



BORDERLESS EUROPE LESSING URDEN ?

CLUJ-NAPOCA

MAY 6TH - MAY 9TH
2016





Borderless Europe: Blessing or Burden Conference

Cluj-Napoca, 6th – 9th May 2016

An event organised by



Association des amis de
Franck Biancheri

1961-2012





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Preface by Your Vision for EUrope

The Franck Biancheri Award Conference “Borderless Europe: Blessing or Burden?” was held in Cluj-Napoca, in the heart of Transylvania (Romania), between the 6th and 9th of May 2016, gathering together around 60 youngsters from all over Europe and beyond. The event was a collaboration between AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca, *l’Association des Amis des Franck Biancheri* (AAFB) and AEGEE-Europe’s Your Vision for EUrope project. The conference was highly “international”, including participants and speakers from Romania, Germany, Italy, Macedonia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Pakistan, Nigeria, Greece, Poland, France and the Netherlands.

In these three days of workshops, panel discussions, the screening of the “Great European Disaster Movie” and so much fun, we discussed the current state of the European integration process, its political and moral crises and how EU is dealing with the current migration phenomenon. The major topic of the conference was “borders in Europe”, whether these be physical, socio-economic, cultural or political. This, in turn, led to the exchange of ideas regarding the current state of the Schengen agreement, the idea of a borderless Europe and how it can be transferred in social and institutional terms. Lastly, we thought about what we, as young people, can do to break borders and stereotypes.

As the Franck Biancheri Award 2016 was awarded to AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca, the conference was also an occasion to commemorate and discuss the life and cultural legacy of Franck Biancheri, founder of AEGEE-Europe and already during the 1980s a promoter of a transnational democratic Europe. Marie-Hélène Caillol, Marianne Ranke-Cormier and Georgeta Grama Moldovan, representatives of the “Association des amis de Franck Biancheri” (AAFB) gave first-hand accounts of Franck’s life and ideas, and the birth of AEGEE in 1985 in particular.

The event was made possible thanks to AAFB itself, which provided financial support and AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca, which hosted the event and organized in detail not only every logistical aspect but also an amazing social programme.



We, the Team of Your Vision for Europe, would like to say many thanks to AAFB, to AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca, to AEGEE-Europe and to all the participants, who showed an incredible degree of passion and involvement. Special thanks go to Réka Salamon, Project Director of AEGEE-Europe, for coordinating this Project.

We feel that the conference has been a successful one. A great opportunity to exchange ideas in a real safe environment, where everybody could breathe a true international atmosphere and have their say about the current and future state of Europe. During the conference, everyone agreed that “We, as young Europeans, are not responsible for the present worrisome state of the European project, but we are responsible for its future, and that is why we cannot sit idle”. We hope that this booklet will help to remind our participants, or any other young European or interested reader, of this important message.

This conference is also the result of a great cooperation between AEGEE-Europe and AAFB.

AEGEE-Europe is very happy to collaborate with AAFB and continue this cooperation in the future!



Your Vision for Europe team





Impact Measurement

Participants of the conference were given the opportunity to help us measure the impact of the conference and our project. This was done by giving participants a questionnaire before the start of the conference and one after the conference had finished. Certain measures were repeated, giving us the opportunity to look at changes brought about by our conference. Not all participants filled out both questionnaires. Data on demographics was gathered from 31 participants, data shown on the evaluation of workshops, organisation and the project came from the 24 people who filled out the post-conference questionnaire, and data comparing the pre- and post-questionnaire was provided by the 22 people who filled out both questionnaires.

The evaluation of the conference was done by having participants rate each aspect on a 5-point scale, higher scores equal higher levels of satisfaction. For the comparative analysis participants were asked about their knowledge on certain topics concerning Europe and the EU, their thoughts on relevant topics to the subject and some questions used for the evaluation of the Your Vision for Europe project goals. All of these aspects were rated on a 7-point scale, higher scores indicate higher levels of knowledge or agreement with a statement.

The results of the impact measurement and evaluation of the conference can be found in graphs and charts throughout the booklet. For any further information on the impact measurement of the conference, feel free to contact Eva Billen, Impact Measurement Manager of the Your Vision for Europe team.



SOME FIGURES!

45 participants attended the conference: 21 from Romania, 10 from Germany, 3 from Italy, 2 from Hungary, 2 from Macedonia, 2 from Croatia, 1 from Bulgaria, 1 from Pakistan, 1 from Nigeria, 1 from Greece and 1 from the Netherlands

15 members of AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca organized the logistical aspect of the conference

9 speakers shared their expertise and ideas during the panel discussions

18 are the members of Your Vision for EUrope team. All the team members gave their support to develop and promote externally the conference

6 delegates of Your Vision for EUrope presented and delivered in Cluj-Napoca the content of the conference: Maarten de Groot, Aleksandra Mojsova, Leonie Riebesam, Tedi Martinescu, Cosmina Bisboaca and Roberto Orrù.

