

KEY TO EURO PE



2010 | 2011

AEGEE ANNUAL REPORT
AEGEE-Europe Publication



STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

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 & ideas concerning Europe,*

H E R E B Y D E C L A R E

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



AEGEE SPRING AGORA,
UTRECHT, 2000

Key to Europe

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Rue Nestor de Tière 15

B-1030 Brussels

+32 2 246 0320

headoffice@aegee.org

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TIGRAN BALAYAN

Spokesman

of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

of the Republic of Armenia

DEAR AEGEE-EUROPE

It is well known that the South Caucasus represents one of the most diverse and conflict-ridden regions in the world. It includes the three former Soviet states Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as numerous ethnic minorities and small nations within these states. All three states since 2008 are included in the EU's Eastern Partnership Program and are willing to be integrated into the big European family.

On the example of Armenia and particularly on the example of its capital Yerevan, we may say that the youth, as well as the most of the residents of the capital, are not so well informed about the institutional structure of the EU, as well as they do not know much about the history of the European Community and the European integration processes. Simultaneously, we consider that Armenia's European integration is not a self-mission for Armenia, as our state has officially proclaimed its European orientation and is trying to establish European values and is willing to be integrated to the EU. In this case the participation of all interested layers of our civil society is essential for the final success. In general the civil society is a system of public mechanisms and relations, which is self-contained and independent from the state, which provides conditions for satisfaction of the private interests and needs of the

collectives and individuals. The non-governmental organizations have unique position within the scopes of the social system, which is one of the elements of the active civil society and the role of the latter ones' is not self-mission as the society through the non-governmental organizations gets a possibility to determine public control and sub-control over the state governance.

In this case the role of AEGEE could be really priceless, as by the help of this youth international organizations the Armenian youth would get a unique and unbelievable opportunity to become a part of the big European family which does not recognize national borders and borderlines. Therefore, the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia welcomes all initiatives and projects of AEGEE-Europe and we are really pleased that AEGEE-Yerevan has obtained the right to officially operate in Yerevan. As the main goal of AEGEE-Yerevan is to promote the communication between citizens of Armenia and Europe and boost the cooperation between the youth in order to build a tolerant and open society, we once again welcomes all its activities and hope that together with their European age-mates our youth would be able to create an open society in which rights and freedoms of all citizens would be respected. Once again best regards to whole AEGEE network!

Tigran Balayan

*Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Armenia*

Dear Reader,

It was more than 26 years ago when the journey of AEGEE started. A journey striving to foster European integration, democracy, human rights, tolerance, cross-border cooperation, mobility and a European dimension in education.

Can one question, I wonder, how different a Europe we encounter nowadays? The European Higher Education has come closer to a universal model with the Bologna Process, while education leans towards a more holistic approach, making non-formal education further recognised as a necessary complement of formal education. In accordance to our statutory aim, the Higher Education Days project of AEGEE loyally serves the development of modern pan-European education.

The world of active citizens of AEGEE refuses to follow the fashionable reality of Europe consisting of attempts to forget and eliminate all steps forward Europe has progressed. The rising nationalism along with the constant questioning of the European Society could only alert AEGEE and make us select Social Inclusion as our main thematic focus for the next two years. The concluding thematic focus, Beyond Europe, has opened up for AEGEE the idealistic box of Pandora, showing us a diverse, troubled world to build on and a broad amount of ideas on how to make Europe itself a better place.

Unlike the past, all Europeans are daily witnessing a new reality offering tangible mobility. Today, the young Europeans can

explore Europe more frequently than ever before. However, no matter how improved this field might seem, AEGEE will not rest before arriving to a status quo of truly equal opportunities and rights for all Europeans in mobility and education. Till that moment, AEGEE will keep initiating projects as the newly developed Eastern Partnership one, aiming to bridge the gap.

It was more than 26 years ago when the journey of AEGEE started. We are happy and proud to see Europe changing, Europe evolving. The publication you are holding in your hands attempts to demonstrate our involvement and influence to that evolution from August 2010 till July 2011.

We are fully conscious it is not feasible to turn Europe to the pantheon of our dreams within one year. Nevertheless, if you catch a glimpse towards it, our starting point appears far beyond the horizon. The same stands for our destination though.

Anyhow, our journey will carry on. Eventually, we will not need to dream of a better Europe, about a better world.

We will all be part of it.

Manos Valasis

Member of AEGEE-Peiraios and

President of AEGEE-Europe 2010/2011



MANOS VALASIS

President of AEGEE-Europe

2010/2011



Olimpia Pârje, Editor-in-Chief Key to Europe 2010/2011

Many Europeans today live under the impression that everything is ok in their community and in Europe itself, thus justifying their lack of implication as active citizens. This is the impression we would like to keep, looking back at the past year and the results of our actions, that we have reached our aim and can lay back and relax. But even though we've come quite far from where we started, there are still many more things to be done.

IS EVERYTHING REALLY OK?

From the European to the local level, in this publication you will find who we are and what we do, the most relevant events and projects taking place across the AEGEE network, from August 2010 to July 2011. Our efforts, our actions and our results, divided into five thematic focuses, spread across a monthly calendar of events: Global Perspectives, European Citizenship, Education, Intercultural Dialogue and Volunteering.

More than a continent or a piece of land, Europe is best described as an idea, stretching from the far ends of history to a complicated and confusing present. While we seem to have learned in the past 50 years what freedom, democracy and tolerance mean, we are still very far from truly implementing those ideas. Just take for example Belarus and read about it from students' perspective as one

of our members makes a trip to Minsk in July.

Following another year into the financial crisis, many incidents have put significant pressure on the idea of a united Europe, more strongly within the EU. Spain has seen its youth on the streets for days as some AEGEE locals have also joined in the 15th of May Spanish movement, an aspect detailed in the May section of the calendar.

Unexpected happenings this year include the Arab Spring revolutions, which also reminded us that Europe should never close itself off from the rest of the world. In AEGEE, a project that went far outside of Europe is the recently finished "Beyond Europe – Perspectives for tomorrow's world" flagship project of 2009-2011. Within the Global Perspectives section of the magazine you can explore the project and its EuroArab pillar, out of which a new project on European – Arab relationships is being developed as we speak.

A question that has always been present in our minds – Where Does Europe End? That is the name of the project, which for the past two years has been exploring the physical and mental boundaries of Europe. What European citizenship is to us you can discover in this magazine's section bearing the same name. In order to promote cross-border cooperation and student mobility within and outside the EU, AEGEE aims to ease visa facilitation for students and volunteers as well as to enhance cooperation between EU countries and neighbouring ones, included in the Eastern Partnership agreement, in an upcoming project next year.

Volunteering was another aspect AEGEE has insisted upon this past year, through its contribution to the European Year of Volunteering (EYV) within the EYV Alliance. An essential part of all our events, a special focus is given to Intercultural Dialogue in our oldest project – the Summer Universities.

An initiative of a group of Europeans, the Higher Education Days project encourages students to take an active role in drafting their own educational path. This, as well as our approach to non-formal education you can find detailed in the Education section.

All this and more you will discover about our organization within this magazine. Looking out we can definitely say everything is not OK, but as long as we continue to work for it and fight for our ideals, eventually it will be.

Olimpia Pârje, Editor-in-Chief, AEGEE-București



Youth Empowered at CEU's Roma Access Program

Despite the ongoing efforts of governments, NGOs and civil society organizations, the situation of Roma within Central and Eastern European countries remains tenuous. Efforts such as the Roma Decade have brought visibility to the plight of the Roma people, but these efforts have underachieved in closing the gap between Roma and non-Roma in some of the most important areas, notably education. Across the region, segregation, unequal access to materials and lack of funding continue to hinder the educational progress of Roma.

“Roma inclusion is at the forefront of discussions in Europe, and this issue was one of the priorities during Hungary’s presidency to the EU” – said Peter Johnson, CEU’s Vice President for Student Services. – “The Roma Access Program at CEU is a tangible effort that makes a very direct contribution to improving the educational opportunities of Roma students.”

Founded in 2004, the Roma Access Program at Central European University is now in its seventh year of working to close this gap by furthering the academic and professional ambitions of Roma university graduates. The Roma Access Program provides underprivileged but motivated Roma youth who are interested in attending graduate programs with the opportunity to come to Budapest and spend a year as a student within the CEU community. During this year of study, they take classes aimed at honing their academic and English language skills, while also auditing CEU master’s level courses within

the academic discipline they wish to pursue during their formal graduate degree program. The English training is specifically geared towards preparing the students to pass required language tests (most notably the TOEFL) that are required for graduate school admission. The students’ academic schedule is rounded out with classes taught by current PhD students at CEU, the content of which is focused on topics with the fields of social sciences and the humanities.

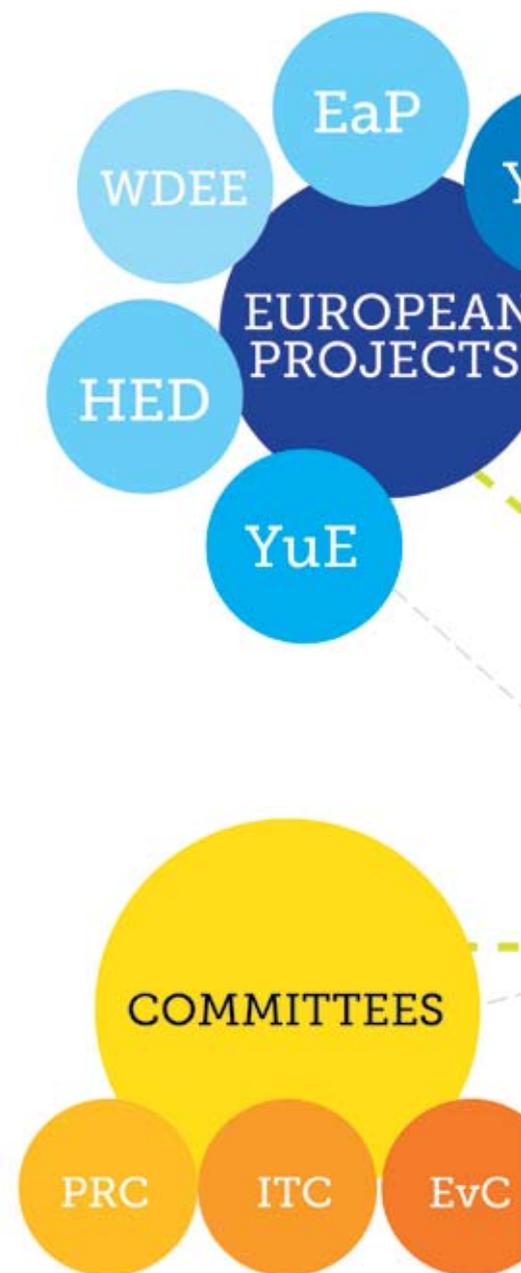
The Roma Access Program is funded and supported entirely by private organizations and Central European University. Students are provided with housing and a living stipend in addition to their academic scholarship, thus removing any financial issues that would otherwise preclude deserving Roma students of this opportunity. Along with this financial support, students benefit from the experience of being a member of the CEU community, which prides itself on the international diversity and civic engagement of its students and faculty. RAP students interact with students, professors, and PhD candidates daily.

Since its inception, RAP has graduated nearly 100 students, many of whom have gone on to gain admission to graduate schools in Europe and other regions of the world. Others have pursued professional positions in the field of Roma rights, and have helped to promote greater inclusion of Roma in countries throughout Europe.

For more information, please visit the following website:
→ <http://rap.ceu.hu/>

LEGENDS

 EaP	EASTERN PARTNERSHIP PROJECT	 YNY	YOUROPE NEEDS YOU
 HED	HIGHER EDUCATION DAYS	 YuE	YOUTH (UN) EMPLOYMENT
 IPWG	INTERNATIONAL POLITICS WORKING GROUP	 EnWG	ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP
 AEGEE Academy	HUMAN RESOURCES WORKING GROUP	 VFWG	VISA FREEDOM WORKING GROUP
 BE	BEYOND EUROPE FORMER FLAGSHIP PROJECT	 CWG	CULTURE WORKING GROUP
 WDEE	WHERE DOES EUROPE ENDS	 EWG	EDUCATION WORKING GROUP
 AC	AUDIT COMMISSION	 SU	SUMMER UNIVERSITY PROJECT
 CD	COMITÉ DIRECTEUR	 EBM	EUROPEAN BOARDS' MEETING
 NetCom	NETWORK COMMISSION	 MemCom	MEMBERS COMMISSION
 JC	JURIDICAL COMMISSION	 ITC	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
 PRC	PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE	 EVC	EVENTS COMMITTEE
 AEGEE LOCALS		 SUCT	SUMMER UNIVERSITY COORDINATION TEAM



EBM - European Boards' Meeting – Thematic Planning Meeting
JC - Juridical Commission - Juridical support to AEGEE-Europe and locals
AC - Audit Commission - Financial Control for AEGEE-Europe and locals
NetCom - Network Commission – Ensures network development and supports AEGEE locals
MemCom - Members Commission – Decides upon disciplinary actions for AEGEE-Europe members
PRC - Assists the network in all matters connected to PR
ITC - Maintains and develops IT structures necessary for AEGEE
EvC - Checks the quality of European AEGEE events
CD - Comite Directeur - European Board of Directors

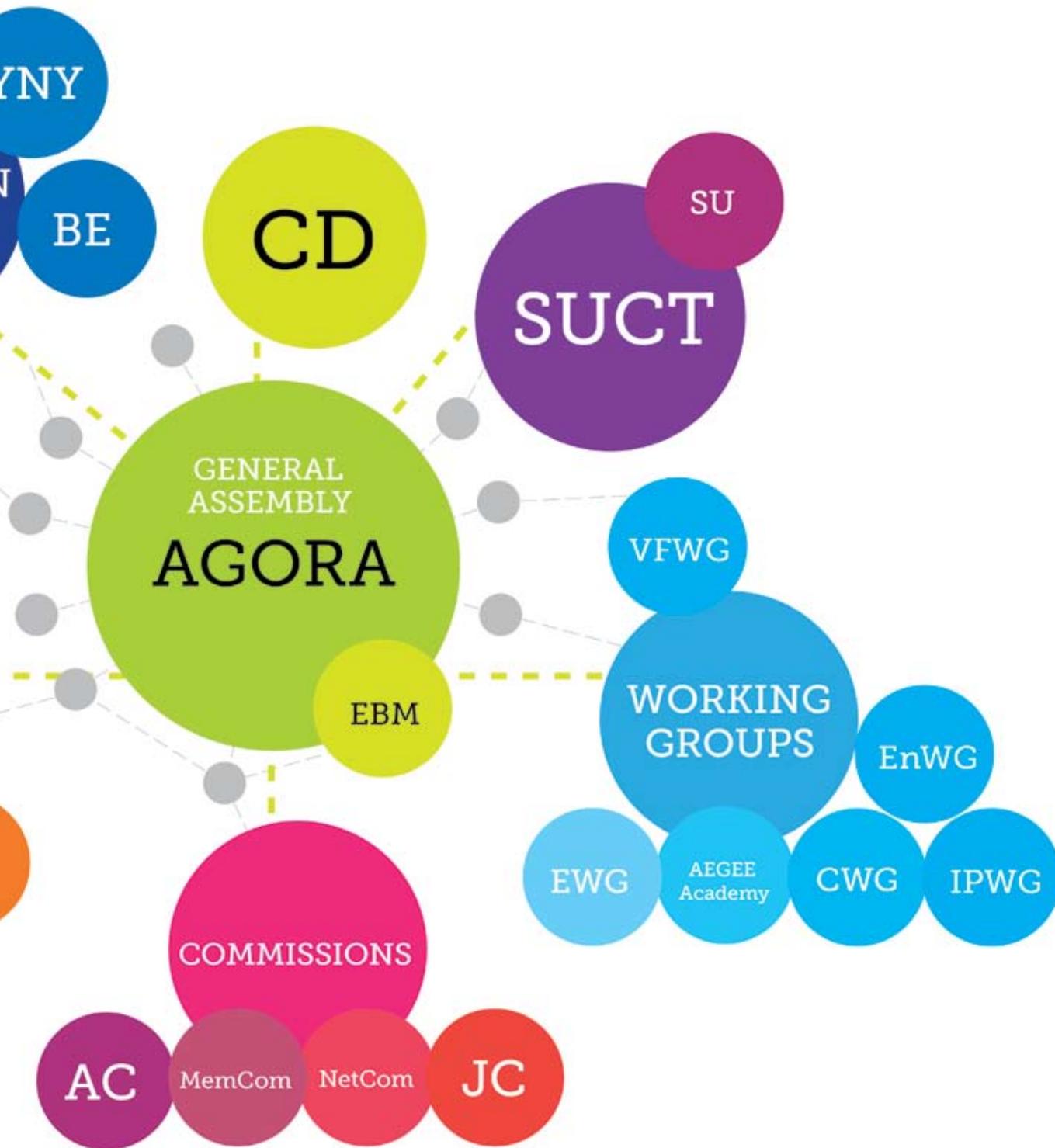
WHAT IS AEGEE?

AEGEE stands for

A non-governmental, politically independent, secular and non-profit organisation. AEGEE counts approx. **13.000** students and young people from all faculties and disciplines, in more than **200** university cities and **40** European countries.

Founded in 1985 in Paris, AEGEE is a widely spread student network providing the ideal platform where youth workers and young volunteers can work together on different cross border projects and activities ranging from conferences, seminars, exchanges to training courses, summer universities, case study trips and more.

By encouraging **travelling and mobility**, stimulating discussions and organising common projects AEGEE attempts to overcome national, cultural and ethnic divisions and to create a **vision** of young people's Europe.



Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe, also known as European Students' Forum.

The mission and values upon which AEGEE is founded are formalised within the *Statement of Principles* of the Organisation, and all the activities organised by AEGEE contribute to at least one of its Main Fields of Action:

- Cultural Exchange**
- Active Citizenship**
- Higher Education**
- Peace and Stability**

AEGEE has participatory status in the activities of the **Council of Europe**, consultative status at the **United Nations**, operational status at UNESCO and is at the same time a *member of the European Youth Forum* and cooperates on occasion with other European institutions such as the European Commission or the European Parliament.

AEGEE has no national level.

Instead, it is divided simply into a local, city-based level and a European level with its Head Office located in Brussels to bring the locals groups together. Local AEGEE groups (locals) are Antennae and Contact Antennae, depending on their level of involvement in the AEGEE network.



THE COMITÉ DIRECTEUR 2010/2011 from left to right: Michael, Kathrin, Alfredo,

FROM BRUSSELS WITH LOVE

COMITÉ DIRECTEUR. Suddenly, it has become our very own reality, this European Board of Directors of AEGEE. These people on the stage that we had always distantly admired for their vision, their eloquence and their responsibility; Suddenly it was us, eight students from eight different countries who found themselves in this position. This was in August 2010, and since then we have been through all kinds of excitement, harassment, movement, commitment, disappointment, encouragement and (eventually) enlightenment. One year in Brussels has left its traces, both in ourselves and in the world around us...

What does it mean to be the leaders of a European Students' network with more than 13,000 members in

40 European countries? In the first place, it means a great challenge: so many possibilities to shape something meaningful in Europe, so many chances to fulfil your dreams and realise your ideas – and at the same time so many responsibilities, and what is maybe even more, so many expectations. As a member of the Comité Directeur, you have 13,000 young Europeans expecting miracles from you, which is both a huge motivation and a heavy burden.

In concrete terms, leading this association has meant many different things. We had many aims: to create a new logo and visual identity for AEGEE, to reduce bureaucracy, to secure the financial sustainability of the association, to give more academic value to our Summer Universities,

to lobby for our friends and fellow students from outside the EU to get equal opportunities in terms of mobility and education, to play an important role in the European Year of Volunteering 2011 and strengthen our involvement in European youth policy making. Besides all that, we wanted to be close to our own members, leading by example and not by virtue of our office alone. We wanted to be an inspiration for young Europeans.

Of course we must ask ourselves in the end: What is our record, have we achieved our aims? Looking back, what we can say is that we may not have achieved everything as we imagined it in the beginning, but we have made substantial progress in all fields and this is something we can



Alla, Thomas, Miroslava, Mirosław, Anna, Manos.

PRESIDENT	Manos Valasis, <i>AEGEE-Peiraiás</i>
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FINANCIAL DIRECTOR	Anna Petrova, <i>AEGEE-Sankt Peterburg</i>
VICE PRESIDENT & EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR	Mirosław Krzanik, <i>AEGEE-Kraków</i>
NETWORK DIRECTOR	Alfredo Sellitti, <i>AEGEE-Salerno</i>
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR	Michael Makowiecki, <i>AEGEE-Hamburg</i>
PROJECTS DIRECTOR	Thomas Leszke, <i>AEGEE-Köln</i>
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	Miroslava Ganzarčíková, <i>AEGEE-Bratislava</i>
IT ASSISTANT	Giannis Betas, <i>AEGEE-Peiraiás</i>
FUNDRAISING ASSISTANT	Kathrin Renner, <i>AEGEE-Passau</i>

be proud of. In some of them, such as the financial sustainability and the close and positive relationship with the network, we have been very successful, while organisational reform proved to be more lengthy

we made to the development of our organisation. But the results of our work are not the only measure for the success of this adventure we started together one year ago. After one year, there are many things that we

spending many long sleepless nights together, in the office as much as in town. For some of us, coming here was the famous „leap into the cold water“ and despite the inevitable and notorious conflicts because of spicy

What this year has given to us is not only many lessons learned, but more than anything else *friendship*, pan-European friendship – and that is exactly what AEGEE stands for.

and complicated than expected. We have initiated many processes that could not be completed during our term, and we are glad to be able to lay our work in the hands of competent successors. In one or two years we will be able to see the full contribution

will take with us. Living and working together in one big house in Brussels has not only been a professional challenge, but also an amazing social experience. We have been a family, sharing rooms, cooking for each other, quarrelling with each other and

food, sleeping with open windows in January and sleeping with open eyes during the morning round, we have spent this year in a remarkable atmosphere of goodwill and respect.

Thomas Leszke, AEGEE-Köln

SPOTLIGHT: *Yerevan*

Building a unified and tolerant Europe is like building a house – a colossal, time-consuming process resulting in a stable, inhabitable house. However, in this process even the smallest brick has its very own significant role. In October 2010 one more piece of the puzzle for a unified, peaceful Europe was placed in a city in the far away southeast of Europe: Yerevan. In autumn 2010 at the General Assembly of AEGEE-Europe in Istanbul a very important and strategic location for our organisation was officially accepted into our network. Being an organisation present in more than 40 European countries, AEGEE naturally extended to the only Caucasus country which was missing: Armenia.

Having joined the Network a little more than six months ago, AEGEE-Yerevan has already organised a number of events which had quite a wide public response in the city and in the whole country. Starting from the very beginning with an incredible opening ceremony in autumn 2010, further action days about higher education, youth unemployment, as well as EU awareness in Yerevan took place and gathered more than 200 participants from different backgrounds and from a large age range every time. In a very short time, the number of active members in AEGEE-Yerevan constantly increased up to more than 50 people and it still continues to grow.

