles were refugee, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, disabled person, Armenian, Kurdish, Schizophrenic person, HIV positive. »

Living Library Aims

- To raise awareness of the people who face prejudices due to their ethnic, cultural, occupational, and gender identities and who are socially ostracized;
- To create an atmosphere in order to reduce these prejudices;
- To make a contribution to the publicity of Human Rights in society;
- To provide an opportunity for people who have prejudices against some people in their minds but have not yet had the chance to meet them;
- To help the readers to understand the people they call ‘others’ by showing empathy.

"I am happy to hear a totally different idea."

» In 2010, as AEGEE-Ankara, we aim to increase the number of readers, remove prejudices as much as possible and foster the human rights concept among people. The project is planned to be held on 6th-8th October

2010 in Ankara by the Human Rights Project Group. Our aim is to reach more people, to destroy or reduce more prejudices with more books. The project will be done in another university campus in Ankara and therefore, more people will have the chance to meet this library. According to the evaluation forms, the book list has been updated and some books have been added to the catalogue such as atheist, NGO worker, a child raised in Child Protection House etc...

The Living Library has been held in book fairs, bookstores, real libraries, different kinds of festivals, universities etc.

The place of the project should be easily accessible and safe for books. The readers must be observed very carefully during the sessions in case of a negative approach. Titles of the books must be well chosen according to the country and the society. These titles

must truly represent the prejudiced groups of people in that society. Organizers need at least a year of thematic preparation and after they have enough knowledge about the human rights concept and human rights violations, the organizational preparation starts. One last essential point is getting help from an experienced team. If you decide to do the project, there are a lot of issues you must approach sensitively.

As the Human Rights Project Group of AEGEE-Ankara, we will be very pleased for other AEGEE locals to adopt this project and

spread it all around Europe. This project helps organizers to gain both knowledge of human rights and organizational skills. For readers this is a wonderful experience of understanding other people living around them in the same society and for books this is a great way to express themselves to other people and learn from the readers as they share their lifetime experience.

If you are interested, we are willing to help you as much as we can. We are ready to share our great experiences with you. ■



Photo: Bettinche

"I have read five books today and it was the best day of my life!"

"It is impossible to break prejudices without talking face to face."



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Amazing Experience of

It was spring of 2007, when a to-be-founded Environmental Working Group proposed to AEGEE the topic of Sustainability for the next Flagship Project. I can remember very well how nervous we were while presenting the idea in front of the General Assembly, with the uncertainty of whether AEGEE would accept the big challenge of exploring a topic where we had a clear lack of expertise as an association.

MIGUEL GALLARDO *Urban Environment Conference Responsible*

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Gathering students from all fields of knowledge, most of the AEGEE members had little idea of what the key aspects of Sustainability were; nevertheless we were brave enough to take up the challenge, and we even managed to turn that initial drawback into an asset: a multicultural and multidisciplinary team, built up a project that looked at the topic from very different angles, therefore giving the opportunity to every AEGEE member to explore such a complex concept from their own point of view and add something from his or her own experience. We also wanted to show how Sustainability is seen and tackled in different parts of Europe, from Scandinavia to Mediterranean countries, and how local conditions play a big role in solving the problems that modern societies have to face.

Project Structure

The Sustaining our Future project was composed by several actions and sub-projects:

Youth Solar Days: Solar Energy

Solar energy is called upon to play a key role in the future, so we went to Brussels to learn more about it and about other renewable energies.

European Day of Environment

This is an Action Day where the local groups of AEGEE are invited to organize small to medium activities to promote sustainable lifestyles and respect for the environment in their home towns and surroundings. It continues now under the coordination of the Environmental Working Group.

Think and In(ter)novate

This is the first Pan-European Think Tank in AEGEE's history. It was the meeting point for industry representatives (who proposed the challenges) and several teams of European students (who delivered the solutions) in a fair competition to find the most creative and feasible idea, which received an award of 1000 euros.

Sustainable SCANDinavia

A visit to Copenhagen was the perfect occasion to learn about how these societies deal better with the social, economical, and environmental aspects of sustainability.

Sustaining our Future



Photo: Sustaining our Future Team

Danube: Let it flow!

The Danube river is the blue heart of Europe. The sub-project organized two events where we analyzed the current problems that threaten the future of the Danube and its role as a European vehicle for ideas and a symbol of a united and border-free continent.