3 is the number of delegates from the "Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri". The association supported financially the conference and shared the spiritual legacy of Franck Biancheri, founder of AEGEE

2 members from the Comité Directeur of AEGEE-Europe coordinated and supervised the organization of the conference

1 is the passion shown by all the participants to share, exchange and discuss their vision of Europe in a true international arena

Opening ceremony and commemoration of Franck Biancheri

The conference “Borderless Europe: Blessing or Burden?” started on 6 May 2016. The ceremony started with the opening speeches of the main conference organisers and promoters: Bianca Sabau (AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca), Réka Salamon and Aleksandra Kluczka (AEGEE-Europe), Maarten de Groot (Your Vision for Europe Project), Marie-Hélène Caillol, Marianne Ranke-Cormier and Georgeta Grama Moldovan (Association des amis de Franck Biancheri).

We firstly spoke about Franck Biancheri’s life, founder in 1985 of the first European Student Association (AEGEE) and decisive figure for the birth of the ERASMUS Programme. Throughout his life, Franck strived for a more democratic and transnational Europe and in 1988 he created together with other AEGEE founding members the first trans-European political party, called “Initiative pour une Démocratie Européenne” (IDE). Although formally dissolved after few years, the spirit and ideas of IDE have been inherited by a new party founded by Franck and other fellows in 2005: the “Newropeans”. Today, Newropeans remains the only trans-European political party.

Franck’s work and thoughts about the future of European governance and the role of Europe in the world continued with the creation of Europe2020, which afterwards became LEAP (Laboratoire européen d’Anticipation Politique).



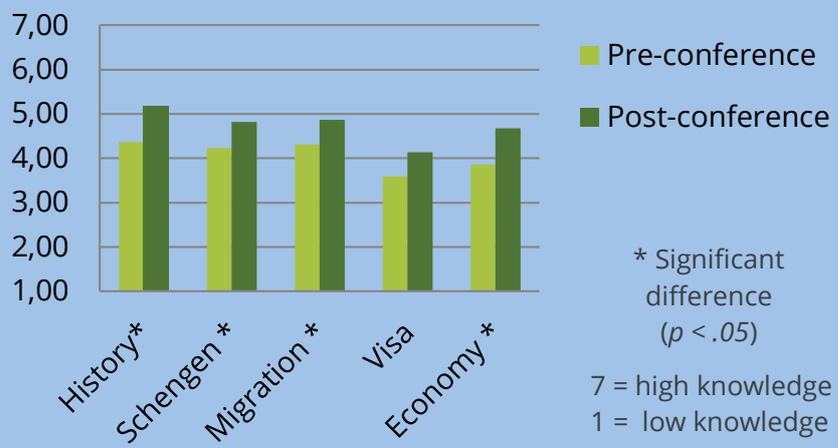


In the second part of the ceremony, we dealt with the history of AEGEE: from its birth in Paris on 16 April 1985, when it was still called EGEE, through 1988 when it changed its



name to AEGEE, until nowadays. Its foundation started with the purpose of creating a platform, a forum of discussion, in which young Europeans could discuss about European matters and propose their ideas to both national and European institutions. In 1986 about 50 university antennae were present in Europe, today the AEGEE network is present in 200 cities, spread in 40 countries all over Europe and counts 13000 members. AEGEE history was the starting point for an interesting discussion not only about the current state of AEGEE but also of the EU and the European project.

Participant Knowledge on Europe



'Great atmosphere overall, I've learned a lot from this event'

Workshops

Borderless Europe vs. Borders in Europe

May 7 - Trainers: **Your Vision for EUrope Team** (YVfEU) and **Aleksandra Kluczka** (AEGEE-Europe)

Having the complex, diverse notion of Europe and its borders, participants explored what Europe and the European Union means for them, how they affect them personally and what it means to feel European in an interactive, non-committing manner.



Furthermore, participants explored how this ideal of a borderless Europe materialized historically: what are the milestones of the European integration process? What are the most important moments of deepening integration and strengthening cooperation? What are

the moments of widening the circle of member states? This workshop was an introductory workshop intended to actively engage participants in an accessible and informing way.



Our Image of Refugees: Change of Perspective?

May 7 – Trainers: **Fabian Wagner** (Federation of the Young European Greens) and **Aleksandra Mojsova** (YVfEU)



During this workshop, we have critically explored the borderless concept of Europe, and the different aspects it brings. Interrogating the differences between experience and acquired information, we came to the process of attitudes shaping and how this process is hugely influenced by

the media. Very often this leads to socio-cultural borders, most implicitly creating mental borders, unnoticeably shaping our views on multiculturalism, integration, social coexistence and social cohesion.