Having such a controversial history, the Caucasus area is now becoming more and more active and involved in creating active citizenship, peace, and stability in Europe. Currently, our organisation is represented by active members in south-eastern cities such as Tbilisi, Baki, Naxçivan and Sumqayıt. Now this list has been extended even further by adding Yerevan to the AEGEE community. The presence of AEGEE in all Caucasus countries means a big contribution towards building a unified, stable, and peaceful European society. Though this is not the happy ending we are hoping for, we are very happy about the promising beginning of this ideal by contributing such an important brick to the foundation of peace and stability in the Caucasus region and, in the end, the whole of Europe.

Olga Iatsyna, AEGEE-Dnipropetrovsk

Network Meeting

Building a strong network

Every spring and every autumn approximately 11 Network Meetings take place in different corners of Europe. From western islands to southern ones, from northern cities to central and eastern European towns to the Caucasus and beyond, these Network Meetings bring AEGEE members from neighbouring areas closer together and provide a platform for strong regional cooperation and knowledge transfer.

A Network Meeting (or NWM in short) is a gathering of board members primarily from all the locals in the area of competence of a specific member of the Network Commission (Netcommie in short), open to all members of the network. The Network Commission is an internal organ that takes care of the network as a whole. It consists of 11 members, each in charge of a number of locals closest to their place of residence, offering support and assistance to their respective AEGEE locals. Every Netcommie organizes at least one NWM per year and attending a NWM is mandatory for AEGEE locals.

The NWM has an internal administrative focus and deals with issues such as best practices, cooperation between locals, and connection to the European Level. Very important topics to be discussed are the statutory events - Agora and EBM - as well as Planning Meetings and regional development. The NWM can be either preparatory for the Agora/EBM, discussing proposals, candidatures, common

interests, current and future projects as well as a follow-up, putting together the ways to best implement the changes or direction recently adopted and decide upon the locals' contribution to the European Level relevant issues (such as the Focus Areas, the Strategic Plan – current and future – Flagship Topic, Flagship Project etc.)

Last fall's Network Meetings took place in Timișoara, Madrid, Skopje, Dnipropetrovsk, Lublin, Tartu, Bilbao, Athens, and Helsinki. Spring 2011 went on in different cities, such as Kiev, Warszawa, Tübingen, Sibiu, Bratislava, Schiermonnikoog, Magusa, Novi-Sad, Catania, Copenhagen, and Granada.

The program of each Network Meeting has to be approved by the Comité Directeur (CD) and one CD member is present at every NWM in order to support the program as a trainer and as an active participant in discussions and debates. According to the needs of the locals as decided upon by the Network Commissioner, specific trainings are included in the program of a NWM, ranging from Public Relations to Project Management, from local administration to Human Resources and Fundraising, in cooperation or with the support of the AEGEE-Academy.

The autumn 2011 Network Meetings are prepared during the summer and their geographic reach is extending even further, from Riga to Odessa, from Gdansk to Tbilisi and many more in between.

BEST *friends*



Board of European Students of Technology (BEST) is a non-profit and non-political organisation. Since 1989 BEST provides communication, cooperation and exchange possibilities for students all over Europe. 90 Local BEST Groups (LBGs) in 30 countries are creating a growing, well organised, powerful, young and innovative student network.

BEST strives to help European students of technology to become more internationally minded, by reaching a better understanding of European cultures and developing their capacity to work on an international basis. Therefore, BEST creates opportunities for students to meet and learn each other through courses, competitions, cultural exchanges, career and educational events. „Learning makes the master“, but the final goal is a good working place, therefore BEST offers services to its members such as an international career platform to broaden the horizons for the choice on the job market. The biggest priority is to offer high quality services for students all over Europe. Thus, BEST manages to bring all the partners in the „student - company - university“ triangle closer.

The similarity in the structure and the objectives between AEGEE and BEST lead to the intent to develop a cooperation in various fields of activities, therefore in May 2010 AEGEE and BEST became official partners. The organisations are sharing knowledge on many matters, including corporate and institutional fundraising, network development and promotion. Besides sharing knowledge, we are working on joint projects, encouraging synergies at local level and supporting each other's initiatives.

AEGEE will organise in September 2011 in cooperation with BEST the Fundraising European School, a training event dedicated to Institutional and corporate fundraising combining the expertise of both organisations on the topic. The event will have 24 participants, equally shared between AEGEE and BEST, but also giving to other organisation the opportunity to participate, as well as trainers from both AEGEE and BEST.

Another field of the cooperation is exchanging participants, where AEGEE members are invited to BEST events and vice-versa, e.g. AEGEE's Network Meetings and BEST's Regional Meetings. This exchange also happens for training events and in 2010 AEGEE

members had the opportunity to attend two BEST training events - one on Human Resources Management and the other about Leadership, Strategic Planning and Project Management. We had also the pleasure to welcome BEST members during the AEGEE trainings Human Resources European School and Public Relations European School. Moreover, this autumn BEST members will join AEGEE's European School 2 and Training for Trainers. Not only participants, but also trainers of each organisation are encouraged to take part in the events organised for the development of trainers and training systems in both organisations.

During the following year we plan to develop our partnership on all possible areas. Special focus will be given to the cooperation at local level, where local groups may organise joint activities such as cultural exchanges, workshops, seminars etc.

In AEGEE, we also started implementing the co-organiser status for AEGEE Summer Universities, as AEGEE members already have the opportunity to participate in BEST Summer Course as co-organisers. This aspect of our collaboration will be beneficial for both sides due to knowledge and experience sharing.

Our partnership with BEST is enabling both organisations to generate a greater impact in our stakeholders, to learn from the best and worst practices of each other on all levels and to further develop our members by providing further and more diverse possibilities.

Agata Gurzawska, AEGEE Liaison Officer towards BEST





Hungarian Presidency of the European Union

AEGEE and politics

Between January and June 2011 Hungary had the honour to hold the presidency of the Council of the European Union. The rotating EU presidency offered both a great opportunity and a challenge for the members of AEGEE-Budapest. It was selected as the hosting organisation of the Presidency Project Officer (PPO) and new partner of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) in September 2010. These organisations work support the presidencies and work closely with them in order to raise awareness of the importance of youth related issues in the European Union.

The so-called Hungarian EU Presidency joint-project began in November 2010 by recruiting the PPO and it ended in

July 2011. After Viktor Szabados was selected as the PPO, he familiarised himself with all the stakeholders of the Trio Presidency, e.g. the National Youth Service, the Hungarian youth delegate, the National Working Group for the Structured Dialogue, the ministries responsible for youth and the key member organisations of the YFJ. As the Hungarian EU Presidency started in the beginning of January, Viktor was immediately involved in the preparatory meetings of the most important youth event of the Trio Presidency: the III. EU Youth Conference that took place in March 2011 in Budapest. By writing articles and delivering presentations, he tried to raise awareness within AEGEE-Budapest and the Hungarian youth on the priorities of both the Trio and the Hungarian EU Presidency (i.e. youth employment and participation) and the relevant policy developments and activities.

One of his greatest challenges during the whole period of the Presidency was ensuring the liaison and clear communication between all the stakeholders in the youth field. Furthermore, he regularly attended and reported the most important youth events in Europe where he represented not only the YFJ, but also AEGEE. He also organised

two events with AEGEE-Budapest at the end of this term, where Hungarian youth workers and representatives of youth organisations gathered to discuss the result of the Hungarian EU Presidency and the possible ways of establishing the Hungarian National Youth Council within one year. During his period as PPO, Viktor spent half of his time at the cosy office of AEGEE-Budapest, and the other half at the YFJ in Brussels. There, he regularly informed AEGEE members about the most important happenings through his newsletters that can be found at the website of AEGEE-Budapest.

The members of AEGEE-Budapest believed that they could make their voice heard not only in Hungary, but also in Europe by being represented at all of the most important gatherings for young people during the Hungarian EU Presidency. They not only ensured Viktor about their full dedication and commitment, but also organised and attended youth events themselves with the PPO and disseminated the result of his work both on AEGEE-Budapest's channels and among their friends in and outside of AEGEE. Our antenna will continue working with Viktor on the establishment of a National Youth Council in our country.

Annamária Németh, AEGEE-Budapest



AEGEE-Europe has always been striving to make an impact on its members, on the surrounding world, on society, on policy makers, and most of all on Europe. However, it is not that easy to change the world, even if we claim to be idealistic and we represent the best of what Europeans can be: open-minded, happy to meet new cultures, building a new system, inclusive for everybody. Whatever we claim to be, we have to also be aware that we are a considerably small association and that out of several thousand members, only a few are working on the European level. This requires a lot of effort and most of all cooperation with other stakeholders.

By mentioning stakeholders we think about institutions, other non-governmental organisations, platforms, networks or companies. But there is a very unique organisation that brings together representatives of young people from all over Europe – the European Youth Forum (YFJ). Its uniqueness derives from its structure combining National Youth Councils and International non-governmental youth organisations, and from the fact that it is recognised and supported by European institutions.

We are *not* alone!

*AEGEE and the
European Youth Forum (YFJ)*

Although AEGEE-Europe is only one out of around 100 Member Organisations, we can play an important role in the Youth Forum for we are a Brussels-based association, being very flexible concerning meeting the Secretariat and participate in all kinds of activities. This gives us the possibility to work on crucial issues and the interests of the AEGEE network. In the past year, our members and the Comité Directeur were working mostly on the issues of the new generation of EU programmes in the new EU budget perspective of 2014-2020, dissemination of the results of

the previous Flagship Topic of AEGEE – Beyond Europe, consultations within the Structured Dialogue on youth employment, quality assurance in non-formal education, as well as on sustainability and green growth.

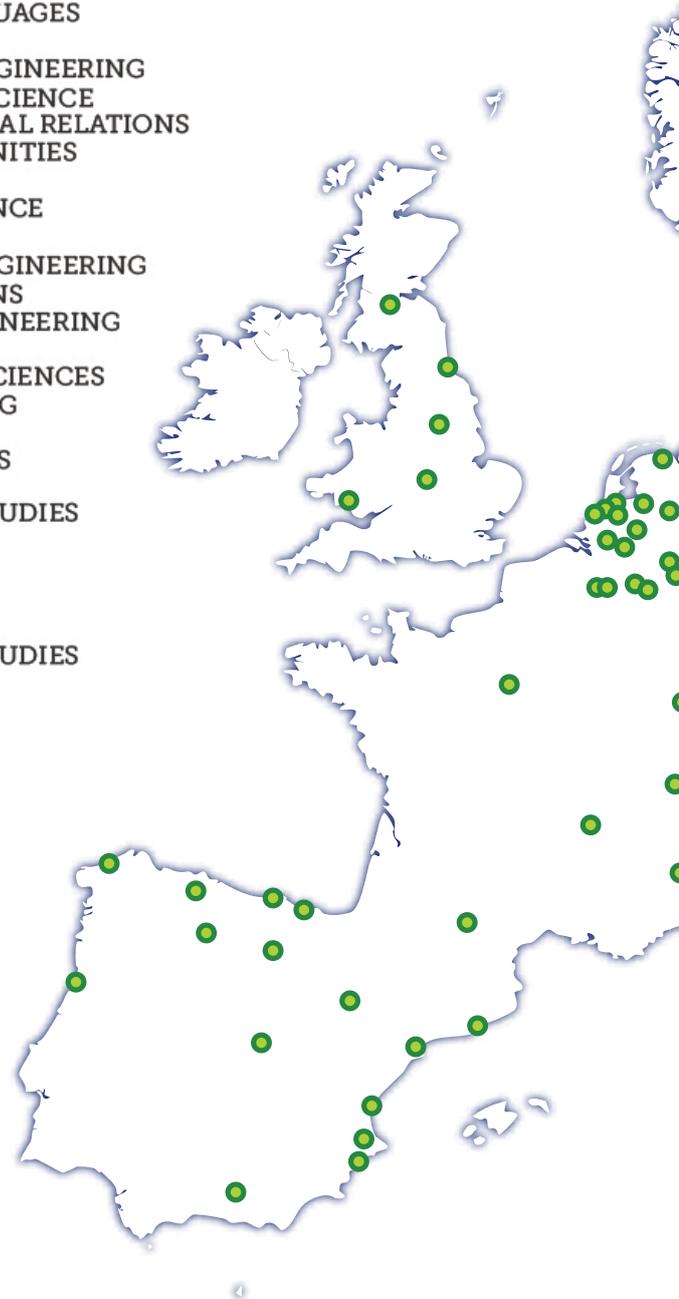
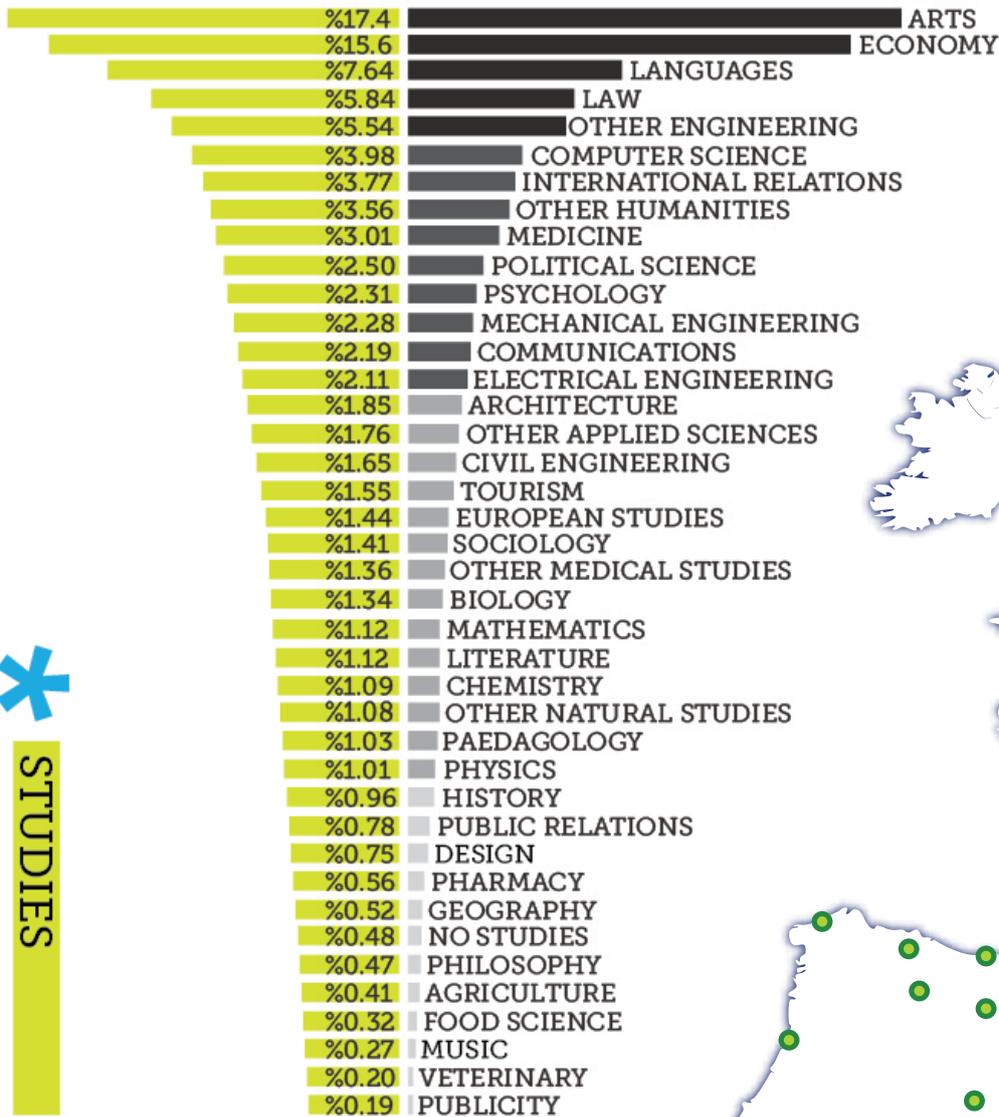
One can say that we should act independently. Nonetheless, whenever we talk about making an impact on society we have to think about the synergy effect. One plus one might make more than two, but in order to achieve this we need to cooperate with organisations and people who stand for the same values as we do. The European Youth Forum works as an umbrella for all European networks and organisations, to speak for them and to make their voices audible. We have to be aware of having such support whenever we need it and that the Youth Forum is the best way for us to disseminate the results of our work and lobby for what we stand for. Hopefully, in the next years the cooperation will only get stronger.

cooperation will only get stronger.

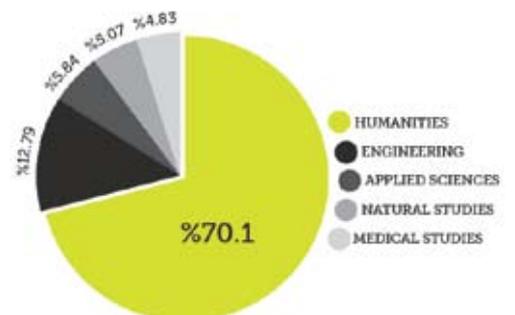
Mirosław Krzanik, AEGEE-Kraków



STUDIES

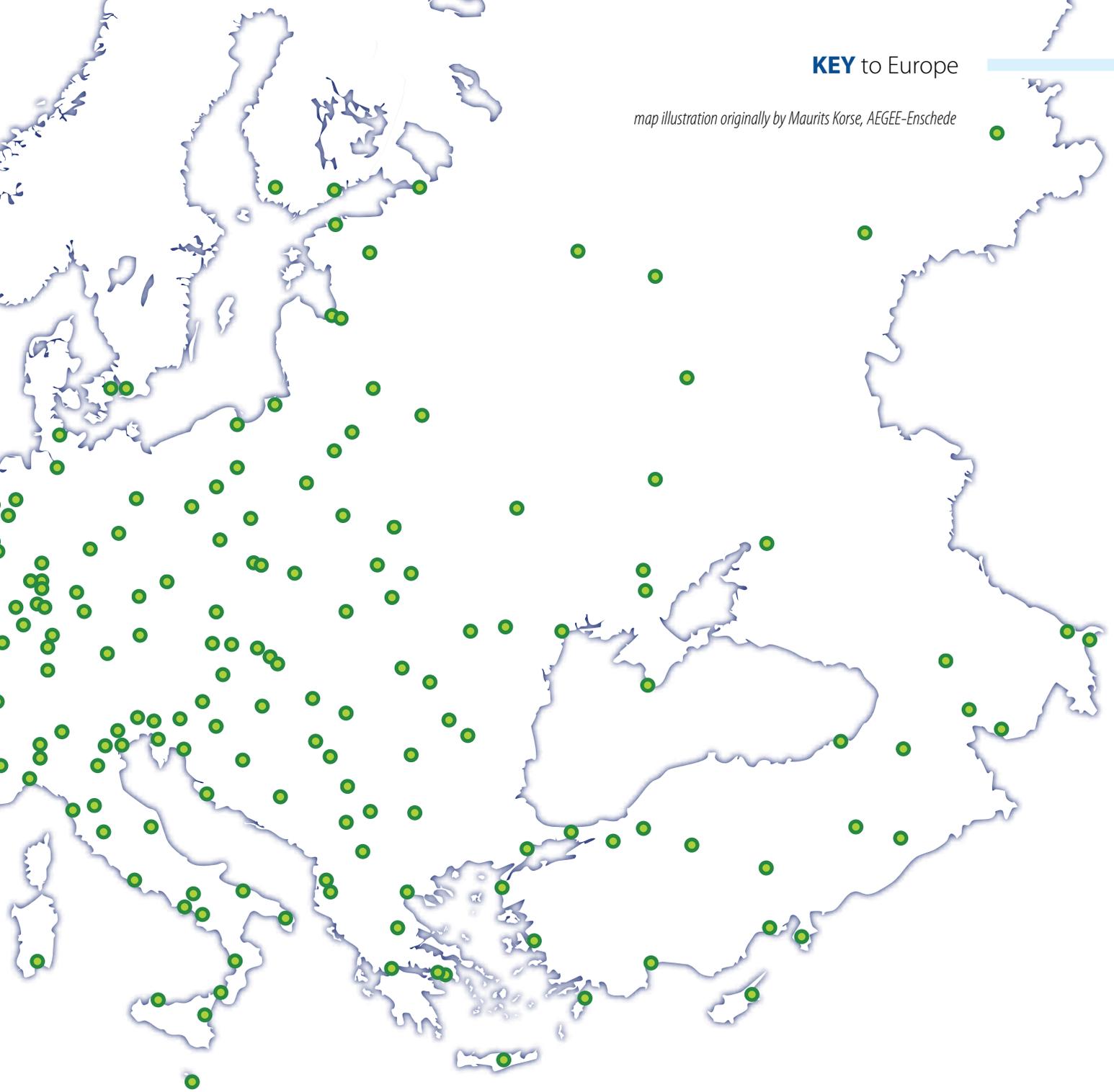


AEGEE consists of
 13.000 students in
 200 cities in over
 40 countries

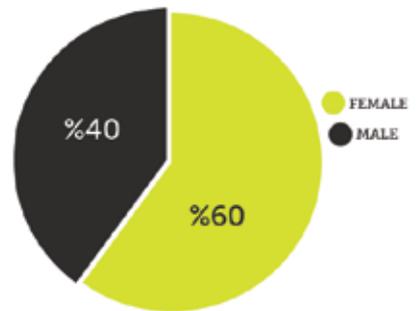
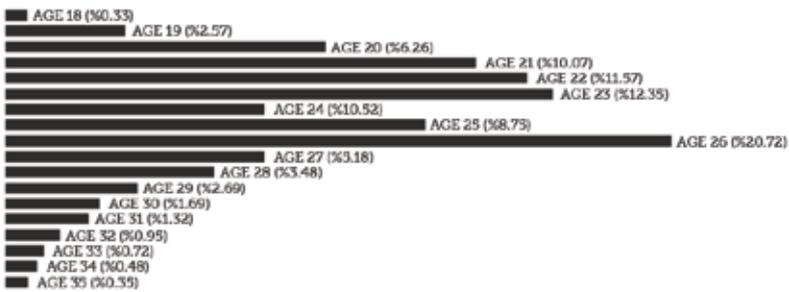


FIELDS OF STUDY

map illustration originally by Maurits Korse, AEGEE-Enschede



AGE & PERCENTAGE



GENDER DISTRIBUTION WITH PERCENTAGES



 *FOCUS ON*

Global Perspectives



Global challenges youth perspective

We live in a fluid world. We can distort time and space. We can send and receive information instantly and interact with several places at once. Modern technology makes us more connected, and connected, we keep on making better technology.

With communications this powerful, material reality seems to fade, and virtual reality, made of symbols and information, gets more “real”. That reality is something that we can change and manipulate easily, and we do it every day. And even outside of electronic communication, the material world keeps changing all the time – economies grow and break, nations mix and collide.

The thing is, even with all this ever-shifting mess we live in, somebody has to push things in the right direction. Somebody has to take responsibility and lead.