We had set up an extremely ambitious objective: to initiate a change in people's minds. Nevertheless, these past two years have been full of challenges. Some of them felt overwhelming for a team composed by members with little experience in project management. We had to deal with difficulties such as misunderstandings in a multicultural team, never-ending online meetings to reach an agreement, last minute fund raising, and trying to successfully combine working for a European-level project with studies at University and still maintaining our social life. Luckily, we could always find support from one or another member of the team, or even from other bodies of the AEGEE network, so that finally none of these obstacles compromised the success of the project. Moreover, we learned a lot during the process, not just about Sustainability, but also about ourselves and how to deal with such situations. In »

SuFu and the City Madrid

Madrid served as a real life lab to test how an increasingly urban society impacts on the environment, having a close look at how citizens can influence their own environments and ways in which they can contribute to improve their city's living circumstances.

Other Highlights

Sustaining our Future involved dealing with the Climate Change issue in Aachen's event CCCP (Changing Climate – Changing People?). We also led a Knowledge Cafe at the IUCN's (International Union for Conservation of Nature) World Conservation Forum in Barcelona about the role of Youth on Sustainability. In addition, our team won the national Charlemagne Youth Prize competition in the Netherlands. AEGEE-Poznan transformed the University Student's Day into a recycling competition and finally, we were active in all AEGEE statutory events with workshops and discussions, and also at internal AEGEE meetings, such as Local Training Courses or Network Meetings.

Project Aims



Photo: Sustaining our Future Team

- Raise understanding of the importance of sustainable living environment among the European youth and their communities at large.
- Involve European youth in the discussion and creation of sustainable living solutions for European societies.
- Act on and promote sustainable living solutions to increase personal and social environmental responsibility.

» the end, all the members of the Sustaining our Future project team agreed that these two years have been an unforgettable experience, and we would like to encourage other motivated young Europeans to give credit to

their own ideas, and to find the way to make them real. AEGEE is an amazing playground for self-development!

I would like to thank all the sponsors and donors, every AEGEE local who organized an event in the framework of the Sustaining our Future project, and especially all our participants who made this trip an amazing adventure.

If you want to know more, our results booklet “Youth’s Eye on Sustainability” is already available to download from the Sustaining our Future website: www.aegge.org/sustaining ■

Project Results

- Increasing knowledge, interest and involvement of AEGEE members (and European youth in general) into issues connected to sustainable development.
- Sharing best practices and guidelines of sustainable resources’ management and lifestyle all over Europe.
- Integrating sustainability aspects into the functioning of AEGEE and the organisation of our events in general.
- Showing the link between sustainable development and the everyday life.
- Empowering young people to take active role in sustainability issues, from giving their opinion to stakeholders, to organising local actions.

It can be estimated that over 1500 young people all over Europe were directly involved or influenced by this project. Dozens of AEGEE members became more active and decided to organize events related to the environment on local level.



Photo: Sustaining our Future Team

Youth Unemployment

MAGDALENA PAWLOWSKA

The statistics show that unemployment among young people is increasing across Europe, in several countries even more than 40%. Nowadays, being a graduate from a reputable university with high marks is not enough to ensure rapid employment. What then can young people do to increase their employability? How to find a job? How to present yourself effectively on labor market and succeed? These are just some questions to which youth is looking for answers.

AEGEE-Europe enrolled eight members to work on the Youth Unemployment Project. The project team initially wants to do a survey and find out what AEGEE's members think and feel regarding youth unemployment. During autumn there are several events planned – "Employment Action Days" - with the goal to increase recognition of non-formal education and voluntary work as working experience. All antennae are welcome to join and organize this action in their locals; more information will come after the summer. Other important parts of the project are raising awareness and empowering youth to set up their own enterprises as a great way of self-employment.

The Project Team is sure that everyone who will participate in the events will gain great deal – better professional future. ■



Photo: Michał Kasprzak

Where Does Europe End

Imagine you are a contestant on “Who wants to be a millionaire”. Now imagine that you are facing the last question. You have used up all your lifelines, so you can’t phone a friend, ask the audience, nor can you use the 50-50. You take a deep breath, praying that you will know the answer, and then the question pops on the screen: “Where does Europe end?” You have less than a minute to answer and no one can help you. Difficult question, huh?

LAVINIA MANEA *Public Relations*

This is precisely what some experienced AEGEE members came to realise during an informal talk in Brussels in early 2009. Percin Imrek, the then Projects Director of AEGEE-Europe, decided to take action and became the founder and, later on, the manager of what is today known as the Where Does Europe End? project.

The main purpose of the project, however, is not to answer the question of where Europe ends, but to explore its physical and mental borders in people’s conceptions, with a view to highlighting the discrepancies in opinions and the lack of coherence that we, Europeans, show when talking about “our” Europe.