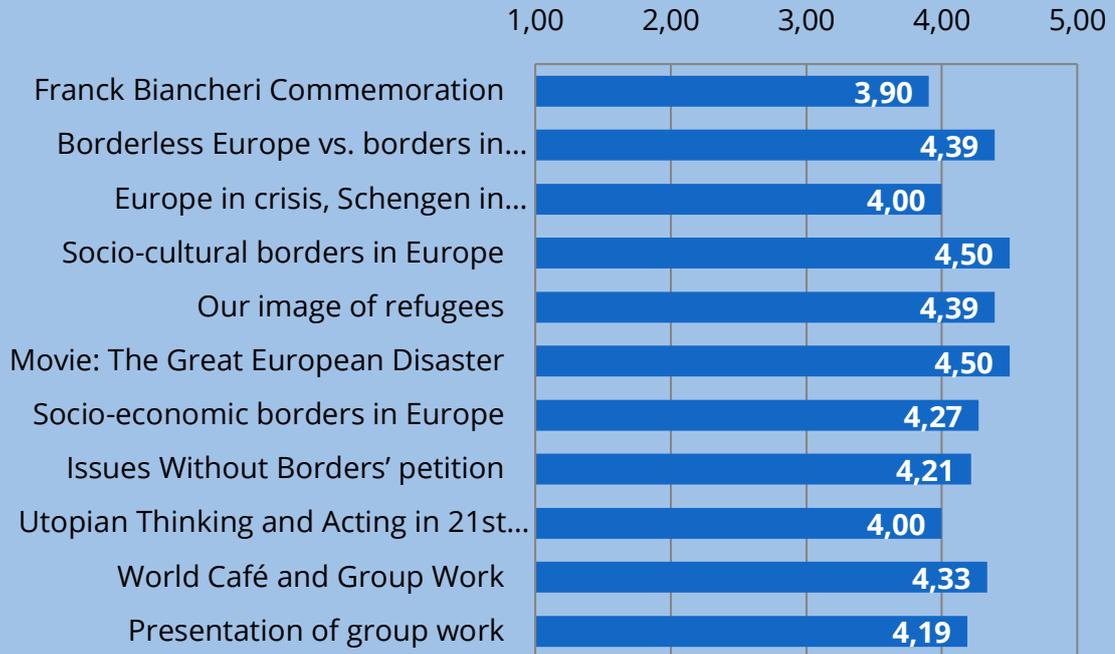
We went on with how refugees define and see themselves through videos, podcasts and pictures. Participants explored what and how much we should take with us from the variety of stories, what steps we



could take for de-constructing these stereotypes, as well as how to always be cautious to objectively construct our preconceptions and prejudices about the refugees in our communities and our European society.

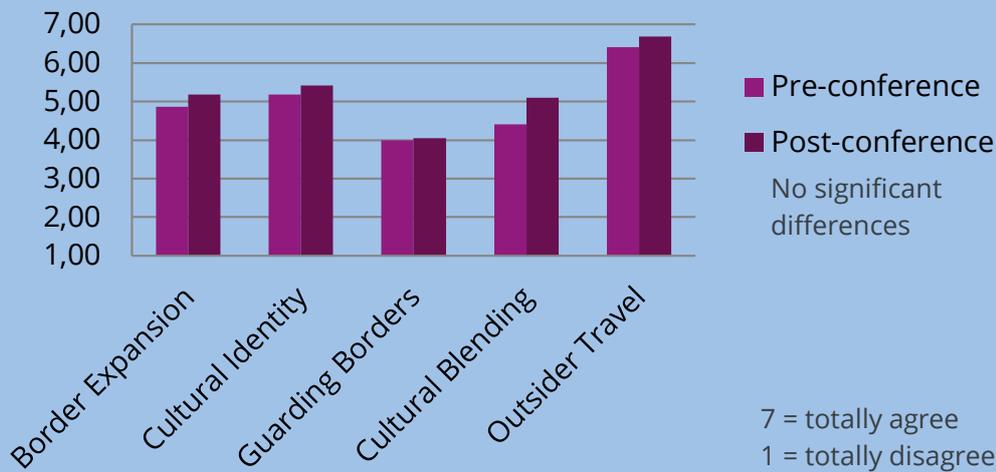


Workshops and Panel Discussions



5 = high quality
1 = low quality

Participants Thoughts on...



Statements: 'Europe should expand its borders', 'It is important for my country to keep its own cultural identity', 'Europe needs to guard its borders more firmly from outsiders', 'European cultures blend well together' and 'It is important for young people from outside Schengen to get the opportunity to travel in Europe'.



Socio-Cultural Borders in Europe: the Borders That Define Us

May 7 – Trainers: **Noemi Lowy** (Democracy in Practice) and **Roberto Orrù** (YVfEU)



Have you ever felt that social and cultural differences prevented you to understand the others? In which ways people create distinctions and borders between “us” and “them”?

In the first part of the workshop, participants took part in a role-play game, in which they represented the

various political parties and associations of a fictitious multicultural city, such as: a Muslim party, a youth association, a far-right party and many others. They discussed and voted in favour or against the construction of a new mosque in the city.

By being in the shoes of “the others”, participants experienced different values, points of view and beliefs. In this respect, they attempted to break socio-cultural borders and to challenge prejudices within the setting of a multicultural society. In the second part of the workshop, participants developed and shared ideas about the cultural, political, historical and geographical borders that define a social community and their positive and negative effects.





Issues Without Borders' Petition: IWB for Refugees! Europe Needs New Legislation on Migration

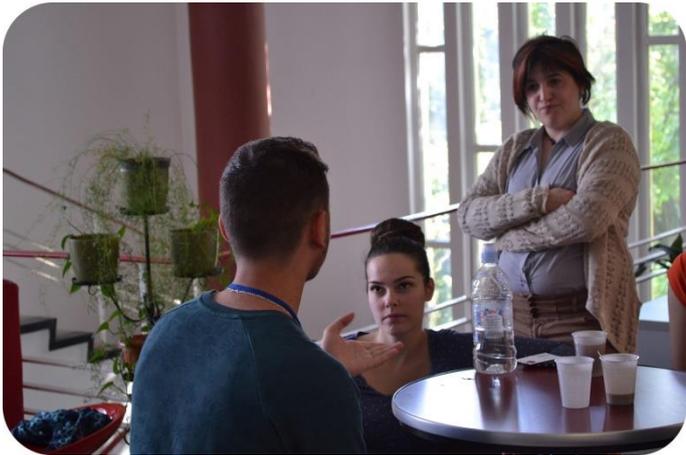
May 8 – Trainer: **Patricia Papuc** (Issues Without Borders)



The workshop was an open discussion about different aspects of the refugee crisis and the problems in the different countries from which we had representatives. These were Hungary, Germany, Macedonia, Croatia and Romania. Patricia Papuc gave a short introduction to the work

of Issues Without Borders. Other aspects that were discussed are the practise of sanctions within the EU, its effectiveness and ideas for other methods that could control the actions of member states.

