



# KEY 2 EUROPE

ANNUAL REVIEW 2017-2018  
EUROPEAN STUDENTS' FORUM

# STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

## **WE, THE MEMBERS OF AEGEE,**

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

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

### **We hereby declare these principles to be fundamental to us:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

# DEAR READER,

What you are holding in your hands is a unique Key to Europe.

Before starting the work on this issue, we had set ourselves a double ambitious goal: to get Key to Europe printed two months earlier than normally, and to make it much shorter by including only this year's most outstanding events in AEGEE life.

Guess what? (Un)Fortunately, we only achieved the first goal.

Truth is, in 2017/18 so much has been happening in the Network, we just could not help dedicating pages to all these anniversaries and breakthrough that AEGEE has witnessed. Just think of it: AEGEE is celebrating 30 Years of Summer Universities Project (p. 42) and is proudly preparing for the European Parliament elections in 2019 (p. 50). Additionally, this year, AEGEE saw the first ever Statutory Event in South Caucasus (p. 63), the most political and compelling Agora in several years (see p. 65), and a skyrocketing number of thematic conferences ('In the Spotlight' section will tell you more). Meanwhile, the 'In the Network' section will guide you through Italy from North to South (p. 78), enchant you with a Gala Ball in Germany's most romantic city (p. 84), take you to Scandinavia and the United Kingdom (p. 85) and offer an insight into the life of former AEGEEans (p. 89)

Yet we know we have only covered a tiny part of all the amazing things that have happened in AEGEE this year. We are always longing for more and wishing the network to organise more and more events that will be featured in Key to Europe 2018/19.

I would like to thank my amazing Core Team for their dedication (these wonderful people will introduce themselves on p. 95), Comité Directeur 55 (brilliant team who helped us with this magazine; get to know about their work on p. 39) and the whole AEGEE Network who wrote, proofread and gave us inspiration.

This year with Key to Europe, we set ourselves an ambitious goal. You will have the chance to judge whether we have been successful.

On behalf of the Key to Europe team,

Natalia Klimenko, AEGEE-Moskva  
*Editor-in-Chief for Key to Europe 2017/18*



# DEAR READER,

I started to feel European when I was the same age as you now, as a university student. In those years I had my first opportunities to meet other young people from all around Europe. I was an Erasmus student, I was part of the European Youth Forum, and I volunteered in some international campaigns against racism and discrimination. That is when I started to call Europe my home. As you say: "Some call it Europe, we call it home."

Those experiences have shaped who I am and how I feel about Europe. I learnt that we all have multiple identities, and each person has a unique story to tell.

I am glad to see that AEGEE is providing hundreds of students with the opportunity to travel, to learn, and to make friends from all across our continent. There is no better way to build a shared sense of belonging to a common European family, and to raise a new generation of truly European leaders.

It was an honour for me to patronise your annual European planning meeting in Yerevan – the first such meeting in Armenia, in a moment when Armenia and the European Union are closer than ever.

We share the dream of a European continent where borders are not an obstacle, but a gateway for young people like you. But in these very months, the idea of a borderless European Union is put into question like never before.

On my side, I will keep working to preserve our European Union's achievements, and to push European integration forward – not backwards. But saving Europe and changing Europe is first and foremost up to you. We all have a role to play for the present and the future of the European Union.

Our future is yet to be written. Don't ever trust those who say that the European Union is too clumsy to work. Europe works if we make it work. Europe is our home, and Europe is what we make of it.

Federica Mogherini  
*High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy  
Vice-President of the Commission*



# DEAR READER,

In the 33 years since AEGEE was founded, Europe has changed a lot. In the last decades, AEGEE fought for the existence of the Erasmus program, for more cooperation between the 'West' and the 'East' and for the integration of Education systems. Nowadays, many of us take for granted that we can study abroad. With last years' abolishment of travel visas for Georgians, Moldovans and Ukrainians, Europe's borders are more open than ever before.

However, the Europe we live in today is still not the borderless Europe we envision and may even be in decline. In recent events we have seen that despite open borders, many minds stay closed. Populism is on the rise. More and more people believe that Europe is something not worth fighting for, and believe in simplistic national solutions to solve transnational problems.

Around Europe, education insufficiently equips young people with attitudes and competences to take an active role in society and the necessary skills to access the labour market. And while youth organisations such as AEGEE organise extracurricular activities to bridge this gap, we continuously have to speak up for the recognition of our added value. As Europeans we like to boast about our exemplary values, yet women and marginalised groups face discrimination and we haven't changed our behaviour to live more sustainably.

The young people that constitute our network don't shy away from these challenges. Instead, we unite, we discuss and we look for ways to build a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe.

This publication showcases the volunteer work of our past year at a glance. You will see that through European-wide projects, local actions and through contributions of thousands of individuals, we bring a positive contribution to European citizenship, European values and European challenges. Thanks to our open and multidisciplinary character, AEGEE brings a whole range of issues that are relevant for the future of Europe to a wide audience of young people around the continent. The opportunities that our network offers are made for young people, by young people. Thanks to this youthful spirit, we are able to present Europe as a continent full of opportunities for adventure, development and fun, and empower young people to take an active role in the further development of our European society.

Europeanly Yours,

Loes Rutten  
*President of AEGEE-Europe 2017/18*



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# ABOUT AEGEE

PROJECTS

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IN THE NETWORK

LOOKING FORWARD





## WHAT IS AEGEE?

by Erika Bettin, AEGEE-Verona

**AEGEE-Europe, or the European Students' Forum, is one of the biggest student organisations in Europe, with around 13,000 members spread in almost 200 university cities in 40 countries, welcoming students of all disciplines. It was founded in 1985 in Paris under the name of EGEE by political science student Franck Biancheri, and since then it has spread all over Europe with a Network now spanning all over the continent, from Western Europe to the Caucasus and Russia.**

The acronym AEGEE stands for *Association des États Généraux des Étudiants de l'Europe*. It derives from the first parliament established during the French Revolution, the *États Généraux*, and the Aegean Sea, where democracy was born 2000 years ago.

Throughout the years, the members have changed and many different activities have been developed, but AEGEE's vision has remained clear: creating a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe, which is socially, economically and politically integrated and values the participation of young people in its construction and development.

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

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

### **INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE**

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

### **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION**

AEGEE provides learning opportunities for the development of its members through non-formal



education and informal learning. By participating in training courses, workshops, and active involvement in the organisation, our members improve their competences (such as leadership, communication and team management skills) which will be useful for their future.

### **THEMATIC PROJECTS**

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

### **POLICY AND ADVOCACY**

AEGEE gathers the opinions of European students and represents them towards stakeholders through campaigns, lobby actions, conferences and membership in bigger advocacy platforms. In addition, AEGEE informs students and young

people about the impact that European policies have on their lives and the opportunities they offer.

### FORUM FOR DISCUSSION

AEGEE provides a space for young Europeans to discuss and exchange different points of view from a European perspective, in order to find a common ground. This exchange of ideas happens in all of our activities, but a special place for them is inside of our Interest Groups, projects, conferences and statutory events (European Planning Meetings and Agorae).

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

### STRATEGIC PLAN AND ACTION AGENDA

Every three years, hundreds of AEGEEans meet to draft the new Strategic Plan. The concept of the Strategic Plan is to foresee a significant change in the organisation and in Europe in three years, and put AEGEE in a key role towards these changes. This is the reason why the Strategic Plan of AEGEE, in the current shape, is divided in two main parts, a thematic and an organisational part, the Action Agenda (AA).

The Strategic Plan 2014-2017 consists of four focus areas, namely Spreading Eurooptimism, Youth Employment, Youth Mobility, Civic Education. Newly adopted Strategic Plan 2017-2020 consist as well in four focus area with the confirmation of the interest in Civic Education, adding Equal Rights, Youth Development and European Citizenship. Working Groups carry out the thematic goals of AEGEE-Europe described in the Strategic Plan of the organisation. Their goal is to ensure that thematic focuses of AEGEE have been fulfilled.

To put the thematic focus areas of the Strategic Plan into practice within the Network, each year a new Action Agenda is developed during the European Planning Meeting. In this Action Agenda, certain



goals (objectives) are given for the aims of the focus areas to be worked with in the next year. To help the Network with the implementation of the Action Agenda and to track the progress with it, there is the Action Agenda Coordination Committee. Each year, a team of new members works with the most recent Action Agenda, cooperating closely with the locals and European Level bodies of the Network.

workshops and case studies, create the perfect environment for fast knowledge absorption among the trainees. Along with European Schools, AEGEEans can also attend trainings and develop their skills at events such as Local Training Courses 1 and 2 (LTC), Regional Training Courses (RTC) and Network Meetings (NWM).

« AEGEE-EUROPE, OR THE EUROPEAN STUDENTS' FORUM, IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST STUDENT ORGANISATIONS IN EUROPE, WITH AROUND 13,000 MEMBERS SPREAD IN ALMOST 200 UNIVERSITY CITIES IN 40 COUNTRIES, WELCOMING STUDENTS OF ALL DISCIPLINES »

#### STATUTORY EVENTS

The Agora and European Planning Meeting are AEGEE's statutory events. The Agora is the General Assembly of the association, held twice a year, in spring and in autumn, gathering 600-1000 students for three to four days. The Agora is the place where young Europeans gather in one place to build the future of the organisation together. The main discussions and decisions take place during the plenary meetings. The participants of the Agora also join workshops, prytania (to discuss changes to the statutes of the organisation), progress meetings about ongoing projects, and other programmes.

The European Planning Meeting gathers together around 300 experienced AEGEE members in order to draft the Action Agenda for the upcoming year. Besides working on the preparation of AEGEE's Action Agenda, participants take part in workshops, panel discussions and round table discussions related to the general topic chosen for the event at the previous Agora.

#### EUROPEAN SCHOOLS AND TRAINING EVENTS

Non-formal education is an integral part of AEGEE. Most of AEGEE's training events are organised by the AEGEE Academy, in cooperation with other AEGEE bodies who are experts in certain fields such as committees of project teams. These training events are called European Schools. The events focus on a certain theme or topic, for example project management, public relations or fundraising. During these events, participants get a chance to understand how non-governmental organisations operate, and at the same time develop their skills. Diverse training methods, which include lectures,

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

When looking at the history of AEGEE, the association has had several important achievements, the best-known being the effective lobbying for the creation of the Erasmus programme in the 1980s. In cooperation with the European Commission, AEGEE played a major role in convincing the European Union Member States that mobility programmes are worth investing in. We have continued on this path ever since, promoting programmes and advocating for them, such as Erasmus and Socrates, with the inclusion of more countries, such as Turkey, in the latter. AEGEE is also known for its longest running project, the Summer University project, that gathers thousands of young people each summer providing courses on a wide range of topics from language courses to seminars about political, cultural or environmental issues. Recently, AEGEE projects have been awarded Charlemagne Youth Prize both on national and general levels of competition.

## AEGEE HISTORY IN A NUTSHELL

1985

EGEE (the *États Généraux des Étudiants de l'Europe*) is founded on **16th April 1985**

1986

EGEE organises, together with Le Monde, the **Nuit de l'Europe**, a simultaneous event on a variety of topics in seven European cities

1987

Lobbying to implement the **Erasmus programme** with support of François Mitterrand

1988

The **Summer University Project** is born. The organisation's name changes to **AEGEE**

1989

The **Berlin Wall** comes down and AEGEE decides to expand itself to the whole European continent. The **East-West Working Group** is established

1997

The **"Europe and Euro"** project raises awareness of the new European currency, five years before its introduction

1998

AEGEE organises case study trips to **Cyprus, Moldova** and the **Former Yugoslavia**

1999

AEGEE becomes a full Member Organisation of the **European Youth Forum**

2001

The **AEGEE Academy** is founded. AEGEE organises major projects focusing on peace and stability under the **Peace Academy** and Education for Democracy project

2002

AEGEE launches one of its biggest and most successful projects: **The Turkish-Greek Civic Dialogue**

2009

AEGEE wins the **Charlemagne Youth Prize** for the YOUrope Needs YOU! project

2010

AEGEE organises the **United Nations Millennium Development Goals Conference** within the framework of the Beyond Europe project

2011

AEGEE initiates the **Eastern Partnership Project** to strengthen civic society in the wider neighbourhood countries

2012

AEGEE launches the Europe on Track project. AEGEE carries out a big advocacy campaign with other youth NGOs and the European Youth Forum for the **Erasmus+ program**

2013

**Europe on Track** wins the European Charlemagne Youth Prize

1990

**Les Anciens** is established as our alumni organisation. AEGEE adopts its logo, the “**key to Europe**”, which hasn't changed for 28 years

1991

AEGEE becomes a pioneer in the field of non-formal education by organising its first **European School** in Madrid

1992

AEGEE receives consultative status at the **Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe** (OSCE)

1993

AEGEE receives **official NGO** status at the Council of Europe (CoE)

1996

More than 1000 students are actively involved in the conference series of the **Find Your Way** project

2003

AEGEE becomes a formal member of the **European Movement International** (EMI)

2004

AEGEE is one of the founding NGOs of the **European Civil Society Platform for Lifelong Learning** (EUCIS-LLL)

2006

AEGEE launches the project **Take Control!** - ways to democracy in Europe

2007

AEGEE plays a key role in the enlargement of the **Erasmus programme to Turkey**. Creation of the **Sustaining our Future** (SuFu) project

2008

Launch of the **YVote2009** campaign to encourage voting of young people in the European Parliament elections

2014

AEGEE launches the **Y Vote 2014** with the EP elections of 2014 in sight. **AEGEE Election Observation and Democracy in Practice** are also launched

2015

AEGEE celebrates its **30th anniversary** with several conferences all over Europe, including the **Night of the Seven Antennae**

2016

**Your Vision for EUrope** Project is launched. The Night of the Seven Antennae wins the **Bulgarian Charlemagne Youth Prize**

2017

**Your faces for EUrope** and **Summer University** project win the Charlemagne Youth Prize

2018

For the first time, a statutory event is held in the **Caucasus Region**: EPM 2018 took place from the 8th to the 12th of March in **Yerevan, Armenia**

# AEGEE STRUCTURE

AEGEE's structure is based on a Network of 161 locals, a bi-annual general assembly, a European Board of Directors working in Brussels, Commissions, Committees, Working Groups, Interest Groups and international Project Teams. Each of these bodies is reflected in the graphic below.

## BODIES

- Members:** 13 000 AEGEEans
- Locals:** 161 local branches of AEGEE's network  
*Find the full list of locals on page 15 and 16.*
- Comité Directeur:** European Board of Directors working in Brussels
- Agora:** Bi-annual general assembly of AEGEE
- EPM:** European Planning Meeting, includes the thematic content and Action Agenda drafting
- Chair:** Chair Team, responsible for preparing and chairing statutory events
- Academy:** AEGEE Academy provides high quality non-formal education training to our members

## COMMITTEES

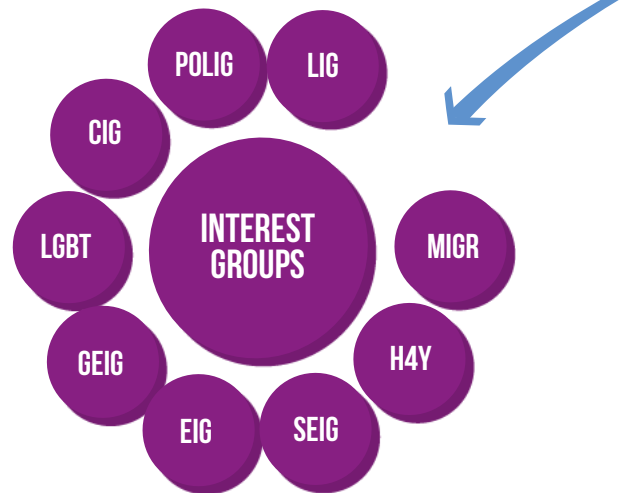
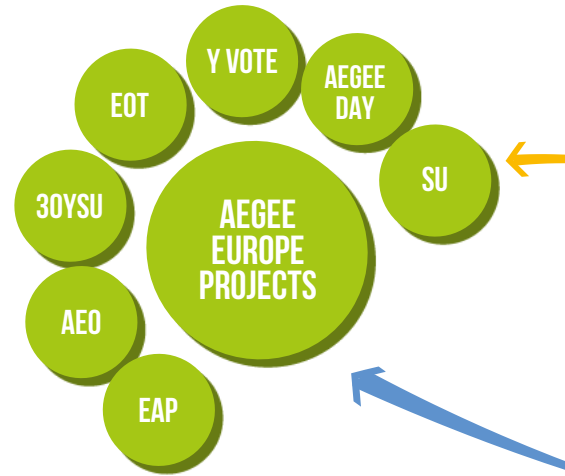
- Committees help other bodies by providing them with services, information, infrastructure and materials needed to fulfill their tasks.
- ACT:** Action Agenda Coordination Committee
  - CIRC:** Corporate and Institutional Relations Committee
  - PRC:** Public Relations Committee
  - ITC:** Information Technology Committee
  - HRC:** Human Resources Committee
  - EQAC:** Events Quality Assurance Committee
  - DPC:** Data Privacy Committee
  - AEGEEan:** AEGEE's Online Magazine
- Read more about Committees on page 28.*

## WORKING GROUPS

- Working Groups carry out the thematic goals of AEGEE-Europe described in the Strategic Plan of the organisation. Their goal is to ensure that the thematic focuses of AEGEE have been fulfilled. Policy Officers are responsible for the coordination of externally oriented activities and the monitoring of the topics of the Focus Areas
- ECWG:** European Citizenship
  - ERWG:** Equal Rights
  - YDWG:** Youth Development
  - CEWG:** Civic Education
- Read more about Working Groups on page 25.*

## INTEREST GROUPS

- An Interest Group is a group of AEGEE members who share a common interest
- LIG:** Language Interest Group
  - POLIG:** Politics Interest Group
  - CIG:** Culture Interest Group
  - LGBT+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, + Interest Group
  - GEIG:** Gender Equality Interest Group
  - EIG:** Education Interest Group
  - SEIG:** Society & Environment Interest Group
  - H4Y:** Health4Youth
  - MIGR:** Migration Interest Group
- Read more about AEGEE's Interest Groups on page 29.*