With this shared goal, we (a team of seven international AEGEE members) have developed further the concept of the project, which took the shape of a series of conventions

meant to gather between 25 and 30 international participants and scheduled to be held in different venues across Europe, from Turkey to Spain and from Sweden to Greece.

The most important action carried out by the participants during these events, is the so-called “street action”, which consists of interviewing local people and asking them to draw a map of what Europe is for them. For this purpose, a standard questionnaire has been created so that the results can be easily assessed and compared from country to country. As a final goal, a booklet with the results will be edited and the conclusions will be presented during the closing conference in Brussels.

The conventions that precede the final one, however, are nonetheless important and share both similarities and differences among themselves. If the street interviews are a common feature, what differentiates them is the distinctive thematic focus of each event. EU & Enlargement, Regional Identity,

Human Rights, Multilingualism, Minorities and Democracy or Economic Integration are some of the themes that have been, and will be, developed during each convention throughout the year 2010 until the first half of 2011, when the closing conference is due to take place.

At the present moment, three WDEE conventions were successfully carried out and two more are due to take place in autumn 2010. In collaboration with AEGEE-Pecs, the kick-off conference took place in September 2009 in Koszeg (Hungary), while the second convention took place in May 2010 and was hosted by AEGEE-Izmir in Cesme (Turkey). Due to its highly interesting thematic focus – EU & Enlargement – and to the great efforts of AEGEE-Izmir, the event was echoed in a series of local publications, which presented our project with a focus on the event that took place in Turkey. Trying to take our project a step further, our team decided together with AEGEE-Ogre to collaborate and hold an event on Multilingualism, within the framework of the “Europe has no borders” Summer University, which took place at the end of June 2010 in Latvia and Belarus.

The next events, to be held in autumn 2010, will be hosted by AEGEE-Lund and

AEGEE-Leon and will take place in the cities with the same name, in Sweden and Spain respectively. There, we will focus on Human Rights (Sweden) and Regional Identity (Spain). Apart from the above mentioned events, our team is planning to hold at least two more events, one in Sibiu (Romania) on Minorities & Democracy and another in Athens (Greece) on Economic Cooperation within the EU.

In our effort, we are not only supported by enthusiastic young people (sub-team members and participants) but also by the European Commission through Youth in Action and by our official patrons and partners, Mr. Jerzy Buzek (former President of the European Parliament), Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso (President of the European Commission), Mr. Christof Leclerk (founder of EURACTIV), as well as by other student organisations and NGOs.

With three conferences successfully carried out and many others ahead, we hope that our efforts will be fruitful and that we will make a difference for many young people both inside and outside AEGEE. Whether we manage to do this, however, only time will tell. ■



Photo: European Environment Agency

Celebrating Twenty Five Years

April 16th 1985, was the day AEGEE held its first conference in Paris with topics related to the paralysation of the European integration process. Starting with just six locals in Western Europe, AEGEE became a platform for students from Europe to discuss the future of Europe.

SVETLANA MIKHAYLENKO *Project Manager*

A lot has happened since 1985: with the disappearance of the Iron Curtain, AEGEE was able to embrace Eastern Europe and it was just a matter of time before the first city in Eastern Europe would join AEGEE. Even today, locals in Central and Eastern Europe prove to be valuable for the European society. AEGEE is even moving beyond the accepted European borders and created locals in Russia, Turkey and a few years ago, locals were created in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

25 years later AEGEE has 230 locals, scattered all over Europe with more than 15.000 members, ten working groups and several projects. All the above mentioned, strive together to reach the established aims since the first years of AEGEE: the promotion of a unified Europe without prejudices, creating an open and tolerant society of today and tomorrow, fostering democracy, human

rights, tolerance, cross-border cooperation, mobility and European dimension in education.

AEGEE25's aim is not only to celebrate the 25 years of existence of AEGEE, but also to show Europe that it is a multicultural organisation with locals in every country of the European Union and not only. We want to highlight AEGEE's accomplishments in the fields of cultural exchange, active citizenship, higher education and peace & stability. The aim of this project is to look at the past, the present and the

future of AEGEE: what has AEGEE done for its members and the European society? How are its projects related to the European society? What can AEGEE develop so that its members can contribute more to the European society?