The question is – who? If you look at governments for leadership, it is easy to see that they cannot really keep up with modern society. Politicians, as always, are too busy struggling for power. Meanwhile, inside and outside political parties, there are many forces afraid of the modern world

that try to push us back to the past, where they feel safer. In the world we live in nobody understands the whole of it, nobody can predict where it is going to, and nobody can tell for certain what the right course of action is. But being young in this day and age puts us in a strange position. We are the ones who know best, not our parents’ generation. We are the natives of this new world, and it is our responsibility to make it hospitable for others.

In our world, we have to govern ourselves. Every young person now carries more responsibility than ever, for their life and happiness.

This is why we gather and make youth organisations and movements, that is why we give our work and time, that is why we connect with other people. That is why we have organisations like AEGEE. There we can work together to improve ourselves, our societies and our world. And we still have a lot of work to do.

Darko Janjevic, AEGEE-Niš

*photo credits: Cape of Good Hope,
taken during the Case Study Trip to South Africa*

© Milan Padilla, AEGEE-München

Going *Beyo*

A Retrospective

Youth-led projects of global outreach are still seldom affairs. We are not really used to youth running a project on different continents. And yet AEGEE took up the challenge and committed itself thematically to tackle global challenges by making Beyond Europe to its flagship project 2010/11.

In a world where a volcanic eruption in Iceland can down planes on a whole continent and affect livelihoods of flower producers in Kenya as they can't export their produce anymore;

in a world where terrorist attacks can impact legislation in several dozens of countries; in a world where the self-immolation of a single street vendor can spark uprisings in several countries; in a world where a nuclear disaster in East Asia can influence election outcomes in Europe; in such a world it is inevitable that youth comes together to discuss common challenges.

This reasoning made Beyond Europe into one of AEGEE's most daring enterprises in its history. In many ways this flagship project pushed the organization and its members to its limits.

First of all there is the mental task

of empathy. Running a youth project dealing with global challenges relies on the capacity to imagine the difficulties faced by youth in other parts of the world. Without this capacity for empathy any attempt to tackle the big question of our time is doomed to fail.

Secondly, a project reaching out to communities far beyond the European continent while Europe itself is increasingly plagued by difficulties might seem controversial. However the answer to Europe's future will increasingly be determined how Europe defines its relations with the outside world.

Thirdly, there are limits regarding resources. All of us were volunteers

Beyond Europe – Perspectives for Tomorrow's World

AEGEE Flagship Project 2010/11

Project Aim – Empowering young people in and outside Europe to tackle global challenges

Objectives – Awareness, Participation, Multiplication, Cultural Diversity

Patrons – Mary Kaldor and James M. Skelly



Four Project Pillars

1. **One World Conventions** on Global Challenge
2. The United Nations **Millennium Development Goals** – A Challenge for Today's youth?
3. EuroArab – Understanding each others' challenges
4. Euro-US youth cooperation

nd Europe

throughout the project sometimes juggling too many balls at once with studies, private commitments and a project of truly global outreach. Financial resources are either non-existing or limited, funding in times of crisis can be difficult to acquire and keeping a team running whose members sometimes only know each other from common conference calls can be a daunting task.

These few examples demonstrate the difficulties. At the same time – and this is not a contradiction – the project was successful in so many ways. The two year long journey of this flagship project took hundreds of people out of

their comfort zone; involved youth from Europe, the Arab region, India, South Africa and the United States; challenged their mindsets and preconceptions; gave birth to new project ideas and provided a vigorous contribution to global youth activism, dialogue and volunteering.

Never before has an AEGEE project reached geographically as far as the Cape of Good Hope or the Taj Mahal. Never before has AEGEE committed itself to a more cosmopolitan outlook putting issues such as the fight against climate change, global poverty reduction and youth contributions to development into the centre of attention.

And yet this can just be regarded as

a first step in light of the challenges we are confronted with. AEGEE should continue to contribute to global youth dialogue and firmly establish itself as a legitimate voice of European students in a globalised world. Beyond Europe changed hearts, minds and lives of those involved. Now it is on the next generation to make further progress on the road of youth activism.

Christian Eichenmüller,
AEGEE-Mainz-Wiesbaden

Objectives Triangle



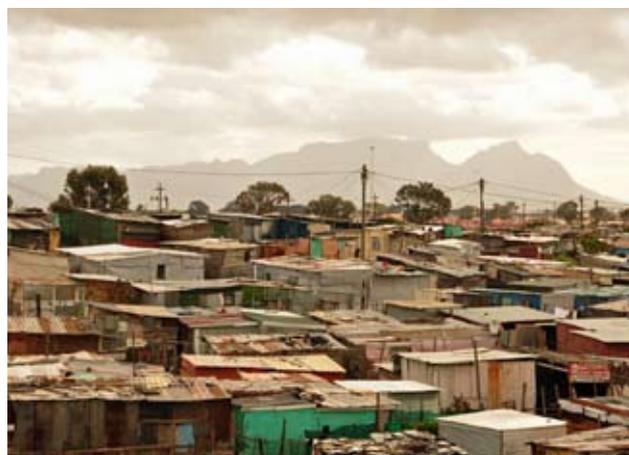
List of activities

- » **One World Convention** on Climate Change (with AEGEE-Toulouse)
- » **One World Convention** on Water (by AEGEE-Groningen)
- » Preliminary Meeting in Brussels on MDGs initiative
- » Case Study Trip to **India**
- » Case Study Trip to **South Africa**
- » Final **Conference of MDGs** initiative (with AEGEE-Utrecht)
- » **EuroArab Case Study Trip** to Europe (with AEGEE-Aachen, AEGEE-Köln and AEGEE-Maastricht)
- » Cooperation regarding annual **BCA conferences** in Derry and Strasbourg

Follow Up – Several projects are direct results of the flagship project, among them the **RISE project** (as second cycle of Europe-India-South Africa youth cooperation), the **AEGEE Volunteering Network**, the **EuroArab** (continuation of EuroArab pillar of BE), and a cooperation with **YNY2 project** with workshops on global challenges

Youth and Development: the Solution

Taking on the Millennium at last



It was a timely moment for AEGEE to put global challenges and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the heart of its activities in 2010/11. Ten years had passed since the Millennium Declaration, with which the international community committed to free humanity from extreme poverty and hunger, to achieve universal primary education, to reduce child mortality rates, to fight diseases such as AIDS and malaria, and to develop a global partnership for development.

What started as an idealist aspiration shared by only a small group of people later developed into an integral part of the Beyond Europe Flagship Project which made the European Students' Forum AEGEE, for the first time ever in its history, become part of the process to achieve the MDGs and literally go beyond Europe. In fact, in June 2009, a group of young people from Europe, India and South Africa, joined hands and took up the challenge of empowering the youth in our countries to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Supported by a European Commission's grant, they organised four international events: a preliminary meeting in Brussels in

December 2009, two case study trips to India and South Africa, in June and September 2010 respectively, and a final conference in Utrecht, The Netherlands, in November 2010.

Through various meetings with NGOs, activists and community workers as well as through workshops with local youth, the participants developed a deep understanding of the root causes of poverty in its many dimensions, beyond just simple numbers and figures. Likewise, they closely looked at how development cooperation works, with its strengths and weaknesses, and how youth can take active part in it.

But development is not only about aid and technical solutions; development is first of all about minds. Public opinion in Europe often fails to see that economic divergence between rich and poor countries in the world is at the heart of problems like international migration, conflict and terrorism. For our governments to remain committed to their promise to achieve the MDGs, especially at times of economic turmoil and austerity measures, it is necessary that you inform people around you about how worldwide poverty and economic divergence will undermine the future of our world.



Youth can play a decisive role in influencing decision-making and the allocation of public or private resources. You can organize a campaign to raise public awareness on specific issues, you can sign petitions and you can take part in public consultations issued by institutions in your country. You can write to your university and ask to establish contacts and exchanges with universities and schools in the developing world. You can contact companies in your countries to fund social projects. Get in touch with youth from developing countries, make use of the opportunities offered to us by new technologies, discuss with youngsters from around the world about challenges in your and their every-day life and learn what is needed in their communities. ►

tion is in Our Hands



Opposite: slums in South Africa & presenting Millenium Development Goals / Above: child in Africa (MDG Initiative – Case study trips to India and South Africa)

► One of the participants, Marta Ibba from Italy, put it beautifully: “Developing countries don’t need exclusively doctors, nurses, engineers or diplomats, also ‘simple’ people like me and like many other youth with a medium knowledge of a language like English or French or Spanish and with the will of being useful for the international community can do very much for this people. For me this is one of the most important things I learnt from this Case Study Trip.”

Development is a societal task requiring attention and empathy from people around the world. Youth possess the potential and skills to set up channels of dialogue thereby

acting as agents of change.

Certainly organisers, participants and local partners of this particular effort can now draw from dozens of eye-opening moments and a set of unique experiences. Nevertheless, this project can only be regarded as a first step to turn AEGEE and European youth in general into more responsible actors in light of common challenges. In a globalised world like ours it is on us, the youth, to make use of new opportunities and pursue our dream of a better, more just and equal planet. ■

Christian Eichenmüller,
AEGEE-Mainz-Wiesbaden
& Mario Giuseppe Varrenti,
AEGEE-Warwick

Photos © Milan Padilla, AEGEE-München

AEGEE-Thessaloniki: Transparent Borders between Our Minds!

The EU and Council of Europe are promoting cooperation and exchange of information on migration at European level, as a solidarity and responsibility approach provides added value in the political, social, economic and cultural development of Europe. Clear, responsible and liberal law provisions for legal migration on the one hand, and promotion of tolerance and rising of intercultural competence on the other hand make a united but culturally diverse Europe possible.

From 17th to 21st December 2010 AEGEE-Thessaloniki, which is known for its intercultural experience, hosted an international Training Course called “Transparent Borders” devoted to migration. For five days, youth from Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Poland, and other countries examined migration from an economic, political, cultural, artistic, journalistic and everyday-life perspective. The participants were offered not only thought-provoking discussions on the types of migration, its reasons, the ways of crossing borders, relevant European documents and policies, but also had the possibility to listen to the lectures on impacts of migration on the hosting society and its possible implications at the Aristotle university. They could also see and evaluate the cases of migrants’ everyday life during city tour and while meeting the locals in Thessaloniki. The city tour did not finish with general observations, but inspired young Europeans to reflect on migration by shooting creative videos, which were presented and analysed during the “Identity workshop”. Those actively involved in promoting multiculturalism at their home countries prepared game-classes on human rights and tolerance for Greek children. The workshop on “Status and rights of Refugees” acquired the form of a bazaar with money allocation to refugees.

“I strongly believe that participants will be able to incorporate and promote the values of anti-discrimination, human rights and social inclusion of minorities into their own future projects on a European level or back home!” says Athina Siamidou, one organizer of the Training Course.

Ahniya Asanovich, AEGEE-Minsk

EuroArab

Long-lasting Cooperation despite Challenges

Be afraid or be friends? Follow prejudices or understand each other? The members of the AEGEE flagship project 2010/11 Beyond Europe chose cooperation: building bridges, understanding each other and being friends with the Arab world, especially as the young people there are facing the same global challenges as youth in Europe do. “EuroArab: understanding each other’s challenges” was one of the four pillars of Beyond Europe. The project was implemented in cooperation with two organizations: Better World Foundation (Egypt) and Students’ Forum Institute (Palestine). The common aim was to empower young people in Europe and the Arab World to tackle global challenges.

From workshops to street interviews

Is it easy for foreigners to integrate in Western Europe? Are Muslim women treated equally in Arab countries? How to help poor people in Europe and Arab countries to overcome social inequality? Migration, integration, socio-economic inequality and gender issues – those were the challenges tackled by young people from Palestine, Egypt and different European countries in the case study trip (CST) taking place from the 1st to the 14th November in Köln, Aachen (Germany), Brussels (Belgium), and Maastricht (The Netherlands). The challenges were tackled in different ways: there were workshops, lectures, panel discussions, a forum theatre, and visits. In addition to official visits in Brussels (The Council of the European Union, European Youth Forum (YFJ) and European Students’ Forum AEGEE head office), the participants also visited, among other places, a migrant district and a mosque in Köln and a site where Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands meet in Aachen. In all cities street surveys were conducted when participants got in touch with the local people to find out how they perceive global challenges. Memorable and beneficial for the future was

the daily blog activity when every day one Arab and one European participant shared his/her thoughts on daily happenings and feelings.

Surrounded by challenges

Nothing can be experienced without a real culture: around 30 so-called EuroArabs tasted delicious food and enjoyed cheerful dancing both at the European and Arabian cultural nights. However, the culture not only introduced them to a new food, but also surprised them with cultural challenges. They came up on a daily basis, thus allowing participants to learn and understand each other’s differences. Clara Galeazzi, a participant from Italy, says: “The CST was an interesting, yet uncommon way to deal with global challenges. The impressions I got were almost always positive, not only because we could discuss contemporary issues with different approaches, but also because the discussion was a challenge by itself. Being confronted with various cultures and sharing different points of view sometimes can be slightly complicated, yet inspiring.”

Not over yet

It is the case study trip that is over, not the challenge though. As Prisca Merz, the initiator and the coordinator of the EuroArab project, states: “I believe that this case study trip was the beginning of a great cooperation between the Students’ Forum Institute in Palestine, Better World Foundation in Egypt and AEGEE.” After implementing the CST together and great memories, the communication among EuroArabs is still alive. Moreover, there is a follow-up EuroArab team established to organise further projects between Europe and the Arab World involving even more youth organizations and more youngsters in order to maintain long-lasting cooperation and pursue the idea of EuroArab.

Agnija Kazuša, AEGEE-Ogre

Sustaining our future

AEGEE Spirit is renewable energy



AEGEE member renewing her energy at a Summer University



*AEGEE members gotta stay flexible!
photos © Michał Kasprzak*

Let's face it – modern civilization is pretty impressive. Not that others in the past are not, but for most of us living in Europe, the power that our age gave us is something that only wizards and gods could do. We can move faster than ever, fly, communicate with any part of the world in seconds, see things that happened decades before we were born, we have ways to look inside peoples bodies and minds, we can eat fresh food all year round, and we can fight and survive diseases caused by viruses too small to be seen by a naked eye. We, as young European students, find ourselves in the privileged situation to be able to profit from all these modern comforts.

Unfortunately, such power has its price. The civilization we live in has started to take more and more from nature, and to do more and more damage. And, even with all our power, we are still dependent on nature, to provide us with food, water and air. To save our civilization, we must be responsible about how much we take, and how much we give back. Now, AEGEE is a youth organization. We are not politicians, presidents of our countries, CEOs of major companies. We cannot define the policies of corporations or governments directly at the moment, but there are many other things we do, and these are just some of them: Environmental Working Group or EnWG is a group of AEGEE members trying to raise awareness on environmental issues within AEGEE and European youth, provide information and facilitate discussions on the topic, start up and support environmental activities within AEGEE. Also, EnWG is trying to control AEGEE's

impact on the environment and prove that a sustainable event can save money and be more entertaining.

'Travel without a Trace' is a project designed to minimize the carbon footprint of big AEGEE events – such as the general assemblies. Traveling from all over Europe to reach their destination, most members use means of transport that run on fossil fuels. In an effort to make such events more sustainable, EnWG influences AEGEE members to use 'greener' transportation, like trains and buses, instead of cars and planes. Another project is the European Day of Environment action. In nine different European cities AEGEE members organized activities including cleaning up garbage, nature hikes, recycling and photo exhibitions in order to get closer to and enjoy nature more, and promote environmentally friendly activities. It originated from a previous flagship project 'Sustaining Our Future' aiming to improve knowledge and involvement of young people when it comes to sustainable development.

Besides specific events dedicated to environmental topics, AEGEE takes a sustainable approach to all its events where participants are encouraged to act environmentally responsible. These are just some example of how we, as AEGEE try to help our planet. In the end, it's not just about the planet, it's about all of us and how we want to live our lives, now and in the future.

Darko Janjevic, AEGEE-Niš



EU's refugee policy

A sail close to the wind?

In how far is the European Union capable and willing to host refugees and offer them a fair and equal future? And does the EU fulfil its own demands?

Refugee policy is a key topic European society and its legal representatives have to deal with since the Arab Spring more than ever. Is the Dublin Regulation an answer to tackle this challenge? Just to mention two topics out of many that have been controversially discussed during AEGEE-Osnabrück's event last year.

The concrete impact of the Dublin Regulation, aiming at preventing an asylum applicant from submitting applications in multiple Member States, was exposed by Alena Thiem, a political science student. In the framework of her diploma thesis, the consequences and

problems that refugees are daily confronted with were analysed. Dr. Martin Geiger, researcher at the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies (IMIS) of the university of Osnabrück, presented in his speech „Trimming the Rim – Migration management at Europe's borders“ refugee-related measures undertaken by international organisations and agencies such as OSCE, Council of Europe and Frontex.

Discussions and a simulation game, re-enacting the feelings and difficulties that refugees face fostered a deeper understanding within the minds of the participants and the conviction that the refugees policy is an issue highly relevant for all of us.

Sabrina Ehmann, AEGEE-Passau



One-World-Convention Passau, July 2011 © AEGEE-Passau & Lichtgestalten

Social Business

A perspective for tomorrow's world

Nowadays it seems as if our future will be determined by two extremes: either we join the social world or the business world. Joining the “social world” means being part of a welfare system that fights social and environmental problems but is highly limited by its dependency on donations. The other option – joining the “business world” gives the opportunity to generate revenue with high efficiency but often at high ecological and social costs.

However, this perception of a polarised world is not the whole truth: there are and there have always been businesses combining both: financial sustainability and the purpose of addressing a social need. Just recently this idea was officially defined by 2006 Nobel Prize Laureate Muhammad Yunus as a new business model called Social Business. A great majority of young people believe in a world without poverty, not destroyed by a chase for

personal profit maximisation. Especially to us, students, this new business model gives a new perspective of how we can create our personal future in terms of this vision. In order to spread the idea of Social Business among the youth AEGEE-Passau organised the “One World Convention on Social Business – perspectives for tomorrow’s world” taking place from May 19th - 22nd 2011 in Passau. In lectures and workshops 50 participants from all over Europe learnt and discussed about Social Business and created their own Social Business ideas together with experts from various vocational fields. While there were not always answers to all the questions, our principal goal has been achieved: walking towards the future we will carry with us the idea of running a sustainable business that is doing good to us, to others and thus to the society at the same time.

Carolin Holtkamp, member of Arbeitskreis Entwicklungspolitik Passau

FOCUS ON

Volunteering

What exactly is *voluntary* work?

Various studies mention that more than a hundred million Europeans are involved in voluntary work, but a few years ago the Eurobarometer survey revealed that thirty percent of all Europeans confirm doing some kind of voluntary work. Unfortunately most of them are not youngsters as European Commission's EU Youth Report mentions that only sixteen percent of European youth are involved in some kind of voluntary activities.

Luckily AEGEE members are included in those sixteen percent and can be proud volunteers, even if not all of them may realise that youth organisations are a part of voluntary work as well. But they definitely are. There are four aspects through which we can recognise voluntary work:

- » In an organised setting (within non-governmental organisations, volunteer centres, more or less organised groups etc.);
- » With the aim to benefit to someone other than the volunteer and to society at large contributing to values of general interest

(although it is recognised that volunteering brings significant benefit equally to the volunteer);

- » Out of a person's free will, choice and motivation;
- » Without concern for financial gain (non-remunerated).

Furthermore, voluntary work is divided in two categories – structured and non-structured. Structured voluntary work can be done either in an organisation on a regular basis or in some large scale festival on a non-regular basis. For example, both board members of AEGEE locals and volunteers in Olympic Games or city festivals are doing structured voluntary work. On the other hand, the non-structured voluntary work is more common in the countryside – e.g., helping out neighbours to chop firewood. AEGEE and other youth organisations definitely fulfil all the requirements, where young people are “working” without getting paid, although they receive something else – experience, practice and development of their skills.

Anita Kalmane, former AEGEE-Riga & AEGEE-Ogre

Volunteering? Why?

We all have our own reasons why we joined AEGEE (read: any youth organisation), why we stayed and why volunteering plays such an important role in our lives.

Here are active AEGEE members sharing their opinions

about the role of volunteering and their reasons to volunteer. by Anita Kalmane, former AEGEE-Riga



Yanike Sophie, AEGEE-Utrecht

“AEGEE gives me joy to see so many stereotypes disappear. I feel that I contribute to better Europe and a better world. The feeling I get when I am with these free-spirited people I will keep in my heart and pass it on to people who have fewer opportunities to travel and see so many different cultures and people. Because of volunteering we work harder than the busiest businessmen. Working in such a diverse team is stronger than any of teams I have been working in before.



Christian Eichenmüller, AEGEE-Mainz-Wiesbaden

“AEGEE was my window to the outside world throughout my studies. With each responsibility I opened this window a bit further and volunteering for AEGEE became a part of my student life and education. I learnt how to be tolerant, responsible, cosmopolite and organised through AEGEE. I learnt that my input counts. I learnt that we all have the potential to change. Isn't that the best lesson that I could have received?



Klaudia Weglarz, AEGEE-Kraków & AEGEE-Eindhoven

“Probably it is the idea of creating something from zero and seeing fruits of my work. I never thought of my activity as pure volunteering. It is more like doing interesting things with friends and people I do not know.



Seren Güneş, AEGEE-Ankara

“I am volunteering because I really believe that there are people working for a better world. Through volunteering I can be one of them.

European Year of Volunteering

What is the European Year of Volunteering 2011? The year 2011 is the European Year of Volunteering (EYV). It is an initiative of the Alliance for the European Year of Volunteering, a group of civil society organisations that had been lobbying for the implementation of this year since 2007. The EYV 2011 has four main objectives:

1. Create a better (legal) environment for volunteering
2. Empower volunteer organisations
3. Improve the recognition of voluntary activities
4. Raise public awareness of the importance of volunteering for our society

The EYV 2011 is carried out by the European Commission and the EYV Alliance in cooperation. Throughout the Year, different activities are scheduled in order to achieve the mentioned objectives:

- » The “Tour”, an exhibition campaign that is travelling to all 27 EU capital cities, staying in each city for around ten days and providing a space (either a public building or a giant tent on a square in the city centre) for volunteers and their organisations to show their work to the public, integrate with each other, meet policy makers and exchange ideas about their own work.
- » A journalist relay, involving young journalists from all 27 EU states, who visit volunteering organisations and report about their work.
- » A series of conferences organised by the European Commission.
- » A wide range of activities on a national level that target all four objectives of the Year in the most different formats, coordinated by the so-called National Coordinating Bodies that are often composed out of representatives from relevant ministries as well as from different volunteering organisations.
- » Activities organised by Alliance member organisations, most notably the II. Youth Convention on Volunteering organised by the European Youth Forum (YFJ) in September.

At this moment, a final evaluation of the Year is not possible, but from the very beginning of its implementation it can be observed that especially the European Commission is not satisfactorily prepared. Both the first stages of the Tour as well as the two conferences that took place in the first half of 2011 have been of questionable quality, in the first place when it

comes to their practical contribution to the objectives of the Year.