● COMMISSIONS

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

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

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

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

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

*Read more about Commissions on page 27.*

● EUROPEAN PROJECTS

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

**SU:** Summer University Project

**AEGEE Day**

**Y Vote**

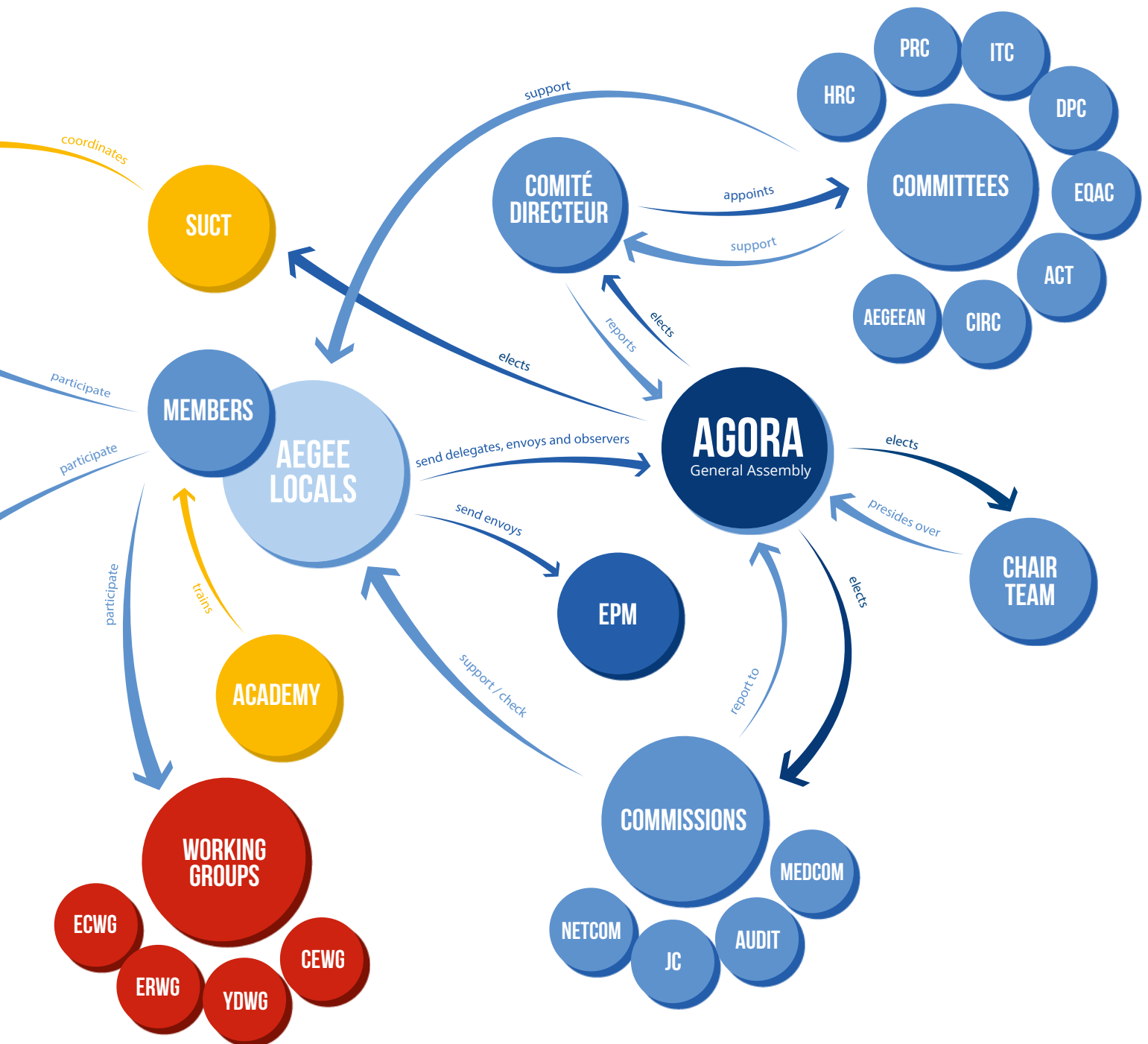
**EoT:** Europe on Track

**30YSU:** 30 Years of Summer University Project

**AEO:** AEGEE Election Observation

**EaP:** Eastern Partnership Project

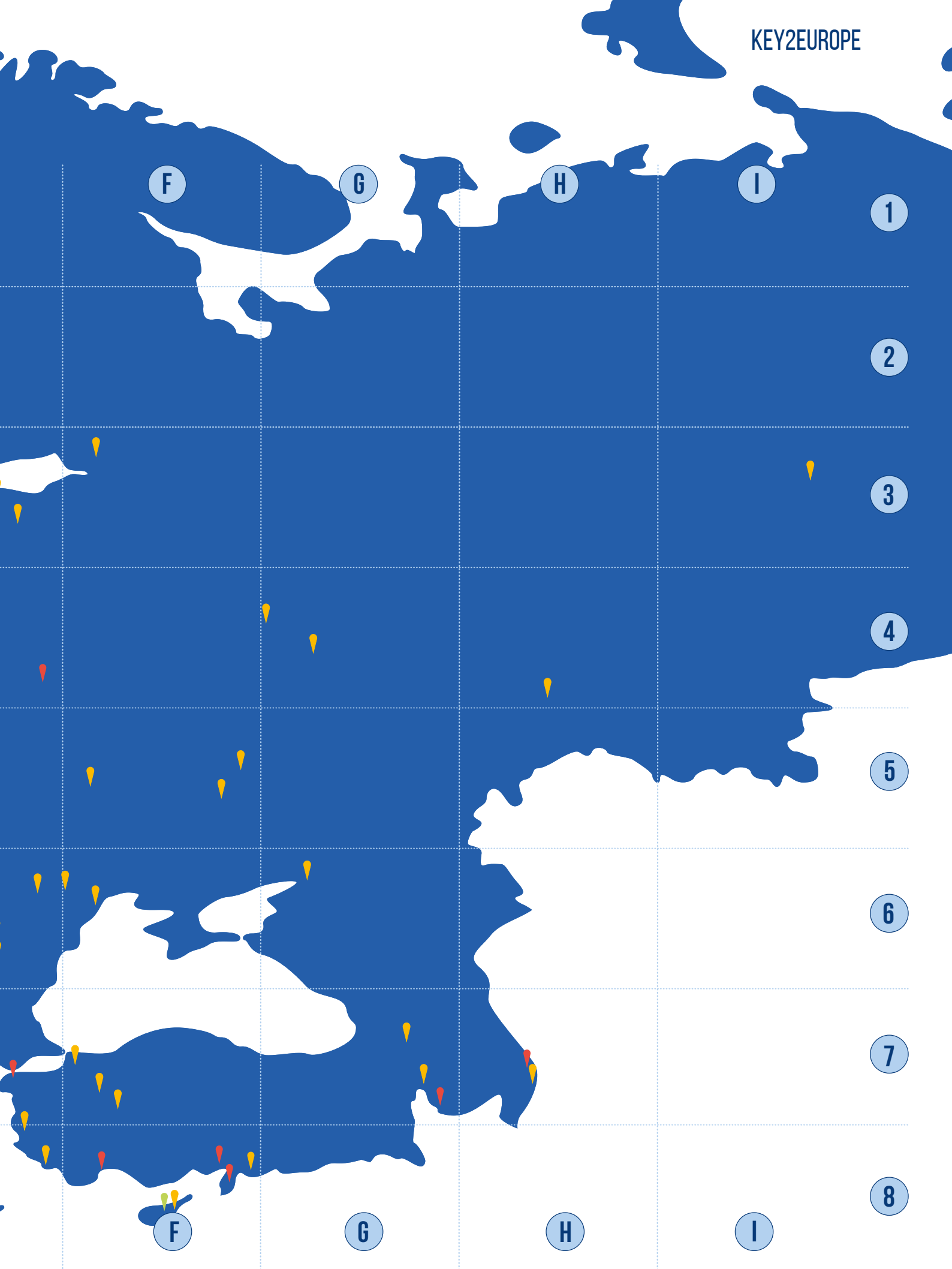
*Read more about AEGEE’s projects on page 26.*



# MAP OF THE NETWORK







## YOUR KEYS TO EUROPE

This list shows 161 cities in around 40 European countries where AEGEE is located. The antennae, contact antennae and contacts can be located on the map on the previous page with the grid coordinates listed behind them. Contact antennae are one step away from becoming a full antenna of AEGEE. Contacts are recent additions to the network which have not yet reached the status of contact antennae.

### ANTENNAE

A Coruña	<b>A7</b>	Gaziantep	<b>F8</b>
Aachen	<b>C5</b>	Gdańsk	<b>D4</b>
Alicante	<b>B7</b>	Genova	<b>C6</b>
Amsterdam	<b>C5</b>	Gliwice	<b>D5</b>
Ankara	<b>F7</b>	Grodno	<b>E4</b>
Athina	<b>E8</b>	Groningen	<b>C4</b>
Baki	<b>H7</b>	Hamburg	<b>C4</b>
Bamberg	<b>C5</b>	Heidelberg	<b>C5</b>
Barcelona	<b>B7</b>	Helsinki	<b>E3</b>
Bari	<b>D7</b>		
Beograd	<b>E6</b>	Iași	<b>E6</b>
Bergamo	<b>C6</b>	Ioannina	<b>E7</b>
Berlin	<b>D5</b>	Istanbul	<b>F7</b>
Białystok	<b>E4</b>	Izmir	<b>E8</b>
Bilbao	<b>B7</b>		
Bologna	<b>D6</b>	Kaiserslautern	<b>C5</b>
Bratislava	<b>D6</b>	Kharkiv	<b>F5</b>
Brescia	<b>C6</b>	Köln	<b>C5</b>
Brno	<b>D5</b>	Kraków	<b>D5</b>
Brussel-Bruxelles	<b>C5</b>	Kyiv	<b>F5</b>
București	<b>E6</b>		
Budapest	<b>D6</b>	L'viv	<b>E5</b>
Burgos	<b>B7</b>	Las Palmas	<b>A6</b>
Cagliari	<b>C7</b>	Leiden	<b>C5</b>
Castelló	<b>B7</b>	León	<b>B7</b>
Catania	<b>D8</b>	Leuven	<b>C5</b>
Chișinău	<b>F6</b>	Lille	<b>C5</b>
Cluj-Napoca	<b>E6</b>	Ljubljana	<b>D6</b>
		London	<b>B5</b>
		Lublin	<b>E5</b>
Darmstadt	<b>C5</b>		
Debrecen	<b>E6</b>	Maastricht	<b>C5</b>
Delft	<b>C5</b>	Madrid	<b>B7</b>
Dresden	<b>D5</b>	Mağusa	<b>F8</b>
Düsseldorf	<b>C5</b>	Manchester	<b>B4</b>
		Mannheim	<b>C5</b>
Eindhoven	<b>C5</b>	Maribor	<b>D6</b>
Enschede	<b>C5</b>	Messina	<b>D8</b>
Erfurt	<b>D5</b>	Milano	<b>C6</b>
Eskişehir	<b>F7</b>	Moskva	<b>G4</b>
		Muğla	<b>E8</b>
Firenze	<b>D7</b>	München	<b>D6</b>
Frankfurt am Main	<b>C5</b>		

Napoli	<b>D7</b>	Warszawa	<b>E5</b>
Nijmegen	<b>C5</b>	Wien	<b>D6</b>
Niš	<b>E7</b>	Wrocław	<b>D5</b>
Novi Sad	<b>D6</b>		
		Yerevan	<b>G7</b>
Odessa	<b>F6</b>		
Osnabrück	<b>C5</b>	Zagreb	<b>D6</b>
Oviedo	<b>B7</b>	Zaragoza	<b>B7</b>
		Zielona Góra	<b>D5</b>
Palermo	<b>D8</b>		
Paris	<b>B5</b>		
Passau	<b>D5</b>		
Pátra	<b>E7</b>		
Pécs	<b>D6</b>		
Pisa	<b>D7</b>		
Ploiesti	<b>E6</b>	Adana	<b>F8</b>
Plzeň	<b>D5</b>	Antalya	<b>F8</b>
Poznań	<b>D5</b>	Banja Luka	<b>D6</b>
Praha	<b>D5</b>	Çanakkale	<b>E7</b>
		Cosenza	<b>D7</b>
Reggio Calabria	<b>D8</b>	Ferrara	<b>D6</b>
Roma	<b>D7</b>	Hatay	<b>F8</b>
Rostov-na-Donu	<b>G6</b>	Karlsruhe	<b>C5</b>
Ryazan	<b>G4</b>	Katowice	<b>D5</b>
		Lisboa	<b>A7</b>
Salerno	<b>D7</b>	Lyon	<b>C6</b>
Samara	<b>H4</b>	Málaga	<b>B8</b>
Sankt-Peterburg	<b>F3</b>	Minsk	<b>E4</b>
Santander	<b>B7</b>	Naxçivan	<b>G7</b>
Sheffield	<b>B4</b>	Padova	<b>D6</b>
Siena	<b>D7</b>	Peiraiás	<b>E8</b>
Skopje	<b>E7</b>	Podgorica	<b>D7</b>
Sofia	<b>E7</b>	Porto	<b>A7</b>
Stuttgart	<b>C5</b>	Riga	<b>E4</b>
		Sibiu	<b>E6</b>
Tallinn	<b>E3</b>	Stockholm	<b>D3</b>
Tartu	<b>E3</b>	Sumqayit	<b>H7</b>
Tbilisi	<b>G7</b>	Tarragona	<b>B7</b>
Tenerife	<b>A6</b>	Tiranë	<b>D7</b>
Thessaloniki	<b>E7</b>	Toulouse	<b>B6</b>
Tilburg	<b>C5</b>		
Torino	<b>C6</b>		
Toruń	<b>D5</b>		
Treviso	<b>D6</b>		
Tyumen	<b>I3</b>		
Udine	<b>D6</b>	Angers	<b>B6</b>
Utrecht	<b>C5</b>	København	<b>D4</b>
		Nicosia	<b>F8</b>
Valencia	<b>B7</b>	Würzburg	<b>C5</b>
Valladolid	<b>B7</b>		
Valletta	<b>C8</b>		
Verona	<b>D6</b>		
Vigo	<b>A7</b>		
Voronezh	<b>F5</b>		

### CONTACT ANTENNAE

### CONTACTS

# STATISTICS

**33**

**YEARS OLD**

founded in 1985



**40**

**COUNTRIES**



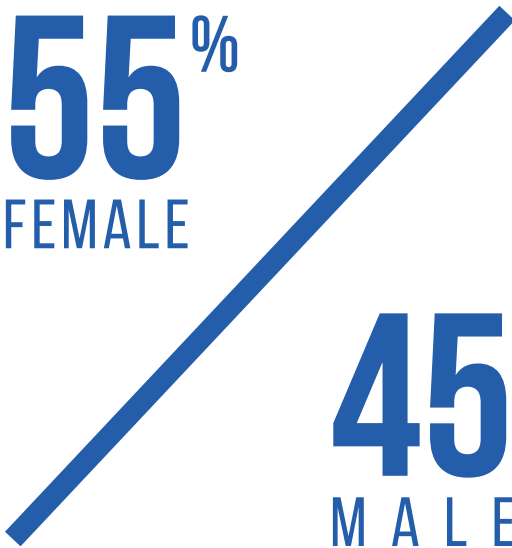
**161**

**LOCALS**



**55%**

**FEMALE**



**45%**

**MALE**

**13 000**

**AEGEEANS**



**22**

**AVERAGE AGE**

> **100**  
EUROPEAN EVENTS

**7** EUROPEAN  
PROJECTS

**30** SUMMER  
UNIVERSITY  
YEARS PROJECT

WITH OVER  
**110 000**  
PEOPLE INVOLVED

 **60 000**  
LIKES ON FACEBOOK PAGE

 **1000**  
FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM  
@AEGEE\_EUROPE IN 3 MONTHS

**TELEGRAM**  
**CHANNEL**   
T.ME/AEGEE\_EUROPE

# AEGEEGRAM

@o.miklasinska



93 likes

@aegeealicante



41 likes

@yvoteu



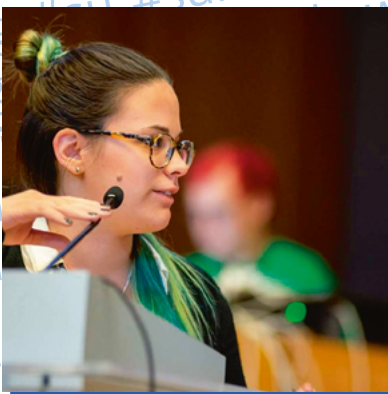
46 likes

@salikusiani



91 likes

@walkonmyway



60 likes

@ritastrivia



121 likes

@laurachrist1ne



188 likes

@kirschplunder



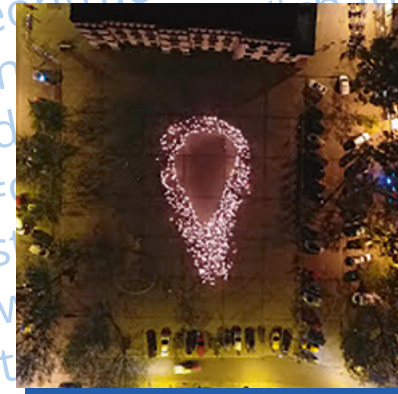
68 likes

@aegee\_beograd



53 likes

@aegee\_krakow



233 likes

@europeontrack



117 likes

@martyna\_adamiec



79 likes

# FOCUS AREAS - THE THEMATIC PART OF AEGEE

The thematic section of Strategic Plan 2017-2020 defines new Focus Areas, i.e. 4 fields of interest on which we, as AEGEE, focus for three consecutive years, as of 1st August 2017. Among the 19 submitted Focus Area Ideas, participants of Ideas Factory in León have decided on the following ones:

**EQUAL RIGHTS** - with its main aim to educate young people about the problem of discrimination based on gender identity, expression and sexual orientation, in combination with other forms of discrimination (connected with race, religion, nationality), and to also promote equity from an intersectional perspective.

**CIVIC EDUCATION** - connected with all activities directly contributing to the development of civic competences (skills, knowledge and attitudes, required to be an active, democratic, responsible and critical citizen) of young people as well as enlightening decision-makers on the key role of civic education in society and pushing them to take due actions.

**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT** - activities and projects aiming to provide young people with various opportunities to gain transversal skills and competences, which will contribute to their employability as well as personal development.

**EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP** - with the objective of developing a sense of European belonging among young people and empowering them to become both more active and critical European citizens, AEGEE's aim is not only to provide them with education on the socio-cultural differences and similarities of Europe, but also to raise awareness on the importance of youth participation in European processes.





## ACTION AGENDA 2017-2018

To put the thematic focus areas of the Strategic Plan into practice within the Network, each year a new Action Agenda is developed during the European Planning Meeting (EPM). In this Action Agenda, concrete goals (objectives) are given for the aims of the focus areas to be worked with in the next year.

### EQUAL RIGHTS

The Focus Area of Equal Rights has the aim to acknowledge and tackle discrimination based on gender identity, expression and sexual orientation, promoting equity from an intersectional perspective.

#### Objectives:

1. Educate 2000 young people on the intersectional approach to equal rights issues regarding (but not limited to) gender equality, LGBT+ and racism.
2. Send AEGEE members to 30 external events to develop relevant expertise on the topic of equal rights and write articles to The AEGEEan about these events in order to share the knowledge.
3. Organise 15 events in cooperation with relevant partners in the field of equal rights.

### EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

The Focus Area of European Citizenship has the aim to empower young people to become active and critical European citizens by educating them on the diversity of European cultures and by enabling them to take an active role in shaping the European project.

#### Objectives:

1. Involve 2000 young people in interactive social media actions in which they are challenged to try different cultural practices.
2. Involve 500 of young people in activities aimed at exploring Europeanness, cultural stereotypes and unequal levels of opportunity for young people across the AEGEE network (e.g. related to visa barriers, socio-economic conditions).
3. Educate 500 young people on European politics (EU and non-EU) through workshops, case studies, study trips, debates and conferences.

### CIVIC EDUCATION

The Focus Area of Civic Education has the aim to promote civic education by increasing the civic competences of young people and by putting civic education on the political agenda.

#### Objectives:

1. Organise 30 workshops, debates or conferences reaching 1000 people in order to educate them on political systems.
2. Deliver workshops on civic education to 500 pupils of high schools in 15 different cities.
3. Develop a workshop toolkit on critical thinking in collaboration with experts on the subject and deliver it in 10 European events.
4. Follow up on the ECI 'More Than Education' by publishing 4 articles in external, edited media and by participating in the European Commission's revision of the European Citizens' Initiative.

### YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Focus Area of Youth Development has the aim to provide young people with opportunities to gain transversal skills and competences that contribute to their personal and professional development.

#### Objectives:

1. Have 10 training courses organised by locals, in cooperation with European bodies and/or external associations, on personal development and transversal skills attended by 250 AEGEEans.
2. Have 70 locals organise a local training event on personal development and/or transversal skills with minimum 10 attendees per event.
3. Design, implement and evaluate 20 activities which contribute to the personal awareness of competences and learning opportunities gained through volunteering in AEGEE.



**EQUAL RIGHTS WORKING GROUP**

The Focus Area of Equal Rights aims to acknowledge and tackle discrimination based on gender identity, expression and sexual orientation and promote equity from an intersectional perspective. The ERWG ensures that AEGEE focuses parts of its activities and advocacy on Equal Rights and that the yearly objectives of the Action Agenda are met. It develops its own projects and content, and supports locals in organising events and activities. It is composed by a maximum of eight members with a one year mandate.



**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

As the Youth Development Working Group (YDWG), we believe that self-development is one of the most important means for personal success and we know that AEGEE offers a lot of resources and opportunities for our members to develop themselves. As the Working Group, we want to help everyone get sexy brains through delivering (online) trainings, our materials database of workshops and useful materials, sharing training opportunities and much more. Find us on Facebook to find out everything!



**CIVIC EDUCATION WORKING GROUP**

Civic education aims at learning the competences, i.e. skills, knowledge and attitudes, required to be an active, democratic, responsible and critical citizen. Its ultimate goal is to educate the population on democratic citizenship and make them aware of their rights and responsibilities. There are many subtopics connected to civic education, such as: Intercultural communication, Media literacy and hate-speech online, Interreligious communication, Functioning of EU institutions, Political knowledge, Critical thinking, Human rights education, Participation in elections and democratic decision-making, Environmental sustainability, Citizens' rights and duties, Global education, etc.



**EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP WORKING GROUP**

The Focus Area European Citizenship has the aim to empower young people to become active and critical European citizens by educating them on the diversity of European cultures and by enabling them to take an active role in shaping the European project. This is achieved thanks to organization of thematic conferences on political and cultural topics throughout Europe beyond the EU countries as well, publication of booklets to help organize educational trips to the EU institutions and obtain a traineeship there, and strengthening collaboration with the EU bodies within the framework of pan-European projects such as European Year of Cultural Heritage and other NGOs.

## PROJECTS



The **Summer University Project** was born in 1988 with the intention of promoting European integration, and it is currently the biggest project in AEGEE which involves more than 2000 young people every year. Summer Universities are events that take place during the summer in most of the cities where AEGEE is present, for a period of one to four weeks. Understanding and exploring the multicultural dimension of the European continent, tasting its diversity, removing national borders, fighting for tolerance and becoming open-minded citizens are only some of the reasons why twenty to fifty young Europeans attend Summer Universities.



**Europe on Track (EoT)** has taken place in 2012, 2014 and every year since 2016. In each edition, selected ambassadors have travelled across Europe by train with the support of InterRail to capture young people's vision on the future of

Europe through photos, videos and interviews. In this year's edition, twenty local events and more than one hundred interviews were conducted on sustainable development.



The **AEGEE Election Observation Project (AEO)** provides youth's perspective on elections. This is achieved

by training and deploying young people (18-30) on observation missions to parliamentary elections across Europe. Mission reports focus on the challenges young people face as voters, candidates, and generally as actors in the electoral process. AEGEE Election Observation Missions are open to AEGEE members and non-members alike. Since 2014, nearly 500 observers have been deployed on 20 missions to 14 countries.



**Y Vote** is a European-wide campaign designed to encourage young people in Europe to make informed choices at the European Parliament elections. The project believes, that youngsters need to receive better information regarding the European

elections, European institutions and the European Union in general to become active citizens. Therefore, conventions and local actions for AEGEEans and young citizens will be organised in the course of one year and a voting guide will be developed to help voters find out how to vote in their country.



### 30 Years of Summer University Project.

2018 marks the 30th anniversary of AEGEE's longest running project - Summer Universities! On this occasion AEGEE takes a look back at its history and looks forward to the future of SUs. Throughout the summer season, celebrations happen all around the network. The new Summer Events pilot 'Summer Breaks' is introduced and teams of adventurers travel across the network to capture insights of different SUs. The project's core team is supported by many assistants and adventurers. Together, they create workshops, audiovisual materials and an anniversary booklet.



The **AEGEE Day** is a project that aims at organising at least one activity per member organisation to show

the strength of the network and to unite our members, regardless of where they are based. This year's edition focuses on Youth Development under the title of Stepping Stones. The teams build around seven people working on content development, contact with the locals, communication, etc., and a pool of ambassadors that are the key to help the locals organise activities.



### AEGEE Eastern Partnership Project

2016 - 2018 is an undertaking created out of commitment of young Europeans who understand the importance of youth initiative. We recognise the necessity to provide young leaders, activists and entrepreneurs with opportunities to experience the advantages of work in an international environment; to encounter cultural diversity and to establish a relationship of friendship and mutual respect among themselves.

## COMMISSIONS AND OTHER BODIES

### COMMISSIONS

A Commission is supervising and ensuring compliance with the rules that are governing the functioning of AEGEE.



#### Audit Commission

The Audit Commission is responsible for auditing, checking, reporting, improving and investigating on the finances of AEGEE-Europe, AEGEE-Europe events and Antennae. They are also actively supporting Locals in improving the quality of their Financial Reports and create a space for economic/financial discussions.



#### Juridical Commission (JC)

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



#### Mediation Commission

The Mediation Commission provides expertise in the field of conflict management and acts as a mediator in conflict situations aiming for reconciliation from a neutral standpoint. Moreover, it acts as the ombudsman for cases concerning data privacy. It consists of four AEGEE members and the president of the Juridical Commission, as well as a member of the Comité Directeur as an observer. The Mediation Commission can be addressed by any person or Body in AEGEE via [medcom@aegee.org](mailto:medcom@aegee.org)



#### Network Commission (NetCom)

The Network Commission is the body entitled to strengthen, support and help the Network. It works in close cooperation with the Network Director and all the AEGEE Locals, and is functioning essentially as a bridge between AEGEE-Europe and the Locals. Network Commissioners take measures to help threatened Locals and support the new ones, while motivating the Antennae to grow and to develop themselves. Besides that, they organise Network Meetings (NWMs) and Regional Training Courses (RTCs).

### OTHER BODIES



#### Chair Team

The Chair Team presides over the Agora - Statutory Event of AEGEE-Europe. The team has four positions: Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (elected for one year, chairing and managing the Agora), Secretary of the Agora (responsible for the minutes), IT Responsible of the Chair Team (responsible for the IT management of the event). They can take Job Shadowers and Secretary Assistants to support them with their workload.