All students involved in AEGEE do this on a voluntary basis and as 2011 will also be European Year of Volunteering, with this project we would like to emphasize the need of volunteer work to create a better European society. The year 2010 has therefore been full of activities which contribute in achieving the aims of this multi-dimensional project: exchanges, competitions, conferences and more activities. ■



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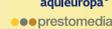
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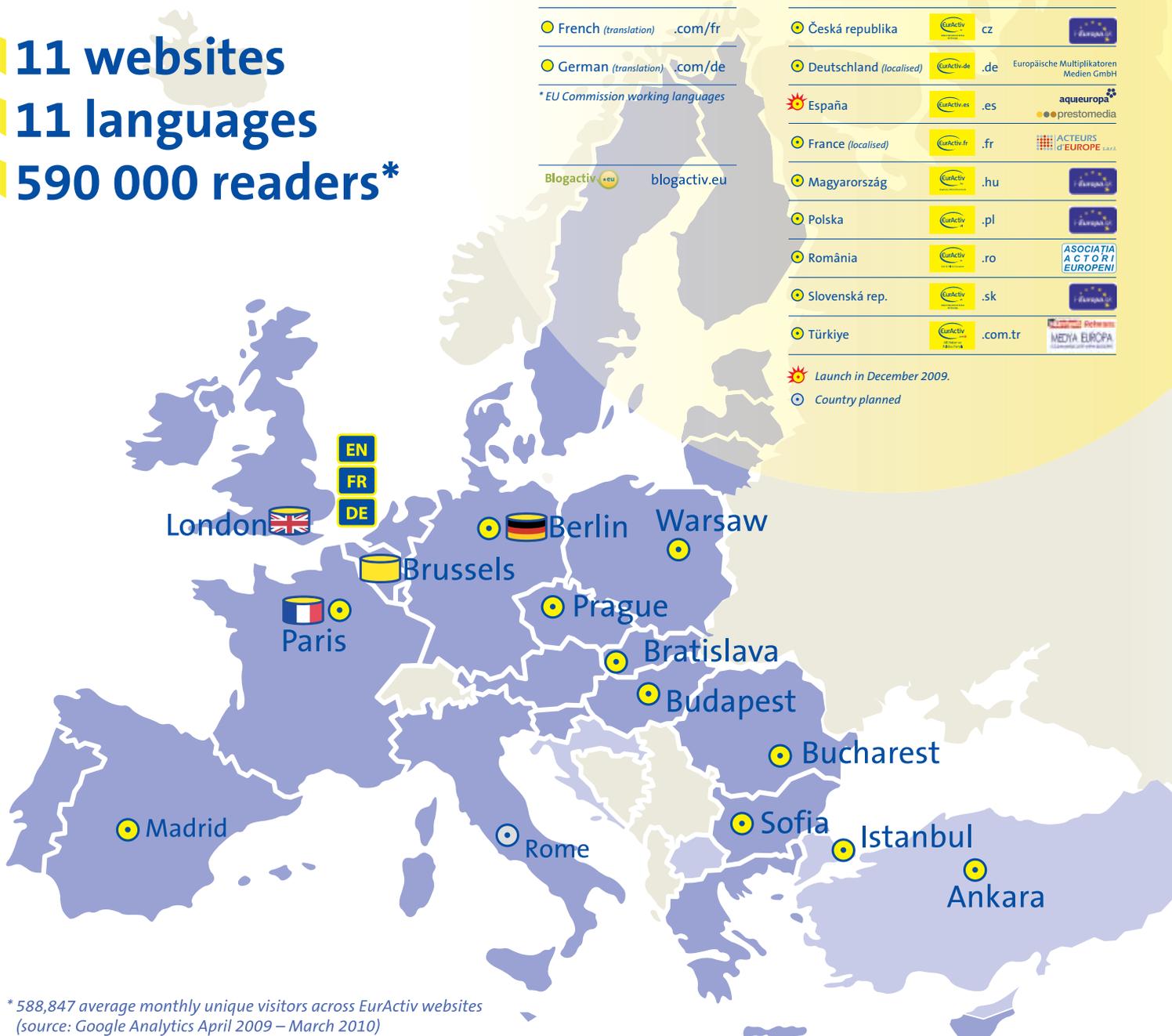
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Ext ernal Rela

● AEGEE is not only a network of students accross Europe that
tions

became member of this Association. On the contrary, AEGEE has many connections with other Youth organiations as ESN and BEST. Besides these connections our network reaches even further with Liasion Officers towards UNESCO and the European Youth Forum.

Keeping Youth Policy Alive

ILDIKÓ FERENCsik *Liaison Officer towards the European Youth Forum*

The European Youth Forum (YFJ) is an independent, democratic, youth-led platform, representing 99 National Youth Councils and International Youth Organisations from across Europe, channeling the voice of young people to such international organisations as the United Nations, the Council of Europe or the European Institutions.