The most concrete initiative that is on the table for the Year is the elaboration of a European legal framework for the rights of the volunteer, which is pursued by the Alliance and in particular by the YFJ. The mentioned Convention in September will include a two-days conference on this topic, where AEGEE will be represented by Dóra Kocsis (AEGEE-Piliscsaba) and our President-elect, Alfredo Sellitti (AEGEE-Salerno).

What is AEGEE's role in the European Year of Volunteering 2011?

AEGEE is a member of the EYV Alliance since autumn 2010 and we have set up a small team to coordinate AEGEE's active contribution to the Year: Barbara Leiner (AEGEE-Budapest), Prisca Merz (AEGEE-Passau), Denis Piplaş (AEGEE-Sarajevo) and Samuel Siegle (AEGEE-Osnabrück).

Initially, it was our intention to offer our support in the local organisation of different parts of the Tour, but the limited response from the AEGEE network as well as the disappointing experience of the first two Tour stations (Brussels in December 2010 and Budapest in January 2011) made us abstain from pursuing this idea any further. Meanwhile, there have been very successful Tour episodes as well, and we are encouraging AEGEE locals to participate in those that are still to come, as well as in the different national level activities that are ongoing.

Eleven AEGEE members participated in the second conference organised by the European Commission on 23rd-24th May. Apart from being a nice networking opportunity, the benefit of this conference was minor, since the input that the Commission could gather from the volunteers present was far from revolutionary and probably not too useful. Barbara will represent AEGEE at the next conference in Athens, 3rd-4th November, and we are curious to see what progress has been made until then.

We have been working on the Convention of the YFJ in September for some months already. Not only will we participate in the conference, but also in the so-called *Volunteering Village*, where a few of our European project teams will present their work. Promoted as “the biggest event of the EYV 2011”, this will surely be the peak of AEGEE's involvement.

Thomas Leszke, AEGEE-Köln



Manager of EYV 2011 Coordination Team in AEGEE – Barbara Leiner, AEGEE-Budapest

Volunteer! Make the difference.

Interview with Barbara Leiner, manager of EYV 2011 Coordination Team in AEGEE cooperating with EYV 2011 Alliance and promoting EYV 2011 among members of AEGEE

What does EYV 2011 Coordination Team do?

We, a team of four persons, are coordinating activities in connection to the European Year of Volunteering 2011 within AEGEE. Together with Prisca Merz (AEGEE-Passau), Denis Piplaš (AEGEE-Sarajevo) and Sam Siegle (AEGEE-Osnabrück) I am planning our biggest event which is taking place at the same time as the European Youth Forum's II. Youth Convention on volunteering in September. It aims to bring Europe closer to AEGEE members working in international project teams.

Apart from this, we are representing AEGEE on different EYV events together with the comité directeur, we are in close contact with the EYV 2011 Alliance and the European Youth Forum and we are sharing the latest information with AEGEE members through our Facebook group.

What is the current situation of recognition of volunteering in Europe?

It is really hard to answer this question. Volunteering is the architect of European identity, active citizenship, social cohesion, it's a source of economic growth and a pathway to employment, thus very important for young people, so it needs to be fully recognised. The European Youth Forum (YFJ), of which AEGEE is also a member, is currently working on developing the so-called 'Charter on The Rights of the Volunteer' to improve the conditions for volunteers and volunteering in Europe by providing a common set of rights and responsibilities for volunteers and volunteering providers.

What measures do you think have to be undertaken to improve the situation?

I think a possible way would be a sort of certificate volunteers get after they finished the project they worked on. Something like the Youth Pass, which the EVS volunteers get, where the skills gained and activities done are listed and approved by the receiving NGO.

Do you see any changes EYV 2011 initiated so far? Do you share the critical evaluation of Thomas Leszke, Projects Director of AEGEE-Europe?

There is a lot being done, but maybe not as much as expected. Some of the public events are of poorer quality, badly organised and not given enough media coverage and advertisement - sometimes they are not really taken seriously by the organisers. However, I got the impression that NGOs are working harder on the year than the EU institutions, because this is a great chance for them. The whole EYV was initiated by NGOs, which shows how much need there is for a change in this field.

Why do you think volunteering is especially important for European youth?

First of all, because volunteering shapes personality and creates a more tolerant and coherent society. Second, young people can get important skills and experiences very early through volunteering, which they can later use in their life. Finally, young people have the most free-time to offer, so they have a lot to give to those in need!

What is the strongest impression you keep of the events you attended so far within EYV 2011?

My impression is that the smaller events with 30-40 people organised by an NGO are more effective and we can have much greater outcome, than having 300 people for two days at an event organised by the European Commission. I think it is really important to have a follow-up – at best case a series of conferences, where the same people are present, so they can develop their ideas and don't have to start again from the beginning.

Sabrina Ehmann, AEGEE-Passau

FOCUS ON

Intercultural Dialogue

Some call it Europe,
we call it *home*.

An idea. A peninsula and a whole continent. More than 40 different countries, countless ethnicities and multiple religions. This is Europe today. A mosaic pattern full of tantalizing differences and fascinating similarities, all at the same time.

What AEGEE offers more than anything else is the perfect opportunity to experience Europe in “one drop”. A unique chance that introduces you to different cultures, languages and places.

Values such as equality and respect take form in the most creative and educative ways, allowing us to see that we are not alone in this place, called Europe. “Unity in diversity” is a commonly known European motto, and AEGEE shares it to the core of its being, implementing it in every action and every project.

From Summer Universities to exchanges across the network, dedicated to cultural dialogue, to our general assemblies themselves, our projects and events, they are all a part of the bigger picture: together building a unified Europe, where we can freely and fully experience each other’s cultures and ideas. The Culture Working Group

of AEGEE is the perfect platform created specifically to give space to the most exciting cultural debates and discussions, offering members the opportunity to go beyond stereotypes and superficial cultural portraits.

Having experienced it themselves, AEGEE members belong to the group of young Europeans who believe in Europe as such, establishing friendships across the continent and teaching each other the meaning of overcoming differences.

Thousands of students and young professionals find themselves travelling and contributing with their own personality, background and culture to each event they attend, in cities, islands, villages bringing with them each time a familiar air of cultural diversity.

The most heterogeneous place on earth, as far as culture, ethnicity and even countries are concerned, Europe offers its inhabitants and visitors a first rate cultural rollercoaster. All you need to do is open your mind, and get on board.

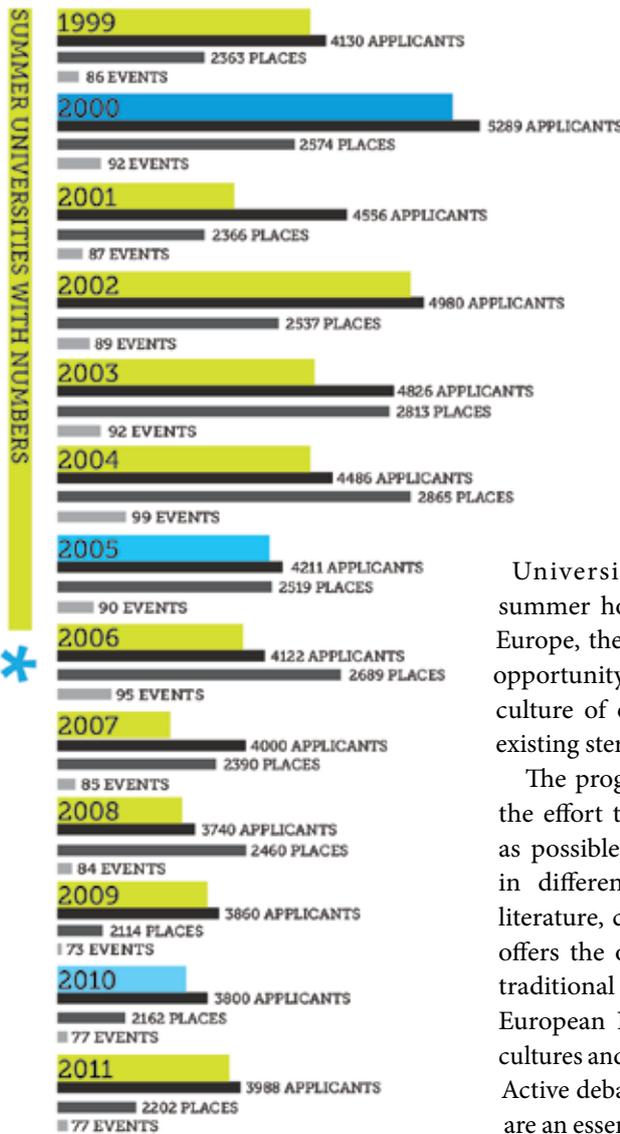
Sofia Zafeiri, Larissa

Summer Universities – others dream, we act!

Since the beginning of AEGEE, one of its major goals has always been the promotion of European Integration. With this goal in mind, in 1988 the Summer University Project was born.

A Summer University (SU), as its name suggests, is a course that takes place every year during summer and lasts for one to four weeks. Each summer, more than 110 of AEGEE's local branches participate in this project, with Summer Universities taking place in most European cities in which AEGEE is present. The project is coordinated entirely by the young members of the European Students' Forum on a voluntary basis, and includes activities that range from purely academic topics such as intensive language courses, to cross-cultural and other similar subjects. Therefore, participants are offered the chance to – for instance – become familiar with the Greek mythology, the Romanian culture, learn traditional Moldavian dances, attend a photography course in Turkey or go hiking in the Polish woods. Others aim more at the discovery of one's self, for instance in Helsinki and Tallinn where the participants are engaged in various teamwork activities to boost their level of self-confidence and cooperation skills. Moreover, each Summer University follows a concrete theme throughout its duration. Some of the Summer Universities' themes so far have included: European integration, cultural exchange, international politics, active citizenship, education, youth unemployment, personal development and many more.

Exploring and understanding the multicultural dimension of the European continent, removing national borders, fighting for tolerance and becoming open-minded citizens are some of the reasons why 20 to 50 young Europeans from all over Europe come together in



each Summer University. Throughout the Summer Universities, the participants discover the lifestyle of young people living in other parts of Europe. Therefore, the participants and the organisers are given the opportunity to experience together the sense of the European identity and citizenship. This is achieved as they share for a number of days the same facilities, their thoughts about shaping Europe, their thoughts about the culture of the country or background of each volunteer. During these days, they are given the chance to create a small multicultural society where people with different personalities

and nationalities come together with the same goal: to learn how to live together and despite their cultural, religious, historical and maybe political differences to think as one community. Furthermore, from the beginning of the project, the exchanges between east-west and between north-south have always been most encouraged.

By choosing to take part in a Summer

University and spending their summer holidays in another part of Europe, the participants are given the opportunity to experience the real culture of other nations and abolish existing stereotypes.

The programme's key to success is the effort to involve as many people as possible. By including workshops in different areas such as history, literature, culture, art, cinema, it also offers the opportunity to experience traditional food, for example on the European Night, learn about other cultures and even discovering one's self. Active debates, music and youth spirit are an essential part of the programme of a Summer University.

The Summer University Project reflects AEGEE's traditional formula: acquainting Europeans with Europe. This year, it will be its 24th anniversary, making it the longest lasting project in AEGEE's history. In the past 2 decades, about 50.000 people have been involved in the project and events have taken place in over 260 cities in more than 40 European countries: The Summer Universities are now the biggest volunteer-based mobility project in Europe.

Hara Kogkou, AEGEE-Peiraiás

FOCUS ON

Education

Formal. Non-formal.
And everything in between.

What is it that makes the difference?

It is not uncommon for AEGEE members to agree with Oscar Wilde's statement that "Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught". Being a students' association, AEGEE has an intrinsic educational dimension. But beyond the formal educational background that each of us brings along, we all gain some added value as a result of our non-formal learning experience taking place in the NGO milieu.

Partly as a result of the poor readiness of young people to enter the labour market, soon after graduation, from a higher education institution, and to perform at the expected level, the concept of education had to broaden. Therefore, nowadays education is believed to include more than plain theoretical knowledge taught in formal settings, consisting also of a certain set of soft skills that complete the ensemble. For instance, if we were to consider working as an economist in a multicultural environment, our formal knowledge of Economy might not be enough, but we may well need to develop non-

formal assets and skills such as good communication skills or intercultural understanding, that may prove to be compulsory. Training such skills and providing the framework for actively experiencing situations that require such flexibility is precisely what associations like AEGEE have to offer to young people.

Besides, an insight to the contemporary concept of Lifelong Learning gives us a deeper understanding of the importance that continuous training and exposure to non-formal learning experiences have for long-term personal and professional development. It is thus understood that in fact, "the result of the educative process is a capacity for further education" (John Dewey). Therefore, we may conclude that what AEGEE implicitly builds up in its members is a genuine openness toward new learning experiences.

Adela Militaru, AEGEE-București



AEGEE-Academy: The joy of sharing!

From the very first moment you join AEGEE, you enter into a continuous learning process. You learn during your first Summer University, from the organizers and workshop leaders, but also from the rest of the participants; you also learn in your local antenna, from more experienced members at local training courses or just during everyday's work. Then, your first Agora, with all the enthusiastic people gathering for the General Assembly - such a great opportunity to get deeper and deeper into all sorts of knowledge; and let's not forget the projects and working groups, the thematic core of AEGEE, where you can learn almost anything that has to do with our beloved Europe.

During all this process you learn about many things from others, but most of all you learn a lot from yourself, and about yourself. It is a never-ending process, and part of what makes the AEGEE experience addictive in a way.

At a certain point, you start feeling the need to share all your experiences with other people. It is the time you start preparing your first small talk for a Summer University campaign, a session

for a Local Training Course or maybe a workshop for the Agora. You prepare it for days, but you are still nervous, with stress clenching your guts. But when it's the time, you go on stage and do it. And you do it well, and you learn from the other people's reactions.

Being a trainer is naturally the next step. As a trainer, you can help trainees to proceed faster and further in their self-development, and you keep learning yourself as you want to get more skilled, and more capable of facilitating the learning process. There are few things more rewarding than following the career of someone who was once your trainee and see that person grow bigger, working hard for their ideals and realizing that you have helped in this process by inspiring motivation, providing some step-stones to make their path safer. And you remember how good a time you've had together during the training, during the sessions and during the breaks, sometimes sharing a nice meal or under a starry night, as there is always an opportunity to share. And when you share, you never lose. It is always a win-win situation.

Miguel Gallardo Albajar, AEGEE-Alicante

AEGEE-Academy is the Human Resources Working Group of AEGEE, as well as its pool of trainers. They coordinate the trainings inside the network on European level, called European Schools, and take care about the needs in Human Resources of the whole association in close collaboration with the Comité Directeur and the Network Commission.

The trainings' methodologies include many non-formal education tools and have a general learning-by-doing, learning-by-experience approach.

Trainings supported by AEGEE-Academy:

- » Local Training Courses
- » Regional Training Courses
- » European School 1/2
- » Public Relations European School 1/2
- » Fundraising European School
- » Human Resources European School
- » Training for Trainers (T4T)

Communication - A pressing matter

IPRES2, what do you do?

We live in a society where we are assaulted by information at every moment, several times per minute; too much noise, too many messages; mostly unwanted and unnecessary, spam in our mailboxes, the ad world has almost blocked our eyes and ears. It all makes it very complicated to focus our attention on the interesting messages; the ones that we'd like to hear more about, the ones that have the possibility to change our life.

AEGEE is committed to deliver one of these messages: Europe itself - full of opportunities for its citizens, and especially for the young ones. But Europe needs Europeans to believe in the project and keep working on it and this is where youth plays a key role, as they have that very energy needed to make the difference. In order to make the AEGEE message reach the general public, we train our members properly, and this is how the decision to organise a training dedicated to Public Relations came up once more - the Public Relations European School 2, colloquially known as PRES2. This year's edition took place in Novi Sad (Serbia) during the second week of May 2011.

The target group for PRES2 was a pool of experienced members who have been already working in PR matters for some time, usually at local level. Some of them might

even have participated in a PRES1 (ideally). With around fifteen participants both from AEGEE and external partners, other NGOs such as JEF (Young European Federalists), they grasped at the opportunity to prove their creative nature.

The trainers for the event were a rare pick with a wide-ranging experience in the field of PR and communication, gathered together from the PRC (Public Relations Committee) to the Comité Directeur, and the AEGEE-Academy. During the very intensive days of the training course the participants have learned in a practical way how to develop an effective PR strategy, gathered knowledge about communication theory (both internal and external) as well how to prepare themselves for a meeting with external partners. Furthermore, modern, digital tools have played a major role during the course and participants have dove deep into the world of social media and internet-based communication.

There is no event in AEGEE without an organising local, and this training followed that rule. AEGEE-Novisad did an extraordinary job, in spite of the freshness of their team and handled all challenges in an exemplary fashion. Hvala to all from Novi Sad!

Miguel Gallardo Albajar, AEGEE-Alicante

European standards. Serbian students. *We'll be doing it our way.*

Beginning like all grand journeys, with a single step, AEGEE-Beograd decided to tread the uncertain path of higher education today. From the implementation of the Bologna declaration and its results on both European and national levels, to the importance of non-formal education, a silent partner in modern career building endeavours, within the frame of the European project Higher Education Days (HED).

The one day conference in March gave valuable insight on issues of

Serbian education system and European education policy seen through the eyes of Serbian students. The program itself aimed to raise interest in the current problems of higher education in Beograd as well as the evaluation of the implementation of the Bologna declaration and the importance and recognition of non-formal education, all in respect to the current issues of diploma valuation and the problem of mobility for Serbian students.

A survey was designed to estimate student's knowledge about the Bologna

declaration, their experience with its implementation, their awareness and involvement in the various form of non-formal education available to them. After presenting the results of the poll and short lectures from experts from the university, several workshops organised by the national employment service and student's portals took place. Every student had the opportunity to discuss the subjects that interested them the most. The debates were divided into four working groups on the following subjects:

The Key to Education

Youth shaping their own education

“Youth participation does not come cheap anymore; it has to be won in the context of a real offer to share power. It is time this happened.”

– Peter Lauritzen (2005)

Higher Education is one of the main pillars of AEGEE. It is a constant priority in our work as it should be in society as a whole. Driven by this belief, and the need and desire of young people to contribute in shaping a modern, democratic and inclusive education system, AEGEE members were inspired to create a project that aims to make a difference.

“Higher Education Days” (HED) project aims to improve higher education by strengthening the students’ voice in universities and striving for recognition of non-formal education. It is high time for an intensive dialogue in the field of Higher Education, youth policies and youth participation in a wider context. HED offers students the chance to be proactive towards the development of their educational systems, it offers a platform where they can discuss, think, and work together not just for one common

goal, but for one common future. By organising many national conferences, round table discussions concerning best practices or problems related to the national higher education systems, as well as events and panel discussions regarding the recognition and impact of non-formal education and the implementation of the Bologna Process, HED aims to organise reach the ear of European policy makers. So far events in the framework of the HED project have taken place in Groningen, Bucharest, Delft, Belgrade, Kiev and Yerevan.

Now more than ever, there is a need for a structural and intensive dialogue in the field of higher education, youth policies and youth participation between decision makers and those affected by the decisions themselves. HED is perfect opportunity to do just this.

Learning is a process that never stops, be it formal in universities or schools, in informal or non-formal environments. And who better to have a say in education policies, if not young people themselves? In the end, it is our future we are talking about.

Diana Yolova, AEGEE-Sofia

1. The evaluation of a university diploma in terms of meeting the requirements of the labour market
2. Concerns about the issue of levelling the theoretical frame and the ever growing necessity of practical and applicable knowledge usually not gained at Serbian universities, as well as the differences of the “old” and the “new”- Bologna system in Serbian universities
3. Proficiency in education. Possibilities for practical work in the country and abroad, opportunities of non-

formal education and the flexibility of the university policy concerning self-designed educational plans and career planning, as well as extracurricular engagement of students

4. Active involvement. Helping students familiarize themselves with the work of student organisations, student parliaments, their rights in the idea of taking on an active role in reforming the educational system on national and European level

By engaging students from many different fields of study and different backgrounds the event managed to rise above petty complaints and convey a spirited discussion with plausible solutions for the near future. Focusing on what can we do as students, rather than what should be done participants succeeded in starting initiatives to change faulty systems, instead of simply ignoring its shortcomings.

Milica Milanovic, AEGEE-Beograd

FOCUS ON

European Citizenship

AEGEE – We share values,
we share responsibilities, we
share *opportunities*.

The topic of European Citizenship has gained a high political importance in the youth policies and programmes of both the Council of Europe and the European Commission over the past years. Consequently a number of training activities, publications and research activities in the field of European Citizenship are being launched nowadays. Let's see which benefits European citizenship brings to AEGEE and how its members contribute to its promotion and development...

Each year AEGEE, in cooperation with other European youth organizations, contributes to the creation of a nation of young Europeans, culturally different, but united in their values. It includes 13 000 active and open-minded young people, who believe in and promote a United Europe. AEGEE members think of Europe as their home, where democracy, rule of law, human rights and tolerance should be practiced and respected. Each AEGEEan travels a lot to experience the world around him and satisfy his curiosity. Therefore the European Students' Forum creates a number of platforms all over Europe, where young people can meet, share the same interests and initiate projects (Youth UnEmployment, Where Does Europe End, YOUrope Needs YOU, Y Vote 2009 and Summer Universities etc.)

AEGEE unites youth which feel great concern towards the construction of a democratic Europe without cultural prejudices, geographical borders and national legal

constraints which hamper cross-border cooperation, professional and educational mobility, volunteering and youth entrepreneurship. AEGEE is represented not only by students but also by young professionals, who are eager to share their knowledge and experience. AEGEE is multilingual and those engaged into mass media activities make Europe and AEGEE visible, transparent and clear for young citizens.

AEGEE members highlight Europe politically, economically, environmentally, culturally and educationally; they get involved and have their say on local and European level. Young leaders and activists of the European Students' Forum lobby and represent youth interests in European organizations and institutions. The trainers of AEGEE make young people aware of their potential and opportunities, as well as the bodies they should approach in order to have their voices heard and their opinion counted. AEGEE not only creates a platform for face-to-face contact, civic initiative and participation, but provides case analyses and reports to be considered by policy and decision makers. Thus benefitting from European Citizenship, AEGEE raises youth awareness on European issues, promotes the idea of deliberative democracy, develops active citizenship and makes European dialogue possible.

Ahniya Asanovich, AEGEE-Minsk

Empowering tomorrow's active citizens

High-school is a period often forgotten, while youth projects focus mostly on university students and young entrepreneurs. However, it is the period most influential in the development of one's personality and basic view of the world. This is why the YOUrope Needs YOU! (YNY) project has decided to focus on this particular target group, aiming to empower high-school students themselves to become active citizens in their societies. By organising workshops conducted by members of AEGEE, the project intends to raise awareness on European matters, illustrate the opportunities Europe has to offer, and enable these students to see the benefits they can bring to themselves and their communities.