Shortly we talked about the EU-Turkey deal as well as the quota system and whether or not the participants feel powerless with regard to the refugee crisis. The general feeling was that the problem is so complex that citizens cannot do much except for offering individual help to some refugees.

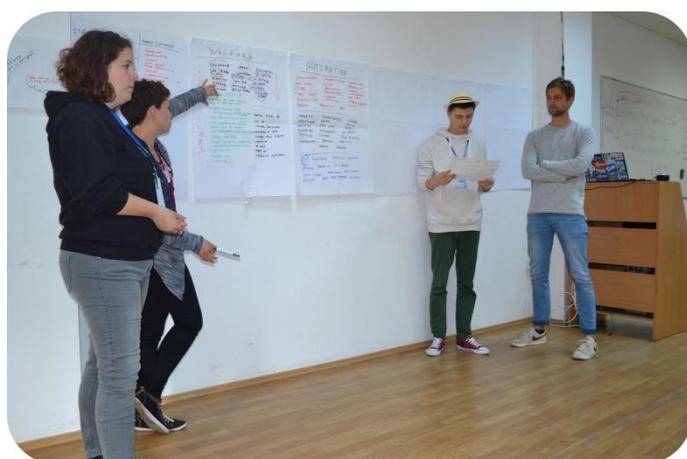




Socio-Economic Borders in Europe and the Idea of a Universal Basic Income

May 8 – **Antonis Triantafyllakis** (AEGEE Mobility Working Group)

The workshop dealt with the idea of a basic income, an idea very much tackled in countries like Finland and Switzerland, that are considering to implement this within a few years. The major focus of the discussion was employment. Most of the participants admitted that, when choosing their field of studies, they also considered the chances of getting a job after obtaining their degree.



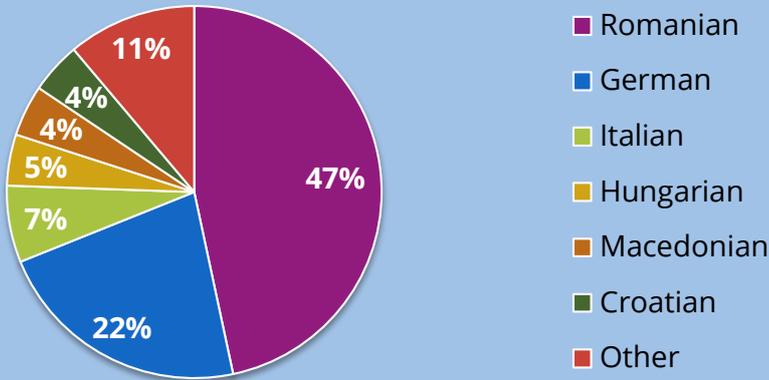
Furthermore, participants talked about the fact that the automation is changing the labour market and the kind of skills that a jobseeker needs to have. One thing is certain: the automation generates less jobs than before. In the end, a comparison has been made between welfare systems

in the participants' countries.