The membership in the umbrella organisation opens new doors for AEGEE-Europe to the magic world of the international youth sector. As a YFJ member organisation, AEGEE has endless opportunities to influence the top levels of the youth advocacy work, allowing us to make our projects and actions more and more visible all over the Universe. Over the past year, AEGEE was represented at a great number of conferences, internal and external meetings of the YFJ from the 1st Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Media and New Communication

Services to the Spanish Presidency EU Youth Conference. AEGEE-members were present in the different YFJ Working Groups, in the YFJ Pool of Trainers and YFJ Pool of Correspondances, that are of key importance in the shaping of the future of the Forum. AEGEE participated in both Council of Members (COMEM) this year, which within is the equivalent to our European Boards Meeting (EBM). During the COMEMs, important policies are discussed among member organisations and different points of view are shared, in order to achieve a cohesive message on behalf of all European young people. »



photo: Michał Kasprzak

Kosovo, Albania and FYROM, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary played an important role in the work of AEGEE.

Youth Perspective on E-society

The role of new media has become crucial as a tool to support access of young people to information and to the development of an active youth participation in democratic processes. E-participation and the better understanding and knowledge about web 2.0 for youth organisations has been supported at different forums by AEGEE.

Fighting Against Youth Unemployment

The financial crisis has badly affected the young people, according to the statistical office of the Eurostat (EU). By the end of 2009, five million young people aged 15-24 were unemployed, therefore Council of the European Union set youth employment as overall thematic priority for European cooperation in the youth field for the period 1st January 2010 until 30th June 2011.

AEGEE, together with its partner member organisations, took action and established the Youth Employment Action (YEA) in September 2009 as a transnational consortium, in order to improve the position of young people in Europe with regards to their access to the labour market, enhancing their employability and making them aware of their working rights. ■

- » At the COMEMS, AEGEE also participated actively in setting important strategic priorities for the YFJ. These priorities allowed us to focus on the issues extensively discussed below.

Quality Assurance in Non-Formal Education

The quality in non-formal education (NFE) is very difficult to define, but the YFJ, based on the Non-formal Education Policy Paper (2008), launched a new Pilot Project on Quality Assurance in 2009. AEGEE joined this new initiative together with 5 member organisations, which allowed us to further develop the quality of our projects, and also to ensure the strategic position of AEGEE on the field within the YFJ.

Supporting the Establishments of the National Youth Councils

The European Youth Forum supports youth NGOs to establish well-functioning, democratic, transparent and inclusive platforms at the national level - National Youth Councils (NYCs). Supporting the establishment, consolidation and strengthening of these national youth structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro,

Cooperation in Action

In the passing year, AEGEE has had mutually beneficial cooperations with a number of NGOs, such as BEST, ESN, EPSA, ELSA, whose members we have welcomed to our events and vice versa. A range of informal meetings were held during which the Comité Directeur (CD), members of AEGEE and the boards and members of partnership NGOs shared their experience and knowledge and tried to find ways for further cooperation.

AGNES LEYRER *External Relations Director AEGEE-Europe 2009/2010*

VERA SOKOLOVA *Member AEGEE-Kyiv*

Board of European Students of Technology

The most successful cooperation, also formalized in a signed cooperation agreement, proved to be with BEST. Like AEGEE it is a non-profit, non-political organization that was founded in 1989 and is now comprised of 86 Local Groups in 30 countries around Europe. It is in many ways similar to AEGEE but with different objectives and methods used.

The cooperation between the two organizations started already years ago, yet was officially presented and voted upon at BEST General Assembly only in Warsaw, Spring 2010, which was attended by AEGEE's Network Director Anita Kalmane. In return the President of BEST, Dávid Salamon was representing the organization at AEGEE's General Assembly in Leiden, April 2010. The contract bares the key points of AEGEE-BEST cooperation, which are:

- Representation and participation – gives an opportunity for AEGEE and BEST delegates to take part in General Assemblies of both organizations and hold a presentation about their organizations. »



photo: Marta Szymkowiak

Dear readers, dear AEGEEans,

After a year of preparations, we are happy to start official cooperation between AEGEE and the Board of European Students of Technology (BEST)!

Fun, friendship, flexibility, learning and improvement are the key elements of what we call "the BEST Spirit". As we have a lot in common, yet a lot to learn from each other, we hope that through extensive participants exchange we can share this spirit with AEGEE members and experience the true spirit of AEGEE as well!