During the previous year, many AEGEE members and hundreds of high-school students have taken part in the project. In the 34 YNY workshops organised all over Europe, from Yerevan to Bucharest, locals from our organisation have shared their knowledge about European issues with inexperienced youngsters and have helped them take their first step towards becoming real volunteers.

During this third cycle of the YNY project, there was a strong desire to cooperate more intensively with the whole AEGEE network. In order to achieve this, "Thematic Action Months" have been implemented, during which several AEGEE projects and Working Groups have developed workshops, which AEGEE antennae would later organise in their local high-schools. In this way European youngsters could have information about topics that interest them most and the ways to take action on them.

This initiative resulted in a publication of 12 workshops and can be found in our web site <http://www.projects.aegee.org/youropeneedsyou>.

Other activities that will be organised during the next months include two types of international exchanges. The first one will take place between AEGEE members, with European citizenship as one of the main topics, along with new ways of empowering European students and other similar issues, while organising workshops at high-schools with people from all over Europe. This initiative aims to show to high-school students the great diversity of Europe and the experiences of active citizens from different nationalities and building friendships across the continent. The other type of exchanges will take place between high-school students, so that they can have their first experience volunteering at a European level, meeting other people from different countries with the same interests as them and starting to develop their network of future international friends. These exchanges will be organised by those high-school students that have taken part in workshops during the Action Months and will be supervised by AEGEE members.

Youth is the future of our society, and high-school students are a very important part of it. So let's empower them to tackle the important challenges on the European agenda, instead of taking on the role of bystanders in the development of their own future.

Felipe González Santos, AEGEE-Coruña

I love Europe!

We all like to call ourselves "European citizens". Sometimes, it is just a reason to feel proud or comfortable, but we forget that being European means a lot more: it is about belonging to a huge "family", exchanging ideas, experience and culture very easily and learning about tolerance. Europe is our reality. Learning about Europe means learning about ourselves. This is why it is important for every European to know what this large community is all about. "YOUrope needs YOU" is an excellent interactive activity, because it involves high school students and it allows them to state their opinions. Moreover, it is not only the perfect occasion to find out facts that you did not know about, but is also the right place to get an answer to all your questions concerning Europe. This was "YOUrope needs YOU" for me.

Young people know that Europe has not been a matter of geography for a very long time. It is now more than ever that

they like to visit other countries, learn foreign languages and make friends all over Europe. Open, friendly, curious, communicative – this is a typical European youngster.

I believe Europe is an exquisite mixture of cultures, languages and people that finally match perfectly. It is brilliant the way it is, as it has everything one could wish. Other than amazing landscapes and lively towns, it's the people who make this continent so beautiful. It does not matter whether you are in Sweden, or in Italy, in France, or in England, in Germany, or in Greece: people will welcome you. Any country in Europe feels like home.

It may be its history or its natural beauty. It may be Europe's possibilities or its position on the global map. Most likely, it is us: its citizens, the relationships between our countries. We are the reason why Europe is awesome. Keep it in mind: Europe means friendship!

Gabriela Manu, high-school student in Bucharest, Romania

“We are all different. Fortunately.”

Where Does Europe End? One project, many answers.

This is how a commercial advertising on consumers' different tastes begins. And they are right. We are all different and in AEGEE, we see this as a gift rather than a burden. But have you ever wondered just how different we are? A group of seven young Europeans have. And they wanted some answers.

That was the starting point of what in September 2009 came to be known as “Where Does Europe End?” A project about differences and similarities, cohesion and segregation, both at the level of the physical reality that surrounds us and at the level of the mental reality that each one of us creates for themselves.

The main aim of the project is to examine the ways in which people – especially young ones – perceive Europe: its limits, identity, founding values and uniqueness. To this, two other aims are added: that of triggering interest and stimulating debate amongst young people and encouraging them to be active as European citizens.

The main aim of the project is to examine the ways in which people – especially youth – perceive Europe: its limits, identity, founding values and uniqueness. To this, two other aims are added: that of triggering interest and stimulating debate amongst young people and encouraging them to be active as European citizens.

As a result, Where Does Europe End? (WDEE) was conceived as a series of local and international events, trying to cover different areas of Europe, from Izmir to Las Palmas and from Lund to Catania.

In general terms, WDEE events have two features: a common one, consisting of interviewing local people based on a standard questionnaire- and asking them to circle on a map what Europe is for them; and a differentiating feature, consisting of a main topic specific for each event, which students learn about and debate on, during each the event. EU & Enlargement (Izmir, Turkey), Regional Identity (Leon, Spain), Human Rights (Lund, Sweden), Multilingualism (Riga, Latvia), History and Colonialism (Las Palmas, Spain) are some of the themes that have been developed during the five international conferences we have organized so far.

The local activities initiative appeared at a later stage based on the need to reach out to as many young people as possible. It will be implemented starting from October 2011. Contrary to what many people think, the final result will not consist in finding an answer to the question of where Europe ends but rather in showing just how diverse people's opinions are about what they call “Europe”. At the end of our project, a booklet with the results will be created and the conclusions will be presented during a closing conference, to be held in Belgium or The Netherlands.

In our efforts, we are not only supported by enthusiastic young people (team members and participants) but also by the Youth in Action programme which funds most of our events and by our official patrons and partners: Mr. Jerzy Buzek - President of the European Parliament, and the European Commission together with its 27 Commissioners.

What could be a more suitable project for a European organization, than to explore how Europeans perceive our continent, its physical and most of all, its mental boundaries?

OUR LATEST EVENTS

After three international events carried out between September 2009 and June 2010 (covered in the previous Key to Europe edition), two others made their way to the list: **WDEE on Regional Identity** in Leon, Spain and **WDEE on Human Rights** in Lund, Sweden. The third and last one (on History and Colonialism) took place in the summer, in the framework of the Summer University organised by AEGEE-Las Palmas.

As in AEGEE, we always strive for improvement, the last two WDEE events have set two new records for the project: the largest number of non-AEGEE participants (in Leon, Spain) and the first international event organized by a new antenna (in Lund, Sweden).

Lavinia Manea, AEGEE-București

Regional Identity in Spain – *The thrive of diversity*

The importance of regionalism and regional identity has been recognised and is growing not only in the European Union but all over the continent. This is why we, the Where Does Europe End (WDEE) team, chose this topic for one of our events and this is also why we chose Spain as our next destination: a country with a strong regional background.

During the five day event, twenty young Europeans, coming from both EU and non-EU countries (including the Caucasus) had the chance to learn about the historical, economical and cultural dimensions of regionalism while being given the chance to present their own region in front of the other participants.

It was an event with a loaded schedule, equally tiring and rewarding, where participants took part in street interviews, attended workshops, listened to the guest speakers – one of whom flew all the way from Scotland for the event – and became more aware of Spaniards' vision on Europe and regional identity.

“I never thought there would be so much diversity in the way Europeans think. Interviewing people in the street was both challenging and interesting. Sometimes the differences between generations were obvious but my general impression was that of openness. I liked the fact that at the end of the event we could see the results of the street interviews and compare them with other countries. That was the moment in which I truly realized the dimensions of European diversity.” –Thodoris Aggelopoulos, a participant from Greece.

Seen from our point of view as organisers, the event was unique due to the great diversity in the backgrounds of the participants: from Las Palmas to Tbilisi and from Riga to Rome, members of AEGEE or non-members, with a broad international experience or no experience at all, with great or little knowledge on regionalism, with more liberal views or conservative, eager to learn or to share their experience, they have all learned and experienced so much, that goes to show the great value of such events. May there be many more like it!

Lavinia Manea, AEGEE-București

Human Rights in Sweden – *The big challenge*

If in Spain what made the event unique were the participants, in Sweden it was the organisers' time to shine. For AEGEE-Lund and their members, this was the first and biggest international event ever organised.

The diversity of AEGEE-Lund members was quite impressive, as most of them are foreign students (some coming even from Canada) and the level of professionalism and dedication they put into the event was a real delight to see.

The words of Anamaria Cociorva, President of AEGEE-Lund and a foreign student herself, say it all:

“WDEE Lund was indeed a challenge for us: the first content European event organised in Lund, the first time we dealt with Youth in Action, the first AEGEE experience for half of our non-Swedish team (who had no previous organizing background), my first time as a coordinator, and all of that on the top of the pressure of previous successful WDEE events”

She then adds: “Such an event meant a lot for everybody involved in the organising team. I won't get into details on how such an event can improve your skills and abilities, but what I can say is that the outcome included a great motivation for all of us and (to my own surprise) especially to the very new members to become even more active in AEGEE.

Seen from a broader perspective, WDEE Lund was much more than that: it gave twenty European students

the chance to discover the history of Human Rights, the progress and the lacks in the field and it enabled them to discover what Swedish people think about Europe and Human Rights, during the street interviews.

For the WDEE team, this event was probably the most spectacular one, having had the chance to travel to two different countries during the same event, Sweden and Denmark, attending a presentation at the UNDP office in Copenhagen, and most of all having had the opportunity to see two antennae at work – AEGEE-Lund and AEGEE-Copenhagen – as they could finally get the chance to show their full potential.

The outcome, as Anamaria Cociorva shows, speaks for itself: “This event represented a great PR opportunity for us: I received a call from the main local student newspaper, asking if they could attend part of our programme and write about it; on the other hand, the coordinator of all student NGO's in Lund was perplexed when she heard about our event and the Youth in Action grant we received:

„How come students don't know about something so big and interesting? We will definitely help you do something about this, tell me more about this event and AEGEE!“ And last but not least, now, after a few months, we have much more online applications for membership than ever before!”

Lavinia Manea, AEGEE-București



Model European Union, Mainz

Experience European Politics Live

“Mister Sirkorski, you have the floor.” – „Our Amendment on the proposal is...” – „In total it is 18 votes in favor...”

Laws passed on the European Level have an enormous influence on the daily life of each one of us, as the European Union has a significant influence on all Europeans, be they part of the EU or not. Yet the turnout for the elections of the European Parliament in most of the member countries has steadily fallen (In Lithuania, as one of many examples, to only 20% in 2009s election). One of the reasons for the lack of interest in the EU, as we have seen, is that the European legislative process itself remains a mystery to most European citizens. The Model European Union (MEU) provides this knowledge for many young Europeans.

One of AEGEE's main fields of action is active citizenship, in the idea of encouraging young people especially, to take an active role in society. But to start being an active citizen within the EU or in your own country it is important to have knowledge about the EU itself.

MEU Mainz started in September 2010 with 50 participants from around Europe to recreate the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. In three days two bills that were proposed by a fictional European Commission were to be discussed, amended, voted upon, passed or rejected. The two bills were actually original proposals from the European Commission.

The simulation actually started for the participants some months before the event, as an information package comprising the role of the participant, the proposals, preparation material and homework were sent to them beforehand. For a month the participants had to research information about the country they represent as a Minister in the Council or as a Member of the European Parliament, about the party they are a member of and about the proposals themselves. Thanks to this preparation the simulation had its own real character and the proposals went through an original debate, avoiding thus a plain representation of the debates being held in the EU level.

Moving a step forward we enhanced the daily program with unofficial fraction meetings over breaks or in the evenings, giving thus some lobbying opportunities, discussing further opinions on the proposals and amendments made during the day.

MEU Mainz was a success in showing how European politics really look like. Nonetheless the aim to transfer the knowledge continues with a series of events. MEU Mainz took place again in 2011 with over 70 participants and with additional help from the Department of Political Science of Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, implementing also the role of journalists during the simulation.

To go even further and continuing the idea, MEU Mainz will take place again in June 2012, working hard on experiencing European Politics - Live.

Benjamin Doll, AEGEE Mainz-Wiesbaden

Calendar of Events

2010 **August**
2010 **September**
2010 **October**
2010 **November**
2010 **December**

January *2011*
February *2011*
March *2011*
April *2011*
May *2011*
June *2011*
July *2011*

August 2010

01-12.08.	Las Palmas , Spain	Summer Event "Far Far Away Kingdom: Surfing on Life"
01-15.08.	Brno / Bratislava , Czech Republic / Slovakia	Travelling Summer University "CZECH-Out-SLOVAKIA"
01-15.08.	Chişinău , Moldavia	Summer Event "Leap into Moldavian deep"
01-15.08.	Tbilisi , Georgia	Summer event "Georgian Mountains and Sunny Beaches"
01-10.08.	Vlora , Albania	Discovering Albanian Riviera
02-16.08.	Brescia , Italy	Summer Course "ready SUgo!"
02-16.08.	Madrid / Burgos , Spain	Travelling Summer University "Feel the SUn and blood of Spain... and party hard!"
02-16.08.	Palermo , Italy	Language course "Burning Lessons and Parties Sessions"
04-25.08.	Messina , Italy	Language course "Let's go straight to the Strait!"
05-19.08.	Cluj-Napoca / Sibiu , Romania	Travelling Summer University "TRy the TRansylvanian TRail!"
05-19.08.	Niš / Sofia , Serbia / Bulgaria	Travelling Summer University "Freeze the summer and catch it in a shot"
06-22.08.	Barcelona / Tarragona , Spain	Travelling Summer University "Catalunya: Arriba, abajo, al centro y, padentro"
06-23.08.	Cagliari / Catania , Italy	Travelling Summer University "Lost in 2 Mediterranean Islands"
07-21.08.	Bucureşti / Sibiu , Romania	Travelling Summer University "There's Something Fishy About Romania"
08-22.08.	Karlsruhe , Germany	Language course "Feel the drive"
13-16.08.	Gliwice , Poland	The European Ideas Factory
14-29.08.	Ausburg / Passau / München , Germany	Travelling Summer University "Bavarian Bachelor of Beer"
15-21.08.	Konstanz , Germany	Sailing/Windsurfing course
17-22.08.	Beograd / Gucha , Serbia	Traditional summer event of AEGEE-Beograd!
18.08.-01.09.	Agrigento / Palermo , Italy	Travelling Summer University "SuPa"
21.08.-04.09.	Izmir / Urla , Turkey	Travelling Summer University "Through Sicily Unconditionally!"
23.08.-06.09.	Ankara , Turkey	Travelling Summer University "Black and White, Show your Art!"
23.08.-06.09.	Kyiv / Sevastopol , Ukraine	Summer Course "How Creative UA"
27.08.-05.09.	Valleta , Malta	Celebration of 25th Anniversary



“Every single one of us may only be a small light, but if we all come together as many small lights forming one, we can light the future – Patrick Kabasci, AEGEE-Aachen

Factory for Ideas: **mission possible!**

The pilot event “European Ideas Factory” gave right place for ideas to be born.

Gliwice, Poland 13–16 August

In an organisation of 13.000 members from 40 countries, how can you give everybody the chance to create a project? And how can you make the members pull on the same string, to focus their ideas?

The current EBM, aimed at approving an Action Agenda, did not leave much opportunity or time for contribution. As a result, AEGEE members could not readily identify themselves with the Action Agenda unless they contributed to it before.

So the Chair Team, in cooperation with the President and Projects Director at the time agreed to do a pilot event for what the EBM could become one day.

Thanks to the hospitality

of AEGEE-Gliwice 50 AEGEEans gathered in August to try something new and create plans for their locals and AEGEE based on our strategy. In brainstorming sessions they discussed a specific aim concerning a topic relevant to European society, and find out how AEGEE could contribute to realize this aim. As Manos Valasis, President of AEGEE-Europe 2010-2011 shared: “The concept of EIF was the following: We took as the starting point the Youth Agenda (final booklet of Y Vote project). Whenever a small group of 3-4 people was having a similar particular interest and the will to do something about it, they would leave the group and develop their idea separately

with the help of a facilitator.”

Many ideas came up during the event, but not all were followed up. “However, the most interesting part was trying out the methodology described above. The methodology has proved to be working and this is what I keep from EIF”, Manos adds.

Despite of being much smaller than an actual EBM, the event emerged to be very motivating among the participants. The next step will be the reform of the EBM. As a conclusion Manos shared the future plans of the CD: “EIF was a test event and as such it succeeded. Based on the success of the methodology and keeping in mind the known deficiencies of our Planning Structures, we (CD

with the help of network) are drafting a Strategic Plan with the aim to make the network have the ownership of it.

A pending reform that will be done in coming Agora-Skopje is the structure of the EBM. The Action Agenda will not be finalised any more during the EBM. It will be drafted during the EBM following the above described concept of EIF and having as a starting point the Strategic Plan. So, European Ideas Factory concept will be followed up for sure to cover different needs, such as discussing about diverse topics of AEGEE and of Europe.”

Katja Behrendt, AEGEE-Aachen

September 2010

01.-05.09.	Mainz, Germany	MEU - Model European Union
04.-12.09.	Poznań, Poland	European School 2
06.-20.09.	Aachen, Germany	Language Course "Au huur, der Steiger kommt!"
07.-13.09.	Cagliari, Italy	Many Countries, ONE Europe: 25 years of young democracy
08.-15.09.	Lutsk, Ukraine	UKRainbow
10.-20.09.	Valencia, Spain	Summer Event "The SUNgria Xperience"
16.-23.09.	Sofia, Bulgaria	"We Don't Need No Education" training for non-formal education
23.-27.09.	Timișoara, Romania	NWM Timisoara - Re-Fresh Yourself!!!
24.-26.09.	Ferrara, Bologna	celebration of the biggest Balloons festival in Europe

We don't need no education...or do we?

Sofia, Bulgaria 16–23 September

To "fly" from room to room during a simulation of Erasmus or to learn your body language by ordering a beer in Belgium. This is just a small part of what participants have learned, even after proclaiming "We don't need no education" during an event, organized by AEGEE-Sofia from 16th to 23rd of September. Part of the AEGEE 25 project (anniversary project of 25 years of AEGEE), the event managed to portray the capital of Bulgaria in at least 25 different poses. Drowned deep in the world of non-formal education (NFE), the participants were not only learning about it, but also experiencing it during an alternative sightseeing tour called "Get lost in Sofia". They got the chance to feel

the strength of practical leadership, by guiding a group of twenty blindfolded people through a park.

With the support of Education Working Group, twenty enthusiastic participants learned why education is so important for our society and organization. After making the difference between formal, non-formal and informal education, using games and puzzles, the participants learned how non-formal education has been implemented within the structure and approaches typical for AEGEE. They received more information about the Europass tool and implemented through different methods what they had learned in a leadership workshop. Put in different

roles they got the chance to experience the obstacles every Erasmus student faces with the administration or dormitory arrangements during a small simulation. A "green" workshop was also included since the mountains are very close to Sofia. A picnic was the perfect atmosphere for environmentally-friendly talks and debates.

Of course one of the most important topics connected with NFE is its recognition. In a lively discussion, participants found out more about recognition as a key factor that varies from country to country and compared the ways it's implemented in their homelands.

During the event participants were encouraged to keep a diary of their

activities, in order to have something to look back upon after going back home. As experienced during this week, words have a bigger impact than first expected, but the most important aspect of learning is to "do it yourself" as they say.

Creativity is of course an essential part of non-formal education, and this event was definitely abundant with it, as a photo-collage from this event was selected as the winning photograph for an internal competition in AEGEE "Some call it Europe, we call it home".

The power and atmosphere of the event encouraged both organisers and participants to keep working in the field of education and expand all its forms.

Liliya Buyukliyska, AEGEE-Sofia

European School 2 a training for success

Poznań, Poland 04–12 September

I am waiting for Elena in one of the most vivid places in Sofia. She is punctual as always but her mind is not completely in Sofia. She is coming from one of her shopping trips, in preparation for her future life in Brussels. She is very excited and there is good reason why - 95,4% of the network voted for her to be the future Financial Director of AEGEE-Europe for a period of one year. Along with the dream trips to Brussels, I started asking her about the European School 2 event in Poznan. For this she had applied long before thinking about applying for the Comité Directeur.

She explains me briefly what European School 2 is. "In theory ES2 is a training aiming to motivate and prepare AEGEE members to get active on European level. It focuses on project development as well as personal development. It is the most advanced training in AEGEE, perfect for everyone who wants to be active on European level, because it provides you with the right tools. It also gives you the opportunity to meet lots of active members so in practice it is also a lot of networking:". But besides the experience of

being together, there was also a long training schedule.

With a smile Elena remembers how they had sessions till 8 in the evening. But she confidently declares: European School 2 has helped me grow and achieve so much in such a short time. Thanks to the training, I have realized what I am good at and where my place in AEGEE is. I learned how to work in a team, to respect others' opinions and develop my own ideas. She learned a lot thanks to the great trainers, with whom she still keeps contact. But she also confesses there were difficult moments. "It's always hard to work with people who have a different rhythm, different from your character. But this teaches you a lot of patience and empathy." To cope with this she had help from the experienced team of trainers and facilitators who were not only from AEGEE, but also from partner organizations such as BEST and EFSPA.

As a conclusion Elena's experience was a memorable one: "I recommend European School 2 to everybody who wants to be active in AEGEE, and to find their own path to self development".

Liliya Buyukliyska, AEGEE-Sofia

Celebrating DEMOCRACY

Cagliari, Italy 07–13 September

2010 was a crucial year for AEGEE: after twenty-five years of existence, we had to prove once again if our values and beliefs were still standing firm, not just by celebrating but also by working on a project which had to honor

AEGEE-Cagliari, celebrated its 15th birthday in July 2010. Many Countries, One Europe: 25 years of young democracy arrived in September 2010, representing the perfect mix of active citizenship, young mobility and multiculturalism, the values which have always been shaping AEGEE since its foundation. AEGEE-Cagliari did more than celebrating, more than just hosting events. Went on exploring the core values of AEGEE, linking them to a very actual topic the labour market.

Every participant who attended Many Countries, One Europe: 25 years of young democracy contributed to the event, putting into it their experience, energy and enthusiasm.

Lectures, workshops, meetings, conferences and trips brought the group together, with a focus on topics such as immigration, bureaucracy or recognition of studies in foreign countries. The participation of several professors and experts on European History and Society increased the academic quality of the event, sponsored by the University of Cagliari and numerous other institutions.

Exchanging culture and experiences is one of the most considerable characteristics of the AEGEE world and this is what transpired once again in Cagliari, keeping an eye on current issues in Europe.

As AEGEE-Cagliari also celebrated its birthday, the event gathered old and new members, people who helped the antenna become active and strong always remembering the importance of friendship and volunteer work.