#### AEGEE Academy

AEGEE-Academy is an official partner association of AEGEE-Europe, functioning as the organisation's official pool of trainers. Several times a year, AEGEE-Academy organises European Schools on different topics, as well as other training courses. AEGEE-Academy addresses the internal education needs of the Network and supports Locals with trainers and training materials whenever needed.

## COMMITTEES

A Committee supports the work of AEGEE-Europe in specific organisational fields. Their role is to help locals and European Bodies by providing them with services, information, knowledge, materials and infrastructure needed to fulfil their tasks.



### Action Agenda Coordination Committee (ACT)

The Action Agenda Coordination Committee supports the locals and European Bodies in the implementation of the Action Agenda, explains the importance of putting the thematic Focus Areas into practice, and measures the final fulfilment of the goals that we as an organisation want to achieve. The team also contributes to the drafting of the new Action Agenda at the European Planning Meeting.



### Corporate and Institutional Relations Committee (CIRC)

The Corporate and Institutional Relations Committee supports the financial stability of AEGEE-Europe by developing corporate and institutional fundraising strategies and partnerships. CIRC also assist any local or body that needs help with fundraising.



### Events Quality Assurance Committee (EQAC)

The Events Quality Assurance Committee works on improving the quality standards and making the impact of AEGEE events by managing the assessment procedure from preparing and submitting the event application forms, supporting the organisers, to the final evaluation once the event has taken place.



### Human Resources Committee (HRC)

The Human Resources Committee supports and educates the Network of AEGEE in the field of Human Resources Management. Among their tasks is raising the awareness of the importance of AEGEE Identity, coordinating the implementation of a tailored HR cycle, making sure through Internal Education that individual new members receive all necessary skills and knowledge. Finally, they also provide mentoring and guidance to the European Bodies, locals and individuals for example through the mentorship system during statutory events.



### Information Technology Committee (ITC)

The Information Technology Committee supports AEGEE-Europe in everything related to IT by offering support to users and maintaining the hardware. Among other tasks, they are responsible for the development of the new Online Membership System (OMS) and the maintenance of the current membership system and the mailing lists.



### Public Relations Committee (PRC)

The Public Relations Committee supports the AEGEE Network in terms of communication, public relations, graphic design, development and implementation of the Visual Identity. Their members are in constant contact with locals and European Bodies aiding their needs in terms of PR materials, campaign strategies and further tools for improving the visibility of their actions.



### The AEGEEan

The AEGEEan is the online magazine reporting on AEGEE-Europe's activity. Founded in 2011, it contains articles on European bodies, members, events and current topics in Europe. The Press Team is reporting live on statutory events for members who can't attend.



### Data Privacy Committee (DPC)

The aim of this committee is to support AEGEE-Europe's path to compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation, a new set of EU regulations that came into force on 25th of May. The main activities of the committee include: creating an overview of data flows; establishing a register of processing operations; developing a data breach protocol (including a register of data breaches); developing processing agreement contracts for third parties; exploring possibilities of how to obtain the necessary consent of members of AEGEE antennae to gather and process their data by AEGEE-Europe; and answering questions relevant for the implementation of the GDPR.

## INTEREST GROUPS

An Interest Group (IG) is an informal group of AEGEE members interested in one particular topic. The purpose of such group is to create a space in AEGEE to gather members with the same interest and provide a space for discussion for them.



The **Culture Interest Group (CIG)** consists of enthusiastic European culture lovers that aim to spread culture in any form, from folkloristic concepts to the international sphere. Its members write a multicultural blog called

“Momus” ([www.aegeemomus.eu](http://www.aegeemomus.eu)).



The goal of the **Language Interest Group (LIG)** is to raise the awareness within AEGEE about the value of multilingualism, to encourage and help AEGEEans to learn more foreign languages

and to discuss issues related to language policies, minority languages and linguistic diversity. The main project organised by this interest group is the yearly European Day of Languages.



The **Migration Interest Group (MIGR)** focuses its activities on raising awareness about the current global and European situation on migrants from different perspectives; sharing best practices to contribute to the internal education regarding migration in AEGEE;

taking concrete initiatives of volunteering; participating at Migration-related conferences and meetings representing AEGEE Europe; and advocating the rights of migrants.



The **LGBT+ Interest Group** aims to make Europe a better, more tolerant and more open-minded place by raising awareness and

creating discussion about LGBT related topics.



The **Society & Environment Interest Group** aims to make a lasting change towards sustainability. Our goals are spreading awareness, education and making AEGEE itself more sustainable. We

have an active Facebook group, give workshops and push for a change in practice such as more sustainable Agorae and Summer Universities. We are a motivated team that strongly values the fun side of change making. We hope that AEGEE takes a leading role in sustainability to cherish our wonderful organisation and our planet!



The **Gender Equality Interest Group** creates a space for discussion and learning about issues regarding gender. It strives for equality within AEGEE network as well as outside of it, focusing on gender and taking into account other ways of discrimination from an intersectional perspective.



The **Politics Interest Group (POLIG)** is a body of AEGEE aiming to increase political education within AEGEE, break the insecurity of sharing political ideas, discuss

theory vs practical, broaden our horizons, feed our curiosity, get instant political news as local and work for a better society as young people. One can start political discussions with your fellow locals by organising Europe Cafés in your city with us, and with internationals on our Facebook group as well as in POLIG’s future events to come.

## PATRONS OF AEGEE



### **Eva Maydell**

Member of the European Parliament (EPP),  
Co-Chair of the Youth Intergroup and Pres-  
ident of European Movement International  
*Permanent patron of AEGEE-Europe*



### **Brando Benifei**

Member of the European Parliament (S&D)  
and Vice-Chair of the Youth Intergroup  
*Permanent patron of AEGEE-Europe*



### **Federica Mogherini**

High Representative of the Union for Foreign  
Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of  
the Commission  
For: *European Planning Meeting Yerevan (2018)*



### **Jo Leinen**

Member of European Parliament (S&D)  
and Former President of European Move-  
ment International  
For: *Autumn Agora Catania (2017)*



### **Antonio Tajani**

President of the European Parliament  
For: *Autumn Agora Catania (2017)*



### **Rainer Wieland**

Vice President of the European Parliament  
For: *Autumn Agora Catania (2017)*



### **Viviane Reding**

Former Vice President of the European  
Commission  
For: *European Boards' Meeting Lublin (2014)*



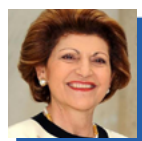
### **Ban Ki-moon**

Secretary General of the United Nations  
For: *Autumn Agora Zaragoza (2013)*



### **Herman Van Rompuy**

Former President of the European Council  
For: *Spring Agora Rhein Neckar (2013)*



### **Androulla Vassiliou**

Former Commissioner for Education,  
Multilingualism, Culture and Youth  
For: *European Boards' Meeting Valletta (2013)*



### **Martin Schulz**

President of the European Parliament  
For: *Autumn Agora Budapest (2012), Spring  
Agora Rhein Neckar (2013) and the Y Vote  
2014 campaign (2013-2014)*



### **José Manuel Barroso**

Former President of the  
European Commission  
For: *Autumn Agora Budapest (2012)*



### **Dr. James Skelly**

Director Emeritus of the Baker Institute  
for Peace and Conflict Studies at Juniata  
College, Pennsylvania  
For: *Beyond Europe Flagship Project (2010)*



### **Baroness Catherine Ashton**

Former First Vice President of the  
European Commission  
For: *Eastern Partnership Project (2012)*

### **MEMBERS OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT FOR EUROPE ON TRACK PROJECT (2012)**

Marian Harkin (ALDE)  
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (EPP)  
Katarína Neveďalová (S&D)  
Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D)

### **MEMBERS OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT Y VOTE 2014 CAMPAIGN (2013-2014)**

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)  
Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D)  
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D)  
Joachim Zeller (EPP)  
Gabriel Mato Adrover (EPP)

## HONORARY MEMBERS

*Honorary Members are individuals who have performed outstanding service to or support for AEGEE-Europe and therefore have been awarded the highest recognition in our association. Nominations are submitted by locals or bodies of AEGEE-Europe and are subject to ratification at the Agora.*



**Franck Biancheri**  
1989, AEGEE-Paris

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



**Zsuzsa Kigyós**  
1995, AEGEE-Budapest

Founder of AEGEE-Budapest in 1990, Organiser of the Agora in Budapest in 1991, the first Agora in Central and Eastern Europe, President of AEGEE-Europe 1993-1994. Recognised for her involvement in establishing AEGEE in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as being AEGEE-Europe's first female president.



**Georg von der Gablentz**  
1993, AEGEE-Berlin

President of AEGEE-Europe 1990-1992, President of the East-West Working Group, President of AEGEE-Berlin. Recognised for his contribution in increasing the participation of AEGEE antennae in the decision-making process of AEGEE, as well as for his initiatives to open up AEGEE to students from Central and Eastern European countries.



**Philipp von Klitzing**  
1996, AEGEE-Aachen

Member of the Comité Directeur in 1993/1994. Editor-in-Chief of the OneEurope Magazine 1994-1998, and ongoing support for the past twenty years of AEGEE's technical infrastructure. Recognised for his contribution of introducing the concept of long-term strategic planning and yearplan projects that helped AEGEE to streamline and focus its activities, and also for his enormous dedication to the IT infrastructure of the organisation.



**Vittorio Dell'Aquila**  
1993, AEGEE-Milano

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



**Stefan Recksiegel**  
1999, AEGEE-Karlsruhe

One of the leading people of AEGEE's IT Working Group in the early years of the internet. Administrator of the first AEGEE server, President of AEGEE-Karlsruhe. Recognised for innovations and improvements which he brought forward in the field of IT in AEGEE, and as well for his contribution in establishing AEGEE on Cyprus.



**Jeroen Hoogerwerf**  
1993, AEGEE-Amsterdam

Chairperson of the Agora 1990-1991, President of AEGEE-Europe 1992-1993, President of AEGEE-Amsterdam, first Chief Editor of the News Bulletin 1988-1989.



**Markus Schönherr**  
2001, AEGEE-Passau

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



**Michael Merker**  
1993, AEGEE-Leipzig

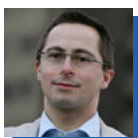
Member of the Comité Directeur of AEGEE-Europe 1990-1992, Vice-President of AEGEE-Europe 1991-1992, Chairperson of the Agora 1994-1995, founder of AEGEE-Leipzig, the first AEGEE antenna behind the Iron Curtain in 1990. Recognised for his involvement in AEGEE's expansion to the East and the foundation of new locals beyond the Iron Curtain.





**Michiel Van Hees**  
2002, AEGEE-Eindhoven

Member of the Coordination Team of the AEGEE-Europe Yearplan Projects "Find Your Way" in 1996 and "Europe and Euro" in 1997, creator of AEGEE.tv in 2002, creator and organiser of several Media Schools, Liaison Officer towards the European Cultural Foundation in 1996, President of AEGEE-Eindhoven, Main Organiser of the Presidents Meeting in Eindhoven 1996, founder and President of AEGEE-Arnheim in 1998. Recognised for his contribution to AEGEE-Europe projects and for introducing AEGEE.tv and Media Schools.



**Olivier Genkin**  
2005, AEGEE-Mainz/Wiesbaden

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



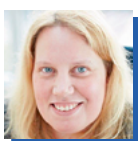
**Gunnar Erth**  
2006, AEGEE-Szeged

Editor-in-Chief of five Keys to Europe, among them the 20th Anniversary Book, Organiser of five European Schools, two PRES and several other European trainings, Member of the Comité Directeur 1996, Network Commissioner 1997-1998, Members Commissioner 1999-2000, President of the Human Rights Working Group 1995-1996, Board member of the PRWG, Founding member of the AEGEE Academy, Member of the Coordination Team of the AEGEE-Europe Yearplan Project "Find Your Way". Recognised for his contribution to AEGEE-Europe's publications and human resources trainings.



**Silvia Baita**  
2009, AEGEE-Cagliari

President of AEGEE-Europe 2004-2005, Network Director of AEGEE-Europe 2004, Vice-Chairperson of the Agora 2006, PRWG board member 2002-2003. Recognised for being a prime example of female leadership for many years, being a rare person in the history of AEGEE who took both the roles of the President of AEGEE and Chairperson of the Agora.



**Kamala Schütze**  
2009, AEGEE-Gießen, AEGEE-Termoli

Secretary-General of AEGEE-Europe 2004-2005, Project Manager and member of the Summer University Coordination Team 2000-2007, Address Book Coordination Team member 2003-2007. Recognised for her years of devotion to the Summer University Project of AEGEE-Europe, and for bringing innovation and quality to AEGEE's biggest and most important project to this day.



**Burcu Becermen**  
2012, AEGEE-Ankara

President of AEGEE-Europe in 2005, European Institutions Director of AEGEE-Europe 2004-2005, Project Manager of the "Turkish-Greek Civic Dialogue Project" 2002-2005. Young European of the Year in 2006, awarded by the Schwarzkopf Foundation. Recognised for her contribution to peace-building, people-to-people contacts and cooperation of young people and organisations in the region by managing the large-scale Dialogue Project.



**David Stulik**  
2013, AEGEE-Praha

Vice-President of of AEGEE-Warszawa 1991-1993, one of the first AEGEE members who got accepted at Central European University, speaker of the East-West WG - 1993-1994 (helping many east locals open, when we decided to open AEGEE to east), Projects Director and Vice-President of AEGEE-Europe -1995-1996, Coordination Team of Find your Way project of AEGEE-Europe, Coordinator of the Case Study trip to Ukraine in 1995 - establishment of AEGEE antennae in Ukraine, first ever Young European of the Year, awarded by Schwarzkopf Foundation in 1997 (the year this award was created).



**Christophe Leclercq**  
2014, AEGEE-Köln

He was part of the first group of AEGEEans who shaped this organisation (involved in the famous dinner with French President Mitterand and the strong lobby towards the Erasmus programme), and after his active time in AEGEE he founded Euractiv, one of the leading online media platforms for European issues. He has provided valuable support to our European Boards in Brussels year after year, with his personal advice and through a special partnership with Euractiv.



**Bernhard Müller**  
2017, AEGEE-Augsburg

Honorary member of his local, former AEGEE-Augsburg. In 1996, he was the founder of the Network Commission, during Autumn Agora Athina 1996. He was also the founder of the AEGEE-Academy in Spring Agora Barcelona 1999. CD member from Spring Agora Barcelona 1999, responsible for Internal Education.

## PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

### COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe advocates freedom of expression and of the media, freedom of assembly, equality, and the protection of minorities. The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial and educational support for European youth activities.

### ERASMUS+

The EU programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for the period 2014-2020. The aim of Erasmus+ is to contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy for growth, jobs, social equity and inclusion, as well as the aims of ET2020, the EU's strategic framework for education and training.



Erasmus+



### EUCAREERS

Are you looking for an exciting new career in a dynamic, fast-paced environment? The EU welcomes applicants from all walks of life, so a career with the EU means working with a diverse and multicultural group of colleagues. Discover more at [www.eu-careers.eu](http://www.eu-careers.eu)

### INTERRAIL

Interrail.eu is the online company for European rail passes. It offers Interrail passes that lets you travel through 30 European countries by train. Traveling to the adventurous Balkans, the sunny south, or the breath-taking nature in Scandinavia; with the convenience of a rail pass a unique adventure awaits you. Interrail passes are for European travelers only. Are you from a non-EU country? Check out Eurail passes at [www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com).



### EDUOPINIONS - REAL STUDENT REVIEWS

Do you recall how overwhelming it was to make a decision about your university? EDUopinions is a 'student community,' it is the new way to connect students from around the world and help them find their ideal studies through genuine student reviews.

**SPOTAHOME**

SPOTAHOME.COM is an online booking platform for home rentals. They personally visit properties to bring you videos, photos, floorplan and detailed information to make the best choice. They offer the most comprehensive listings in Europe. Use the code AEGEESA25 for a 25% discount on all your bookings.

**N26**

N26 has redesigned banking for the smartphone, making it simple and fast. Opening an account takes 8 minutes and can be done from your smartphone. Withdrawals in the eurozone and bank transfers in euro have no fees.

**PRICewise**

Pricewise is the largest energy switching service in Europe. In 2013 they helped more than 500.000 European consumers switch supplier and save money. In the Netherlands they also have compare tools for telecom and insurance products. These tools help Dutch AEGEE members save money.



Microsoft



Podio



## AEGEE IN PLATFORMS



### EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM (YFJ)

The European Youth Forum is the umbrella platform of youth organisations in Europe, bringing together 100 youth organisations. It represents the common interests of millions of young people and advocates for youth rights in international institutions. AEGEE-Europe is currently represented in the Board by Luis Alvarado Martínez and present in various networks on topics like volunteering, funding, European Youth Strategy, mobility and education.



European  
Movement  
International

### EUROPEAN MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL (EMI)

The European Movement is the largest pan-European network of pro-European organisations. It is present in 39 countries and encompasses 36 international associations, bringing together European civil society, business, trade unions, NGOs, political parties, local authorities and academia. Since its foundation 70 years ago EMI has advocated in favour of European co-operation and integration, based on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, equality, justice, the respect for human rights and the rule of law. AEGEE-Europe is currently represented in the EMI board by Florian Hauger. This year, a group of AEGEEans was also present at Sharing Europe, EMI's celebration to mark the 70th anniversary of The Hague Congress where they gathered citizens movements from across Europe, stakeholders representing society at large, political parties, academia, business, trade unions, youth organisations, local government, environmental movements. Right before this event, the first Political Committee meetings took place, in which several AEGEEans are active as members until 2020.



### CIVIL SOCIETY EUROPE (CSE)

Civil Society Europe consists of various European civil society umbrella organisations. The aim of the platform is to facilitate and enable horizontal and vertical dialogue between the European civil society and policy makers. In a context of shrinking civic space in a number of EU countries, the focus of Civil Society Europe was to push for an overall strategy on promoting civic spaces and democracy, such as through the resolution on the 'European

Values Instrument' adopted by the European Parliament in April. The platform also produced a Civic Space Report giving the state of the art of civic space in Europe based on input from member organisations and beyond.



### EUROPEAN CIVIC FORUM (ECF)

The European Civic Forum is a transnational network that brings together over 100 associations and non-governmental organisations across 27 countries in Europe actively working on issues such as citizenship education, defence of Human Rights and the advocacy of Democracy. In January, forum launched the Civic Space Watch: collaborative online tool contributing to better observing the state of civic space across Europe by gathering together alerts from civil society, existing analyses and institutional resources. The beginning of the year also marked the launch of the MEGA campaign, calling on all of us to Make Europe Great for All. This year the representation of AEGEE-Europe in the Steering Committee was handed over from Maarten de Groot and Loes Rutten to Dorothea Harles. With the European Parliamentary Elections coming up, AEGEE's YVote campaign and ECF MEGA campaign will join forces to mobilise as many citizens as possible to make their voices heard.



### LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM (LLL Platform)

The Lifelong Learning Platform is an umbrella that gathers more than 40 European organisations active in the field of education, training and youth, coming from all over Europe and beyond. Currently these networks represent more than 50 000 educational institutions and associations covering all sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning. It aims to voice citizens' concerns about lifelong learning. The idea is that no one should be left out and that bridges are built across sectors to increase access to quality education for all. This vision is meant to ensure equity and social cohesion as well as active citizenship. The Lifelong Learning Platform believes that the objectives of education and training should not only be described in terms of employability or economic growth but also as a framework for personal development. By bringing together actors from all sectors of education and training, the Lifelong Learning Platform creates a space to exchange innovative practices, Europe-wide. The Platform also strives to set up a strengthened

dialogue between civil society organisations and public authorities in order to modernise our educational systems as well as to support public sector innovation. AEGEE is represented in the Steering Committee by Joanna Pankowska, former Projects Director of AEGEE-Europe.



### ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (AC)

The Advisory Council consists of 30 representatives from youth NGOs and networks which give input for all the

youth sector activities of the Council of Europe. It co-manages and co-decides on policies, programme priorities, and budget allocation. Until the end of 2017 AEGEE-Europe was represented by Marko Grdošić as the Chair of the AC.



### INFORMAL FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS (IFISO)

IFISO is a platform of 28 international student organisations, covering around 22 million students around the globe. It aims to support and improve international student organisations through networking, cooperation, and sharing knowledge and best practices. It can be compared to an AEGEE's network meeting, but between international organisations instead of AEGEE locals. There are two meetings per year. Last autumn it took place in Belgrade and was hosted by the International Forestry Students' Association. The big topics of discussions were mainly how to ensure quality in events, how to manage human resources, and an analysis of the differences of the training systems. The Spring meeting hosted by AEGEE-Europe instead focused on financial practices, and more pressing matters such as the new General Data Protection Regulation. Being located in Brussels, for the first time after many years, several organisations based in Brussels also participated and gave their input, a very good thing for the diversity of opinion.



### CONFERENCE OF INGOs OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Conference of INGOs of the

Council of Europe is a platform which provides space for civil society in the Council of Europe – one of the oldest government organisation on our continent. Within the Conference, we have 3 Thematic Committees: Education and Culture Committee, Human Rights Committee and Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee. Their purpose is to facilitate co-ordination between the INGOs in specific interest areas, serve as common interlocutors for all the Council of Europe bodies, and ensure more effective participation in the activities of these bodies. Beside that Conference organises country visits' in the member states, where with support from experts of law, the legislation regarding NGOs' is being checked.



### EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE

European Citizen Action Service is an international

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



### EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

The Eastern Partnership

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

# EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM (YFJ)

*by Loes Rutten, President of AEGEE-Europe*

When it comes to youth policies and youth rights in Europe and beyond, the European Youth Forum (YFJ) is their biggest defender and one of the largest stakeholders in the field. The Forum consists of 104 member organisations, national youth councils and international youth organisations. AEGEE has been a member of the youth forum since 1998 and ensures a good representation of the European students and young people in the Forum.

Throughout this academic year, YFJ and AEGEE found successful cooperation on many topics.

Both organisations supported the 'Transparency at Work' campaign to advocate for meaningful internships and the European Youth Forum submitted a legal complaint on the issue of unpaid internships to the Belgian state. AEGEE also provided input on the policies of the EU on the field of youth employment through the Youth Guarantee task force.

AEGEE participated in the 4th EU-Africa youth summit in Abijan, that was co-organised by the European Youth Forum and joined the campaign to drastically increase Erasmus funding in the next multiannual financial framework: Erasmus10!

During the Council of Members in Cascais, the policy paper on the Erasmus successor program was adopted, giving the Youth Forum the mandate to ensure proper funding for youth organisations, in cooperation with the expert group on Funding that AEGEE is part of.