We, like AEGEE, believe in developing students by hands-on experience in a truly international environment. Each year, around 100 BEST courses, BEST engineering competitions, leisure events and BEST events on education open up for students of technology, and from now on for AEGEE members by offering the possibility to be co-organisers on these events.

Through BEST Career Support we link technology students with their future employers, our partner universities showcase their study opportunities in BEST University Centre, we develop our members' soft skills with the help of our training system, not to mention the countless internal events where AEGEE members are also welcome.

In case you are interested in events where you can meet BEST, just drop a line to ambassador@BEST.eu.org!

BEST regards,
David and the XXII Board of BEST



Board of BEST Association

- » • Exchange of participants – active members are encouraged to take part in AEGEE and BEST committee meetings, project meetings, workshops, etc. in order to increase sharing between the organizations.
- Corporate and institutional relations – sharing a company's contact upon request, and taking part in acquiring grants mutually, for example Youth in Action program.
- Educational Involvement – provides cooperation between AEGEE Education Working Group and BEST Educational Committee.
- Training – AEGEE and BEST members are encouraged to attend training courses and schools of the fellow organization, as well as exchange trainers if required.
- Communication – gives members of both AEGEE and BEST a chance to get the information about upcoming events via newsletters or announcements through mailing lists of both.
- Projects – joint projects between the two NGOs.
- Joint training events – dwells upon the idea of a joint AEGEE-BEST soft skills training event comprised of members and trainers of both organisations.
- Promotion – promoting the partner NGO through websites, articles in partner's internal and external magazines, sharing the upcoming events participation opportunities.

While we can already observe the results of the document in action, AEGEE has



photo: Alexandr Povstyanoy

also hosted Nikola Gajic, a member of BEST-Nis, Serbia, at our Shape our Home visual identity event in Aachen. It should be mentioned that Nikola, along with another BEST member was working on the BEST logo 4 years ago and during the event in Aachen he shared his vast experience and contributed greatly to the final AEGEE logo proposals. Thus, AEGEE would like to thank BEST for this help, which is most surely a sign of a cooperation in action.

Erasmus Students' Network

The cooperation between AEGEE and ESN has been very positive this year, despite the prejudice of the organisations' competition in fields of supporting international students on local level.

On European level ESN strives for the same goals as AEGEE, promoting students' and youths mobility in Europe, the recognition of semesters spent abroad during one's studies, and recognition of non-formal education. To reach the high-aimed goals AEGEE and ESN are both stronger if acting together in Brussels. At the spring General Assembly of the European Youth Forum ESN became

a full member of YFJ, therefore the cooperation between the two youth organisations can be extended among the walls of the official youth partner of the European Commission.

In university cities across Europe AEGEE antennae and local organisations of ESN work together supporting 'Erasmus students' and other exchange students, organising trips, international evenings or other networking sessions (to be called in many cases just 'Erasmus parties').

Through the European cooperation the Comité Directeur and The International Board of ESN would like to encourage their members and local organisations not to see each-other as competitors, but as groups of students aiming for the same European goals! »

» European Law Students' Association

The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) is the best friend of the CD in Brussels! The cooperation between the two groups is rather informal, but highly appreciated by both sides. AEGEE helping ELSA in finding an IT assistant, and ELSA helping AEGEE with legal issues like privacy statement are the "side effects" of the personal relationships the two European boards established in Brussels, next to the official visits of each others General Assemblies. AEGEE's relationship with ELSA perfectly shows the nature of youth NGO relationships, leaving aside all the formalities and inhibitions of business relations of "older" associations.

The passing year has shown great achievements in cooperation between AEGEE and its fellow NGOs, and made us certain that future joint activities will be even more fruitful. ■

More Info...

ELSA was founded in 1981 and has its head office in Brussels.
More information: www.elsa.org

ESN was founded in 1989 and has its head office in Brussels.
More information: www.esn.org

BEST was founded in 1989 and has its head office in Vienna.
More information: www.best.eu.org

ELSA

As the President of the International Board of ELSA I can refer to our relation with AEGEE as high potential cooperation. There are many correlations between our associations. The vision of ELSA is "A just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity". It is similar to the vision of AEGEE which mentions diversity as one of the important values.

We are both associations that strive to promote mutual understanding among students from different European countries and give them opportunities to develop their professional skills.

We are both European networks and, what is also very important, both have the central offices in Brussels. This gave us many opportunities to meet throughout the year and share our experiences, discuss and solve problems, ask each other for support and advice. On behalf of ELSA I would like to thank AEGEE for the cooperation in the term 2009/2010 and I look forward to seeing how this cooperation develops in the future. ELSA is always open for mutual projects and we are convinced we can work together towards our visions more efficiently!