Carla Cogotti, AEGEE-Cagliari

October 2010

15.-17.10.	Madrid, Spain	Networkmeeting
13.-20.10.	Izmir, Turkey	Training4Trainers
15.-18.10.	Skopje, FYR Macedonia	Networkmeeting "SkopYEAH!"
17.-20.10.	Antalya / Eskişehir, Turkey	Gather Together to Agora İstanbul (Pre-Agora event)
15.-20.10.	Sofia, Bulgaria	Shake the Planet (Pre-Agora event)
21.-24.10.	Istanbul, Turkey	Autumn AGORA 2010
30.-31.10.	Leiden, The Netherlands	"Back to the future!" - Gala Ball, celebration of 25th anniversary

Hitting people in the *face!*

How *not* to give feedback

Izmir, Turkey 13–20 October

One week is not enough to form a trainer out of raw "European student" material. Four brave men tried it nevertheless: Tomasz Szreder (AEGEE-Warsawa), Percin Imrek (AEGEE-Çanakkale), Mircea Vardan (BEST) and Radu Seuche (YFJ). They taught 13 young Europeans how to become better speakers, better team-workers, better teachers and in the end to

be a little better person. With workshops, discussions and games, the participants learned skills like "giving feedback", one of the most important: for good feedback is never given, but asked for. "Don't tell the other person, that they did wrong. Tell them what you would have done differently instead", says Radu Seuche, who works as a professional trainer. The group was fascinated. After all, they didn't learn it

for school, but for life and for a better training the next time. They learned how to deal with public, how to govern the group dynamic, how to be real leaders of a situation.

The *Training for Trainers*, as it was called, was organized by AEGEE-Izmir and the Academy, the pool of trainers in AEGEE. Some participants already joined the Academy and successfully developed their

own trainings. The *Training for Trainers* combined well-known methods with non-formal learning and inspiring trainers.

"Being a trainer is a huge responsibility - people will trust your knowledge, so you have to make sure it is there and never stop developing yourself", says Tomasz Szreder – organiser, trainer and inspiring mentor.

Georg Rehberger, AEGEE-München

AEGEE crossing the bridge of cultures

Istanbul, Turkey 21–24 October

The Agora between worlds has passed by quickly since almost one year ago, when the Autumn Agora was held in Istanbul and I remember those days like it was yesterday. Organizing an Agora is every antenna's dream, and it was the same for AEGEE Istanbul. The most amazing part was that we had this chance, whilst celebrating the 25th year of AEGEE, and while Istanbul was the European Capital of Culture: the perfect setting for the 50th Agora of our association!

Napoleon said once that 'If the Earth was a single state, Istanbul would be its capital'. We're not quite there yet, but we can safely state that Istanbul is a Capital of Culture. Sitting at the crossroads between the two continents, with its ancient historical legacy, former capital of two empires, a mix of religions and cultures, Istanbul stands high on the list of cities that have a great variety of events to offer to its approximately 13 million citizens. AEGEE contributed to increasing the multiculturalism of this amazing city, with almost 1000 young Europeans from different corners of the continent gathering in one point. From the boat trip at



the Bosphorus where Europe and Asia meet, to discussions, debates and workshop sessions, participants were able to see for themselves and discuss the future of Europe and our association.

The Agora team and AEGEE-Istanbul were extremely pleased to host this event, as Istanbul is a small world on its own. It is at the same time eastern and western, a place where even time flows in a different fashion. We say that Istanbul is the bridge of cultures between Europe and Asia, and to feel this, you only have to listen to the city and its many stories. See you all in Istanbul!

Anil Baysal, AEGEE-Istanbul

Photos © AEGEE-Istanbul



November 2010

31.10.-06.11.	León, Spain	Where Does Europe End - Regional Identity
01.-15.11.	Köln / Aachen / Brussels / Maastricht, Germany / Belgium / The Netherlands	Beyond Europe - EuroArab Case Study Trip to Europe
04.11.	Groningen, The Netherlands	HED conference, organized by AEGEE-Groningen
04.-07.11.	Tartu, Estonia	Network Meeting Tartu "Active Like a Squirrel"
05.-07.11.	Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine	Network Meeting
12.-14.11.	München, Germany	AEGEE 25 München - Find out the truth about AEGEE
12.-14.11.	Bilbao, Spain	NWM Bilbao 2.0: Get ready for the next level!
14.-21.11.	Budapest, Hungary	Human Resources European School
16.11.	Leuven, Belgium	Education on the Move
17.-21.11.	Praha, Czech Republic	Looking for the Slavic World
19.-20.11.	Bruxelles, Belgium	External training course organized by "Careers in Europe"
22.-28.11.	Palermo, Italy	Summer University Project School
25.-28.11.	Athina, Greece	NWM - Work Your NET in Athens!
26.-28.11.	București, Romania	HED conference



Bulldozing Stereotypes

AEGEE-Praha & Slavic culture

Prague, Czech Republic

17–21 November

Are Serbs much different from the Slovenians? Is it hard to use two alphabets? What's the element, which makes Austrians different from Germans? Do people in Central European countries understand each other's language?

Has any of such questions come across your mind?

Prague's antenna doesn't sleep, even if dark November clouds take over the sky over the Europe's heart between 17th and 21st of November. This time, it welcomed 23 participants and four guest workshop leaders to get together for four days, full-packed with interesting multi-thematic workshops,

Change is possible and it must start with *us*.

AIM HIGHER!

Bucharest, Romania 26–28 November

AEGEE-București organized in November 2010 a local event of the Higher Education Days project. It offered Romanian students the chance to be proactive towards the development of their education system, as they first identified the existing problems and then sought solutions to improve the quality of the academic environment. The event itself took place in Bucharest, from 26 to 28 November 2010, gathering more than 80 students who chose to contribute with innovative ideas to a new vision of the Romanian education system. The project was implemented over a period of two months (October – November) but the culmination happened during the three days of debate. They included 30 seminars and workshops, lead by professionals with an outstanding background in the

education system, and were results-oriented. The first two stages of the project consisted of events organized in the main university centers in the country as well as a survey which circulated for a period of one month. All the solutions proposed by the participants and the results gathered from the other two stages of the project were put in a memorandum. The discussions were focused on a vision for the future regarding the education system in Romania. The students' responses synthesized a series of four values: attitude, freedom, respect and honesty. Higher Education Days was a project that succeeded to contribute to the students' involvement in their education process, which gave them opportunity to find solutions that are appropriate for their current needs.

Alexandra Ștefan, AEGEE-București



discussions, city discovering and unleashed the fun celebrating also AEGEE's 25th anniversary. The cornerstone of the convention was this one-third of Europe's countries, which share the ancient Slavic heritage - and what it means today for them and for their neighbours on the uniting continent. Accordingly, the

event got a title "Looking for the Slavic World". The spectre of participants was really colourful, spanning from the Netherlands to Turkey, from Russia to Italy.

The variety of participants' interests shaped the event's topics, covering culture, social behaviour, history, languages and even politics.

Their everyday experience was also not forgotten, topped with workshops for mastering another alphabet or taking advantage of knowing one's language in another history-related country.

The final cultural research showed, that some of general beliefs regarding the Slavic nations have a true basis,

while for many others, the reality would be more than surprising. In any way, it opened one big for a long time disregarded topic that has still so much more to offer and organise about. The general conclusion of the event was, that being Slavic is not a nationality, but a lifestyle!

Jan Halamiček, AEGEE-Praha

It's all about *the people*

Budapest, Hungary 14–21 November

Human Resources are a critical part of any organization, and even more so in NGOs based on voluntary work. Lacking in financial compensation, motivating and recruiting members require more creativity and ingenuity than ordinary HR strategies that companies or institutions are using. This is why special attention is given within our association to training our members in the arts of Human Resources management, within a student organization specifically. AEGEE-Budapest was the lucky antenna, selected to host the first Human Resources European School (HRES) – an initiative of the AEGEE-Academy – in the history of our organization. The event took place mid November 2010 in the centre of Budapest, at the Central European University and was supported by International Visegrad Fund. HRES was a 7-day training course, with the aim to empower fresh HR coordinators and those who are considering becoming one, to develop, implement and manage consistent HR strategies on a local level. These comprised the following 3 points: first of all, getting an overview of the

common tools used in each stage of the HR cycle, then putting into practice techniques taken from motivational theories, conflict management, group evolution and coaching, and last but not least confidently applying strategic planning and the tools of change management in a local youth NGO setting.

The team of trainers was a mix from diverse organizational and cultural backgrounds: AEGEE, BEST, IFMSA and AIESEC. The methods used were based on experiential learning, peer to peer education, mentoring and coaching.

As far as AEGEE-Budapest was concerned, they took care of the logistics and social program of the event, with almost 30 members involved in the organization.

All in all, HRES was a great success! The aims of the training were fully reached, as most of the participants could implement their newly developed HR strategy in their local organizations, and thus ensuring enough human resources in the future, to make all their projects possible.

Bernadett Polya, AEGEE-Budapest



FUN FACT: the three guys with the beer steins are *three generations* of AEGEE:

Georg Rehberger – 2009/10 Michele Turati – 2006/07 Joaquin Soucherion – 1996/97

December 2010

02.12.	Delft, The Netherlands	HED conference
03.-7.12.	Lublin, Poland	Training For "Interpersonal Skills In A Multicultural Background" And "Building A Multinational Team Via The Internet"
03.-06.12.	Helsinki, Finland	NWM Helsinki: Welcome To The Winter Wonderland!
08.-12.12.	Lyon, France	Lyon By Light
10.-12.12.	Tallinn, Estonia	Local Training Course in Tallinn
10.-12.12.	Burgos, Spain	Celebration of its first anniversary
11.-14.12.	Izmir, Turkey	SteXX – Students Experience Exchange
13.-14.12.	Brussels, Belgium	Careers in Europe Brussels Event "High Flyers Top Careers"
14.-21.12.	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain	European school 1 "From Knowledge to Inspiration: Creating Active Young Europeans"
16.-22.12.	Thessaloniki, Greece	Creating transparent borders
27.12.-03.01.	Riga, Latvia	Winter University
27.12.	Napoli, Italy	Entrepreneurial Exchange between Naples and New York

Riga the place where *fantasies* turn into reality!

Riga, Latvia 27 December – 03 January

Already the 8th time this year, AEGEE-Riga is offered a unique possibility to see, feel and enjoy the magic of winter, with a miraculous fairy-tale-like view. This winter between 27th December and 3rd January, they gathered 21 AEGEE members in Riga and despite fears of frostiness and coldness they learned how to warm up during freezing days and nights of Latvia. For some of them it was one of the rare opportunities to touch the snow, to make a snowman or even become an "angel" by diving into snow banks.

You can just imagine the excitement of people when they see frozen sea for the first time, step on it and walk all over it. Yes, it takes breath away and makes the blood circulate more rapidly. Participants were ready for all kind of activities, even rolling in the snow after a hot sauna but no one predicted such hot winter surprise, like a beach volley tournament in the

middle of the coldest season of the year.

Indeed, the one cannot survive in this weather without some dose of creativity. Who could expect that a normal creek of AEGEE people can turn into the gang of suspicious, dangerous and armed Mafioso on the New Year's Eve thematic party? Luckily, Santa Claus was brave enough and visited them to make the upcoming 2011 better, in case somebody didn't get a desirable future according to Latvian tradition by pouring "laimite" (a traditional Latvian charmed piece of metal supposed to predict the future). Fortunately, the hearth wasn't burning at that time and the chimney was at needed size. After one week in Riga we can assure that there are miracles in the world, because in Riga you can really see the images from your childhood's stories!

Diana Ondža, AEGEE-Riga

From Knowledge to *Inspiration*

Las Palmas, Gran Canaria 07–12 December

In December 2010 AEGEE's European School 1 took place in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, in Spain. The event, "From Knowledge to Inspiration: Creating Active Young Europeans", was hosted by the network's most southern locals – AEGEE-Las Palmas. Thanks to the work of the organizers who closely collaborated with the AEGEE-Academy, the body in charge of internal trainings, 25 young Europeans lived a true intercultural learning experience. During the whole event, participants from all over Europe attended training courses delivered by experienced trainers who were not only from AEGEE, but from other youth NGOs as well. The workshops dealt with topics ranging from local NGO management, Fundraising, to Public Relations, Human Resources, and Project Management. They have learned how to work in intercultural teams,

about conflict management and about the importance and impact of voluntary work in a society fueled by the motivation of young people wanting to make a change.

During their free time, participants had the chance to enjoy and discover the beauties of Canary Islands' culture and the traditions of the island of Gran Canaria.

Apart from the theoretical sessions, trainers gave participants various tasks, such as case studies and street action activities, making them acquire vital skills and tools through non-formal education methods. This will give them the possibility to lead their NGOs on the local level. Thanks to the great job done during this event, AEGEE locals can now count on an inspired and prepared new generation of young youth activists, from whom we will hear a lot about in the future.

Luis Alvarado Martínez,
AEGEE Las Palmas

The Best Continent for Entrepreneurs?

Napoli and New York – enrichment by comparison of two different realities

Napoli, Italy 27 December

In November 2010, a group of AEGEE-Napoli went to New York to visit big companies like UNO, ENIT of New York as well as New York University and New York Stern School of Business. The project called "Overseas self entrepreneurship" aimed to bring together young students with entrepreneurs in companies present in Napoli and New York, USA. Supported by the Ministry of Youth Politics of Italy, the project wanted to give to young people the opportunity to compare the Italian people who made their success in the USA, evaluating the difficulties to do it in their own County, as well as to compare the problems existing in Italy for finding a job after graduation from university.

The bilateral exchange had 10 people from AEGEE-Napoli who went to New York in November to visit companies. The second part of the exchange was organized in Napoli, in December when 10 people

from „The Association of United Pugliesi Federation“ (an association of Italians in New York) came to Napoli to see business companies like CIS di Nola (a company dealing with import and export of clothes and food), Città della Scienza, Alenia Aeronautic, Chamber of Commerce of Napoli and also a large cheese factory close to Napoli.

Thanks to these meetings the young members of both associations benefited from a significant professional enrichment on two different realities in two different cities and continents. They've had the opportunity to share direct testimonies from immigrants of old and new generations. Beyond the institutional and formal meetings the participants have had the chance to improve the experiences under the human aspect, by putting faces and names on companies and corporations.

Mauro Savastano, AEGEE-Napoli



Not all tales are fairytales. But they could be...

Izmir, Turkey 11–14 December

STeXX is the secret abbreviation of an interesting project called Student Experiences Exchange. It was shaped from a cooperation between Studyportals.eu, AEGEE-Izmir and ESTIEM, and went on for a few months.

The main aim of this project was to collect reports from students about their studies abroad, and to create a database that will help future international students in choosing the right programme and the right university for them. Last December, between the 11th - 14th, AEGEE- Izmir hosted nineteen motivated participants from different

parts of Europe, ready to enrich the local students knowledge with their own stories about Europe. Participants shared their experiences with new students in order to increase their motivation for studying abroad. What they shared showed that no story is a bed of roses, filled only with positive experiences, but in general one learns a lot by the experience itself. The stories were gathered under headings into a blog that will be used as local consultation, about the cultural differences Turkish students can face abroad. Each student wrote a report about the university and the city they

studied in. Altogether the reports were uploaded on the website “studyportals.eu” where thanks to multimedia tools, visitors have the possibility for further communication with the writers. Within the social program, participants discovered the “Pearl of the Aegean” (Izmir) via AEGEE-Izmir. Their hosts got the chance to introduce them to Turkish culture and hospitality. In the end all participants returned to their countries with positive impressions having shared their traveling tales with local students, and the world wide web. Sila Özdemir, AEGEE-Izmir

Training and *celebrations*

Tallinn, Estonia 10–12 December

In December of 2010, AEGEE-Tallinn hosted its biannual Local Training Course (LTC). After AEGEEans got inspired by the history, aim, vision and mission of our association, they were taught how to manage human resources, planning of any sorts and how to fundraise for their future projects.

Although usually this training course is an internal event, this year the cliché was broken as this LTC was visited by members from other locals as well, like AEGEE-Helsinki and AEGEE-Tartu. This was very much appreciated, because those participants could give a different input on some of the topics from a different local experience.

The event ended with the celebration of AEGEE-Tallinn’s birthday, during which the “birthday” antenna received many presents and many greetings from friends. The dress code of the birthday was complementary to the topic of the party, the memorable 90s, as AEGEE-Tallinn was founded in 1991.

Jüri Kirpu, AEGEE-Tallinn

January 2011

27.12–02.01.	Utrecht , The Netherlands	New Year's Event: 'Say Cheese'
27.12–03.01.	Paris , France	Winter University '10 "Paris never dies : 2011 will be immortal"
27.12–03.01.	Maribor , Slovenia	New year - Ski event "I feel sLOVEnia Vol. IV"
27.12–02.01.	Riga , Latvia	Sp(ice) Matters: Warm up with creativity!
28.12–02.01.	Ljubljana / Bled / Piran , Slovenia	Traditional Slovenian Drinks & Habits 2010
28.12–05.01.	Voronezh , Russia	New Year's Event: Some like it HOT
29.12–02.01.	Brno , Czech Republic	New Year's Event: Happy New Beer
29.12–04.01.	Belgrade , Serbia	DANCE. FEEL. LOVE.
06.-10.01.	Amsterdam , The Netherland	Hakuna Matata
25.01.	Brescia , Italy	"Youth opportunities in Europe" – Conference, part of AEGEE- Brescia initiative "European talks"
28.01.-04.02.	Pisa , Italy	Exchange Pisa–Ryazan, cooking event

Under the Tuscan Sun

A tasty exchange or

“What is hidden

in the Italian Cuisine”

Pisa, Italy 28 January – 04 February

Last winter between the 28th January and February the 4th 2011 AEGEE-Pisa welcomed members of AEGEE-Ryazan into its home. The period was unusual for an event in Italy because of the rainy weather, but for our Russian friends it was no obstacle at all.

The idea of this exchange was born in the summer, when Danilo, the vice-president of AEGEE-Pisa, had attended a Summer University in Ryazan and has made many new friends eager to get to know more about the Italian culture and tastes. So the curious AEGEE-Ryazan members came, ready for a full week in the cradle of the real Italian culture: Tuscany!

The exchange was meant to introduce our Russian visitors to the hidden beauties of Tuscany: Pisa with its Piazza dei Miracoli

and Leaning Tower, Florence with its many museums and her Renaissance atmosphere, the famous medieval walls of Lucca and Piazza del Campo in Siena. And last but not least - the tempting sea in Livorno! We have paid particular attention to the tastes that Tuscany has to offer: the exquisite wines and Fiorentina steaks!

Our guests have returned the hospitality with caviar and traditional drinks, and during a so-called European Night we've had the chance to explore and present the differences between the two cultures, starting from dining habits to social, educational and political backgrounds. It was an event from which we've learned a lot and we will hopefully continue with the second part of our exchange in Russia this autumn.

Pietro Silvestri, AEGEE-Pisa

European Talk. European Talks.

Brescia, Italy 25 January

The first seminar of the 2011 edition of “European Talks” (original title: “Incontri sull'Europa”), a cycle of eight thematic meetings organized by AEGEE-Brescia, took place in the beginning of the year, on January 25th with the support of the University of Brescia and the “Jean Monnet” professor Angelo Santagostino. Organized for the second consecutive year, the meeting with the title “Youth opportunities in EUrope” gathered together students and guest speaker Anita Kalmane, former member of the Comité Directeur of AEGEE-Europe.

The general aim of the seminars was to share a number of issues about Europe with an open public of local university students, starting with a presentation of what Europe can offer to its youth: Erasmus exchanges, European Voluntary Service (EVS), Leonardo da Vinci programme (all within the Lifelong Learning Frame), European Parliament and European Commission paid or unpaid internships, and many others opportunities.

It has been said that every year European institutions are investing millions of Euros in different programs for young people, giving them opportunities to live, study or work abroad. In some countries, information about them is widely available and the competition is high, while in some others only those who dare to seek and find are benefitting from the opportunities. However, the possibilities are there for all young people.

About 70 people attended this first conference, which was followed by a questions and answers round where the attendees had the chance to interact with the two speakers, Miss Kalmane and Mr. Santagostino, under the moderation of Mr. Turati. The seminar, despite the fact that it was taking place in an Italian city for an Italian public, was held in English (and so were the following seven meetings) in order to stimulate the participants and the interaction with the guest speaker.

Michele Turati, AEGEE-Brescia

February 2011

02.-07.02.	Carpathian Mountains, Ukraine	Snow-white event
07.-12.02.	Wien, Austria	Europe Is Not Enough!
12.-13.02.	Heidelberg, Germany	Gala Ball "25 ² -The best of 625 Years"
13.-17.02.	Kayseri, Turkey	"Winter University 10"
16.-18.02.	Lyon, France	Regional Meeting in Lyon
18.-23.02.	Tallinn / Helsinki, Estonia / Finland	FinEst Wintertale
17.-20.02.	Bolu, Turkey	Burası BOLUU Herşey OLUU 4 – ski event
19.02.	Yerevan, Armenia	EU Awareness Action Day
23.-26.02.	Riga, Latvia	EBM Riga: Today Europe's heart beats in Riga!
25.02 – 07.03.	Kraków, Zakopane, Liptovsky Mikulas, Chopok, Poland	Winter University "ICE BREAKERS"

FinEst Wintertale

Tallinn 🇪🇺 Helsinki 18–23 February

As an introduction to the European Boards' Meeting in Riga (EBM), AEGEE-Helsinki and AEGEE-Tallinn joined forces to host one of the most spectacular events in the first half of 2011. The pre-EBM event managed to incorporate the immersion into the Finno-Ugric culture, history, winter sports, as well as other topics such as youth unemployment together with significant amounts of snow.

The Wintertale presented very important aspects of the regional cooperation, such as the networking between AEGEE-Helsinki and AEGEE-Tallinn. It was meant also as a supporting event for our southern neighbours in Riga, and it served its purpose of enlightening young students of various European cultures,

bringing with it lots of bonding between our members. The event was extremely helpful for the members of both antennae, because it directly influenced the teamwork between the two locals. This proved to be very useful later on, for an even bigger undertaking, namely for the crossing point of two Summer Universities that would end in Tallinn on the 28th of July 2011.

Jüri Kirpu, AEGEE-Tallinn



A place to shape our *future*

Riga, Latvia 23–26 February

Every year around 350 young activists gather together to shape the future actions of the association they belong to: AEGEE. This year, active fellows of AEGEE flew from all over Europe to Riga to discuss ongoing issues in Europe and basing the results finalized the Action Agenda for 2011.

On February 23rd, 320 AEGEEans gathered together in Riga for one of the most valuable events of AEGEE, European Boards' Meeting namely EBM. With various workshops about human rights, higher education and intercultural dialogue along with the long plenary sessions, AEGEE-Riga was able to create a warm atmosphere though -15 degrees were awaiting outside.

Once you meet AEGEE there is no turning back. This is the story behind AEGEE-Riga's will to host the EBM. After organizing a Network Meeting followed by European School 1, one of the main training courses in the AEGEE network, AEGEE-Riga members were very enthusiastic about contributing even more to their beloved network. Hosting 320 people, supplying accommodation and food, planning the social program, arranging rooms

and halls for workshops and plenary sessions along with the many other details were the way to do so.

The year AEGEE-Riga worked on making the EBM happen passed so quickly and as they said "it was impossible to describe the excitement we had when time was getting closer and closer". With the great support they got from their many partners, including the president of the Republic of Latvia, the university and especially their twin antenna, AEGEE-Las Palmas, AEGEE-Riga was able to handle everything from the beginning to the last touches: preparation of welcome packages, arrangement of the gym, collecting goods provided by the sponsors of EBM Riga, cross checking every single detail to ensure a flawless meeting. And there they were: welcoming their fellow friends to EBM Riga.