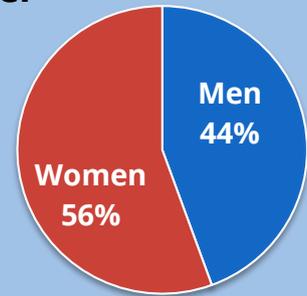


Demographics of Conference Participants

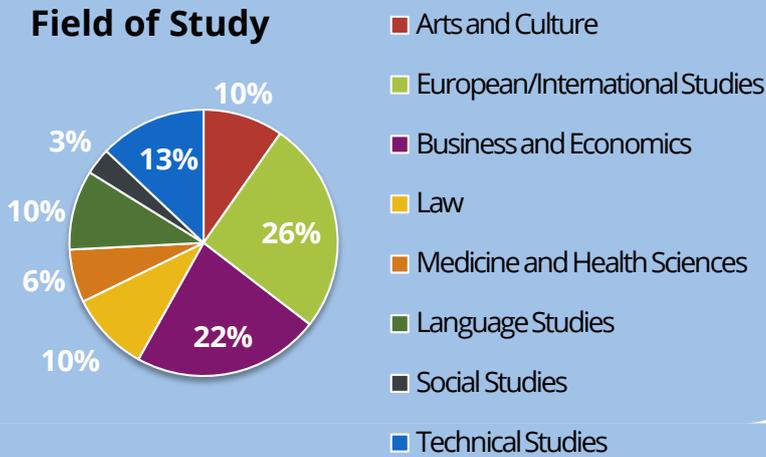
Nationality



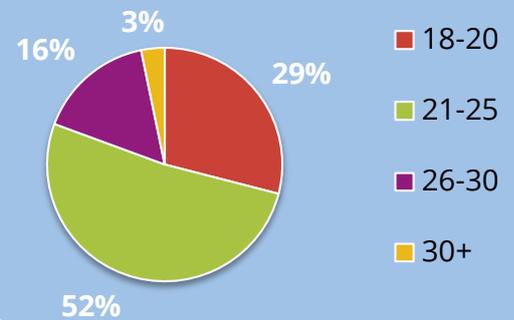
Gender



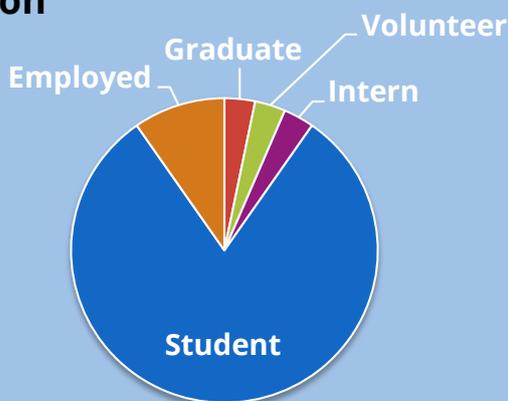
Field of Study



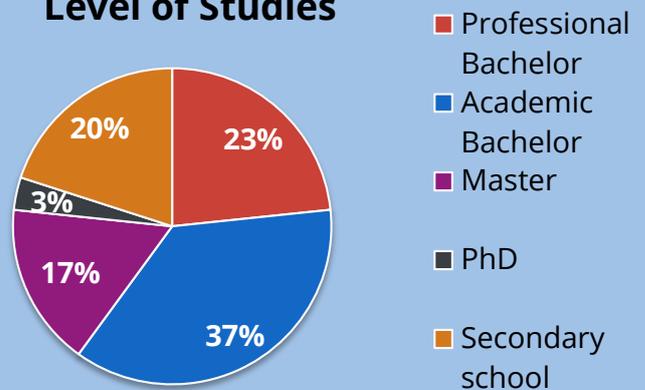
Age



Occupation



Level of Studies





Panel discussions

Europe in crisis, Schengen in suspension

May 7 – Speakers (starting from the left): **Fabian Wagner** (Coordinator Global Justice Working Group of the Federation of the Young European Greens); **Marius Grad** (PhD Candidate at Babeş-Bolyai University); **Patricia Papuc** (President Issues Without Borders); **Marianne Ranke-Cormier** (Editor in Chief NewropMag) Host: **Réka Salamon** (Vice President and Project Director AEGEE-Europe)



The main topic discussed in this panel discussion was the crisis that EU faces today, not only politically but also morally. The factors that have caused this crisis might be found in the EU's democratic deficit and in the failure to implement important values on which the EU is based, such as

respect for human dignity and human rights. This failure appears clearly through the way the EU is dealing with the refugee crisis.



The second topic that has been discussed was about the Schengen agreement and whether this agreement is necessary for the success of the European project. After a fruitful debate, we could conclude that there is a need to maintain Schengen, since it is one of the

biggest achievement of the EU. Schengen gives us a sense of community, it helps the EU to stay united and to act as a global player in the international arena.



A Leap of Faith – Utopian Thinking and Acting in 21st Century Europe

May 8 – Speakers (starting from the left): **Aleksandra Kluczka** (President AEGEE-Europe/European Students’ Forum) **Ivaylo Bogomilov** (Main organizer of Night of the Seven Antennae Sofia); **Vlad Pop** (President “SHARE Cluj-Napoca Federation”); **Mihai Chira** (Author at Basic Income UK); **Marie-Hélène Caillol** (President Laboratoire Européen d’Anticipation Politique); Host: **Maarten de Groot** (Content Manage Your Vision for EUrope)



During this panel discussion we have exchanged perspectives on how the future of the European project should look like, and on the initiatives that are already ‘out there’ that strive for this new Europe or embody it practically. The panelists have pointed at a number of

developments that should give us reason to be hopeful, such as the possibilities that the internet gives us, the idea of a Europe-wide Universal Basic Income and the recent introduction of the European Citizens’ Initiative.

The idea that was discussed most extensively was the role of cities as drivers of societal change: it is in cities that all relevant stakeholders are gathered in one place - universities, businesses, NGOs, local authorities and communities. This was argued to make the city much



more dynamic than the state. Moreover, AEGEE is the living proof that you do not need to be organized at the level of states in order to have an effective cooperation at the



