

THE EU AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES 28 IDEAS FROM THE ERASMUS GENERATION

60th Anniversary of the Rome Treaties
30th Anniversary of the Erasmus Program

3- 5 May 2017

School of Political Science “ Cesare Alfieri” and Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence
University of Florence

Outline of the Event

In light of the very positive results of a previous conference organized to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ‘Erasmus’ program (<http://www.rise.unifi.it/vp-169-erasmus-generation-conference-31-maggio-1-giugno.html>), the University of Florence is organizing a second edition of the event, by maintaining the original format - except for the fact that there will be 28 rather 27 national teams involved. The purpose of the conference is to allow a group of students coming from all over Europe (two from each Member country) to present specific proposals and discuss their views on the European integration process and its current challenges with representatives of EU institutions. The original idea of this event stems from a series of eight roundtables on “The costs of non Europe”. The results of the roundtables were summarized in a manifesto (Declaration of Florence – the World won’t wait for Europe) officially presented and discussed with Giuliano Amato during the first Festival of Europe jointly promoted in May 2011 by the European University Institute, the city of Florence, the University and other local Institutions. In the Declaration, the University of Florence committed to an annual initiative to draw attention to the process of European integration, involving academia and Erasmus students “who are the symbol of a common Europe that already exists. Only by re-launching the project originally envisaged by Jean Monnet and Altiero Spinelli, can young Europeans hope for a better future, raise the stature of Europe in the world, and reverse the perception of an inevitable European decline.” (http://www.rise.unifi.it/upload/sub/florence_declaration-final-version.pdf)

Participant selection:

The University of Florence has chosen a university partner for each of the EU Member States on the basis of current exchange programs. The partner universities are responsible for selecting two students (a male and a female) currently attending a European Studies or International Relations program. As a further requirement, the two students should have spent a period of study in another European country, preferably as Erasmus students, and should be in good academic standing in order to contribute effectively to the success of the project. The selection process was completed by early March 2017.

The 28 teams are asked to write a position paper on the issues that are – in their view - a priority for revitalizing the European integration process.

In order to encourage the exchange of views among the participants and to stimulate a joint exercise, the local organizers have set up an online platform for the group. The documents prepared by the students will be submitted to the local organizers by mid-April, in order to be forwarded to MEPs and other EU institutional representatives taking part in the event at least two weeks before the forum.

The local organization covers travel and accommodation expenses for all the students. Participants will stay in Florence for five days during the first week in May (from May 1st – 6th).

Institutional participants

The students will present their proposals and discuss them with MEPs from different political groups and possibly members of the Commission and other EU institutions (contacts are under way).

Outline of the event

The conference is scheduled during the Festival of Europe which takes place in Florence every two years and runs for a week. Students will arrive in Florence on Monday May 1st and leave Saturday May 6th. Tuesday May 2nd will be left for them to visit the city. In the afternoon the Mayor will host them for a guided tour of Palazzo Vecchio. The forum will start on Wednesday with the whole day devoted to students interacting with each other and finalizing themes and proposals to be discussed the following day with the European Institutions' representatives. In detail, students will gather in thematic working groups during the morning; a *Rapporteur* will be chosen for each thematic group. In the afternoon, students will gather in a plenary session, in order to learn about the work being carried out in each thematic area. The *Rapporteur* will be in charge of illustrating his/her working group's dossier to the students of other working groups, and exploring the possibility for wider agreements. Students will receive technical support from the local scientific committee and additional experts, so that every group will have a tutor. There should be approximately six different thematic groups. Thursday May 4th and Friday May 5th the students will interact with the MEPs and representatives of other EU institutions attending the event. There will be two lectures and six different panels. For each of them, the *Rapporteur* chosen by the students will open the discussion. All working documents will be made available online. Students' departure is scheduled for Saturday 6 May.

Schedule

- Project promotion with the selected Universities - December 2016
- Opening of the selection process 15 December 2016
- Participant selection by early March.
- Launching of the online platform by mid-March.
- Participants' interaction through the online platform, definition of the proposals and distribution of responsibilities among the teams, plus lay out of the documents during the whole month of March
- April 15 : Deadline for sending the proposals to the local organizing Committee.
- Monday 1 May: Students' arrival in Florence.
- Thursday 3 May: Beginning of the conference at the Polo delle Scienze Sociali (Campus of Social Sciences) of the University of Florence.

Partner Universities

Austria: University of Salzburg

Belgium: University of Leuven
Bulgaria: Sofia University
CzechRepublic: Masaryk University
Cyprus : University of Cyprus
Denmark: University of Copenhagen
Estonia: Tallinn University of Technology
Finland: University of Helsinki
France: Sciences Politiques – Paris
Germany: Freie Universität Berlin
Greece: Athens University of Economics and Business
Hungary: Corvinus University - Budapest
Ireland: Trinity College Dublin
Latvia: University of Latvia - Faculty of Social Sciences
Lithuania: Kaunas University of Technology – Institute of Europe
Luxembourg: Université du Luxembourg
Malta: University of Malta - Institute for European Studies
Netherlands: Leiden University
Poland: University of Warsaw
Portugal: Universidade Católica Portuguesa - Lisboa
Romania: University of Bucharest
Slovakia: Comenius University in Bratislava
Slovenia: University of Ljubljana,
Spain: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Sweden: University of Gothenburg
United Kingdom: University College London (UCL)

Local organizing committee

Prof. Valeria Fargion (Jean Monnet Chair)

Prof. Laura Leonardi (Jean Monnet Chair)

Administrative Assistant

Ksenyia Dekurno