Throughout the year, the youth forum did a lot of work on the EU youth strategy, both on the content through the European Youth Conferences in Tallinn and Sofia, where AEGEE contributed through the European Working Group of the Structured Dialogue, as on the structure and functioning of the strategy itself. The EU Youth Strategy proposal that was released by the European Commission in May has the potential include more young people in decision-making, change the attitude towards youth issues, and empower more youth organisations to carry out their invaluable work. The next step is to make it happen!



During the Council of Members in April, member organisations voted on positions including the one for the Multiannual Financial Framework of the European Union and on Sustainable Development. The next step is to work together to implement it! The largest scale event of the year took place in June in Strasbourg: the YoFest!, gathering 10 000 young people from around the continent to discuss relevant topics for youth and the future of Europe. AEGEE contributed to the content with workshops on inclusion and youth participation and mobilised one of the largest delegations of nearly 100 young people.

The next year, the cooperation for sure continues. European Parliamentary Elections are coming up and it is our responsibility as active youth around Europe to mobilise all young people to cast their votes during the elections. This is one of the key opportunities to #YouthUp Europe. We're looking forward to continue our battle for Youth Rights together with the European Youth Forum next year!

## AEGEE COOPERATES



### ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DE FRANCK BIANCHERI (AAFB)

Association des Amis de Franck

Biancheri aims to bring in and promote many actions in order to disclose Franck Biancheri's work to the general public in Europe and the world. As Franck Biancheri was the founder of AEGEE, there was a cooperation for the 30th Anniversary of our organisation. Since 2014, AAFB each year rewards an initiative in AEGEE with the Franck Biancheri Award.



### BOARD OF EUROPEAN STUDENTS OF TECHNOLOGY (BEST)

BEST is a student NGO

which provides communication, cooperation and exchange possibilities for students all over Europe. BEST and AEGEE share knowledge and best practices, work together on training opportunities and participate in each other's events.



### BRUSSELS INTERNS NGO (B!ngo)

B!NGO focuses on promoting quality internships, supporting interns and dialogue with

stakeholders on this matter. B!ngo and AEGEE-Europe cooperate on the basis of mutual promotion, exchange of events and initiatives related to quality internships.



### THINK YOUNG

Think Young is a Brussels-based think tank focusing on young Europeans. It

aims at mobilising young

Europeans into reflecting upon their future, believing in their potential and showing the results to political, business and social actors. AEGEE-Europe and Think Young cooperate on the basis of mutual promotion, exchange of events and sharing best practices.



### DEBATING EUROPE

Debating Europe is a platform which connects European citizens and politicians

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



### ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

The OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization and has a comprehensive approach to security that encompasses politico-military, economic and environmental, and human aspects. It addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities. All 57 participating States enjoy equal status, and decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis. AEGEE-Europe and OSCE maintain their link through AEGEE's Liaison Officer towards the OSCE. This year OSCE representatives provided a workshop for the Conference 'Citizenship at its Grassroots' by AEGEE-Warszawa and ECWG, OSCE has provided support for AEGEE Election Observation Project and in the preparations for the organisation of a side event during the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2018.



### ASIA-EUROPE FOUNDATION (ASEF)

ASEF (Asia-Europe Foundation) promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people

exchanges. They organize around 25 projects per year, involving 100+ events in Asia and Europe.

## 2017-2018: A YEAR TO REMEMBER

**It seems ages ago that seven of us presented our individual candidatures to join the Comité Directeur at Agora Enschede in May 2017. Some of us had never met each other before the elections. During that same general assembly, we were elected and given the mandate to guide the network through the European journey of the upcoming year.**

We moved to Brussels in July, where the previous Comité Directeur provided us with the necessary knowledge to hand the leadership over to us. What followed was a period of brainstorming, creating a common vision and compiling our ideas into one activity plan.

In September, 800 AEGEE members travelled down to Sicily for Agora Catania. Under the slogan 'Ideas in EUruption', delegates and visitors from 150 cities discussed about the actions that AEGEE, and Europe in general, should take on topics like youth participation, inclusion of refugees, European citizenship, youth development, civic education and equal rights, and how to maximise our impact in these fields as pan-European youth organisation.

During the Agora, we adopted a policy paper urging the revision of the European Citizens' Initiative, the only transnational tool for direct democracy, to make the tool more accessible, attractive and impactful. These policy recommendations were a result of the hand-on experiences we gained during our own ECI 'More than Education', advocating to put Civic Education higher on the European political agenda. The policy paper was presented during the closing event of our ECI at the European Economic and Social Committee in October, organised in cooperation with Irini Pari, the President of the EESC's ECI ad-hoc Group.

Until Christmas, the members of our Comité Directeur spread around the European continent to meet local change makers at Network Meetings from Alicante to Sankt-Peterburg, from Utrecht to Gaziantep.

The Spring was the period of Action Months, with the Working Groups for Youth Development, European Citizenship, Civic Education and Equal Rights took the spotlights to showcase their themes and while antennas around the continent organised activities related to the topics.

March was the month that close to 200 AEGEEans crossed unknown borders to arrive to Armenia, where AEGEE-Yerevan hosted the first youth conference of its size in the country's history, attended by the Armenian Minister of Education, the French and German ambassadors and representatives of political think tanks. With the freshly signed Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the EU and Armenia on the table, we discussed the international relations between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries in the context of AEGEE's dream for a borderless Europe. The European Planning Meeting also provided space for representatives of our network to plan the Action Agenda of the coming year. Another highlight of was a brainstorm meeting between Armenian and Turkish members of our network, to explore the possibilities of a Turkish-Armenian Civil Dialogue project.

Just one week later, the kick-off conference of the Europe on Track project took place in Thessaloniki. The conference on Smart Cities was the start of the journey of three teams of ambassadors that embarked a journey to 34 cities to deliver workshops on the theme of Sustainability and Climate change.

Even though the European Parliamentary Elections still seem far away, this year the Yvote 2019 team has already assembled itself to plan the entire framework for conventions and other activities related to the campaign to encourage as many young people to make their voices heard during the elections next year. Thanks to the support of the Directorate-General for Communications of





the European Parliament, the project already build up significant offline and online visibility.

16th of April marked the 33rd birthday of AEGEE-Europe, which is traditionally celebrated around the continent as 'AEGEE day'. This year's theme was 'Stepping Stones - The way to Youth Development'. Local activities included AEGEE Inspire sessions, language workshops and trainings on soft-skills like time management.

We realised how fast time flew by when suddenly Spring Agora Krakow became reality. Under the slogan 'Destination Europe', 850 of us discussed the challenges that our continent faces. AEGEE-Krakow provided high level content through panel discussions about freedom of the media, rule of law and nationalism. Moreover, it was the opportunity for antennas, international teams and ourselves as Comité Directeur to present our activities to the network. Delegates were well-prepared and contributed to intense discussions on the opportunities that our network should offer, the best way to allocate our resources and the direction our network should take. Within the focus area of Youth Development, we adopted a policy position on transversal skills.

It was also during Spring Agora Krakow, that our next Comité Directeur was elected. Seven brave AEGEEans found out that there is a year of adventure ahead of them and that they would join the headoffice in July to start their knowledge transfer.

Although the Spring Agora was the last statutory event of our board year, the last months of our term were still full of highlights. In May, AEGEE-Europe hosted the Informal Forum of International Student Organisations. Thanks to the help of AEGEE-Brussel/Bruxelles we were provided the space for leaders of more than 20 different international student organisations to exchange best practices, and to let them taste Belgian mussels, fries and beers.

June started with the European Youth Event en YoFest in Strasbourg, an event organised by the



European Parliament and European Youth Forum gathering 8000 young people to collaborate with EU decision-makers in building a better European Union. AEGEE contributed with a session on social inclusion and a fish bowl discussion called 'Meeting your representatives' with Members of the European Parliament Terry Reintke and Brando Benifei and was present with more than 40 representatives.

With the start of the summer, the activities of AEGEE's academic year didn't end. This summer we celebrated 30 years of Summer Universities. Besides 57 youth exchanges providing more than 1600 young people with the summer of their lives, ambassadors travelled from Summer University to Summer University to provide extra content and to celebrate the anniversary of AEGEE-Europe's longest lasting project.

The past year has been a rollercoaster of experiences. We travelled to all corners of the continent to meet members of antennas and project teams. As Comité Directeur we would like to express our gratitude to all of volunteers who helped us this year to bring Europe closer to young people.

Keep on rocking and see you somewhere in Europe,

*Comité Directeur 55*

*Fabrizio, Julia, Ksenia, Loes, Marco, María and Teresa*

ABOUT AEGEE

# PROJECTS

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

IN THE NETWORK

LOOKING FORWARD



## A 30 YEARS - LONG SUMMER

by Laura Garcia, Summer University Coordination Team, and Gunnar Erth, AEGEE-Gold

The Summer University project started in 1988, and since then it has become the flagship project of AEGEE. The project started as a way to improve foreign languages, with 10 language courses being organised back in 1988 in Bellaterra/Barcelona, Madrid, Sevilla, Heidelberg, Kiel, Milano, Amsterdam, Orléans, Paris, Toulouse. In the presentation book, written in both English and French, available to see at the Agora, there was this description:

*"Summer University presents European students with the opportunity to study a European language for two weeks at one of the several universities throughout Europe. Next to the language course itself, a leisure programme will be offered to introduce the students to the cultural, historical and social backgrounds and activities of their host city"*

The Summer University Project was initiated in order to underline the beliefs of AEGEE-Europe in a united young European society, in better communication between the states of the same continent, and much more.

the end of the booklet and had to be sent by post to the hosting locals. If the places for the desired SUs were already filled, there was a third option, which meant sending the candidate to another Summer University similar to the ones that they had applied for.



JANI DUGONIK



LAURA GARCIA RUEDA



LORENZO LIGAS



VASILIKI ANDRIOTI

SUCT 2017-2018



« IN 2018 SUMMER UNIVERSITY PROJECT CELEBRATES ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY. IT IS ALREADY 30 YEARS THAT AEGEE CONTRIBUTES EUROPEAN CONSCIOUSNESS TO YOUNG PEOPLE, FOSTERS A EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND OFFERS A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF EUROPEANS LIVING TOGETHER AS ONE COMMUNITY »

The main purpose of the project was to get young people familiar with other languages spoken in Europe and also with other countries' way of living and habits.

The Summer University Project has faced some changes since its creation. First of all, they way of how people could apply was completely different back to when the project started compared to today. The participants could choose two different language courses and be selected for one of them afterwards. The registration form could be found at

An interesting fact about the first Summer Universities is that they used to be open also for participants outside AEGEE, whereas today all the participants have to be members of the organisation. The confirmation process was similar to the one in use today, the only difference being, that the candidate had to pay the fee at least two weeks before the event.

During the development of the project, the application and the confirmation changed completely, mirroring the development of the

society. Nowadays, the confirmation system provides the applicants with more options and everything is coordinated online. Moreover, regarding the development of the project itself and how it has grown, in 1991, the Summer University Project sees for the first time central and eastern European locals organising a SU (Budapest, Cluj-Napoca, Moskva, Pécs, Praha and Riga).

As the project developed, more SU types were introduced (Summer University, Summer University +, Travelling Summer University and Summer Camp). Nowadays, there are three general types of Summer Universities: Summer Course, Summer Course Plus, and Travelling Summer University. The difference of the Summer Course Plus and the others is that the former requires professional teachers and more tuition hours.

In 1995, the Summer University Coordination Team, or SUCT, was created. They are the ones connecting and coordinating all Summer Universities within the Network together. This small team voluntarily dedicates numerous hours of their time to the success of this project.

The SUCT is a team of four AEGEE members from different parts of Europe, plus at least one of the member of the Board of Directors of AEGEE-Europe.

These team members have different tasks: Project Manager, Public Relations Responsible, Content Manager, Information Technology and Publications Responsible, Fundraiser.

In 2018 Summer University Project celebrates its 30th anniversary. It is already 30 years that AEGEE contributes European consciousness to young people, fosters a European identity and offers a practical example of Europeans living together as one community. Being 30 years old means that Summer University is the longest lasting project of the association. More than 1500 young people will participate in 57 Summer Universities this year, they once again will try to remove all national borders and feel "at home in Europe".

Since the beginning, from year to year up to 2000 students wait for exactly this project to experience all the best of it and then to spread their own summer stories among their friends, families, acquaintances and generally everyone. Summer University stories are special because they are written from bottom of the heart by highly motivated volunteer young organisers and passionate participants. They are created in a multicultural environment where everyone learns to live together, breaks down stereotypes and appreciates diversity brought by different cultures.



One of the most important aspects that make Summer University unique is the factor of human relationships that are developed in it. As an example we can set ourselves. Three out of the four members of current SUCT (2017-2018) Laura Garcia, Lorenzo Ligas and Vasiliki Andrioti have met each other in a SU in Cagliari at 2016 and then again in SUPS Skopje 2017. They have stayed close and through all the experiences faced this year they have become much attached to each other creating a real and true friendship that among others shares hopes, dreams, fears, good and bad times.

Leaving though history and experiences behind, the Summer University Project has been developed year by year, with a particular attention to the



position of the Content Manager in the past years. The position has to ensure that the number of tuition hours are fully respected by the organising locals, and as well that thematic Summer Universities are being organised with the cooperation of European Bodies and external trainers. The role has been recognised in Spring Agora Krakow, being voted as proposal, with a positive result.

This year Summer Break, a new typology of event introduced was introduced for the 30 Years of the Summer University Project. The goal of such shorter event is to give the opportunity to smaller locals to organise an European event, as well as testing the possibility of a shorter Summer University, that we will consider after the impact measurement of the Summer Break pilots.

Thinking on the future of Summer University Project, someone could start from the concerns that many share. We live in an era where Europeans already developed a travelling attitude and culture among Europeans, Summer University has to face and live up to different circumstances and expectations than it may have been back to when it started.

What needs to be done? Reevaluate the impact of the project and make it suitable to nowadays' requirements. Enhancing the content of the project on a general basis, as well as on the Summer Universities that are organised every year along the Network of AEGEE is one of the focus points on which all involved parts should work in the future. As important as this, is also to reconsider the way we, as AEGEEans promote the project among members and externals. With the occasion of 30

Years Anniversary we dare to say that the project is in front of another turning point and it is up to all of us, involved parts in any way, to take it to the next levels for another successful 30 years.

How has the Summer University Project actually been changing AEGEEans' lives? Laura, Lorenzo and Edoardo share their stories.

*"I was really happy when I received the email "you have been accepted" for the SU I applied. I arrived, the first day, surrounded by 30 strangers and, after 14 days, I felt as if they were part of my family. During my first SU I left my comfort zone doing things that I would not imagine I could do before. I had one of the best experiences of my life. It's not just two weeks of your life, it's a whole new life in two weeks. After Summer University, I started to get more and more involved in AEGEE, being part of the board of my local, going to many events, and now, I'm here, representing one of the loveliest projects in AEGEE.*

*I just can say a big thanks to this Project, and to all the AEGEEans who make Summer University possible. Thanks for the opportunities, for the memories, for the training, for the development, for the eurooptimism, for all the friends, for all the love. For making a better me."*

Laura García, SUCT

*"My first Summer University in 2016 simply changed my life and my goals in AEGEE.*

*After being PR Responsible for the Summer University "Bigger Better Stronger: Sardinian Challenge" in Cagliari, I decided that I wanted to be more active in AEGEE, being actively part of the project. I would have never imagined that I would have been elected as SUCT member the year after, together with Laura and Vasiliki, that were participants in that magic SU back in 2016. Summer Universities gave me the opportunity to meet amazing people, I will always love this project."*

Lorenzo Ligas, SUCT

*"Being a Main Coordinator of a Summer University wasn't an easy job but it was definitely worth it.*

*Before organising a SU I wouldn't ever have thought to organise any kind of event in my life, I used to be scared of talking in public, I didn't know how to work and manage a group of people, I wasn't confident in my skills, basically.*

*I will never stop thanking the Summer University Project for all the great benefits it gave me.*

*And I'm not talking just about improving my skills but especially about making great friends, which bonds will last forever. That's the power of this project, you learn, have fun, discover new perspectives of life and have the time of your life.*

*What really made me appreciate all the work we put into this event was the genuine compliments me and my team received from our participants, and from all the people who heard about the event, that was the time I realised what an incredible experience I had and it was such a rewarding feeling after all the efforts we put in such a project."*

Edoardo Luis Carrera, AEGEE-Torino



BEFORE ORGANISING A SU I WOULDN'T EVER HAVE THOUGHT TO ORGANISE ANY KIND OF EVENT IN MY LIFE, I USED TO BE SCARED OF TALKING IN PUBLIC, I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO WORK AND MANAGE A GROUP OF PEOPLE, I WASN'T CONFIDENT IN MY SKILLS

## EUROPE ON TRACK 5: OUR SUSTAINABLE WAY TO INTEGRATE EUROPE

by Europe on Track 2017-2018 team members

To raise awareness, to create a space for discussion and to capture the opinions of youth in Europe on important social issues - these are the aims of Europe on Track, an inspiring and adventurous youth-led project of AEGEE-Europe.

In 2018 we held the fifth edition of the project, and it was bigger than ever before! Thanks to Interrail, our ambassadors in teams of three (one videographer, one photographer and one interviewer per team) traveled by train across



« WE RECEIVED 400 APPLICATIONS FOR THE AMBASSADORS' POSITIONS, FROM 80 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. FOR THE FIRST TIME WE LAUNCHED A CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN SUPPORTED BOTH BY INDIVIDUALS AND CORPORATE PARTNERS »

15 countries in one month to deliver workshops, interview young people and organise local events in cooperation with 300 volunteers from 30 cities in Europe.

In June 2017, the new Project Team started to work on the fifth edition of the project. Thirteen new Project Team members, led by the ambassador of Europe on Track 4 Jorge Sánchez Hernández, had a clear and an ambitious goal - to take Europe on Track 5 to the next level. We started by collecting ideas for a new, big topic to discuss within AEGEE and even further. After receiving 32 suggestions, we carefully researched them all and decided to choose Sustainability and Climate Change! We were aware of the environmental crisis caused by irresponsible

human behaviour. We not only want to talk about it, but we also wanted to take real action. We decided to make the project CO2 neutral, to plant trees and above all, to inform young people about how to act responsibly and how they can have an impact on the Earth.

The next big step was having three teams instead of two as in the previous editions and therefore nine ambassadors instead of six. We received 400 applications for the ambassadors' positions, from 80 different countries. For the first time we also launched a crowdfunding campaign in which we were supported both by individuals and corporate partners such as Urban Adventures. Having three teams meant having three different

routes and more AEGEE locals to engage in Europe on Track. We involved 31 AEGEE antennae from fifteen countries. In cooperation with the Society and Environment Interest Group of AEGEE we carried out an Environmental Action Week – seven days with a different challenge every day in order to help spread environmental awareness. This initiative involved more than 200 people and ten AEGEE locals.

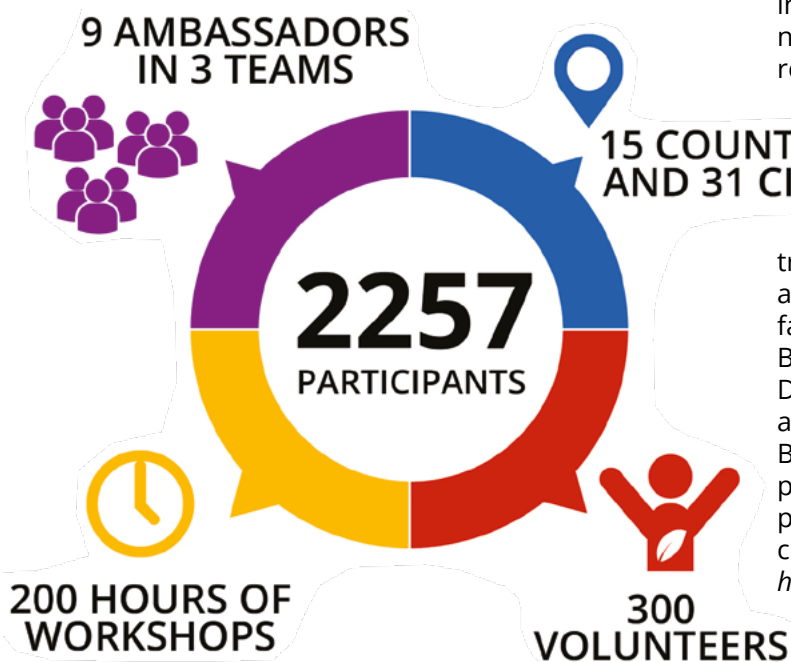
All these took place before Europe on Track 5 actually started! This year the big kick-off conference of Europe on Track was organised in cooperation with AEGEE-Thessaloniki. From 15th to 18th of March the conference «Smart Cities: Can you hear the ECO?» gathered 120 young people who discussed the innovative concept of smart cities and had a chance to take part in a hackathon organised by our partner Youth 4 Public Transport. We had the pleasure to cooperate with the City Hall of Thessaloniki and involve high-level speakers such as Mr Alain Flausch, the former Secretary General of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP). After four intensive days and extra training for our ambassadors, Europe on Track 5 was ready to take off. On the 22nd of March, three teams headed to different directions and started their adventure.

«WHAT I LEARNED FROM MEETING SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE IN EASTERN EUROPE IS THAT THERE ARE MORE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN US THAN DIFFERENCES. WE SHARE THE SAME VALUES AND WE ALL WISH FOR PEACE AND MORE COOPERATION IN THE WORLD»

Team Red with its eastern route through Turkey, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Belarus had the opportunity to deliver a workshop at a university course on sustainability for 300 students. They met representatives of the Çankaya municipality (one of the authority levels in the city of Ankara), travelled 26 hours from Turkey to reach Bucharest. They also were stopped on a border in Russia after their visa had expired by ten minutes, hugged by a participant of their workshop as a way to say *thank you* and above all, they discovered eastern hospitality, kindness and urge to make an impact. *“What I learned from meeting so many young people in Eastern Europe is that there are more similarities between us than differences”,* says Aliénor Pirlet, one of the ambassadors of Team Red *“We share the same values and we all wish for peace and more cooperation in the world. We are also concerned and annoyed with the same things and we all care about the well-being of the future generations”.*

Team Blue headed north through Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, the Netherlands and Germany. They planted trees in Aachen, took part in a food sharing project, had an amazing tour to the aquaponics lab in Eindhoven. They also held several documentary nights on the way and had a discussion with the representative of the Saxonian State Parliament of the Green Party in Dresden.