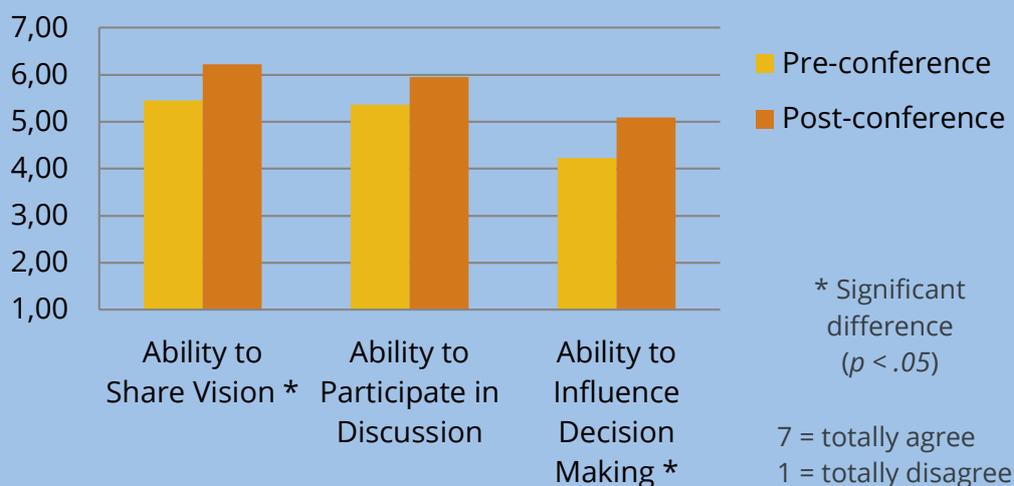


European level. The idea of a world parliament of mayors was coined as an ideal to be striven for, an ideal that is not all that far-fetched if one reads Benjamin Barber's *If mayors ruled the world* and follows the initiatives he has carried out.

Conference Organisation Quality



Your Vision for Europe Goals



Statements: 'I am able to share my vision on Europe', 'I am able to participate in discussion on European issues', 'I am able to influence European decision making'



Other Thematic Aspects of the Conference

The Great European Disaster Movie

The movie is directed by Annalisa Piras and executively produced by Bill Emmott

May 8. Screening of the movie.

Having discussed the critical state of the European project from multiple angles already during the panel discussion, the movie screening was introduced by means of the following question: how critical is the current constellation really? Although the movie is engaging and even funny at times, the underlying message of the movie-makers is undeniably a serious one: Europe is about to sleepwalk into the abyss, just like it has done in the run-up to the two world wars. Things that young generations tend to take for granted now - such as Schengen, or the EU - cannot be taken for granted, as they are the products of human effort and will not sustain unless we take proper care of them. Moreover, participants agreed with the following statement (that was freely translated from a story told by the Vice-President of the German Red Cross in the movie): "We, as young Europeans, are not responsible for the present worrisome state of the European project, but we are responsible for its future, and that is why we cannot sit idle."





Europe for all, all for Europe! (World café)

May 8 Trainers: **Your Vision for EUrope team**



In this last session, through the method of World Café, that in our case involved five small group rounds, we tried to identify clearly what we, as young people, can do to influence politics and to have an impact on a more borderless Europe. In order to influence politics we have

to be active citizens: that is to participate actively in youth organizations; get in contact with politicians and stakeholders and invite them for conferences and discussions; sign petitions and protest in the streets. Other ways to affect politics are using online tools such as social media to spread new ideas and to connect with other people; organise conferences and help the others to be active citizens themselves; improve our communication skills and being good "storytellers": only through an effective communication we can transmit our messages.



In order to reach a more borderless Europe the participants proposed to: organize international cultural exchanges; improve and allocate more financial resources for the Erasmus + programme; advocate for the expansion of the Schengen area and for less visa regulations; improve

the English language classes in school and universities; raising awareness both through informal talks with friends and by undertaking symbolic actions such as occupying borders and checkpoints.



Europe for all, all for Europe! (Group Work)

May 8 Trainers: **Your Vision for EUrope team**

In the second part of the workshop, 5 different groups have focused on 4 specific kind of borders and what can be done to break these borders. 2 groups worked on cultural borders, the others on political borders, external borders, and socio-economic-borders. At the end of the workshop, every group presented its own proposals. Here you can read and see the ideas developed and how they can be implemented.

Political borders

The main issue identified here is the European citizens' disinterest toward European politics and their lack of representation (democratic deficit). A proposed solution could be