After many sleepless nights, hours of meetings, non-stop ringing phones and many other challenges it was already time to say goodbye. What is left: the good feeling of a job well done, a remarkable follow-up and all the nice comments that made the organisers think it was all worth it.

Alma Mozgovaja, AEGEE-Riga
& Gizem Karsli, AEGEE-Ankara

Splendid and unforgettable:

*Gala ball at Heidelberg Castle
allowed everyone to sink back into
the history of the last 625 years*

Heidelberg, Germany 12–13 February

"It was amazing!" – This was the corresponding comment of the participants at the Heidelberg Gala ball in 2011. In a cold winter's night in February 300 dance enthusiasts were walking up the steeply 330 stairs to the bright enlightened Heidelberg Gala ball in 2011 in a real medieval castle. It's the same way purled by tea lights and the cold fighting with mulled wine.

It is a tradition, since already 18 years AEGEE Heidelberg is organising a Gall ball weekend for passionate dancers. But this year it was a special one, because it was supposed to be the best Gala ball of all. A special one. Because this year they celebrated the 25th birthday of AEGEE Heidelberg! Another important birthday was celebrated as well: the University of Heidelberg turned 625 years old. So, according to the motto „252 – The best of 625 years“ everyone would wear a historical outfit from the last 625 years. The result was a big mixture of costumes: damsels dancing with

hippies or hat swinging gentlemen with girls in a mini dress.

The evenings' programme was filled with a diverse entertainment. Beside a tombola with over 300 prizes, AEGEE Heidelberg showed its humorous side with a satirical play, called „Mocking Europe“. They entertained the audience by reviewing last years' European political decision makers. At this point of the evening it was hard to resist being in a good mood. For everyone starving, AEGEE Heidelberg had the right surprise: A large birthday cake was brought in while everyone joined in, singing „Happy birthday“.

After a live band got the participants in a dancing mood, a DJ took over and heated up the dancers until their feet hurt. Time passed too quickly. Instantly it turned to 3 am and an unforgettable, funny night was over....till next February at least.

Stephanie Müller,
AEGEE-Heidelberg

'HELLO
EUROPE'

from Yerevan

Yerevan, Armenia 19 February

It is well known that the South Caucasus represents one of the most diverse and conflict-ridden regions in the world. It includes the three former Soviet states Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as numerous ethnic minorities and small nations within these states. All three states are since 2008 included in the EU's Eastern Partnership Program and are willing to be integrated into the big European family.

Simultaneously, on the example of Armenia and particularly on the example of its capital Yerevan, we may say that the youth, as well as the most of the other residents of the capital, are not so well informed about the institutional structure of the EU. They also do not know much about the history of the European Community. The reader may get a little bit amused and a rhetorical question may arouse: how the state, which has officially proclaimed its European orientation and is trying to establish European values wants to be integrated within the EU if 76% of its citizens do not know anything about the EU? The question is very fair and appropriate.

So, when on December 2010 the International Politics

Working Group of AEGEE-Europe announced that it is going to initiate and organize an "EU Awareness" action day around Europe, the members of AEGEE-Yerevan immediately took the opportunity, applied for it and started to work on the organization of the above mentioned event. Such events were also held in Skopje, Novi Sad, Kyiv and Moscow.

At last, the event was held on 19th of February 2011 at the Best Western Congress Hotel in Yerevan and was dedicated to the "Overview of EU Institutions and Opportunities Given by the EU to non-EU Member States". 50 participants were chosen together with 30 AEGEE-Yerevan members to take part in this event.

The entire event was covered by 11 TV and web channels. During the workshop speakers presented the history and the development of the European institutions, as well as cultural, economical and educational opportunities given by the EU to the non-EU member states.

The event closed with a presentation of the book "Hello Europe", which we believe has intrigued our members and will educate them in the history of Europe.

Armenak Minasyants, AEGEE-Yerevan

Europe!
Can you
hear
US?

Lyon, France 16–18 February

On the 11th of February, 25 French participants coming from Paris, Toulouse, Lyon and Grenoble gathered for a regional meeting in Lyon! Bon Baisers de Lyon was it called! Filled with motivation and eagerness to share ideas and opinions, participants were determined to show the rest of the network that French AEGEE members also care about the future of Europe. While on the political level the European Union currently faces new challenges, this event reminded us that, from the bottom up, young people still believe in its construction, and are willing to contribute to make it a better place to live. Youth in Europe was the main focus of this meeting. Participants were brought to reflect on the reasons of their own commitment, and about what they would like to change and to improve in their communities. Through several workshops, they were also asked to gather in groups to think about how French antennae could take a more active part in shaping the future of Europe. Finally, participants also tried to figure out the reason of the low commitment of the French youngsters within our association, and tried to develop a strategy to improve it.

After three days of intense working the motivated participants returned to their own antenna, ready to share with other members the energy and inspiration they gained during this meeting!

Lucille Rieux, AEGEE-Toulouse

March 2011

27.02 – 08.03.	Moskva / Sankt-Peterburg / Shuvalovka, Russia	Alice in Winterland! Post-EBM Winter event
03.03.	Brescia, Italy	"Generation Y on labor market", Conference by AEGEE-Brescia initiative "European talks"
04.-7.03.	Fribourg, Switzerland	AEGEE Song-Project
05.-7.03.	Kyiv, Ukraine	NWM Kyiv: Blooming the AEGEE Spirit
09.03.	Brescia, Italy	"The European Union, committed to be green", Conference by AEGEE-Brescia initiative "European talks"
10.-13.03.	Mağusa, Cyprus	NWMağusa
10.-14.03.	Pisa / Viareggio, Italy	The best Italian Carnival Parade in Viareggio only with AEGEE-Pisa
11.-14.03.	Strasbourg, France	Differing Perspectives on Environmental Issues
15.-22.03.	Baki, Azerbaijan	International Novruz Festival in Azerbaijan 2011
17.03.	Brescia, Italy	"The role of young people in the World and in Europe", Conference by AEGEE-Brescia initiative "European talks"
17.-20.03.	Novi Sad, Serbia	NWM: Quality experieNS
17.-20.03.	Sibiu, Romania	NWM Sibiu: Spring In, Blend In, Unlimited!
17.-20.03.	Treviso / Venezia, Italy	School of Rock Italian Edition!!
19.03.	Kyiv, Ukraine	Start of the project "Step to aim"
20.-27.03.	Skopje, FYROM	"Let the world see you", YiA project
23.-25.03.	Nijmegen, The Netherlands	EurPrivacy - international symposium on privacy in the digital age
24.03.	Brescia, Italy	"Updating status: @ Social networks vs. Europe event", Conference by AEGEE-Brescia initiative "European talks"
24.-27.03.	Granada, Spain	NWM Granada: Back to the Roots
24.-27.03.	Bratislava, Slovakia	Wanna be AEGEElicious? Taste AEGEE on the NWM in Bratislava
26.03.	Beograd, Serbia	HED conference for non-formal education and bologna implementation
31.03.	Brescia, Italy	"Youth cooperation on the European level. Opportunities and perspectives", Conference by AEGEE-Brescia initiative "European talks"

Let the world see **youth!**

36 young people from 9 different European countries came to Skopje to fire it up.

Skopje, FYROM 20–27 March

At the beginning of this year, from 20th to 27th of March, AEGEE-Skopje got involved in a Youth in Action project realised with the Blue Sky Network organisation from Macedonia. The project “Let the world see you” involved young people from Azerbaijan, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Slovenia, Serbia, Turkey, and Macedonia in a training course on how to write and edit a student magazine. The project was divided into two parts: Aiming at helping young people increase their level of consciousness regarding the distinction between human beings, as well as encouraging their creativity and individuality through intercultural cooperation.

The first part of the project was the seven days training course with interactive lectures, workshops about art, culture, and society, as well as trainings on journalism, creative writing, graphic design and public relations.

The second part includes a follow-up on the training by a finished product – a student magazine, both in hard copy and online, on an official web page.

The magazine is a reflection of the most creative and most unique happenings in different countries, but it also mirrors the different societies. The aim of the magazine is to inspire young people from different countries, to foster their individuality, and to increase their level of awareness and acceptance about different social groups. Moreover, the magazine does not have a standard theme like most student magazines; it is truly liberal toward the method and style of writing fostering both the individual qualities and creativity of every person involved and giving youth a chance to write in the field of creative journalism. More info can be found on www.lettheworldseeyou.org.

Ljupcho Koshchicovski,
AEGEE-Skopje

After Wonderland, Alice tries *Winterland*

Moscow & St.Petersburg, Russia 27/2–8/3

In March 2011 AEGEE-Moskva and AEGEE-Sankt-Peterburg organised a winter event - „Alice in Wonderland“. The event was mostly meant for delegates coming from the European Boards’ Meeting in Riga as a post-event. The participants came to spend 10 more days visiting two main Russian cities and eager to dive deep into Russian culture. Fortunately, the timing of the event coincided with „Maslenitsa“ celebration - one of the main and oldest Russian traditions and holidays, symbolising the winter send-off and meeting of spring.

During this event participants visited the capital city of Russia and its main sightseeing attractions – the Red Square, Kremlin, the Mausoleum etc. According to them, the museum of ice sculptures left quite an impression in the memories of the participants, as well as the space museum where our guests got the chance to learn about the space achievements of the Soviet Union times. And of course, they got the chance to try traditional Russian banya, snow games and ice-skating.

After visiting Moscow, participants got on a train to the “north capital” of

Russia - St. Petersburg. Organisers from AEGEE-Sankt-Peterburg guided the guests through the city and involved them in the traditional celebration of Maslenitsa holiday: one day in an ethno-village was full of different traditional games, pillow competitions, tasting traditional food, enjoying traditional music and dances. At the same time, besides all the entertaining activities the participants also had several thematic workshops, during which they managed to learn some Russian words at a language workshop, tried their art skills in Matreshka painting workshop and cooked traditional Russian meat dumplings “pelmeni” by themselves.

The event was an intensive one, including a large variety of happenings: from city tours and museums to workshops and seminars as well as open-air activities. Despite the cold weather, our warm and cheerful organizers from AEGEE-Moskva and AEGEE-Sankt-Peterburg didn’t let the participants freeze their minds nor bodies. And the same as Alice in Wonderland, all participants made many new friends and learned numerous new things.

Peter Gusev, AEGEE-Moskva

When a wheelchair is not a border

A Network Meeting open to everyone

Bratislava, Slovakia 24–27 March

A group of active members from the only antenna in Slovakia, AEGEE-Bratislava, decided to invite all AEGEEans to come to their homelands for a Network Meeting (NWM), to see their country and to get them as much involved in AEGEE as they themselves were – in short, to be AEGEElicious!

The first task for eager organisers was to attract future participants, since in March 2011 there was a strong competition within other antennae organizing NWMs. So they shot a provoking video of a colourful worm chasing after cherries.

After a long preparation,

daily contact with the Network Commissioner responsible for content development and later trainers, countless emails and calls, 25 “cherry seekers” arrived from all over Europe on 24th of March. In the spirit of equality, open-mindedness and tolerance that AEGEE promotes, one of the accepted participants suffered from a walking disability, thus being in a wheelchair. Due to this uncommon participation even some of the workshops were dedicated to the topic of including participants with disabilities in youth events, and especially AEGEE events. Along with an AEGEE quiz, the

participants got the chance to experience real team work during simulated conflict situations. Of course, other much needed topics such as public relations management, along with Human Resources coordination were not left out of the program.

A Network Meeting (NWM) is meant to exchange experiences between members of different antennae, usually neighbouring ones. During the various sessions, with the help of facilitators and trainers, the participants managed to touch the most sensitive problems shared by all the locals and find common solutions to tackling them. Regional PR strategies

as well as a common visual identity for AEGEE locals were brought to discussion, while the participants were sitting down on round table discussions.

During the four days of the event, participants experienced the real AEGEE spirit, along with the more challenging part of including in all activities a student with limited mobility. A good example for the future and inspiration for other antennae and projects, this NWM gathered people together and not only exchanged but also managed to create good practices.

Barbora Náhliková, AEGEE-Bratislava

From 7 to 40 – or how **dreams** start working

Baku, Azerbaijan 15–22 March

Culture and traditions play an important role in every nation's life. They run through our daily lives, give us messages that shape our world view and judgments. They say culture is the thing hardest to break. But we do try to break them somehow. We learn one another's traditions and attempt to understand them without trying to change anything. Only in a case where mutual respect and understanding are gained we can build our world of friendship and peace.

The “International Novruz

Festival in Azerbaijan”, which took place between 15-22nd of March 2011, is an event giving foreign young people a unique chance to discover Azerbaijan's rich culture, ancient habits and traditions. Novruz is one of the oldest national holidays in Azerbaijan, with the day itself, marking „the Coming of Spring”, celebrating the resurrection of nature and the initiation of new life. Participants of the festival have a chance to walk along the streets of Baku, a city where you can feel the spirit of the East and West at the

same time, take part in ancient holidays and other cultural activities.

“International Novruz Festival in Azerbaijan” (INFA in short) was created in 2007 by AEGEE-Baki members. The idea was to invite European students (AEGEE members) to Azerbaijan, to teach them about Novruz as well as Azeri culture and habits. The idea was soon realised and the first INFA festival held in 2007 for just a few European students. In the next years, AEGEE-Baki has received significant moral and financial support from the

government. After one year, they opened their “borders” to participants from non-European countries such as Japan, China, USA, Egypt and many others. The number of participants increases every year, from only seven participants in the first year to 40 participants in 2011. AEGEE-Baki is working hard to make this festival one of the biggest festivals in Europe, rivalling other famous ones such as ISFIT in Norway and hoping to get participants' numbers up to thousands.

Fariz Nahmatov, AEGEE-Baki

April 2011

06.04	Moskva, Russia	«European Union, its perspectives and opportunities» conference
06.-08.04.	Poznań, Poland	“Meet the Presidency”, initiative from AEGEE-Poznan in preparation of future EU presidency of Poland
07.04.	Brescia, Italy	“Westen Balkans as a challenge for Europe”, Conference by AEGEE-Brescia initiative “European talks”
08.-10.04.	Tübingen, Germany	NWM Tübingen - Tü be or not Tü be connected?
08.-10.04.	Schiermonnikoog, The Netherlands	NWM Schiermonnikoog: «Suit up in Schier!»
11.04.	Ankara, Turkey	“Deaf and Dumb Community”, meeting for discussing problems of deaf people.
14.04.	Brescia, Italy	“Security in Europe and the EU” –conference from the AEGEE-Brescia project “European Talks”
15.-17.04.	Ankara, Turkey	Regional training course for whole Turkish locals
15.-17.04.	Tbilisi, Georgia	Regional training course «Youth for Peace»
15.-17.04.	Warszawa, Poland	NWM Warszawa «Give & Gain»
23.-27.04.	Barcelona, Spain	Vicky, run in Barcelona!
24.-27.04.	Valencia, Spain	Pre-Agora Valencia
25.-27.04.	Madrid, Spain	Pre-Agora Madrid - LIFE IS TWO DAYS
27.-30.04.	Alicante, Spain	Spring Agora Alicante

The EU is looking to the **EAST**

Moscow, Russia 6 April

“European Union, its perspectives and opportunities“. That was the topic focused on the joint conference, organised by the Student’s Science Society of Moscow State Economical, Statistical and Informatics University and AEGEE-Moskva on April 6, 2011.

Apart from the interested students that took part in the event, other stakeholders were present as well, such as Bertram Wieland, Counsellor of the Embassy of the Federal

Republic of Germany, a representative of the Federal Bank of Germany and Irina Loginova, the President of the European Students’ Forum - AEGEE-Moskva.

Mr. Wieland highlighted financial aspects of the European Union, presented the background and peculiarities of the single currency establishment and even highlighted the advantages of such system, focusing on inflation. In addition, students had the

opportunity to learn more about the relationship between the European Central Bank and national banks of countries outside the EU. The cultural side of the Union was also not neglected, as the opportunities in the field were discussed in the second part of the conference. President Irina Loginova highlighted the main position of the EU regarding youth policies, focusing on educational and cultural aspects. The

conference explored the self-determination of young people in terms of diversity of European cultures, as well as the possibilities of self-realisation within the framework of European projects.

Thanks to this initiative, students managed not only to assess global reported issues, but also to determine their position in the European system.

Irina Loginova, AEGEE-Moskva

Meet the Presidency!

Poznań, Poland 6–8 April

For the first time, Poland holds the Presidency of the EU Council - a challenge for the whole country! “Meet the Presidency” was a project aiming to inform citizens of Poznań about the approaching Polish Presidency of the EU Council. It took place 6-8th April 2011 – almost three months before the presidency started. The project consisted of 3 different events connected to the approaching Presidency. First was the “Eurobimba” day - “Bimba” meaning “tram” in the local dialect. This connection of European and local words aimed at getting peoples’ interest in the Polish Presidency, already three months before its actual beginning. Travelling through Poznań in a historical and colourfully decorated tram, the participants of the project were informing citizens about the upcoming Presidency. The second event of the project was a city game called “Key to Europe” where participants, selected via online applications, set themselves to solve tasks connected to Europe, Poznań and the Presidency. The winners were awarded

with a very useful prize – a trip to Brussels where they would get to see the Presidency up close and visit the European Parliament with MEP Mrs. Sidonia Jędrzejewska. The last event, which finalised the whole project, was a conference about the Presidency. Thanks to special speakers, guests could get to know the Presidency better as well as its preparation stages and future priorities. The general information was given by Dr. Piotr Ebbig from the Poznań University of Economics, while the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Janusz Sznajder, also shared interesting information with the curious students. At the end of the conference, Dariusz Gmurczyk from the Ministry of Defence discussed the issue of one of the Polish priorities – “A Secure Europe”. Paraphrasing the main coordinator, we can conclude that this project has fully reached its aim – drawing attention of not only participants but also citizens of Poznań to the upcoming Presidency and the importance of this fact.

Marta Grytka, AEGEE-Poznań

Youth for Peace

What is it like to live in a region where “war” is not just story from history books?

Tbilisi, Georgia 15–17 April

“Why don’t we do something about bringing locals from our region together?” whispered Togrul during one of the workshops at Autumn Agora in Istanbul.

I looked at him with a confused grin on my face. My friend went on explaining himself now more clearly. “You heard, didn’t you? There is no project implemented in the Peace and Stability Field of Action. It is us who should do something about it!

The Republic of Georgia has been a tormented country throughout its history. Desire for peace has always been a priority for people. That insatiable desire is obviously reflected in Georgian culture. The word “peace” is even used in various expressions of daily conversations, such as one of the first toasts made during feasts, greeting someone, or entering a host’s residence.

Unfortunately, “war” is not just a story that children can read out from their history book at school. It is our present and we have to deal with it.

The Regional Training Course “Youth for Peace” took place in April 2011, and it was organised by AEGEE-Tbilisi. 20 young people from Georgian,

Armenian, Azeri and Turkish locals participated in a three-day training course on conflict management.

What were my personal motivation and goal? To see at least one representative from the country involved in a conflict becoming friends with an individual representing the other side of the conflict.

Being a part of AEGEE means sharing and respecting the values of various cultures. As AEGEE stands for being open-minded, being ready to contribute, cooperate, willing to overcome your prejudices, and, most importantly, being tolerant, I dared to hope this would be the basis for building interaction, understanding, and friendships among participants. And it partially was.

However, it is never easy to work with people having such deep wounds as the ones people in the Caucasus region bear. The strangest part is that the most active members of AEGEE, promoting the idea of a Europe without prejudices, cannot even imagine what is happening on the Eastern side of Europe. Neither could I, if I only I were not living here.

Tika Kukhianidze, AEGEE-Tbilisi



The organizers of the Spring AGORA 2011 in Alicante look on the results of many nights of work – and they see it is good.

ALICANTE POINTED THE DIRECTION FOR YEARS TO COME

Alicante, Spain 27–30 April

Agorae are probably AEGEE at its best. This event, during which the association demonstrates its full potential, is based on three main pillars: members, antennae and ideas for a better Europe. In the end, this all

aims at shaping a better world. Last year, AEGEE-Alicante was the antenna elected to host and organise the Spring Agora 2011 which took place from 26th April to 1st May. Apart from the honour of being the main organiser it also meant a

big challenge. Fortunately, the members of AEGEE-Alicante did their best to manage working as organisers as well as contacting and getting support from every local institution: the municipality of Alicante, the Diputacion Provincial

- and regional - Generalitat Valenciana - authority. They also established a close cooperation with the University of Alicante and other private partners. Besides these external partners, AEGEE-Alicante got significant support from

Closing the Castle Gates

Brescia, Italy 14 April

Security in Europe and the EU was the hot topic in the University of Brescia during a lecture I delivered on April, 14th this spring. The theme of the event could be summarised around two main questions. Firstly, to what extent should private companies steer European Security Policy, and secondly - in particular “border management”? The event was part of the series of events called “European Talks” organized by AEGEE-Brescia.

A very interesting fact is that of how responsibility for managing migration flows had shifted from the state sector to the private sector. Beginning with recent policy developments, the lecture started from the principles which the EU is committed to. The significant ones from our topic include ,interoperability’,

meaning the operability of one set of state systems to others within the EU. ,Integration’ meaning systems can be pooled to mine data across the EU. And finally, the principle of ,convergence’, meaning our systems ought to be networked. These prescriptions emerged from the Future Group report of 2008, which was highly influenced by private companies. In the future they will have the capacity to data mine private information contained in public records for their purposes. However, theory translated differently into practice.

Let’s take the two examples brought up in the conference. Firstly, the EU agency (FRONTEX) charged with maintaining the borders. They are an ,autonomous’ agency which contains its own risk analysis department. Their findings have

lead to maritime missions. Secondly, the most contentious example is TALOS. This project aims to develop and deploy drones at the Eastern borders of the EU. These drones will be able move across various terrains, and will have ,artificial intelligence’ and ,autonomous’ capabilities - a relatively cheap option for policy makers.

During the conference we have initiated lively discussions, with the general consensus being that for the sake of legality and responsibility, private agencies should not be responsible for border controls. My final and central question was therefore simple: as my professor once said, who will take a robot to the tribunal? Now, this question is more valid than ever.

Mathew Davies, economic columnist for the Kraków Post



different AEGEE locals in the area: Coruña, Madrid, Oviedo, Santander and Zaragoza. They all played an important role by adding both human and material resources to the event.

All this happened under the supervision of the main coordinator, Carol Bello, and her great team which made the spring Agora the perfect meeting place to work. All delegates and present AEGEE

stakeholders managed to discuss and make tough decisions needed to keep such a large organization functioning and to maintain AEGEE's position as a relevant European social actor.

In this sense, the new Comité Directeur (CD) of AEGEE-Europe was elected with Alfredo Sellitti (AEGEE-Salerno) as the new president. The seven enthusiastic

members of the new CD got their first task right at the Agora where the new flagship topic was voted upon by the General Assembly. The two-years general thematic focus for activities within AEGEE will be Social Inclusion, out of which the Flagship Project 2012-2013 will be developed.