Team Purple took the Western direction through Italy, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. During their trip they visited countless sustainable businesses and organic community-supported agriculture farms, cleaned a square in Torino and a river in Burgos and spent Easter in Málaga meeting the Deputy Mayor of Environmental Sustainability. They also had a chance to visit the Comité Directeur in Brussels and meet the representatives of political parties in Utrecht who signed Europe on Track’s pledge and committed to tackling the issues of climate change. *“For me it was very inspiring to see high school pupils being so enthusiastic, so concerned*





*and so knowledgeable about climate change and sustainability and really willing to make a change!"* said Hanna Alajõe from Team Purple.

The journey finished on 22nd of April in Krakow, Poland where the ambassadors and the project team gathered to work on the final results of Europe on Track 5 and spent some time together after the intensive month. The ambassadors travelled 17,035 kilometres taking 42 trains, 12 buses and two flights to hold workshops in high schools and sessions at universities, participate in conferences, panel discussions and great outdoor activities provided by the locals of AEGEE. What's more important, they saw a real need and will from young people from different parts of the continent to take care of not only our planet but also of the future generations.

*"We felt we could really empower young people to take action! It is more than education and it is actually what is needed for a change."*

Marie-Claire Graf, ambassador of Team Red

We want to give a huge thank you to everyone involved in Europe on Track 5 that made this project possible! To our partners: Interrail, Urban Adventures, the City of Thessaloniki and Youth 4 Public Transport for their great support. To all the locals that took part in Europe on Track activities, everyone who attended the workshops or supported us through social media. To the hidden heroes of our crowdfunding campaign and every AEGEEan that helped to shape the project since it first started. Without all of you, Europe on Track 5 would not have been the same. Thank YOU!

« THE AMBASSADORS TRAVELLED 17,035 KILOMETRES TAKING 42 TRAINS, 12 BUSES AND 2 FLIGHTS TO HOLD WORKSHOPS IN HIGH SCHOOLS AND SESSIONS AT UNIVERSITIES, PARTICIPATE IN CONFERENCES, PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND GREAT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY THE LOCALS OF AEGEE »





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## WHY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT?

by Nadia Deis and Philipp Blum, Project Officers, Why European Parliament (YEP)

**There is a lack of overall awareness on the institutions of the European Union by its citizens. The Why European Parliament (YEP) project tackles this issue, focusing on the EU in the eyes of youth, and builds a solid foundation for the AEGEE election campaign, Y Vote.**

There is a special need in raising awareness on the European Parliament, the democratically elected institution by its citizens, especially among young people. Let us not forget that the turnout of young people in the 2014 European Parliamentary elections was at a record low of 28%<sup>1</sup>. The European Parliament is the place where the diversity of European public opinion is heard and exchanged; with the next elections approaching, the need of encouraging young people to vote through providing them with relevant, objective information in a dynamic, original way is urgent. The YEP project aims first and foremost at informing young people about the European Parliament as an institution, the democratic concept for which it stands, its functioning and competences. Besides, it aims at exposing its relevance in the daily life of young people, encouraging them to take an active role in it.

### Multiplication is the keyword

By training a pool of young multipliers on the objectives of better information and participation, the project has formed an informal network that will carry out numerous local and regional actions oriented at informing young people on the European Parliament by peer learning, non-formal education and audio visual production between April and August of 2018.

Our multipliers have gathered

<sup>1</sup> Directorate-General for Communication Public Opinion Monitoring Unit, "REVIEW", p. 3 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/elections\\_results/review.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/elections_results/review.pdf)

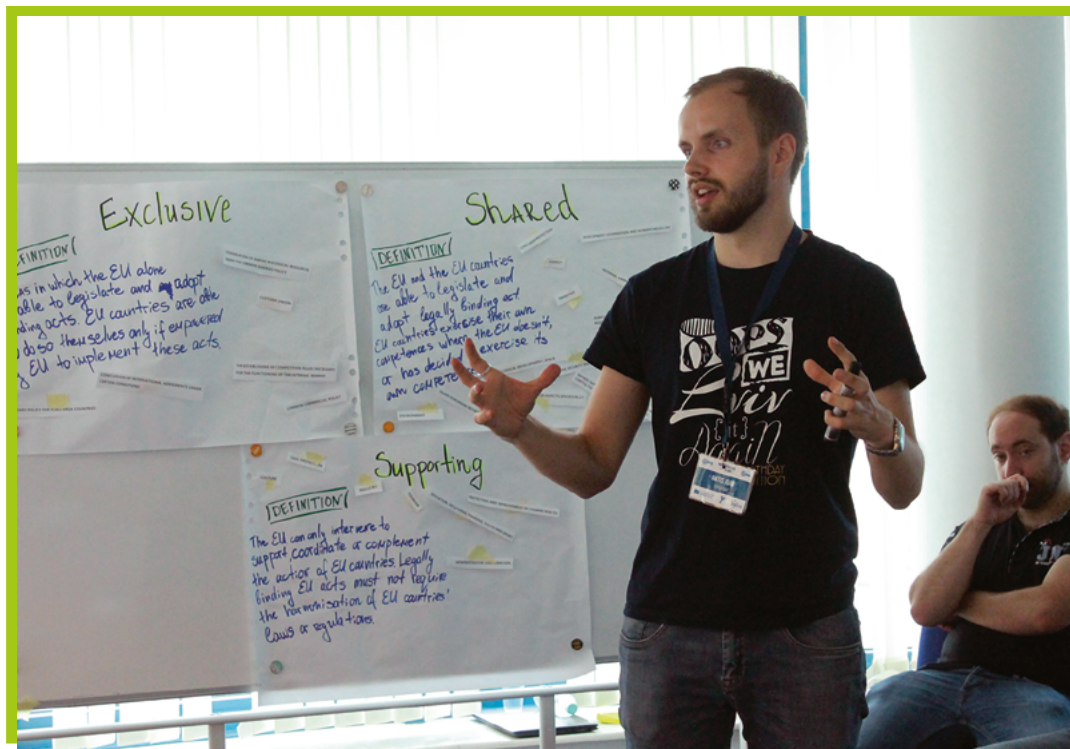
opinions of young people in their different geographical areas, and this information has been shared among the network and produced an overview on the different perceptions of the European Parliament, the EU, and the different needs of young people, as well as the ones they have in common all across Europe on social media channels, reaching 100.000 people online.

All the workshops were developed especially for young people and were accompanied by toolkits. Any participant of the YEP workshops had the possibility to replicate and multiply the 5 workshops on the EU institutions, advocacy, and participation for the AEGEE network and beyond, in order to encourage young people to be aware and participate in the democratic European life and start the basis for the European Parliamentary elections in 2019 and increase the youth turnout.

*The project was co-financed by the European Union in the frame of the European Parliament's grant programme in the field of communication.*



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# Yvote



## LET'S GO VOTE!

To raise the youth voter turnout and enable young citizens to engage in the election process and make informed decisions we organize eight Conventions as part of the Y Vote project. These will take place between October 2018 and April 2019. There you have the chance to learn about the European institutions, the functioning of the European Parliament and its impact on their daily life with a focus on a specific topic from the European Youth Strategy. To really make an impact you participate in a process of finding solutions for problems the youth is tackling and draft recommendation that we will present to European politicians.

## CONVENTIONS & TOPICS

Creativity & Culture (AEGEE-Passau)

Education & Training (AEGEE-Warszawa)

Employment & Entrepreneurship (AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca)

Health & Well-Being (AEGEE-Sofia)

Participation (AEGEE-Düsseldorf)

Social Inclusion (AEGEE-Tallinn)

Youth and the World (AEGEE-Utrecht)

Final Conference (AEGEE-Torino)

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## TOO LATE OR TOO SOON TO START CAMPAIGNING?

by Nadia Deis, Project Officer, Why European Parliament (YEP)

**AEGEE-Europe, ESN and JEF Europe are three youth organizations that all agree: youth organizations must seek to play an active role in the empowerment of youth for the 2019 European Parliament elections. But when should this campaigning begin, to have an actual impact and to avoid repeating history?**

It was clear from the 2013 Eurobarometer<sup>1</sup> that young people were not going to vote with the same frequency as the older generations for the 2014 European Parliament elections. Yet there was hope for a decent turnout. Approximately two thirds of all respondents in the survey (64%) said that they were likely to vote in the next European elections in 2014, and almost three in ten were certain that they would vote in the next election (28%). An EPC policy paper from 2013 followed the line of the Eurobarometer and predicted that the 2014 European elections could witness more debates about the EU, as well as higher turn out at the polling stations. It ended differently.

In 2014, 72% of young people, ages 18-24, did not vote in the European Parliament elections. 72%! The total turnout was at 42.6%, and remains the lowest ever recorded. However, every cloud has a silver lining. The same Eurobarometer provided the top three reasons why youth would not vote in the elections for civil society, policymakers and political parties to actually learn from:

- My vote will not change anything (64%)
- I do not feel sufficiently informed to vote (61%)
- The European Parliament do not influence my daily problems (56%)

<sup>1</sup> European Commission, "Flash Eurobarometer 375: EUROPEAN YOUTH: PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE"

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/flash375\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/flash375_en.pdf)

The question is, when should one begin to campaign, if we need to tackle this?

In fear of repeating the 2014 outcome, youth organizations have altered their view on European elections campaigns. *"Participating in elections stems from active citizenship which is an important cause we should all stand behind. That's why in a way it's never too early to start campaigning"*, said Kacper Olczyk, Communication Manager at ESN. He continues, *"We believe that the Erasmus Generation is a generation of active citizens! [...] Our activities will primarily focus on encouraging young people to go and vote, because even if you don't like politics your voice matters!"*.

For AEGEE-Europe, it is a change in how youth are approached in elections, from receiving pre-produced information to developing skills, knowledge and motivation, and from being told to go vote to genuine empowerment of young people to take an active role in society. "Develop, Empower, Involve" are the key words, emphasizing the civic educational elements. Maria Ballesteros Melero,

FOR AEGEE-EUROPE, IT IS A CHANGE IN HOW YOUTH ARE APPROACHED IN ELECTIONS, FROM RECEIVING PRE-PRODUCED INFORMATION TO DEVELOPING SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND MOTIVATION, AND FROM BEING TOLD TO GO VOTE TO GENUINE EMPOWERMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN SOCIETY

Vice-President & External Relations Director of AEGEE-Europe explains, *"in AEGEE we believe that every campaign should be based on informing and engaging citizens, and that's what we are starting to do since the last months"*, and continues, *"for AEGEE, active participation goes far beyond voting, even if it's one first step. Therefore, the campaign to bring youth closer to Europe - and Europe closer to youth - and engage them in the daily influence of the European institutions in their lives, should be a permanent joint effort from different stakeholders, where youth organisations play an essential role"*.



*decision, so it is also important to be present and active in the last two months, whereas also parties' campaigns enter in their peaks [...] our main aim will be to remind the voters that, despite what the parties say, the European dimension is the most important nowadays" says Jacopo Barbati, illustrating a more classical approach to campaigns. Kacper Olczyk, ESN, and notice that "the general awareness should be built constantly", but he fears that in the Information Age people are constantly bombarded with hundreds of messages constantly fighting*

JEF Europe will invite the voters to think European in their elections campaign, as Vice President Jacopo Barbati explains it: *"We will invite the voters, especially the younger ones, to consider the European elections as the most important ones for their future, since most of nowadays' challenges are transnational issues, from employment policies to migration, from foreign policy and defence to online data protection. The current setup of the EU is inadequate to tackle them, therefore requires a change. So yes, "go to vote" but not only: vote for candidates who have understood this and are willing to fight and contribute to change the EU towards a democratic federation".*

**When to expect youth campaigns?**

When is the magical time then for youth organizations to unfold their campaigns? JEF Europe started their preparations in December 2017, after the election of the new board, and plan to start a more structured field campaigning at the end of the summer 2018. Jacopo Barbati clarifies, *"regarding the activities, we will engage both voters and politicians in debates, conventions, street actions and awareness-raising events".* For ESN, they are waiting for their grant application to be approved, and consequently the campaign will not begin before October 2018, while AEGEE-Europe started planning its European elections campaign, Y Vote, in the autumn of 2017. Already by April-May 2018 regional actions oriented at informing young people on the European Parliament by peer learning, non-formal education and audio visual production had taken place in 5 countries. JEF Europe plan is to follow the electoral campaigns as it unfolds, and to provide *"additional efforts to guide them (red. young voters) through an informed and independent*

*for their attention: "Many young people feel like they don't have enough time or energy to care for causes outside of their immediate surrounding. That's why it's important to start not too early and give only the information that is needed through targeted communication tailored directly to a target audience".*

AEGEE began in March 2018 with a six month intense campaign on informing young people about the European institutions with a focus on the upcoming elections, gathering also their opinions about them, all from a local level. From October on until May a series of conventions in different European cities, as well as local actions, the development and dissemination of a voting app on how to vote (from one's country and from abroad, especially relevant for today's youth), and connecting young people with policy makers at different levels will be the actions of AEGEE' elections campaign.

With less than one year until the next European Parliament elections, not even the national political parties have elected their lead candidate yet, so the question remains: Is it too late or too soon to start campaigning? Will European youth be ready for next year's elections?

*The article is part of the YEP project, co-financed by the European Union in the frame of the European Parliament's grant programme in the field of communication.*



## AEGEE ELECTION OBSERVATION 2017-2018

by Karolis Butkevičius, Mission Manager, and Thomas Leszke, Project Manager

**The academic year 2017-2018 marks the transition of AEGEE Election Observation from a youth initiative with a primarily educational focus towards a professional organisation reporting on youth participation in elections.**

Three Election Observation Missions (EOMs) have taken place over this period of time, which is illustrative of this process during the parliamentary elections in Germany, Czech Republic and Hungary respectively. The mission to Hungary, our 20th since 2014, was the first to focus and report exclusively on youth issues in the electoral context.

### **AEGEE EOM - Hungarian Parliamentary Election, 8 April 2018**

Between 4th and 10th April, AEGEE Election Observation deployed 29 young observers from all across Europe, totalling 20 different nationalities, making it the largest international election observation mission to deploy these elections. AEGEE election observers covered Budapest and the counties of Bács-Kiskun, Baranya, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Csongrád and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, both in urban and rural areas.

Prior to beginning the observation activities, youth observers met for discussions with several stakeholders such as Hungary's National Election Office and the leadership of the OSCE/ODIHR Limited EOM present in the country. Once in their regions of observation, AEGEE observers received help from representatives of local NGOs, students and youth in general - including at least one instance of a gulyás lunch.

The EOM found that, while election day itself was administered professionally, the campaign took place in the context

of restricted space to exercise civil liberties, and a lot of work is still to be done to include youth in the political process in a genuine way. In particular, with one notable exception, major parties had virtually no youth candidates in winnable positions.

In an unusual exception from the general voting age of 18 years, Hungarians are allowed to vote from the age of 16 if they are married. The EOM observed that this constitutes a discrimination of voters on the basis of civil status, and suggested that the newly elected parliament should address this matter and ensure equal treatment.

### **Outlook**

Focusing on a limited number of specific youth-related issues throughout 2018, AEGEE Election Observation is working to expand its scope in the following years. By 2019, we will have an elaborate methodology in place to have every AEGEE EOM report comprehensively on youth participation in elections, while continuing to train young Europeans as international election observers and offering them a unique opportunity for their professional development.



« IN AN UNUSUAL EXCEPTION FROM THE GENERAL VOTING AGE OF 18 YEARS, HUNGARIANS ARE ALLOWED TO VOTE FROM THE AGE OF 16 IF THEY ARE MARRIED. THE EOM OBSERVED THAT THIS CONSTITUTES A DISCRIMINATION OF VOTERS ON THE BASIS OF CIVIL STATUS »

## EAP+: ART IN REVOLUTION, A MEDIUM TO BRING YOUTH TOGETHER

by Eastern Partnership Project team members

**What connections are there between the youngsters of France, Ukraine, Armenia and Greece? This was the fundamental question leading to this initiative of Eastern Partnership project of AEGEE-Europe. Art in Revolution is a two way exchange in Paris and Kyiv for 24 participants, in each city, involving participants from AEGEE-Paris, AEGEE-Kyiv, AEGEE-Yerevan, Hellas and EaP+.**

There are many ways to answer the question asked above. In our view, the things affecting us all are clearly the changes in society, the social movements, protests, upheavals and revolutions of which there have been a lot in Europe and which are all supposed to serve our common goal as young thinkers: democracy.

For some of the countries participating, the fight for democracy is very real and serious. The experiences of the Velvet Revolution in Armenia and the Euromaidan or Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine have shaped and changed the society and have been spearheaded by young people fighting for their ideals. On the other side, the established democracies have their fights as well, standing up for social rights or freedoms as seen in May 1968 in Paris.

To communicate these shared experiences, art is the ultimate medium. In whichever form, may it be murals, music or literature, artists and creative minds, many of whom are young, have encapsulated these similar experiences all across the continent. Experiences yield messages, which resonate in many of us, communicating the struggles for democracy, freedom, rule of law and prosperity shared among the people of Europe from West to East.



It is through art that these revolutions and social movements, separated in space and time, contribute to a common European identity, one which importantly surpasses the boundaries of the European union and includes, among others, the countries of the Eastern Partnership.

The goal of our exchange and our project alike is to work out this common identity, polish it, and put it in the spotlight, fostering intercultural, international and inter-religious dialogue. We wish to provide a European perspective, portraying our common hopes for the future and providing the courage and means to lead the change for a better tomorrow all over Europe.

Through the means of art, its expressions and impressions, the bond and connection between the young people of the participating countries shall be established, leading to a broader understanding of our common European values, forged in an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual understanding. Workshops, roundtables and excursions will provide the participants with the skills necessary to become active citizens in their societies at home, contributing to a democratic, European future.

« THROUGH THE MEANS OF ART, ITS EXPRESSIONS AND IMPRESSIONS, THE BOND AND CONNECTION BETWEEN THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES SHALL BE ESTABLISHED, LEADING TO A BROADER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR COMMON EUROPEAN VALUES, FORGED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF TOLERANCE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING »



## DIVE INTO DIVERSITY: BRAND NEW PROJECT OF AEGEE, ESN AND JEF

by Réka Salamon, Project Officer of DIVE Project

**Do you think youth organisations include and represent all young people? Do you think all young people have a chance to participate in youth organisations? The biggest youth organisations in Europe representing hundreds of thousands of young people - AEGEE-Europe, ESN International and JEF-Europe - realised that they need to be even more open and inclusive in order to provide proper representation of the youth of Europe.**

Together with volunteers from Belgium, Greece, Italy, Sweden, Croatia, Bulgaria and France the DIVE project was born. Diversity and social inclusion in European youth organisations is a two-year project funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. Between 2017 and 2019, the three networks will be working on:

- Developing organisational tools to be accessible to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Learning to break down barriers and obstacles young people face when it comes to participation;
- Gaining more understanding on the topic of social inclusion.

During the DIVE project, AEGEEans have the chance to learn about social inclusion and diversity in youth organisations by attending three trainings in Sofia, Athens, and Malmö. The DIVE trainings will gather participants who want to learn more about the topic of social inclusion in youth organisations, and want to take part in creating mechanisms that can involve more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in volunteering and in the activities of their own organisations. You can take part in fully-funded training courses to help your local with the development of inclusive methods.

The DIVE project is for young people who feel they are privileged to be able to volunteer in their free time – because they don't have to work two jobs to support their families. But they also think that we should give more chances to young people coming from disadvantaged backgrounds – because not having enough money to travel or not attending the university should not make them feel inferior.

European youth policy and youth organisations should pay more attention to involving young people from minorities, from religious groups, from rural areas and from groups with less economic means to travel and explore Europe. European youth organisations like JEF, AEGEE and ESN are already trying: but we need YOUR COOPERATION to make it work!

You can reach the project at: [dive@aegee.org](mailto:dive@aegee.org)

« THE DIVE TRAININGS WILL GATHER PARTICIPANTS WHO WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE TOPIC OF SOCIAL INCLUSION IN YOUTH ORGANISATIONS, AND WANT TO TAKE PART IN CREATING MECHANISMS THAT CAN INVOLVE MORE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS IN VOLUNTEERING AND IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THEIR OWN ORGANISATIONS »

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## COOPSTARTER 2.0: ENABLING YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAKE A LIVING OUT OF THEIR ASPIRATIONS

by Teresa Carene Kiambu, Financial Director of AEGEE-Europe 2017-2018

**Young people today know the human costs of maximum profit-driven businesses where they have no say. But this is not how we see the future.**

What better way to take action against youth unemployment and precarious jobs in Europe, than offering an alternative way of starting a new business together with people who share their dream? What if that business would be democratic and benefit the local community too? The answer: cooperatives. AEGEE-Europe has taken one step forward and joined the European project CoopStarter 2.0 funded by the European Union's Erasmus + Programme.

Anyone who has set up a business in his/her life is aware of the level of personal commitment it requires, but also the feeling of insecurity it generates. This is why CoopStarter 2.0 aims to make younger generations' life easier through the cooperative business model which ensures collective ownership and gives every member a say in the business no matter their age or background. CoopStarter 2.0 thus aims to offer a framework enabling youth organizations to better tackle one key challenge: valorising and improving recognition of the experience and skills acquired by their members investing volunteer time in the organization's daily life through entrepreneurial projects.

In practice, the project partners are developing training content at the crossroads between cooperative mentorship and youth action. The consortium is utilizing training methodologies used by youth organizations (informal and non-formal learning), and relating them to technical

tools and content needed to set up and fulfil all legal requirements for registering and running a cooperative business. They also intend to set up an online Knowledge Base, which would enable anyone interested in starting a coop or a mentorship programme for coop entrepreneurs to easily find educational resources and useful material across Europe just with a few clicks.



« THE PROJECT PARTNERS ARE DEVELOPING TRAINING CONTENT AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN COOPERATIVE MENTORSHIP AND YOUTH ACTION. THE CONSORTIUM IS UTILIZING TRAINING METHODOLOGIES USED BY YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS (INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING) »

Want to find out more about the project? Are you looking to develop your own cooperative? Check out the [www.starter.coop](http://www.starter.coop) website or get in touch.

*The consortium brings together AEGEE-Europe, Cooperatives Europe, Centre des Jeunes, des dirigeants, des acteurs de l'économie sociale (FR), Kooperationen (DK), Legacoop Liguria (IT), K.A.P.A. Network (GR), Co-operative College (UK), Promo Jeunes (BE) and the Young European Cooperators' Network (YECN).*

## THE PLATFORM FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF GENDER-FRIENDLY ORGANISATIONS IN YOUTH WORKING

by Maria Ballesteros Melero, Vice-President and External Relations Director of AEGEE-Europe

The GENDERS project (Platform for the Certification of Gender-Friendly Organisations in Youth Working) aims at providing youth organisations with a self-assessment tool and a step-by-step guide on gender mainstreaming in their organisations, in order to make them more gender-friendly, through an online platform. Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender

equality perspective is incorporated in all the policies at all levels at all stages, by the actors involved in policy making. The platform will be developed and tested through research and trainings for youth workers. It is an Erasmus+ two years' project of AEGEE-Europe, Futuro Digitale, UNSA Spain and e-Romnja. Key Action 2 "Strategic Partnerships for Youth - Development of innovation".