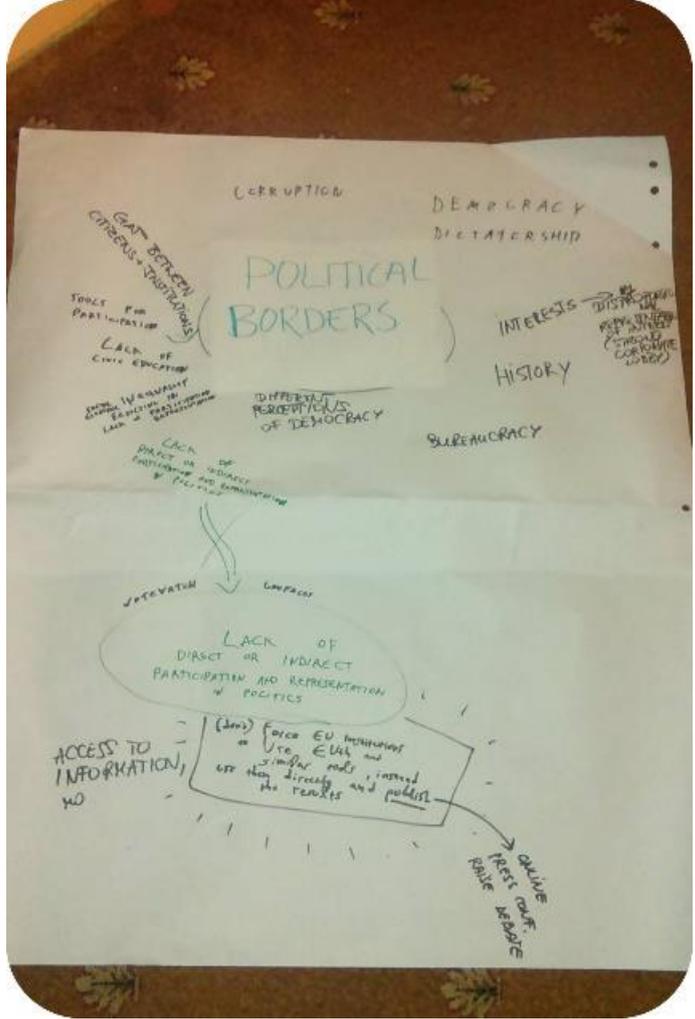
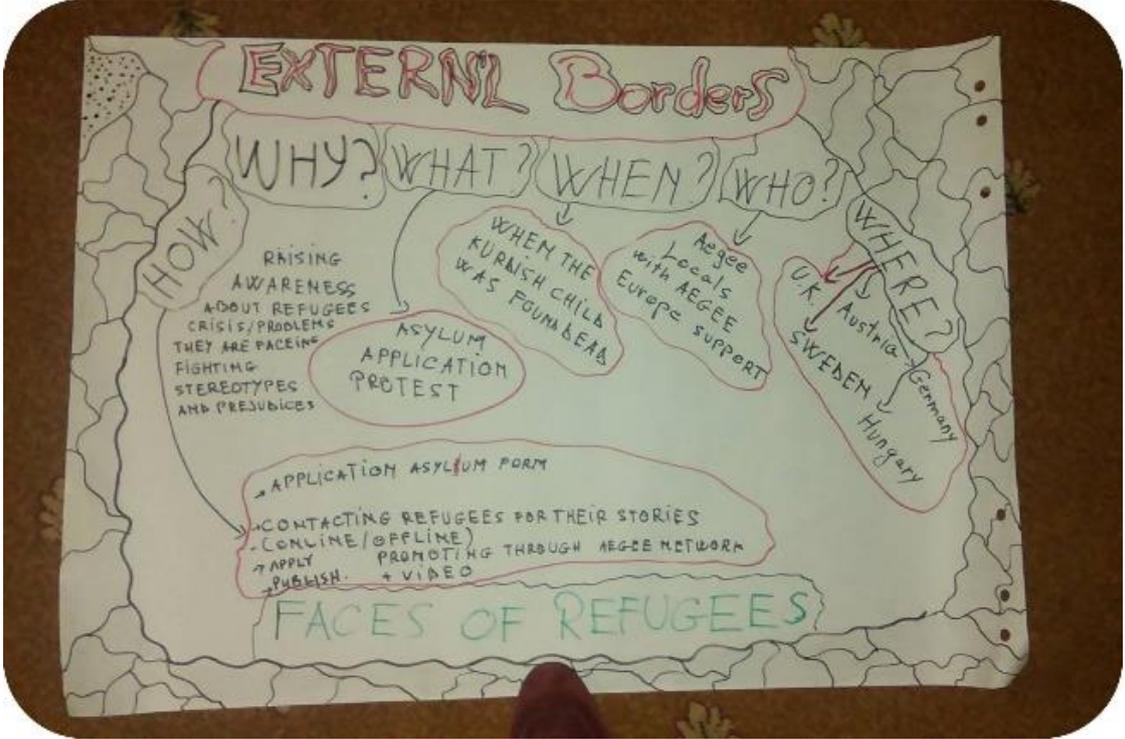


a kind of direct e-democracy tool, an online application through which citizens can have their say about a specific topic or question proposed by the European Parliament.

External borders

The main issue found here relates to how EU is dealing with refugees. In order to raise awareness about the refugees' situation and fight stereotypes, this group proposed to contact refugees, interview them and share their stories. This project could be called "Faces of Refugees".







Cultural borders (1)

The main problem tackled here is about traditions, lifestyles and stereotypes that apparently prevent different cultures to communicate with each other. In order to promote respect and tolerance toward other cultures, this group proposed that through youth associations, NGOs, schools and universities we can enhance and develop cultural exchange initiatives. These initiatives might be festivals, food tasting sessions, film-nights and post-screening discussions.



Cultural borders (2)

The second group examining cultural borders focused on tackling prejudice. Many ideas were proposed to solve this issue: organize cultural exchanges through schools, universities and within the Erasmus programme; increase foreign language courses and offering evening classes also for the working class; expand freedom of movement, raising awareness about other cultures through social media; enhance the roles of NGOs.





CULTURAL BORDERS

-prejudices

- ★ exchanges (ERASMUS, high schools)
↳ corporate level
- ★ language courses
- ★ expand freedom of movement (Schengen zone, for tourists etc.)
- ★ Sharing cultural content via Media → curiosity, awareness
- ★ promoting cultural minorities on local level
- ★ expand NGO work & volunteering (like AEGEE (U.S.))