Leonid Cherniavskyi
President ELSA International 2009/2010



FIND YOUR UNIVERSITY WITH THE HELP OF AEGEE!



Photo: Wojciech Gajewski

Study in Europe

AEGEE is a European students' association with open-minded members who are ready to take the challenge of studying in a different country than their own. To find the most suitable place abroad however is not an easy task, therefore AEGEE gives a hand for its members and other potential students to find ones way in the labyrinth of international universities.

AGNES LEYRER *External Relations Director AEGEE-Europe 2009/2010*

Study in Europe Fair

Two Study Fairs have been organised so far by AEGEE-Europe, one in Autumn 2009 and one in Spring 2010. Up to 1000 AEGEE members, the delegates, visitors and organisers of the Agorae, together with all local students have access to the Study Fair and the related workshops and activities. Any university can apply to take part in return of a contribution to the budget of the Agora through AEGEE-Europe.

The first "AEGEE Study in Europe Forum" took place in Kiev on 22d October 2009 and was a great success among Agora participants and especially local Ukrainian students who are more than interested in Master Programmes in European Union countries. The event didn't only give space for exhibiting universities from 10 different European countries, but also included workshops on crucial questions Ukrainian students are interested in. The Erasmus programme, master programme application packages, scholarships, how to write a motivation letter, the Bologna System, summer »



Agnes Leyrer



» courses, internships and volunteering opportunities were explained to the attendees. The education systems of specific target countries like Germany, the UK, France, The Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, Sweden and Spain were introduced as well.

The second fair was held on the first day of Agora Leiden on the 15th April 2010. There was big improvement in the number of exhibiting universities, and also some companies were present in the university hall. Careers in Europe, an international recruitment company offered “cv check”, and high-level jobs for graduates and young professionals. Workshops were led by representatives of the exhibiting universities

on various topics, like “How to apply for a Scholarship or a Job?”, “Entrepreneurial learning”, “Interplanetary supply and demand”, and “Your international cv – your way to success”.

The study fairs will continue in Agora Istanbul and Agora Alicante. After Agora Leiden the universities filled in a feedback form, which will help to improve the event, to give the chance to even more AEGEE members and external students to a great future in a European university, institution or company.

Study Choice Tests

There are many students who know from the beginning what they want to study, how they want their life to develop. Well, the „Choice of Study Website of AEGEE“ addresses those, who do not!

The website is a tool for future Master and Bachelor students to find out what kind of studies and which universities would fit them the most. Filling in a questionnaire about ones personality the system gives answers to the basic



CEU and AEGEE: Partners in Student Networking and Leadership Development

Since 2009 Central European University (CEU) in Budapest and AEGEE have been teaming up to support student activists involved in a variety of social and civic issues in Europe. CEU has since become one of AEGEE's top partners, hosting events and conferences, and providing general support for AEGEE's projects and presence within the European student network.

'The CEU-AEGEE connection is a natural partnership,' says Lena Koch, former president of AEGEE Berlin who now is the head of student recruitment at CEU. 'We both share the same ideas and goals.'

CEU is an English-language graduate school founded in 1991 by Hungarian-American philanthropist George Soros. The mission was to create an institution dedicated to promoting open and democratic societies and respect for human rights and to train a generation of future leaders committed to the values of civic engagement and social responsibility. CEU students are active with numerous international and local NGOs, as well as with dozens of campus-based groups supported by the university.

CEU and AEGEE share what Koch says is a 'mutually beneficial and successful relationship', working together to promote student activism, educational exchange and civic awareness. Past collaborations have included the 'Y Vote 2009 Conference on Education' hosted at CEU in April 2009, a conference on LGBT rights in Europe.

After participating in the Study in Europe Forum in Kiev (October 2009) and Leiden (April 2010), CEU will partner with AEGEE at the Study in Europe Forum and AGORA Istanbul.

question: what to study? And selecting among most European countries the question: at which university to study?

The Study Choice Test furthermore helps AEGEE members to find a university where AEGEE is present. The list of universities resulting from ones personal test have a small AEGEE logo attached, if the university hosts a local AEGEE antenna. With this tool AEGEE members going to study abroad must have no more fears of not finding a group of internationally oriented friends. ■

Photo: Michał Przybylski

Op in. ion

Within any organisation there are discussions on how to move on. The Key to Europe is a document reflecting the past year. However it should also take a look at the future.