## IMPACT PROJECT: EVERYONE MATTERS!

By Loes Rutten, President of AEGEE-Europe 2017-2018

The goal of this project is to empower youth organisations, youth workers, trainers and educators to develop orientation on inclusion and diversity in their work with rural and unprivileged young people and build competence in addressing needs of marginalized youth. It is a consortium between 7 organisations led by Armenian Progressive Youth. After a kick-off meeting in February, the first main event was a training on social inclusion hosted by Armenian Progressive Youth in Armenia in April. Concepts in the training included diversity, privilege, equity and brought together

the best practices of the seven partners in the consortium. Upcoming activities of the project include a training on inclusion for leaders of youth organisations and AEGEE will host several week-long Civil Society Fellowship events for young people from Eastern Partnership countries in the head office in Brussels.



ABOUT AEGEE  
PROJECTS

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

IN THE NETWORK  
LOOKING FORWARD



## “MORE THAN AN INITIATIVE - THE FUTURE OF THE ECI”, THE CLOSING CONFERENCE

by Elinne Mertens, ECI task force and Júlia Hanesz, Policy Officer of the Civic Education Working Group

**The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is the first transnational participatory tool of the EU, which enables citizens from all Member States of the EU to propose legislation to the European Commission. Any ECI can be successful if at least one million signatures are collected over a one year period. A group of AEGEE members launched the “More than Education - Shaping Active and Responsible Citizens” ECI in October 2016, in order to put civic education on the political agenda and to raise awareness about the importance of it.**

Social Committee, the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), the European Ombudsman and the European Parliament, with whom we discussed the tool from different perspectives.

Irina Pari, the President of the ECI ad hoc Group of the EESC highlighted in her welcoming speech that an ECI is not only about the objective of getting the required 1 million signatures, it is also about the process and about engaging a network coming together for something that is important for all of us as a society. Margot Joris, PhD Researcher at

« DURING THIS ONE YEAR CAMPAIGN, WE HAVE LEARNT A LOT ABOUT THE TOOL, AND REALISED THAT IT OFFERS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE OUR VOICES FOR A TOPIC RELEVANT TO US, BUT THAT AT THE SAME TIME IT NEEDS TO BE PROMOTED AND RESHAPED »

During this one year campaign, we have learnt a lot about the tool, and realised that it offers a great opportunity to raise our voices for a topic relevant to us, but that at the same time it needs to be promoted and reshaped to a form which is more accessible and user-friendly for young people. Fortunately, the official revision process of the European Commission has started in 2017. In order to share our experience and discuss our views on the future of the ECI, on the 27th of October 2017 the closing conference of our campaign was organised at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) with the title: “More than an Initiative - the Future of the ECI”.

Among the guests there were academics and representatives of the European Economic and

KU Leuven, asked “do we need an identical idea of citizenship or civic education for all Member States? Or is it our strength that we all have different ideas about it?”, and also agreed that an ECI is an immense opportunity to truly participate and act like critical citizens.





Continuing the point of impactfulness Gertrud Kendernay-Nagyidai drew our attention to the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which states that an ECI can only invite (and not bind) the European Commission to propose a legislative act. The question is: can the European Commission refuse this invitation or not? We can approach the ECI from the angle that it is based on the sovereignty of the Member States, or we can approach the ECI as a participatory tool. If we take that last approach, we have doubts about the illusion that the ECI has caused with its existence. The European Parliament has the idea to make it a moral obligation for the European Commission that the ECI will cause political engagement.

In the second part of the event, called world café, the participants could discuss how they would make the ECI more accessible, attractive and impactful. Following that the same questions were asked to our guests, Koen Roovers from the European Ombudsman, Elisa Lironi from ECAS, Gertrud Kendernay-Nagyidai, who is assistant of the MEP György Schöpflin, and Andrei Moraru, researcher on the ECI. Koen Roovers explained us that as the work of the European Ombudsman is mainly driven by complaints, they also deal with ECI related complaints, for example regarding the online collection software or the legal deadlines. To answer our question, some examples of the Commission's proposals were mentioned, such as plans to set up a centre for online collection, which means that the data will be on the Commission's servers. Elisa Lironi stated that in order to make the ECI appealing as a participation instrument, we need to make it accessible and impactful. Although many points of the Commission's proposal make the ECI more user-friendly, the impact is still missing, which might cause frustration for the organisers.

At the end of the discussion, Andrei Moraru presented the results of his research on the ECI. He outlined two alternative models to the ECI, the participative and deliberative initiative, by drawing on David Held's theoretical models of democracy. They outline improvements to the ECI by suggesting clearer priorities: citizen inclusion in the decision-making process or continent-wide public deliberation on EU issues.

To conclude, we all agreed that many of us share the same concerns when it comes to the ECI. Therefore, the proposal of the European Commission is very important. However the institution should take into account also other stakeholders in order to answer questions about the real impact of an ECI. In the end, the ECI should serve the purpose to bring the EU closer to its citizens.

« TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION STATES THAT AN ECI CAN ONLY INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO PROPOSE A LEGISLATIVE ACT. THE QUESTION IS: CAN THE COMMISSION REFUSE THIS INVITATION OR NOT? »

# AEGEE-SHEFFIELD AND AEGEE-MANCHESTER PRESENTS: “BREXIT, WHAT NEXT?”

by Annabelle Díez, AEGEE-Bilbao

**Lights, camera, AEGEE... Action! 25 participants. 0 degrees. 1 Member of the Parliament: John Leech. Two UK locations: Sheffield and Manchester. Setup: university and a military academy. One goal: BREXIT. Or, better said, to disarm it with reasonable arguments. And with songs, as British EU Supergirl Madeleine Kay also joined us. Before impressing us with the tunes of “All I want for Christmas is EU”, she kindly gave us an informative talk about BREXIT details and her adventure in Brussels. Delighted to share his knowledge with us was also John Leech, a former MP with a long career in Parliament who also got invited to our event and answered technical and sometimes polemical questions. Lots of action in very few days, indeed.**

From 29th of November to 4th of December, a number of diverse European nationalities gathered in “BREXIT- What Next”. Besides high-level discussions on the topic, the event also united old and new friends for cultural programs, discovering the hidden charm of Sheffield, Manchester and the Peak district National Park. The evening program included a “Dress to impress” night out and a European Night, where participants prepared their national drinks and food. It was all made possible by the marvelous organisation carried out by AEGEE-Manchester and AEGEE-Sheffield in collaboration with AEGEE-London. Our dormitory for the 2nd part of the stay was a military academy, which provided more of a unique atmosphere adding up to a great experience.

Why has it been so successful if its results are far from the once imagined? The effective campaign for “Leave” appealed strongly to the citizens’ emotional side with short and powerful messages based on fear. Campaigners appealed

to the core of their identity and convinced them to vote “Leave”. The remainers didn’t focus on such a concentrated effort into campaigning because it was assumed people would vote for remaining. It is also essential to understand that when you are trying to change something you get more vocal and innovative than if you want it to stay the same.

On who has the biggest interest in orchestrating Brexit to benefit from it, our speakers pointed at millionaire corporations unhappy with European regulations around taxes, workers and environmental rights. Conspiracy theories have pointed at the UK willing to establish close ties with the USA towards a New World Order. Without going that far, it seems clear that the ideologists of BREXIT didn’t have the common good in mind.

Great minds discussing ideas brought a natural feeling of comfort, ease and freedom around one another. It made the short trip very pleasant. Bonding culturally and personally, sharing and willing to share so much with other fellow Europeans created the perfect ambience for proficient brainstorming.



“IT’S THE BIGGEST CON PLAYED ON BRITISH PEOPLE IN RECENT HISTORY” - MADELEINA KAY

## EPM 2018 YEREVAN: THE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR AEGEE'S ACTIONS

by Marlène Rene, Content Manager of EPM 2018 Yerevan

**A big opportunity was born this year by hosting the EPM 2018 in Yerevan, Armenia. A true action for the future and a proof for indeed a borderless Europe.**

As Content Managers, Natasha and I wanted to focus on what AEGEE's identity and impact are, specifically in relation to the idea of "Borderless Europe". In other words, why borders exist and why they have to be understood in order to comprehend better what our dream of a borderless Europe is, and how to achieve it.

We wanted to make participants think about what the AEGEE identity means to them and how pluralistic and, to some extent, problematic this idea is: how can we think of the European identity as a borderless one and to what extent we are inclusive in our thinking. The idea was to allow participants to gather enough knowledge through the panel discussions in order for them to be able to better exchange new ideas to implement with a greater impact during the Action Agenda drafting. It was really important for us to link the two together. For this purpose, all different workshops had specific targets depending on the topic. They ranged from disinformation to gender equality. The aim was to show that through different considerations of what borders are, we, as AEGEEans, have big room for improvement. We aimed at inspiring participants to make a change, to fight against the walls which prevent AEGEE and Europe in general from being borderless as well as recognize the different bridges that were built in the past. To reunite our past experience and history, as well as our present concerns and aspirations, aimed to serve as a hub for new ideas, new types of cooperation and new projects.

Being a Content Manager means being part of an adventure to inspire others about the importance of today's challenges in AEGEE and in society. Since Natasha also represented the European Citizenship Working Group, we developed the idea that European identity should focus on not being limited to the European Union, but rather include the region in the Eastern part of the network. The EPM is the occasion for a specific theme to be impactful through the Strategic Planning. The location of Armenia was a perfect opportunity to remind the network that the South Caucasus region is also part of the European family as well as to highlight the



need to focus less on Brussels and more on the whole network – as I am sure the next EPM in Izmir will go on highlighting the same. EPM was a way to develop a theme that was close to my heart and that needed to be addressed on different layers: the importance of Eastern Partnership countries as well as Russia in the network. We wanted to remind about the challenges of mobility that people face when accessing those regions and how difficult it is to motivate the network to do this huge step and to bridge Europe together. The challenge was not only geographic but also a political one, as it allowed AEGEEans to speak about the issues that are being avoided and should be better included in our policies.

Equal access to mobility is essential to bring knowledge of history, culture and society all over Europe in its diversity and central to the feeling of a





« THE LOCATION OF ARMENIA WAS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND THE NETWORK THAT THE SOUTH CAUCASUS REGION IS ALSO PART OF THE EUROPEAN FAMILY AS WELL AS TO HIGHLIGHT THE NEED TO FOCUS LESS ON BRUSSELS AND MORE ON THE WHOLE NETWORK »

common identity that allows us to say: "Europe is my Home". AEGEE brought me that feeling and made me comfortable living both in Western, Central and Eastern Europe, from London to Tbilisi. However, for me it was very easy as neither did I need a visa nor I went through much administrative bureaucracy apart from when I went to Russia. I rarely had to queue to register anywhere while others always had so much trouble to do so. The main point of the EPM topic was therefore to overcome the simplistic idea of "we are against borders", or the common motto of "United in diversity". The aim was to make it impactful and meaningful. Huge work has been done by the organisers, and the help of senior members is a huge plus to develop oneself professionally and intellectually. The guest speakers and the huge publicity of the event would not have existed without them.

One of the main challenges that I have faced was the lack of integration of regions in the network, for example the lack of antennae others apart of those in capital cities, which led to the creation of upcoming projects in the South Caucasus region and hopefully in other regions of Europe, too. Our aim was to actually accelerate the development of exchanges between youth: the discussions that

started in EPM Yerevan between young Armenians and Turkish was a bright example of how EPM can spread new ideas of what can be done to be more inclusive and build stronger bridges within our European Students' Forum.

As a conclusion, I think being EPM Content Manager is something that helped me understand better what AEGEE is and what can make changes and reinforce the long time goals that I had. It inspired me to do better and work in a diverse multicultural environment. I would only recommend this unique experience I have lived to every AEGEEan who is looking for new challenges and to those who believe that AEGEE can make a difference. It is an event which aims at building the future of our community and open possibilities and solutions to overcome problems and fears.

## DESTINATION: EUROPE, KRAKÓW'S THEMATIC AGORA

by Agata Sambor, Content Manager of Spring Agora Kraków 2018

**Some say the Spring Agora Kraków 2018 has been the most intriguing, political and memorable Agora in the recent years, and not by chance: the organizers managed to bring up a number of relevant issues that concerns every European citizen.**

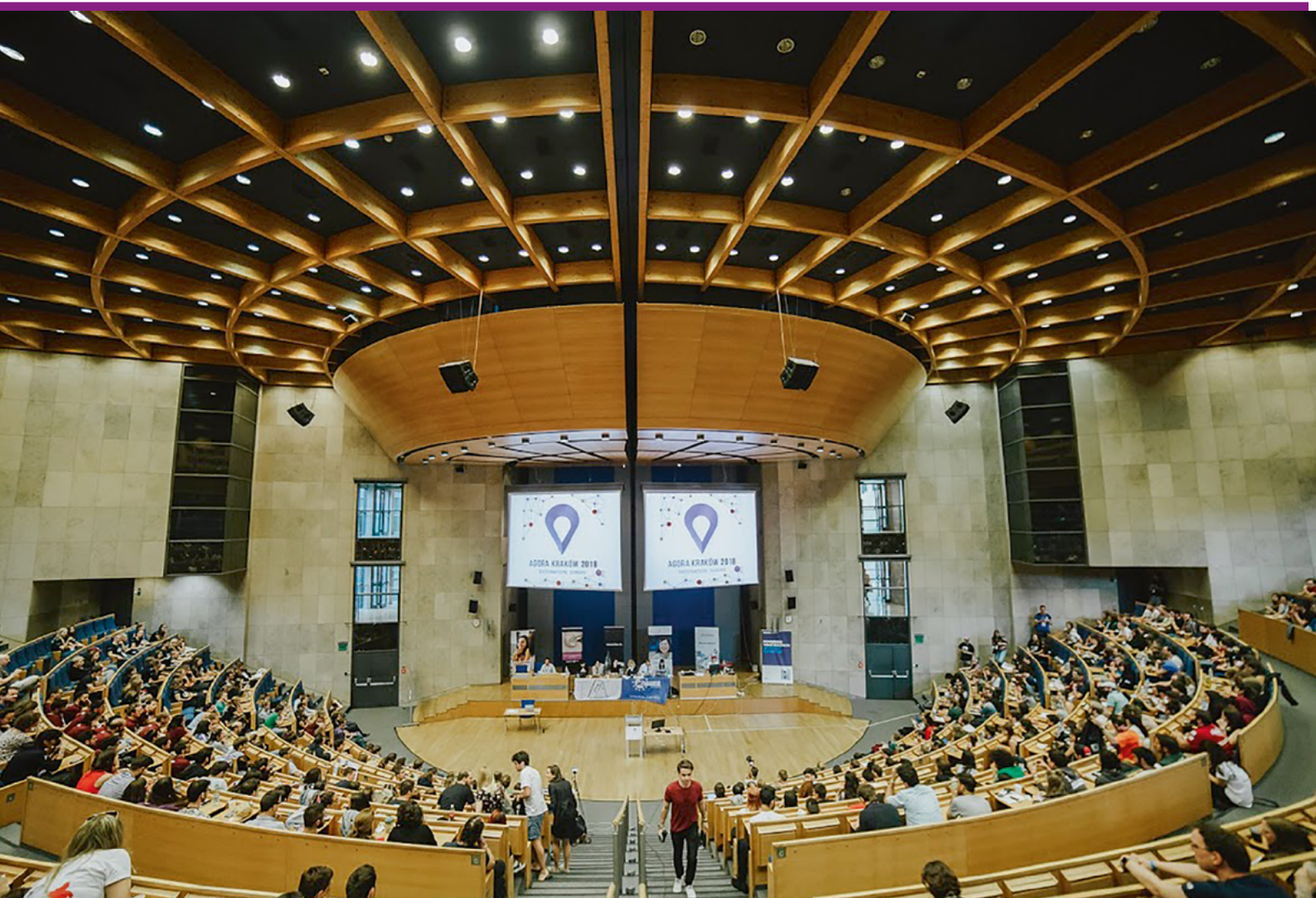
Spring Agora Kraków 2018 was held from the 24th to the 29th of April 2018 in Kraków, Poland, aiming to create a place for discussion and dialogue on important socio-political topics, exchange of views, information and experiences. The event was organised by 146 organisers and helpers and gathered 759 people in total. It was the first thematic Agora in recent history, with 54 meetings and seven panel discussions organised by AEGEE Kraków, open to the public, taking place within five days.

The panel discussions were:

- International Cooperation in Europe - What does it give, what does it take? Presentation

of report based on answers of group of European students. Importance of free media and its role in spreading information by Agata Sambor – AEGEE-Kraków; Mateusz Gierczak – AEGEE-Kraków, Antonis Triantafyllakis – AEGEE-Academy, Bartosz Pawłowski - Association Demagog

- Civic Engagement in Youth Organisations: from Student to Active Citizen by Armenak Minasyants, Founder and Executive Director of AEGEE-Yerevan
- The role of diplomacy in maintaining relations between countries by Urszula Michalska Ayd, Head of Academy of Young Diplomats, Ambassador Urszula Gacek.
- Comparative analysis of Democracy in Europe and Asia, by Mr. Thomas E. Garrett, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies; Naseem Khan Achakzai, the Founding Executive



Director of Center for Sustainability Research and Practice - CSRP, University of Lahore and Álvaro Gonzales European Citizenship Working Group.

- Poland on international arena by Jan Olbrycht, Member of European Parliament
- How to protect the interests of our homeland while respecting other nations, Aleksandra Gruszczyk PhD, researcher representing Zygmunt Zaleski Stichting
- Catalan Separatism – Can it Trigger a Domino Effect? Separatis movements in Europe by Agnieszka Grzechynka PhD and Catalan - Sergi Cols Ràfols.

The speakers invited represented different sectors, from AEGEEans, volunteers, activist to professors and politicians. Apart from that, five articles on current topics were published: Dare to travel thanks

to the Erasmus + Programme; Discrimination in Europe: The psychosocial background and the possibility of prevention; A two-speed Europe - the only real scenario for the future of the European Union?; Understanding fake news - How to assess the value of information? and POLEXIT- is it a possible scenario for Poland?

We are currently analysing the answers for the survey about the situation in Europe to write a detailed report based on 1136 answers of people age 18-35 who took the survey about the International Cooperation in Europe – What does it give, what does it take?. Worth mentioning is also the action “Let’s get united” organised after the opening ceremony when each person got a sparkle and by lighting them up in the same time we have created a pin, the symbol of Spring Agora Kraków.

Concluding, it was a great pleasure to organise Spring Agora Kraków 2018 - Destination: Europe. Thank you all for being there with us.



« IT WAS THE FIRST THEMATIC AGORA IN RECENT HISTORY, WITH 54 MEETINGS AND SEVEN PANEL DISCUSSIONS ORGANISED BY AEGEE KRAKÓW, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, TAKING PLACE WITHIN FIVE DAYS »

## EUROPE ON TRACK 5 KICK OFF CONFERENCE ON SMART CITIES AND SUSTAINABILITY

by Maria Tiaka, AEGEE-Thessaloniki

**From 15th until the 18th of March, in the lovely city of Thessaloniki, the “Smart Cities: Can You Hear The Eco?” Conference was held. It was the kick-off conference of Europe on Track 5 project, in which 120 people gathered to talk about sustainability and climate change, focusing on smart cities and future cities. It was organised by AEGEE-Thessaloniki in cooperation with Resilience Thessaloniki and the City of Thessaloniki.**

The conference «Smart Cities: Can You Hear The Eco?» welcomed more than 120 people from all over the world to the heart of northern Greece. The four-day programme was a series of events related to the topic of Smart Cities and sustainability. From behind the scenes, the teams of Europe on Track and AEGEE-Thessaloniki had been working hard for months in order to make this innovative conference a success. Based on a problem-solving approach, the goal of this event was to set the tone for fruitful discussions on the issue of urban resilience and to help participants come up with inspiring plans aiming to increase the sustainability in modern cities.

The entire conference was divided into three parts. First off, the opening ceremony, which took place at the City Hall of Thessaloniki, introduced everyone to the topic of Smart Cities and was followed by discussions on sustainability, climate change and their relation to cities. This set the tone of the event, while it helped everyone get ready for the real challenge of the three very busy and productive days that were to follow.

The second day the participants, ambassadors, project team along with the local organisers gathered at the City Hall again to begin their journey towards sustainability. A marathon of workshops and panel discussions took place, covering a wide range of subjects from urban planning and the concept of a Smart Economy to the social implications of technological fixes. These mini-sessions left the attendees with plenty of food for thought, since they touched on many urgent matters of environmental innovation and ethics. The day ended on the hostel rooftop, where a cultural event took place. The attendees had the



chance to share and enjoy international specialties from each other's home countries and socialise during this well-deserved party break.

The next challenge on the agenda was to survive the eight-hour long Hackathon, that took place in the International Exhibition and Congress Centre of Thessaloniki, with organising partner, Y4PT (Youth for Public Transportation). During this contest, also known as an Ideathon, the attendees split into groups of five people and joined forces to come up with solutions to real-life problems in the framework of the city of Thessaloniki. With the help of Mr. Akylas, Consultant of Urban Resilience and Mr. Goniadis, an expert in sustainable development, the contestants put their ideas into practice and finished their innovative projects in time for the final round of the Ideathon, where the jury would announce the winners.

On the final day, everyone presented their projects and held their breaths in anticipation of the results. Finally, the team with the winning project, «Happy soil», was announced. Their concept aimed to manage the organic waste in the city of Thessaloniki by fully engaging the citizens and raising awareness in the community. The prize gave the winning team

the chance to send one of its members to the third Y4PT Global Transport Hackathon in Stockholm next year. At last, the conference ended with the speeches of the organisers of AEGEE-Thessaloniki and the project team of Europe on Track, who were thrilled to see their month-long efforts being realised. The participants left the event with a lot of inspiration and a better understanding of the Smart Cities concept. This conference was an example of youth in action for a better future, since, as Mr. Akylas pointed out, in order to change the world “we should think globally and act locally”.



« 120 PEOPLE GATHERED TO TALK ABOUT THE SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE, FOCUSING ON SMART CITIES AND FUTURE CITIES

## BRILLIANT PERSPECTIVES FOR A THEMATIC AEGEE

by Álvaro Gonzalez Perez, European Citizenship Working Group Coordinator

**After months of cooperation and preparation between AEGEE-Warszawa and the European Citizenship Working Group, from the 23rd to the 25th of March the conference “Citizenship at its Grassroots – European and Polish Perspectives” finally took place.**

Along with the conferences organised by AEGEE-Bilbao and AEGEE-Leiden with the Equal Rights Working Group, AEGEE-Salerno with the Civic Education Working Group, Europe on Track and AEGEE- Thessaloniki and AEGEE-Berlin with the European Citizenship Working Group as well, not to mention the debates, Europe Cafés and discussions organised by the multiple locals scattered all around Europe, there is something that is certain: we are back to thematics in AEGEE!