Furthermore, other important decisions were taken in Alicante concerning

the internal organization of different commissions, committees, or working groups. All in all, the Agora in Alicante was a great event which demonstrated the good health of AEGEE and which pointed the direction our organisation should follow for next couple of years.

Juan Hernández, AEGEE-Madrid

EVERLASTING SILENCE *Turkish Sign Language Initiative*

Ankara, Turkey 11 April

Everlasting silence is an unbearable thought to us. However, for many other people with whom we live, this is reality. To face and combat this problem, AEGEE-Ankara organised an unusual meeting about the deaf and dumb community on 11th of April. The initiative was highly appreciated and visited by many students who got the chance to meet trainers such as Mr. Bülent Tekin, a teacher for Turkish Sign Language. He managed to become the voice of the deaf community in Ankara that he is a part of.

'I have taken speaking classes and I can speak. Still, I prefer to use a sign language, because with this language you use not only your hands but also your facial expression and gestures; you speak with your whole body!', says Mr. Tekin. He continues 'Sometimes we face people who think that they can indeed communicate with us by shouting, without even knowing whether or not we are able to do lip-reading. Additionally, sign languages are not that different from spoken languages if people put a little effort into it, as

communicating with each other is rather easy. He adds 'The worst part is coping with people who give up on us and stop talking when they realise that we are deaf.'

Some of the many other difficulties have been mentioned during the meeting, because they may not come to our minds easily, when we imagine deaf people leading normal lives. Illuminated door bells and vibrating walky-talkies are among the many clever devices helping them to catch up with the pace of life.

Towards the end of the

three hour long meeting, our participants tried to learn Turkish Sign Language and managed to express basic sentences in a considerably short time. While taking its place in AEGEE-Ankara's sixteen year old traditional Monday meetings history, this amazing meeting became the very inspiration to us. During Turkish Sign Language classes our pretty big office turned out to be too small for such big number of participations making us believe in the change we started.

Hilal Isik, AEGEE-Ankara

May 2011

05.-08. 05.	Istanbul, Turkey	Crossing the Bridge Vol.2
06.-08. 05.	Firenze, Italy	20th Anniversary AEGEE Firenze
08.-15.05.	Novi Sad, Serbia	I PRES2. What do you do?
09.-10.05.	Berlin, Germany	Business Excellence in cooperation with Careers International!
12.-15.05.	Düsseldorf, Germany	Your Own Vision - 12 points for Europe
14.05.	Yerevan, Armenia	HED dialogue conference, dealing with the problems of Higher Education in Armenia
18.05.	Ankara, Turkey	Panel discussion about "Saturday Mothers", mother of lost people
19.-22.05.	Osnabrück, Germany	Europe's refugee policy
19.-22.05.	Passau, Germany	One World Convention on Social Business
19.-22.05.	Catania, Italy	NWM Catania: 'Occasion for Future Cohesion'
26.-29.05.	København, Denmark	NWM København

Are you satisfied with the Higher Education System in *your* country?

Yerevan, Armenia 15 May

Students are the future of each country and universities are responsible to educate them according to their needs. But do our universities and education policy makers take our needs and demands into account?

To find the answers to these and other questions related to higher education

matters, AEGEE-Yerevan, with support of Youth Foundation of Armenia and the Higher Education Days project team organised an event on the 14th of May 2011. The aim was to bring all the stakeholders of the educational sector together, discuss the problems of higher education in Armenia, and compare the

higher education systems in Armenia and Europe. By this, they managed to give students the opportunity to share their ideas on improving higher education systems, discuss current problems, and offer solutions. To have a fruitful dialogue, representatives from almost any sphere of higher education were invited: the representatives from the

Tempus Office, Erasmus Mundus Association, Ministry of Education and Science, Union of Employers, Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Association, and the Armenian Association for Academic Partnership and Support /ARMACAD.

The "hottest" topics of the HED in Yerevan were internships for Armenian

Europe doesn't END at the Pyrenees

The 15th May Movement and the Spanish Youth

There is an old “Europe ends at the Pyrenees”, hinting that Spain (and also Portugal) were always a bit different and there was a gap between Spain and the rest of the European countries.

Years of political isolation created a situation where just a few people were able to speak any foreign language (no matter the large number of tourists coming to Spain year after year). Cultural communication channels had also been obliterated. This handicap could not be solved in a couple of years after joining the European Union, so it kept the country isolated, leaving its mark on Spaniards and their attitude towards European society.

Within AEGEE itself, not so long ago, it was not very common to see Spanish members actively involved on the European level. However, the situation has changed in the past couple of years, with members being active in European projects, Working Groups and many others, contributing to the AEGEE work towards a better Europe. The icing on the cake was the Spring Agora in Alicante in April 2011, gathering around 800 active Europeans.

Coming back to the world outside of AEGEE, Spanish youth seems more prepared than ever and are willing to take part in building a new European society. Thanks to projects such as Youth in Action, the Lifelong Learning Programme (Erasmus

and Leonardo especially) or organisations such as AEGEE, the bonds have been created between young people from Spain and every European country, and now Spain and Europe are growing closer together.

An interesting example is the spread of the 15th May movement, started by Spanish Youth who found that the political situation of Spain dissatisfactory and decided to march on the streets in order to express this state of mind. A movement that started almost spontaneously on social networks, transforming every big square into an Agora, took politicians and sociologists completely by surprise. It has since spread to many other countries, like Portugal, France or Greece, creating links and synergies. Although the “indignados” were not very clear about all their demands, they certainly managed to draw the attention of decision makers and media across Europe, and even managed to get some of their points on political agendas

Probably now, more than ever, we can claim that Europe doesn't end at the Pyrenees, a place where there are young people looking forward to leap into a new, active European society.

Juan Sordo & Miguel Gallardo, AEGEE-Alicante

students and cooperation of the university and potential employers, which were put on the agenda due to numerous students' complaints about the quality and duration of the internships provided. Participants also shared the need of an efficient internship, because the transition from the university to the labour market still remains one of the weak points of the higher education

system in Armenia.

Another concern was the implementation of the Bologna process in Armenia and whether its implementation is truly satisfactory. Do students have clear information on what the Bologna system is and which purpose it serves? Moreover, there were discussions about the visibility of European Student exchange programmes, for instance the

Erasmus Mundus program, and what should be done to make it more accessible for students.

Overall, the event managed to provide the opportunity to exchange ideas and to discuss further improvements. Thus, AEGEE-Yerevan raised the issue of higher education and will try to contribute actively to the sector reforms in the future. future.

Shushan Khachatryan, AEGEE-Yerevan



June 2011

22.04.-05.06.	Poznań, Sofia, Tarragona, Alicante, Voronezh, Cagliari, Coruña, București	European Day of Environment
10.-22.06.	Bolu, Turkey	Summer Event "Live with Nature - Protect the future"
14.-19.06.	Pisa / Tuscan, Italy	Sun, Beach and Sea in Tuscany V
17.-25.06.	Riga, Latvia	"Come to Riga and blOoow... the candles with us!" – Birthday celebration
22.-26.06.	Mainz, Germany	Model European Union Mainz 2011
25.06.-09.07.	Dnipropetrovsk / Lutsk, Ukraine	Language Course "BiUkrainian: two languages - one soul"
25.06.-09.07.	Barcelona / Toulouse, Spain / France	Travelling Summer University "Tasting Europe"
27.06.-11.07.	Çanakkale / Urla, Turkey	Travelling Summer University "Journey to the Heart of Mythology by Trojan Horse"
27.06.-08.07.	Amsterdam, The Netherlands	Summer Event "SU d'Orange"
30.06.-14.07.	Adana, Turkey	Summer Course "Fire of Mediterranean 3!!!"

Where does European culture end?

Las Palmas Running for the Capital of Culture

June 2011 was the month when the final decision of the jury for the European Capital of Culture 2016 was finally announced. In 2016 the honour of hosting the European Capital of Culture was decided to be shared by both Spain and Poland. The jury, composed by members of the European Commission and the Spanish Government, chose 5 cities from Spain for the final round: Zaragoza, San Sebastián, Burgos, Segovia and Las

Palmas de Gran Canaria.

One of the AEGEE locals from the very south, AEGEE-Las Palmas has been working for almost one year in collaboration with the Las Palmas of Gran Canaria 2016 office in order to offer a high quality project to the jury during the final round. AEGEE-Las Palmas has helped especially in the area of social and voluntary projects department. Activities such as street actions, music festivals, sport activities, projects to create

awareness on the importance of voluntary work in society, creating a network of NGOs for the city, and many other social and non-lucrative initiatives were some of the outputs of this collaboration.

Almost as in a football match, and despite the good game, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria finally lost against San Sebastián and will not have the opportunity to be the European Capital of Culture 2016. However, this journey was a nice and very enriching experience for the members

of AEGEE Las Palmas. It showed great opportunities and gave them the feeling of belonging and the chance to see how big European projects, with a strong impact on society, actually work. We would like to congratulate San Sebastián once more for having the best project and wishing them luck to be a great European Capital of Culture 2016, together with the splendid Polish city of Wrocław..

Luis Alvarado Martinez,
AEGEE-Las Palmas

„More than 27”

A Eurovision song about AEGEE, written by former AEGEE-Riga member Jöran Steinhauer

Riga, Estonia 17–25 June

This year Riga is a very important city for AEGEE, not only because of organising several significant events, but because it is also celebrating its 10th

birthday. Some might say that 10 years is not much, and that time flies by really fast. But when you start counting what has been done throughout those years, it seems like AEGEE has been here forever.

The birthday celebration gathered older and newer members of AEGEE as well as friends from other locals and representatives from Latvian organisations. Together they looked back to what has been done till now, shared

stories, memories, pictures and videos. AEGEE-Riga was happy to see Giorgio from AEGEE-Milano, for whom this was already the 5th visit to AEGEE-Riga events.

In the official part of the celebration a dear friend and former AEGEE-Riga member Jöran Steinhauer, performed his song “More than 27”, which he wrote for a European Day of Languages event, organized in 2007. Later on he



participated in the Eurovision song contest with the exact same song. Besides the celebrations, all the guests as well as local students were invited to an open discussion about voluntary work in Europe, moderated by AEGEE-Riga president Aija Auziņa and a representative from the Latvian Voluntary Association. After the

discussions, participants took interviews in the streets to find out what and how much people in Riga know about voluntary work. The celebration continued with the most traditional Latvian Midsummer night – the shortest night of the year, when it never gets completely dark. Everyone was singing the ‘Ligo’ song and learned how

to make a crown from oak leaves, what to do in a sauna and how to survive in the countryside. Those who missed AEGEE-Riga’s birthday celebration have missed a great anniversary, but fortunately, ten years is just beginning, and many more things are waiting in the future.

Evita Meiere, AEGEE-Riga

July 2011

01.–03.07.	Stuttgart , Germany	Sustainable Mobility Conference
03.–17.07.	Leiden , The Netherlands	<i>Summer Event</i> "SUrviving the Low Lands"
04.–19.07.	București , Romania	<i>Summer Event</i> "Delta Press"
04.–16.07.	Istanbul , Turkey	<i>Summer Event</i> "Let The Game Begin"
05.–19.07.	Madrid , Spain	<i>Summer Event</i> "Madrid, or not Madrid– that is the question!"
05.–15.07.	Samara , Russia	Feel the Rhythm of Volga
06.–20.07.	Maribor / Zagreb , Slovenia / Croatia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Dancing with the (AEGEE) Stars"
06.–20.07.	Groningen , The Netherlands	<i>Summer Event</i> "If it ain't Dutch it ain't Much"
07.–21.07.	Katowice / Bratislava , Poland / Slovakia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Lost in the jungle of the unknown"
08.–22.07.	Budapest / Brno , Hungary / Czech Republic	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "AeGeE of Empires"
08.–22.07.	Moskva / Ryazan , Russia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Transsiberian Dream Vol. 3"
09.–18.07.	Yerevan , Armenia	<i>Summer Event</i> "City of Rocks, City that Rocks!!!"
09.–24.07.	Skopje , FYR Macedonia	<i>Summer Event</i> "The games may begin... Here!"
09.–20.07.	Zadar , Croatia	<i>Summer Event</i> "SuperCroative"
11.–25.07.	Poznań / Gdańsk , Poland	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Green Extreme"
11.–21.07.	Maastricht , The Netherlands	<i>Summer Event</i> "SUstainable Summer"
11.–25.07.	Eindhoven / Tilburg / Leuven , The Netherlands / Belgium	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Below the rivers, above sea-level Vol.II"
11.–25.07.	Lublin / L'viv/ Warszawa , Poland / Ukraine	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "The Love Letter"
11.–21.07.	Toruń , Poland	<i>Summer Event</i> "Get ready for the Challenge!"
13.–27.07.	Wrocław / Zielona Góra , Poland	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Feel WrocLOVE in Zielona Góra – Wild Wild West of Poland"
14.–28.07.	Peiráias / Heraklio , Greece	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Clash of the PEIRans: HERA's Revenge"
14.–25.07.	Alicante , Spain	<i>Summer Event</i> "ALC Confidential"
14.–28.07.	Voronezh , Russia	<i>Language Course</i> "Russian Study Go On!"
14.–28.07.	Patra , Greece	<i>Summer Course</i> "Age of Mythology"
14.–25.07.	Wien , Austria	<i>Summer Event</i> "In varietate concordia"
15.–26.07.	Coruña , Spain	<i>Summer Event</i> "Atlantic view: Become a wild celt!"
15.–30.07.	Cosenza , Italy	<i>Summer Course</i> "Exploring Calabria....Taste the beauty of our land!"
15.–29.07.	Kraków , Poland	<i>Summer Course</i> "Discover the Undercover"

Europe, are you listening? *The struggle of Belarus*

Belarus, a country where it is prohibited to talk about politics, where every mass protest against the current politics of the government is suppressed by the police, where people are afraid to talk and laugh loudly, where there are not enough places left in prison for the

arrested protesters and where all these actions are finalised by a state law prohibiting clapping on the streets. It might look like the beginning of another Hollywood movie about Soviet Union times. Unfortunately it's not a movie, but a real picture of real-time events happening now in Belarus,

right in the heart of Europe, just outside the borders of the European Union. Sitting at home and hearing news from Belarus about unsuccessful protests and repressions against nonconformists, it is quite hard to believe that it might happen to people you know.

However, as soon as the news is connected to friends, family, or personal acquaintances, they suddenly develop another meaning. Not so long ago, in the time of repressions and protests in Belarus, one member of AEGEE was arrested. Nowadays it is hard to believe that somebody can be arrested only for standing near protesters. However,

15.07 – 01.08.	Paris / Berlin , France / Germany	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Ich bin ein Parisien: From Paris to Berlin!"
16.–23.07.	Cluj–Napoca , Romania	Leadership Summer School
16.–31.07.	Maribor / Rijeka / Novi Sad , Slovenia / Croatia / Serbia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Be Green do Extreme"
16.–31.07.	Praha / München / Plzen , Czech Republic / Germany	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "European Master of Beer: Cultural Studies in Bavaria and Bohemia"
18.07 – 03.08.	Utrecht / Nijmegen , The Netherlands	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "The Biking Dutchman"
18.07 – 01.08.	Tartu / Ogre / Tallinn , Estonia / Latvia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "You always finds its Self"
18.07 – 01.08.	Sankt–Peterburg / Helsinki / Tallinn , Russia / Finland / Estonia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Discover Your True Colours"
19.07 – 03.08.	Torino / Genova , Italy	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Wine & Pesto!"
20.–31.07.	Tiranë , Albania	<i>Summer Event</i> "Albania – A New Mediterranean Love "
20.07 – 03.08.	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria / Tenerife , Spain	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Far Far Away Kingdom III: SUN, Sand and Fun!"
20.07 – 04.08.	Tbilisi / Baki , Georgia / Azerbaijan	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "CaucAEGEEans"
21.07 – 01.08.	Santander , Spain	<i>Summer Event</i> "Catch me if U can! The Cantabrian adventure"
21.07 – 04.08.	Oviedo , Spain	<i>Summer Event</i> "SUperAction V: The celtic challenge"
22.07 – 05.08.	Osnabrück , Germany	<i>Summer Course</i> "An OSNAlicious summer!"
22.07 – 05.08.	Ljubljana / Pécs , Slovenia / Hungary	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Sleepless nights from Pannonia to Adriatic"
22.07 – 04.08.	Mağusa , Cyprus	<i>Summer Event</i> "Freaky Flip–Flopies"
23.07 – 04.08.	Kragujevac , Serbia	<i>Summer Event</i> "Green New World"
24.07 – 07.08.	Chişinău , Moldavia	<i>Summer Course</i> "Step Up!"
25.07 – 08.08.	Athina , Greece	<i>Summer Course</i> "Cult Attack"
25.07 – 08.08.	Firenze / Avellino–Benevento , Italy	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Rotolando verso sud–one year later!"
27.07 – 10.08.	Salerno , Italy	<i>Summer Course</i> Non Solo Sole 2011 – XXIII Edition"
28.07 – 08.08.	Napoli , Italy	EAT, PLAY, LOVE
28.07 – 11.08.	Cluj–Napoca / Sibiu , Romania	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Hide 'n' Seek in Transylvania!"
28.07 – 11.08.	Zaragoza / Burgos , Spain	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Spin'n Spain"
29.07 – 12.08.	Niš / Beograd, Serbia	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "Limes – No limits!"
29.07 – 06.08.	Sofia , Bulgaria	<i>Summer Event</i> "Shake the SUMmer and Catch it in a Shot!"
29.07 – 08.08.	Köln , Germany	<i>Summer Event</i> "Urban Nature"
30.07 – 13.08.	Darmstadt / Heidelberg , Germany	<i>Travelling Summer University</i> "The Thrilling Tongue Twister Tour for True Talking Talents"
30.07 – 08.08.	Porto , Portugal	<i>Summer Event</i> "Enter the bohemian kingdom of Portus Cale!"

none of the members of our organisation in Belarus - whom I met during my trip to Minsk this July on behalf of the Network Commission - none were surprised by this fact. It became quite common for them to hear news about people being arrested without any good reason, merely for having a distinguishable face in the crowd. Seeing only a few

smiling faces in the metro or shocked people running from the streets at the sound of a sudden clapping of hands says more about the emotional state of Belarusians than any words every could. There is no need to talk about it, as you can feel all the emotions in the air – initially disturbed and shocked citizens have now become hopeless and frightened.

Members of our local in Minsk gave me two diametrically opposed answers to the question about their hope for future changes in their country. This situation reveals that the country itself is divided into two different parts – one hoping that Europe will notice their problems and help soon, and another one – hopeless and disillusioned. Until now,

the European society had done a good job at pretending that nothing is going on in Belarus while Belarusians keep losing their hope, but still waiting for someone to reach out to them, waiting for changes and for a better future.

Olga Iatsyna, AEGEE Dnipropetrovsk



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thank you!

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YOUR KEY TO EUROPE TEAM 2011

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Olimpia Pärje

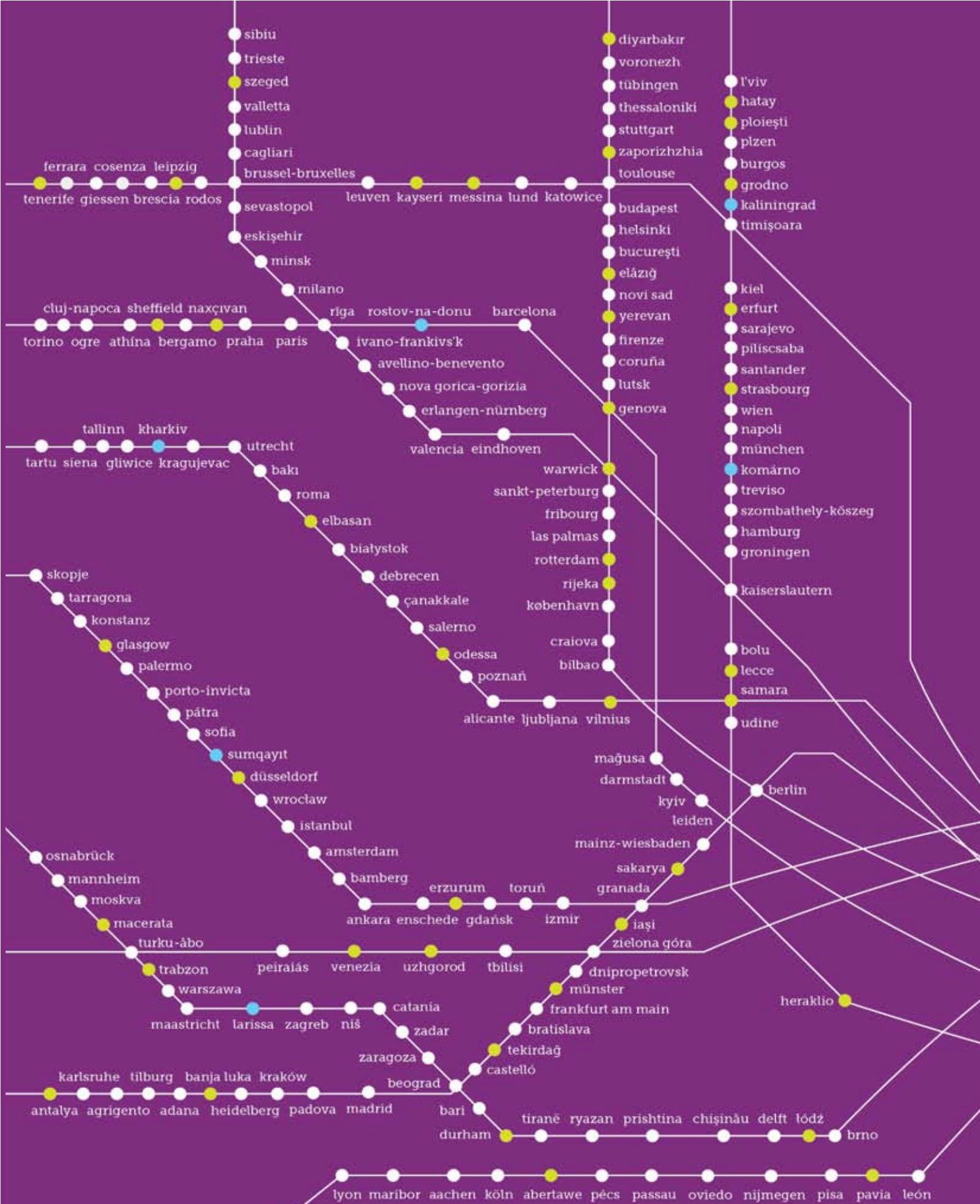
EDITORS Liliya Buyukliyska, Sabrina Ehmann, Sofia Zafeiri

STATISTICS Seren Güneş + Hans-Peter Bretz

DESIGN & LAYOUT Georg Rehberger + Erman Berkay

PHOTO DIRECTOR Norbert Sata

COMITÉ DIRECTEUR SUPPORT Michael Makowiecki



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