On Democracy, or Being the Devil's Advocate

STELLA PARASCHA *Member AEGEE-Athina*

Democracy is a word that derives from the Greek word δημοκρατία, a political system that many describe as the best legacy ancient Greeks left to our modern societies (which means that the Greeks were doing much better hundreds of years ago, but this is a totally different matter). So, democracy in its ideal form would opt for a simplified “power to the people” doctrine. But in its current state it has another form, trying to give as much freedom of choice on civic matters to the people as possible, which sometimes can be very little. That’s why democracy tends to be a word that is all greek to many political consortia around the globe, which need not to be named explicitly.

Basically, what I am trying to point out here is that the definition of democracy can vary greatly, as a simple scan through the Wikipedia explanation or some brief research into several countries’ constitutions can assure us. An adjective near this pure word can spoil »



The right to demonstrate belongs to most western democracies

Photo: Wojciech Gajewski

- » it; transform it into something monstrous, as monstrous a wolf in a sheep's clothing. Whether it is direct, representative, liberal or any other kind of democracy, it should share some common elements: freedom and equality, in the first place and some others that we can look into more closely right now.

I will use as an example the proclamation of the American government on characteristics of democracy, as on paper everything seems quite right. "Democracy is a government in which power and civic responsibility are exercised by all adult citizens, directly, or through their freely elected representatives." What this statement does not tell us, is the dubious ways that candidates could use to gain votes. Then, "Democracy rests upon the principles of majority rule and individual rights" and not only that but, it tends to "guard against all-powerful central governments and decentralize government to regional and local levels". But one could imagine that individual rights are always somehow neglected in the end, as well as this so called "majority rule" principle, which could lead us to the "tyranny of the majority" or "ochlocracy", as featured already in Hellenistic Greece where examples of corrupt democracy were prominent. I should equally criticise the responsibilities that citizens are supposed to have in our modern democracies: it is easy to escape citizenship, if not a common practice. Individuals can be easily excluded from taxes payment, even voting, needless to say, joining the army (which, in my opinion, should be revised as a civic responsibility) or environmental conscience without any remorse or any impact on their everyday routine.

All the above criticism is meant to point out the misleading



Photo: Michał Przybylski

meaning of democracy in corrupt societies, which is usually the case. Corruption, after all, is the main enemy of democratic power, and we have yet to find the antidote. Nevertheless, AEGEE as a lucidly designed European Students' Forum supports the ideal of democracy and applies it to every possible aspect of its non-governmental infrastructure. AEGEE – which stands for Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe and is politically independent – is open to students and young professionals from all faculties and disciplines and counts around 15,000 members, involving all of them in the procedure of direct democracy, by voting. Voting per se is the most fundamental way of applying democracy, whether this is for the board of the local antenna or the Comité Directeur in a spring or fall Agora. Lead positions in working groups, personal initiative in new projects, everything is possible

for motivated and educated young people in AEGEE, acts that galvanize the democratic virtue and active citizenship for further use.

Numerous are the projects that have involved democracy as a main or side topic within the glorious (sic) 25 AEGEE years; a scholarship program was designed and dedicated to democracy, called "Education for Democracy", which requires both readiness to fight and absence of hatred, according to Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski. Then the project "Take Control, Ways to democracy in Europe", which was AEGEE's flagship project in 2006, aimed to "increase the involvement and engagement of young people in the (European) political process" through a series of training events, conferences, political campaigns, educational and media activities. A recent project steaming from AEGEE Cagliari, which celebrates the 25th birthday of the organisation, was entitled "Many Countries, ONE Europe:

25 years of young democracy", and does right to AEGEE's main concern on promoting democracy with its eloquent title.

As far as members are concerned, AEGEE is successful in its aim and deeds of Active Citizenship, Intercultural Dialogue and Borderless Europe, thus going further than mere democracy would ask for. But, as far as I am concerned, there is the need for a new project, a need emphasised by the proceeding examples of the ill combined democracy and corruption: a project with the potential title: democracy in peril. Such a project could familiarize young people with the idea of misleading democracy and enlighten them on the ways to preserve it in its most pure and true form and guide it away from recent examples of power or economic corruption. ■



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We, the members of AEGEE,

Realising that the European youth is building the future of our continent,

Aspiring to a peaceful Europe free of obstacles and enmities, of false divisions and forced differences,

Resolved to remove barriers between the peoples of Europe,

Determined to contribute to a Europe of co-operation and understanding,

Creating a network of young Europeans desiring to spread our ideals and ideas concerning Europe,

Hereby declare

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

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

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

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

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

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