Now the question is, with all these thematic activities going on all around Europe, what made “Citizenship at its Grassroots” special? The very first things that I would like to highlight is the high number of external speakers we welcomed. For a conference that lasted altogether just two days, 16

speakers from all kinds of backgrounds made an appearance in the Warsaw School of Economics, our venue and our partner as well. Political advisors, members of the Polish parliament from opposed parties, professors, EU or OSCE officials with years of experience, activists – such as Marta Lempart, organiser of the Black Friday protest that took place for the second time during our conference – diplomats and professional journalists from European and Polish media. Our participants had the opportunity to engage with all kinds of experts, and enter constructive and fruitful discussions with them.

In order to ensure this kind of interaction, not only did we organise high-level panel discussions and lectures with Q&As for the participants to engage, give feedback and ask critical questions to the speakers. The conference participants also had the opportunity to participate in interactive workshops and in a World Café-style session, in which for a period of two hours they could engage in five different stations with diplomats, professors or activists from Estonia, Turkey, Spain, The



Netherlands and Poland on the basic elements that conform the democracy of those specific countries. Naturally, the social programme was, as in every AEGEE event, also part of the weekend.

As the last highlight of this article, from the organising team, we would like to encourage any member of any local interested in organising an event and reading this to certainly take a step

forward and go for it. None of us had organised before an event with so many external speakers with such a professional background, but still we decided to go for it. And sometimes the difference was a single e-mail or a phone call. So if you like a topic and would like to raise awareness on it, our advice is: be brave, gather your team, build-up a nice idea and draft, and go for it!



FOR A CONFERENCE THAT LASTED ALTOGETHER JUST TWO DAYS, 16 SPEAKERS FROM ALL KINDS OF BACKGROUNDS MADE AN APPEARANCE IN THE WARSAW SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, OUR VENUE AND OUR PARTNER AS WELL

## AEGEE-SALERNO - FRANCK BIANCHERI AWARD 2018: “REPRESENTATION NEEDS PARTICIPATION: EUROPEAN ELECTIONS”

by Sonia Della Sala, Main Organiser (AEGEE-Salerno) and Dorothea Harles, Content Manager (AEGEE-Mannheim)

The conference “Representation needs participation: European Elections” took place from the 13th to the 15th of April 2018 in Salerno, and went on the topic of European Elections and transnational lists. It saw a moderate participation from engaged European students, and took part as an activity related to the Franck Biancheri award granted to AEGEE-Salerno and the Civic Education Working Group.

The Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri (AAFB) was founded shortly after Franck's death in 2012 to continue his legacy. Since 2014, AAFB grants each year the award to one AEGEE local to remember and to promote Franck's work and ideas connected to European decision making processes.

The topic chosen for the conference is connected to Franck's vision on transeuropean democracy in European Union politics. This includes his creation of two parties: Initiative for a European Democracy (IDE) in 1989 and Newropeans in 2009, both running for European elections. The motivation

behind the chosen topic is the current need for more transnational democracy in Europe.

Since the next European Parliament elections will take place in 2019, the Franck Biancheri Award 2018 played a major role in informing and discussing about present problems and future solutions. In the last elections, the voter turnout was very low, especially that of young people. From this fact arise the following questions: what are the reasons behind this scepticism and indifference towards European elections? And how could participation be more increased when the next elections are coming? Right now, for the European Parliament elections, each and every of the 28 Member States uses different voting systems according to their national legislation, with results summarised at European level. Even though there is only little connection between the election systems of the EU countries, one possible solution could be changing the current law and introducing a different election system.





The proposal to change the election law was actually made in the European Parliament during the beginning of 2018. It called for a redistribution of parliamentary seats left after the Brexit effectively happens, to make the current system fairer and according to the law. Additionally, the law proposed an inclusion of transnational lists. These lists include politicians from several nationalities, in order to have a common constituency. This means that citizens would have been able to vote for candidates of other countries. The parliament rejected the second part of the proposal on the 7th of February.

The aim of the conference was to discuss these ideas from today's perspective. In the beginning there was an introduction on the current election system. To understand such complex system, the content team designed a simulation game including transnational lists. The participants got to know participation tools such as e-voting and learned more about the parties created by Franck. The outcome of the discussions was the need of a common European electoral law and the underlining of the fact that there should be transnational parties and citizen's movements, like AEGEE, pushing for the creation of this law. AEGEE was created by Franck as a laboratory of transeuropean democracy and should continue on its road.

After learning about tools on how to increase participation, the participants had the chance to work on their own ideas. Those were skills gained through non-formal education via simulations, a campaign for an election law change and the fostering of an e-voting system inside AEGEE to



test procedures to be later implemented in a bigger context with a greater impact. To sum up, there were engaging discussions, a lot of shared knowledge and great ideas to improve the future election system in Europe.

AEGEE-Salerno also implemented a local based discussion format on burning political topics with the "Europe Café". One took place in March on the topic of "Nationalism and National Indifference" and others will be carried out again during the year.

« WHAT ARE THE REASONS BEHIND THIS SCEPTICISM AND INDIFFERENCE TOWARDS EUROPEAN ELECTIONS? AND HOW COULD PARTICIPATION BE MORE INCREASED WHEN THE NEXT ELECTIONS ARE COMING? »

## AEGEE-LEIDEN SHOWS ITS TRUE COLOURS DURING THE EQUAL RIGHTS CONFERENCE

by Zenaïde de Stigter, board member of AEGEE-Leiden

**Under the topic of diversity and Equal rights, AEGEE- Leiden in co-operation with Equal Rights Working Group, organised a conference at the end of May. While bringing on the table issues such as sexual orientation and LGBTI+ under the religious umbrella, it managed to bring up to the light, its true colours, by empowering people.**

From the 24th until the 27th of May, we organised a conference in Leiden for which our local committee worked together with the Equal Rights Working Group (ERWG). When we started to discuss the topics and theme in December, there was so much enthusiasm within the team that we chose three topics: gender issues, LGBTQI+ issues and sex issues. Samantha Smidt, who is both a member of AEGEE-Leiden and of ERWG, was the content manager and contacted a lot of professionals in those fields. This resulted in a whopping 17 external speakers for lectures and sessions during the conference. Topics like sexual orientation-related crimes, intersectional discrimination, intersex identities and discriminatory violence

against women and the LGBTQI+ community were discussed.

Furthermore, we held a few open activities during the conference. Such as a dinner in which we discussed the issue of human rights, based upon the 'if the world were 100 people' video. In addition to this, there was an open lecture about LGBTQI+ and religion-related issues. The conference was not only educational on the Equal Rights topic: some of the participants learnt to ride a bicycle in the four days that the conference lasted! During our True Colours Party, which was open for both AEGEE members and members of the Dutch LGBTQI+ association, everyone got their own t-shirt and painted it to make it as colourful as possible! Despite an exhausting program full of discussions during the day and social activities in the night, nobody wanted to leave the closing party before 3 am. All in all, we had a great time together!

Dear participants, we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. See you somewhere in Europe!

« SAMANTHA SMIDT, BOTH A MEMBER OF AEGEE-LEIDEN AND OF ERWG, CONTACTED A LOT OF PROFESSIONALS IN THOSE FIELDS. THIS RESULTED IN A WHOPPING 17 EXTERNAL SPEAKERS »



## EYE 2018: IF AN AGORA WAS TEN TIMES BIGGER

by Viola Bianchetti, AEGEE-Heidelberg

**Could AEGEE miss a youth event with 10,000 participants in the very heart of Europe? Of course not! And indeed the AEGEE delegation at the European Youth Event 2018 (EYE) was very numerous.**

But what is the EYE? It is the biggest youth event in Europe, which this year brought together around 10,000 young Europeans for two days (1st and 2nd of June) in Strasbourg. The venue of the event was the European Parliament itself. Among the numerous activities there were idea labs, discussions, hearings, talks, debates, workshops, role-play games and even activities related to art, skills and creativity. The aim of the event was to come up with ideas for the future of Europe and discuss them with decision-makers. The follow-up of the event comprises a report, which will be distributed to all Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), featuring the most concrete ideas discussed during the event. This year, also the YO!Fest took place in parallel with the EYE. While the latter is organised by the European Parliament, the first is coordinated by the European Youth Forum and AEGEE-Europe was one of the partners of this event. The YO!Fest combined debates, workshops, talks, exhibitions and performances to celebrate being a young European. The activities were structured around five core themes: Keeping up with the Digital Revolution, Staying Alive in Turbulent Times, Working out for a Stronger Europe, Protecting our Planet and Calling for a Fair Share.

All the AEGEEans present at the event did not only enjoy the vivid debates and networking opportunities offered by the EYE, but also organised and facilitated many activities themselves. The YVote team prepared the session *Meeting your representatives: What happens next?* during which young people could discuss with two MEPs (Terry Reintke and Brando Benifei) how to have a meaningful exchange with Members of the European Parliament and how these meetings can be followed up in an appropriate manner. The

Equal Rights Working Group together with Youth Work Ireland organised a workshop on privilege and intersectionality titled *The privilege walk*. Moreover, AEGEE-Europe organised the debate *Equal rights: Fighting for social protection and inclusion for all*, where Loes Rutten (President of AEGEE-Europe) and Wim Gabriels (President of ESN) discussed with the participants how the EU can provide adequate social protection to young people and how we can ensure that every young person enters adulthood on an equal footing. In the meantime, members of the European Citizenship Working Group facilitated an activity to educate people about barriers to free mobility and visa issues. Other AEGEEans arranged a photobooth with the title *Faces of Europe*, they took pictures of the participants and asked them to write three resolutions on fighting against discrimination in the next month.

The EYE was not only a great opportunity to meet policy-makers, youth workers, activists and other people passionate about European politics, but it was also an amazing festival. The open-air concert on Friday night made everybody dance and sing until late night, while on Saturday participants enjoyed watching *La La Land* while chilling on the grass outside the European Parliament – a unique experience! The city of Strasbourg was completely taken over for two days by young people from all over Europe, meeting in squares and bars to enjoy a drink together. You could experience a lively and exciting atmosphere – an Agora ten times bigger!



## “REFLECT & REACT”: A CONFERENCE IN BILBAO FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

by Viola Bianchetti, Equal Rights Working Group Coordinator

**On the 23rd and 24th of March 2018, AEGEE-Bilbao hosted the first conference organised by the Equal Rights Working Group of AEGEE-Europe, titled “Reflect & React: Discrimination of Women at Work.” The goal of the conference was to discuss why women encounter significant difficulties in entering the job market and in building a career, and to identify possible solutions. Since the conference was located in the Engineering Faculty of the University of the Basque Country, special attention was given to women’s access to jobs in the fields of science and technology.**

Quique Cañada and Viola Bianchetti (members of the Equal Rights Working Group) were in charge of the content of the conference, while members of AEGEE-Bilbao took care of all the organisational and logistical side of the event. The core team of the local organisers comprised Ana González, Raúl Ibarгүйen, María Monzón and Jesús Pérez, while twelve local active members contributed as helpers before and during the event.

The conference started with an introductory workshop by the Equal Rights Working Group, presenting the Focus Area and inviting participants to reflect on the obstacles that different types of women can face in accessing and succeeding in the job market. During the Opening Ceremony, Marivi Herrero (Communications Vice-Director of the University) welcomed the participants, and was followed by Laura Alonso, member of the Student Council, who presented the initiatives implemented in the University to promote equality and prevent episodes of harassment and discrimination. The morning ended with a lecture by Jone I. Elizondo, an independent legal policy analyst in diversity, equality and non-discrimination, who talked about multiple and intersectional discrimination in the EU. Her presentation provided the participant with an interesting overview of the legal framework of anti-discrimination in Europe.

The afternoon session began with the speeches of two female entrepreneurs from Bilbao: Miren Lauzirika (creative worker, consultant and trainer)



and Arantza Arruti Gómez (professor, entrepreneur and researcher at the Faculty of Psychology and Education of the University of Deusto). They presented their experience as female professionals, gave some advice to the audience and explained how being a woman affects your career choices and opportunities.

Afterwards, Núria Salán (Professor at the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgical Engineering at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia) gave an inspiring workshop about women in science and technology. She explained how female scientists and technicians have been made invisible throughout history and how women had to struggle to obtain the right to access education in these fields. This is reflected today in a very low percentage of women studying STEM subjects. Ms Salán aims at denouncing this situation and motivating more and more women to enter the scientific and technological field.

The last session of the day was a workshop by the Equal Rights Working Group on gender bias patterns in the workplace.

The next morning was devoted to finding solutions to the problems of gender discrimination in the workplace. Participants were asked what can be done at the individual level, at the level of civil society, and at the institutional level. In the afternoon, the participants enjoyed a city tour organised by AEGEE-Bilbao.

Throughout the conference, the participants engaged with the speakers by asking questions and intervening actively during the sessions. The speakers were positively impressed by the interest demonstrated by the audience and the high level of interaction. The participants themselves gave a very positive feedback to both the organisers and the content team: they considered this conference a valuable opportunity to learn more about gender discrimination and to discuss with experts and peers about possible solutions.

« FEMALE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICIANS HAVE BEEN MADE INVISIBLE THROUGHOUT HISTORY AND HOW WOMEN HAD TO STRUGGLE TO OBTAIN THE RIGHT TO ACCESS EDUCATION IN THESE FIELDS. THIS IS REFLECTED TODAY IN A VERY LOW PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN STUDYING STEM SUBJECTS »

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## BERGAMOSKVA: THE STORY OF A FRIENDSHIP ACROSS BORDERS

by *Tatiana Romanova, AEGEE-Moskva* and *Roberto Cirillo, AEGEE-Bergamo*

**In their communication, AEGEE locals behave like people in real life. Some of them hardly know each other, others, being geographically close, live like neighbours, and some are like old penpal friends or a couple who are truly fond of each other despite the distance. These latter become twin antennae to show the whole AEGEE their affinity. Key to Europe spoke to two of such twin antennae, AEGEE-Moskva and AEGEE-Bergamo, to find out the friendship story that 3000 kms of distance only strengthen.**

**Why have you chosen each other as twin antennae?**

*Tatiana:* Because AEGEE-Bergamo is a very strong antenna, with very experienced, hard-working members. Besides, our members often have to attend events in Bergamo and we have definitely become friends during this long period.

*Roberto:* Mutual exchanges of participants in each other's events have always been numerous, so we have always felt great affinity. Moreover, both antennae recognize the high quality of the other's events: the SU Transsiberian Dream stands out in the whole network, while Agora Bergamo is known as one of the best organized statutory events.

We were not scared of the distance, we just had to come up with some manageable activities, so we wrote down a plan. First we tested our cooperation abilities with an easy post crossing, which was fun; and then decided to sign the contract at Agora Enschede.

**Do you have an official slogan of Bergamoskva?**

*Tatiana:* Even more: we have a song! We changed the lyrics of the famous song "Felicita" and the result is a song called "Bergamoskva". Besides, we made the joint roll call at Agora Catania 2017 "Choo-choo Bergamoskva, AEGEE on fire!"

**We know that AEGEE-Moskva visited AEGEE-Bergamo during the pre-Agora event Transitalian Dream in September 2017. Has AEGEE-Moskva already organized, or is planning to organize, a similar trip for**

**people from Bergamo?**

*Roberto:* The Transitalian Dream was an incredible experience! We passed from the concept to the announcement in mere 3 weeks. The organization of the event was shared between the two antennae: Bergamo took over the logistics part (we sincerely thank Bologna and Salerno for working with us), while Moskva was more in charge of the PR. We wanted an open event. There were 9 members from Moskva, 7 from Bergamo and 15 from all over Europe, a mixture everyone loved.

Among the numerous highlights I'd mention the night train party on the way from Bologna to



Salerno and our arrival to Autumn Agora Catania.

*Tatiana:* We were impressed by the nature, culture, architecture of the cities. And, of course, we had amazing city tours and quests. We had a lot of fun! Later, we met our lovely friends from AEGEE-Bergamo in Moscow in April and spent three days together.

*Roberto:* I thank AEGEE Moskva for hosting AEGEE Bergamo back then. They welcomed us so warmly and spent their full time with us. In just two days we visited the Kremlin, had a banya, visited the arts in the subway and enjoyed the big Moscow. Our eyes were full. And our hearts even more.

### What have been the main achievements of your partnership so far?

*Tatiana:* New friends are the best thing that could ever have happened. And the amazing calendar! We showed how two different countries have so much in common, how so different people could have such similar hobbies.

*Roberto:* For me, the BergaMoskva Calendar and the Transitalian Dream. The idea of importing the Transiberian DREAM experience to Italy thrilled us a lot. The BergaMoskva Calendar was an experiment to cooperate tightly on a concrete item while being distant from each other. What the Calendar tells are the stories of what we have in common despite the distance.

### How would you describe your partnership in three words?

*Roberto:* Inspiration. Ambition. Lovely people (smiling)

*Tatiana:* The best twins!





## THE AEGEE DAY: A HEALTHY TRADITION

by Pablo Hernández (AEGEE-Alicante, AEGEE-Thessaloniki), co-project management

Every April 16th, thousands of AEGEEans join together to celebrate the birthday of our organisation in their own way. They all organise activities that mean something to them and that make them feel connected with the rest of the network, from the Canary Islands to Siberia.

With this year being the third edition, the project team wanted to add a nice touch to it. With the clear idea in mind of improving the impact that a series of activities happening simultaneously all across Europe could have, they decided to choose a thematic topic: youth development, under the name of Stepping Stones. This topic allowed locals, members and European bodies to organise a wide variety of activities that would directly benefit their members, including training events, CV workshops and self-awareness activities.

Locals received support in their activities. This was accomplished by launching extensive guidelines with many different ideas for activities, including complete packages to organise different sessions. Each local had their very own ambassador, ready to share tips with them and answer any question they could have.

On top of that, to showcase the great activities organised in the past two editions, a social media campaign was set up sharing previous activities with the whole network. Besides that, this year the Big Birthday Bash (#BBB) was born - a mini-project that does not only celebrates AEGEE-Europe's birthday but also the birthdays of all the locals



in the network, giving locals space to share their wishes with the Network.

The number of activities organised will be revealed on our social media channels and via email so stay tuned and follow us!

I don't want to leave without thanking the great team of ambassadors and obviously the lovely core team that made this project possible:

- Svenja van der Tol (AEGEE-Nijmegen), co-project management
- Alejandra Piot (AEGEE-Coruña), content management
- Lía Tuska (AEGEE-Sofia), public relations management
- Giulia Melis (AEGEE-Torino), Ambassadors management
- Daniel Tufeanu (AEGEE-Bucureşti), impact measurement management

## ACADEMY AND AEGEE: A NEW REVOLUTION HAS JUST STARTED

by Lucia Gavulová, AEGEE-Aachen, Alejandra Piot, AEGEE-A Coruña, Jorge Miguel, AEGEE-Valladolid, Lia Touska, AEGEE-Sofia, Antonis Triantafyllakis, AEGEE-Cluj Napoca, Midas Veraart, AEGEE-Leuven

**AEGEE-Academy is the official pool of trainers of AEGEE-Europe. The main mission is to implement Non-Formal Education inside AEGEE. AEGEE-Academy achieves this by organising various training courses and European Schools. The organisation also provides trainers and supporting content for the events in our network. Our mission is to advance the development of our members.**

AEGEE-Academy and its training courses already exist since 1999. Traditionally, European Schools focus on the skills needed to run a youth organization like AEGEE, and at the same time contribute to the personal development of their members. We also recently started to introduce the mini-European Schools (namely Mini-ES) which are shorter versions of our European Schools, aiming to reach more people. The participants of our training courses come home skilled and motivated to take an active role in their locals.

AEGEE-Academy also assists every local or European Body in the network. It achieves this by providing support for Local Training Courses, Regional Training Courses, Summer Universities, Network Meetings and almost every other event and activity that can benefit from non-formal education and an interactive, fun and participatory way of learning: the AEGEE-Academy way!

*RTC Napoli - RURTC? - Are You Ready To Change?:* In March, 20 participants and three trainers from various locals joined an intense training course in Napoli. The main focus of the meeting was the fundamentals of event management. We discussed such elements of event management as effective communication, group dynamics, logistics, fundraising and budgeting. Moreover, we offered a deep dive into the history and structure of AEGEE-Europe and a small check on antenna management. The participants attended approximately 17 hours

of training and left motivated and inspired to organize events in their local antennae.

*Trainers Meeting:* In February 2018, ten trainers met in Brussels for the first Trainers Meeting organised by AEGEE-Academy. The meeting covered internal topics like the vision of AEGEE-Academy and how to develop our members. We also developed ideas for collaboration with other European bodies organisations. The most important topic of that weekend was the quality assurance of our training events and the assurance of our trainers' competences.

Lastly, we got the chance to meet and discuss with the Network Commission and the Comité Directeur about our collaboration in the Internal Education taskforce.

*Mini HRES in Moscow:* Mini-HRES, aka "the event of HeRoES", was co-organised with AEGEE-Moskva. 16 participants from nine AEGEE locals and two partner organisations embarked on an adventure in which they developed skills in human resources management, such as recruitment, motivation,

« EUROPEAN SCHOOLS FOCUS ON THE SKILLS NEEDED TO RUN A YOUTH ORGANIZATION LIKE AEGEE, AND AT THE SAME TIME CONTRIBUTE TO THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR MEMBERS »

teamwork, knowledge transfer, conflict resolution and more. The training was very intensive, but very inspiring and the participants left motivated to take the work in their locals to new levels!

*TNT Bucarest:* As the old chinese saying goes, send an Academy trainer to a training and members learn for a day, Train New Trainers and members learn for a lifetime. During this event, taking place in the Paris of the East, the vital competences of trainers were obtained by the nearly two dozen enthusiasts. The lessons were immediately put to the test, when the apprentices had to deliver their

developed trainings to AEGEE-Bucuresti members who enjoyed a afternoon full of trainings. A new generation of trainers is making themselves ready to take these trainings to the rest of Europe.

*Leadership Mini-ES in A Coruña:* This Mini-ES was co-organised with AEGEE-A Coruña. We managed to have seven participants and, though it's a low number, the group and the development of the event was incredible. The feedback received both towards the local organizers and the trainers were very positive, and the participants were willing to repeat.

Part of the ACAdemy revolution are new ideas and structures. One of those ideas is the consultants available for every network area. This experienced trainer will work together with the Network Commissioner to assess bottlenecks and train antennae.