CULTURAL BORDERS

-customs, traditions, lifestyles

1 WHY? 1 WHO?
2 WHAT? 3 WHERE?
3 WHEN?

- ① respect, accept tolerate
- ② initiatives (food taste, cineforums, literature, theatres, festivals)
- ③ holidays celebrations national days clubs
- ④ NGOs Cultural Associations AEGEE diocesan unions schools/universities
- ⑤ country embassies representatives

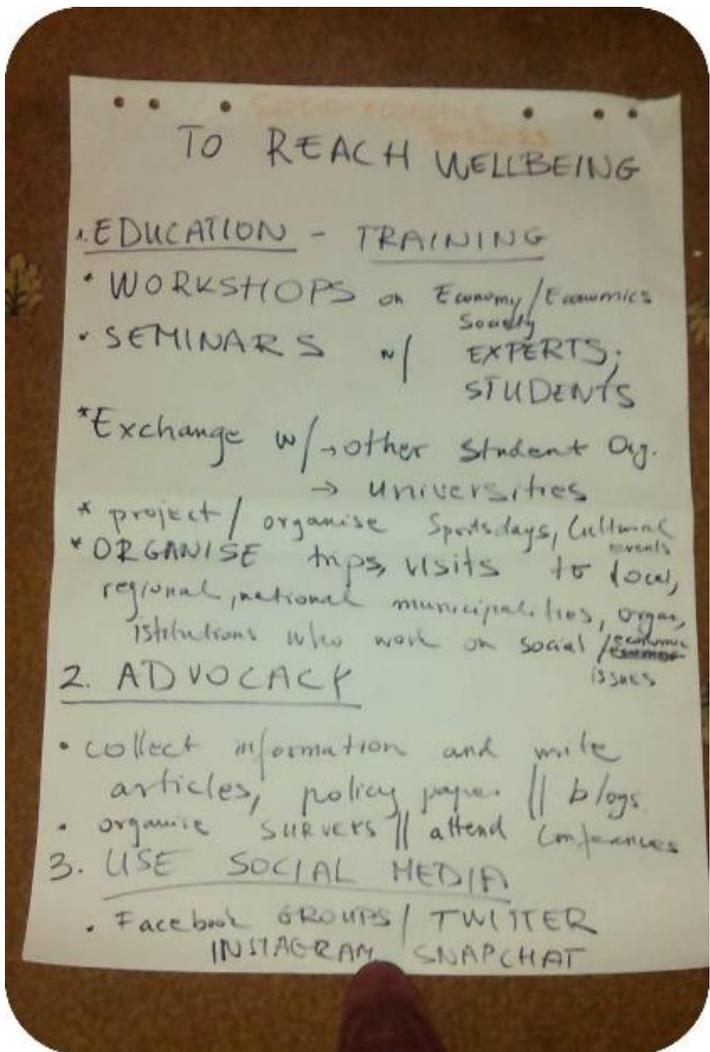


Socio-economic borders

Here, socio-economic borders has been tackled in a more general and philosophical way, by trying to reach a situation of well-being, meant as a status in which people live their lives with dignity and safety. Citizens might be trained about social and economic issues through many ways:



education through formal and non-formal sessions in schools or universities; visiting local and national authorities, working with them on social issues and publish the results through social media.





AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca anniversary

The end of the conference has been a great occasion to celebrate all together also the

25th anniversary of AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca.

We would like to thanks once more all the members of AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca for hosting our first conference. Here you can see some pictures of the closing ceremony and the anniversary celebrations.



Above: AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca members
Below, from left to right: Maarten de Groot (YVfEU); Georgeta Grama-Moldovan, Marie-Hélène Caillol (AAFB), Aleksandra Kluczka (AEGEE-Europe), Bianca Sabau (AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca), Réka Salamon (AEGEE-Europe), Marianne Ranke-Cormier (AAFB).





Special thanks go to:





The Your Vision for Europe team

In alphabetical order:

Adonis Meggos (AEGEE-Peiraias)	Financial Manager
Aleksandra Mojsova (AEGEE-Skopje)	Content Team member
Cosmina Bisboaca (AEGEE-Torino)	Faces of Europe coordinator
Elinne Mertens (AEGEE-Leuven)	Communications Team member
Eva Billen (AEGEE-Brussel/Bruxelles)	Impact Measurement Manager
Ioanna Gympaki (AEGEE-Athina)	Content Team member
Jelena Stankovic (AEGEE-Beograd)	Fundraising Manager
Katharina Lawall (AEGEE-London)	Content Team member
Konstantina Anagnostopoulou (AEGEE-Athina)	Fundraising Team Member
Lara Killius (AEGEE-München)	Project Manager
Leonie Riebesam (AEGEE-Aachen)	Faces of Europe coordinator
Maarten de Groot (AEGEE-Amsterdam)	Content Manager
Marijn Scholte (AEGEE-Groningen)	Communications Manager
Neda Stanojlovic (AEGEE-Beograd)	Fundraising Team member
Oğuz Kaan Kahraman (AEGEE-Istanbul)	IT Manager
Roberto Orrú (AEGEE-Cagliari)	Communications Team member
Tedi Martinescu (AEGEE-Ploiești)	Faces of Europe coordinator
Viola Bianchetti (AEGEE-Bologna)	Faces of Europe Manager



This conference was organised by AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca and the Your Vision for EUrope Project after receiving the Franck Biancheri Award.

We would like to thank the Association des amis de Franck Biancheri, AEGEE-Cluj-Napoca, our wonderful participants and amazing speakers, who made this event possible.