Other plans include:

- rebranding European Schools
- a new working structure
- increased presence of our trainers on all training courses
- closer cooperations with the European bodies and with trainer teams of other youth NGOs.

We would like to make sure that every member who wants to develop themselves, knows that Academy trainers are available for you. No matter if you are searching for a trainer for your event, consultancy on the content for Summer Universities, facilitating team building for the new board or simply in search for training material. Academy and its trainers work closely together with the network and are more than happy to support your needs. Feel free to join our mission to Learn & Share!

Academy also wants to grow and is open to each member whose dream is to become a trainer or a facilitator. We will provide you with support, materials and expertise to make sure you can pursue your dream and work on your own projects!

In case you have any questions, want to ask for a trainer, feedback and support for your event, or you'd simply like to chat with us, please do not hesitate to send us an e-mail to: [board@aegee-academy.org](mailto:board@aegee-academy.org) or a message through our Facebook page: [fb.com/AEGEE.Academy](https://fb.com/AEGEE.Academy).



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## HEIDELBERG — WHERE TRADITIONS ARE ALIVE AND CHERISHED

by Shakira Rompf and Evita Ločmele, AEGEE-Heidelberg

**Heidelberg may be relatively small - 150 thousand citizens, from whom 30 thousands are students, but it has proven itself to be a home for long-lasting traditions and a glamorous history. "To the living spirit", a motto carried by Heidelberg's university -the oldest one in Germany- summarizes the city perfectly. The castle is its most popular tourist attraction; destroyed three times, it embodies the era of German romanticism. The dark green forest contrasts with red sandstone ruins and, accompanied by a charming view of river Neckar, it is clearly a must-see.**

AEGEE-Heidelberg does a great job, keeping up with the city it is located in. An antenna with a remarkable history, organiser of one of the first conferences on relations between the Far East and Europe in 1986, and in addition it contributed to the Summer University project 28 times out of 30. AEGEE-Heidelberg is passionate for European Events and 20th anniversary of Gala-Ball will be no exception.

First organised in the early '90s, the Gala-Ball is surely one of the most elegant events within the network. Welcoming AEGEEans from all over Europe, it has proven that traditions are still welcome in the students' organisation: New Year's event, a ball to celebrate 30 years of AEGEE-Heidelberg and a Masked Ball, filling the hall with hundreds of colourful masks. Every year the Ball had its element of surprise to make it outstanding. This year the visitors were left astonished by the alluring Merian-Saal in

the Kongreshaus (city hall). Until midnight a live band, "Peppermint Soul", entertained the guests; afterwards a Dj was responsible for the mood.

In addition to the Gala-Ball, from May 31st to June 3rd AEGEE-Heidelberg welcomed all AEGEEans to the four-day event "Gala-Ball: Fireworks of Cultures". AEGEE-Heidelberg joined its powers with POLIG (Politics Interest Group) and EaP (Eastern Partnership Project) to bring the thematic value to the event. As the main organiser Shakira Rompf says: "It is quite challenging to organise an event like this, but I really believe it will be one of the most special and outstanding events this year. After so many people associate Heidelberg with the Gala-Ball, it is my honor and my obligation to organise it once more, now for the 20th time. Especially for me as main organiser, it is most important to create unforgettable memories for everyone. This event is something AEGEE-Heidelberg can be really proud of."



« FIRST ORGANISED IN THE EARLY '90S, THE GALA-BALL IS SURELY ONE OF THE MOST ELEGANT EVENTS WITHIN THE NETWORK. WELCOMING AEGEEANS FROM ALL OVER EUROPE, IT HAS PROVEN THAT TRADITIONS ARE STILL WELCOME IN THE STUDENTS' ORGANISATION »

## AEGEE-SHEFFIELD: A SUCCESS STORY WORTH NOTING

by Oksana Prokopchenko, Francesco Rossetto, Jacob Bloor, and Khurram Shah, AEGEE-Sheffield

**Hi! We are AEGEE-Sheffield, and our board consists of four people: Oksana, Khurram, Jacob and Francesco. It's hard to believe it now, but we joined AEGEE family only a year ago as a Contact, and now we're already a full Antenna, upgraded at the Spring Agora Krakow 2018! At the moment, only two of us are living stably in Sheffield, which makes this experience challenging, but we always manage to get the most out of it.**

How? Thanks to the motivation that we get from it. We know how important the motivation factor is in our life, since most of us have been living abroad for a considerably long period of time, and what kept us going has always been the inspiration we got from our success, but mostly from the people around us. We all faced new kinds of experiences since the beginning of this adventure, and even if some of us occasionally did not fit for the purpose (most of all at the beginning), we managed to achieve great results. We designed a new customised logo, and together with AEGEE-Manchester and AEGEE-London we organised a thematic European event "Brexit - What Next?", which was a big success! We also managed to get to meet up, at the Agora-Krakow, to get to know each other better.

We're currently working on organising a Summer University, which is a great result, considering this is the first SU organised in the UK in more than ten years!

What allowed us to move from one stage to another has always been the energy that we were giving to each other, the fact that - despite the distances - we were accountable to each other. We are a Board with a lot of mutual empathy, and the help we give to each other to face new tests is not only a way to learn new things about the organisation of the Antenna, but also a motivational factor that makes everything easier in this adventure.

Sure, there's still a long path to go, but well begun is half done: so far our work has given us a lot of satisfaction, and many new members are subscribing to AEGEE-Sheffield. Few months ago we were mostly strangers to each other, and now we have found ourselves involved in the creation of the second AEGEE Antenna in the UK. If looking ahead of us might sometimes look like an unknown path full of perils and uncertainty, what lies ahead is enough to give us the energy to fulfil the goal we set and to keep sharing it with the new members. But now that we got upgraded, this is the beginning, the adventure goes on!



## AEGEE-STOCKHOLM: THE WORLD IS YOURS WITH AEGEE

by Jelmer Wiersma, President of AEGEE-Stockholm

**During the Summer Universities of 2017, a new idea saw the light: if your Erasmus destination doesn't have an AEGEE, why not start one yourself? Of course, at first this started out as a joke, but as my Erasmus began, it became more and more real. During Agora Catania, the whole thing actually started rolling and shortly afterwards, the Contact of AEGEE-Europe in Stockholm was established. The beginning of an era, AEGEE was back in Sweden!**

However, the work was not over yet. Since there were quite some people interested in the whole concept of AEGEE, we decided to keep up the work and become Contact-Antenna as soon as possible. Now, after Agora Krakow, I am writing this as the proud president of the newest local in the network: AEGEE-Stockholm! I have to say, it feels amazing to get this opportunity, but it feels even more amazing that our newly established board of (mainly) AEGEE-newbies is putting in all the effort they can and are eager to learn.

As for the future, we are happy to show Stockholm our beautiful network and to show the network our beautiful Stockholm. Even though we are a small local at the moment, we see many opportunities to grow. Stockholm is really an exciting city and I myself see the

potential for many great things. Stockholm is a very vibrant city with plenty of activities going on, and so is Sweden as a country in general. This energy is stimulating us to keep up the work.

Now that I was asked to write about our "success story"... I don't like to call it like that because I really feel like we are doing something that any motivated person could do. Founding an AEGEE-Local might seem an impossible task, but with the right people around you and the love and support of all our experienced members it is actually quite achievable! Never be afraid to ask for help and be bold in your ideas. The world is yours with AEGEE!



« EVEN THOUGH WE ARE A SMALL LOCAL AT THE MOMENT, WE SEE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW. STOCKHOLM IS REALLY AN EXCITING CITY AND I MYSELF SEE THE POTENTIAL FOR MANY GREAT THINGS »

## THIS IS THE TIME OF AEGEE: TRENDS IN NETWORK DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

by Gunnar Erth, *The Golden Times*

**It was a deserved triumph: when Oksana Prokopchenko and Polina Khapaeva were elected as new Network Commissioners with 99% and 93% of all votes at AEGEE's general assembly in April. It was not only because of their election programme, it was a recognition for their outstanding work as antenna presidents in the past year, when Oksana founded and created a strong AEGEE-Sheffield, while Polina made AEGEE-Sankt-Peterburg one of the top antennae in the network.**

This episode also describes two of the hotspots of AEGEE – while traditionally the United Kingdom and Russia have been countries where it is a little bit harder to find European-minded students and create great projects together, those two areas saw a remarkable upswing in the AEGEE network recently. AEGEE in the UK has been able to present itself as a positive force in a Brexit-struck country. And Russia just elected Putin for another term, while young people crave for a chance to participate in building up an open society.

Today, there are seven local AEGEE branches in Russia. The youngest one, the very popular AEGEE-Tyumen, joined the network in spring 2017, and the members of the entire network are extremely enthusiastic about having a branch of a European association in geographic Asia. AEGEE-Tyumen with its extremely European-minded members has become a bridgehead for AEGEE, a place that makes it possible to get into the mentality of a remote Russia – but hasn't the chance to widen the horizon always been the main reason for joining AEGEE?

Indeed, the most exciting developments regarding the network happened at the fringe of the continent. Like in Scandinavia. AEGEE-Stockholm, which had disappeared from the AEGEE map in 2013, joined the network again this spring. Finally Scandinavia is not a white spot on the AEGEE map anymore. AEGEE-Helsinki, the only branch in Finland, was in a crisis last year but thanks to great new members is now much stronger than before.

« AEGEE IN THE UK HAS BEEN ABLE TO PRESENT ITSELF AS A POSITIVE FORCE IN A BREXIT-STRUCK COUNTRY. AND RUSSIA JUST ELECTED PUTIN FOR ANOTHER TERM, WHILE YOUNG PEOPLE CRAVE FOR A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING UP AN OPEN SOCIETY »



It seems that Europe is growing together again – and this is reflected by developments in AEGEE. This might seem as a paradox, since the whole Europe is in a crisis: populism is growing, nationalism is spreading, separatism is flourishing. However, this is not a contradiction at all. When Europe is in a crisis, the AEGEE network stands up and says: “Stop! Not with us!” Aside from the described network developments, we have seen a new and strong interest in thematic conferences, we have seen the foundation of the Politics



Interest Group last year and it won't take long until we see the renaissance of thematic European projects again.

More and more members see that AEGEE is the answer to the political crisis in Europe. However, it would be too easy to say that everything is great. We are actually seeing a shift – while more and more members join and get active who want to help a

political environment in these countries. Turkey is actually a very good example of a country, where AEGEE is flourishing – AEGEE-Gaziantep and AEGEE-Mugla became full members of the network recently thanks to their great work, while other branches such as AEGEE-Eskisehir and AEGEE-Izmir are going strong and spread European spirit in a country where democracy has been facing huge challenges in recent years.

« THE MORE POLITICAL THE EVENTS ARE, THE MORE AEGEE MANAGES TO SHINE AND ATTRACT PEOPLE. THIS IS ALSO GREAT FOR THE EXTERNAL IMPACT OF THE ASSOCIATION AND FOR ATTRACTING NEW MEMBERS THAT ARE POLITICALLY MINDED

So, is everything great in AEGEE? Things could always be better. The aftermath of the economic crisis in southern Europe of the past decade also hit the network.

Europe in need for idealism, passion and motivation, less people are interested in rather fun-oriented Summer Universities or networking events such as Network Meetings. The more political the events are, the more AEGEE manages to shine and attract people. This is also great for the external impact of the association and for attracting new members that are politically minded.

Such a shift, however, doesn't happen overnight. Such a change towards a more politically-minded association usually sets any association under stress. The more the members are aware of it the easier it will get to embrace the shift and to nurture it. Fortunately, they are. In fact, AEGEE has never been so strong in this decade as now.

We can see it also in the choice of the locations for the three statutory events this year: the European Planning Meeting took place in Armenia, Yerevan, the spring Agora in Kraków, Poland, while the autumn Agora will be hosted by AEGEE-Istanbul. This is giving the members a great insight in the



For many young people supporting the family with work has priority over joining a European network. We could witness it for example in Greece, Southern Italy and the Balkans. However, as soon as these parts of Europe will do better economically, the network will hopefully grow there again as well. It would be great because these regions are also part of our vision for a better Europe.

## LES ANCIENS: AEGEE FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

by Michele Turati

**Sustainability. This is a word often associated with environment and nature, but for a society to grow and for an association to pursue its dynamic interests across a period of time, sustainability becomes the ability to pass knowledge and best practices on to future next generations.**

Every year since AEGEE-Europe was founded back in the 80's, new members join a pulsing and expanding network. Every year older members complete the knowledge transfer to the newer one who can pursue the objectives of the Association, expand the scope of AEGEE actions, establish new ways of doing things, meet new people, work to achieve our vision for Europe.

Les Anciens of AEGEE-Europe is the international alumni network, a group of formerly active AEGEE members who keep in touch, gather together, discuss, strengthen network ties. A group that formed naturally to stay together even if all the alumni live in different parts of Europe and of the world. It is an intergenerational association, an incredible opportunity to meet active AEGEE

members from different generations and to look ahead together.

AEGEE is a students' organization, very inspirational and empowering, that is why most of Les Anciens members are active in civil society, meeting few times each year to renew contacts, to make new ones and to celebrate life.

In Spring 2018 the last general meeting took place in Zagreb, organized with the cooperation of the local antenna, next meetings will take place in September and December 2018 for a new year's eve event. It sounds like AEGEE, it somehow still is, but as Les Anciens members are not students anymore the facilities have been upgraded to something more comfortable. This should not discourage current AEGEE members who are holding on to the network and to the inevitability of time: there is AEGEE life after AEGEE, this is Les Anciens.

How to join the alumni network: go to the website [www.anciens.org](http://www.anciens.org) and fill the contact form under the button "join Les Anciens". Simple as it is.

« SUSTAINABILITY IS A WORD OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE, BUT FOR AN ASSOCIATION TO PURSUE ITS DYNAMIC INTERESTS ACROSS A PERIOD OF TIME, SUSTAINABILITY BECOMES THE ABILITY TO PASS KNOWLEDGE AND BEST PRACTICES ON TO FUTURE GENERATIONS »



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## TWO CONTINENTS – ONE AGORA: AUTUMN AGORA ISTANBUL 2018

by Réka Salamon, Vice-Coordinator of Autumn Agora Istanbul

**What do you know about Turkey? The news has been depicting a quite turbulent country, where speculations about the future direction are split between moving either more towards the Eastern or the Western powers. While the delicacies of geopolitical powerplay are more influenced by heads of states and trade negotiations, there are even more powerful tools in the hands of youth organisations like AEGEE: active and engaged young people.**

Bringing 800 European students together in Istanbul for four days, the Autumn Agora Istanbul has two main aims; it wants to invite Europeans to

Serkan Sayar; supported by the board of AEGEE-Istanbul: Bengisu Genez, Birant Janbek Öztürk, Cansu Kutlu, Hasan Hüseyin Camuz, Hilal Türker. But organising an event as large as the Agora is no easy task for any AEGEE local; in fact, Agora Istanbul is organised by not only AEGEE-Istanbul, but also AEGEE-Ankara, AEGEE-Eskişehir and AEGEE-İzmir members as well! The organisation wants to send a strong message of unity and cooperation among the Turkish-speaking locals. Rich in experience, the locals are cooperating in taking good practices from past statutory events like: Agora Ankara (1997 and 2001), Agora Eskişehir (2007), Agora İstanbul (2010) and EBM İzmir (2012).

← RICH IN EXPERIENCE, THE LOCALS ARE COOPERATING IN TAKING GOOD PRACTICES FROM PAST STATUTORY EVENTS LIKE: AGORA ANKARA (1997 AND 2001), AGORA ESKIŞEHİR (2007), AGORA İSTANBUL (2010) AND EBM İZMİR (2012) →

explore the reality of Turkey, as well as it to offer an opportunity for Turkish and European youth to come together and build long-lasting relations. The latter is strongly aligned with the mission statement of AEGEE itself, building a better Europe that is “socially, economically and culturally integrated”.

The AEGEE Agora is a place for practicing our internal democracy, holding vivid discussions, workshops and training sessions expanding our knowledge and soft skills – and Agora Istanbul will be no different, but offers even more! The theme of the Agora is the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda; and the event will host an Action Day on October 5th which will be open to AEGEE members and the general public.

The core team is composed of: Arda Özküşaksız, Ayşe Bahar Güven, Batuhan Çarıkçı, Dermanşah Hazer Ersoy Yalın, Enes Furkan Kurt, Gökhan Ertuğrul, Gül Hira Nur Turhan, Réka Salamon,

Remember how AEGEE was taking part in the birth of the Erasmus programme? Legend as it may be, AEGEE certainly played a key role in bringing the Erasmus programme to Turkey, thanks to the efforts of AEGEE locals in Turkey successfully lobbying and taking part in the Socrates programme (former Erasmus+). This success story shows us the power of our organisation and what AEGEEans can achieve if they stand united and fight for a good cause.

Do you need more reasons to come to Agora Istanbul? Istanbul is Turkey’s economic, cultural and historical centre, Europe’s most crowded city with almost 15 million citizens, more than 3.000 mosques, 67 different ethnic origins, 49 universities, 41 municipalities, 39 districts (25 of them in European Side) and 31 languages, the capital of four empires and the centre of 20 different civilizations. The famous saying goes: “If the Earth were a single state, Istanbul would be its capital!”



## EPM İZMİR 2019: A FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

by Batuhan Çarıkçı, Main Organiser of the Spring EPM İzmir 2019

**First of all, in this period of the year, we are very happy to see that our work is well-appreciated and supported so far, by both the university and the AEGEE network. Having organised a successful Network Meeting about green sustainability in May 2018 has made us much more experienced in this field, and it was as well a good motivation to organise a much bigger event as well.**

"Tomorrow's nature is created today. If you protect the nature, you protect the future", said Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Since last year, when we decided to focus more on topics like green sustainability, energy and future, these words have always been in our minds and encouraged us to take more initiative in this area. İzmir, being the capital of green sustainability and modern agriculture in Turkey and hosting important institutions, has a great potential to be the centre of sustainability and protection, to raise awareness and encourage people to think and take part in it. We, as AEGEE-

İzmir, are aware that we are working on a project that has a critical importance for the world and its future existence. Because of that, we want everyone to work on or at least seriously think about it. During EPM İzmir, participants will have the chance to do this, they will meet and discuss with professionals, entrepreneurs, academics and journalists who are working actively on this field.

« DURING THE EPM İZMİR, PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO DO THIS, THEY WILL MEET AND DISCUSS WITH PROFESSIONALS, ENTREPRENEURS, ACADEMICS AND JOURNALISTS WHO ARE WORKING ACTIVELY ON THIS FIELD »

We hope that, after enjoying their time in our welcoming, easy going and warm city, participants of EPM İzmir 2019 will bring back many useful ideas which they could apply in their daily lives and their own environment. Changes start with ourselves first, and fortunately, our future and the future of next generations lie in our hands.



## COMITÉ DIRECTEUR 2018-2019: AN INTRODUCTION

Dear Network,

"United we stand strong".

The motto of Bulgaria's presidency of the Council of the EU captures the spirit of what Europe and the world needs today. We are increasingly seeing the results of the general crisis that has been going on for the last decade. We tend to forget that our strength and beauty lies in our differences; these differences should unite us more than divide us.

Democracy is the backbone of Europe. For 33 years now, AEGEE has been finding its way to make a difference in the local, European and global society. We, the young people of Europe are the continent's present and future. Thus it is important to fight for what we believe in and to try to shape a better future for us all. We, as future Comité Directeur, feel proud to be part of this wonderful Network and are eager to work tirelessly for all the AEGEEans and the young people who seek to be the change they want to see in the world.

The network of empowered cities is AEGEE's biggest strength. By bringing each city, each culture, each young person closer, we are connecting Europe and we are celebrating our diversity. We may have different views, we may speak different languages,

we may have different life experiences, but we are all the same in heart.

In the upcoming year, we hope to see each and every one of you learning from each other, following your beliefs, sharing your passion, fighting for your ideals for a united, borderless and diverse Europe. We will be waiting for you in the Agorae, the European Planning Meeting, the conferences, the Network Meetings, the training courses, the conventions. We are proud to be here to support you and we invite you to discover yourself together with us. Thank you for putting your trust in us and we wish to honour your choice for the upcoming year by learning, acting and bringing the change. Together.

Europeanly yours,

*Alejandra, Evrim, Marco, Matis, Monika, Spyros and Viola*  
Comite Directeur 56



# THE TEAM



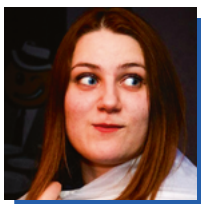
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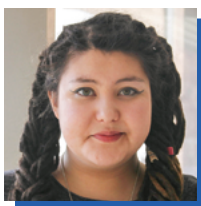
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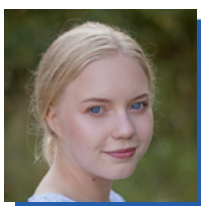
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*Map of the Network (p.15-16), orig. created by Philipp Blum & Vincent Baas, modified for this version by Leonardo Manganelli & Mariia Martynova.*

*Structure of AEGEE (p.13-14), orig. created by Angelos Pappas, modified for this version by Anna Ermakova.*

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« I'M DEEPLY THANKFUL TO AEGEE FOR ENTRUSTING ME THE CREATION OF THIS KEY-TO-EUROPE. PROUD OF OUR TEAM! »  
Natalia Klimenko

« AT LAST, HERE IT COMES MY FINAL EDITION. ONE LAST ENGAGING MOMENT OF MY AEGEE LIFE »

Erika Bettin

« WORKING IN K2E TEAM WAS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE AND ONE OF THE MOST INSPIRING AND SURPRISING THINGS I'VE EVER DONE IN AEGEE »

Maria Martynova

« THE CHALLENGE TO SHIFT CREATION TIMELINE OF THIS KEY2EUROPE EARLIER THAN USUAL WAS REALLY TOUGH AND THE TEAM ACCOMPLISHED THIS CHALLENGE WITH EXCELLENCE! WORK WAS FULL OF FRESH IDEAS, PROFESSIONALISM AND INSPIRATION »

Ksenia Lupanova

« WORKING ON THIS EDITION WAS A REALLY NICE EXPERIENCE, WITH A TEAM EAGER TO DO THEIR BEST AND WITH NEXT INSPIRATION AND IDEAS »

Alejandra Piot

« CREATING SOMETHING FROM SCRATCH IS ALWAYS A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE. HAVING THE CHANCE TO COOPERATE WITH AN AMAZING TEAM LEFT ME WITH FULFILLING MOMENTS »

Fani Kragiopoulou

« OUR TEAM WAS VERY SUPPORTING AND SKILLED AND THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE LEFT ME A WARM FEELING WHILE BEING ABLE TO TRY OUT SOMETHING NEW! »

Karin Kanamäe

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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union





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