

FRANCK BIANCHERI AWARD 2018

REPRESENTATION NEEDS PARTICIPATION
EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

Results booklet



CIVIC EDUCATION
Working Group of AEGEE-Europe

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Introduction

The conference “Representation Needs Participation: European Elections” took place from the 13th to 15th of April 2018 in Salerno. It took part as an activity related to the Franck Biancheri Award granted to AEGEE-Salerno and was co-organised with the Civic Education Working Group. The topic was dedicated to the idea of transnational lists and the European Elections.

The Association des Amis de Franck Biancheri (AAFB/ Friends of Franck Biancheri) was founded shortly after Franck’s death in 2012 to continue his legacy. AAFB grants each year, since 2014, 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 trans-european democracy in European Union politics. This includes his creation of the two parties: 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.





In the beginning of 2018, a proposal to change the election law was made in the European parliament. It called for a redistribution of seats left after the Brexit 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, so 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. For this, the current European election system was explained, alternatives to it were introduced and compared and ideas for the future were drafted by the participants. The participants came from different European countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain and Turkey. There were participants also outside from AEGEE. The working language was English.

The conference was taking place at EBRIS Foundation (European Biomedical Research Institute of Salerno), born as a common project between Medical School of Salerno Foundation and the Mass General Hospital for Children of Harvard University. Located in the Convent of "San Nicola della Palma" (1060 a.C), an historical milestone in the Medical School of Salerno's history, EBRIS Foundation is nowadays a worldwide top-level research centre.

The content of the conference was prepared by the content team from the Civic Education Working Group with the content manager Dorothea Harles and the team consisting of Saramijn Lujken, Julia Hanesz, Joanna Pankowska, Mirek La and Maria Ballesteros Melero. Members from AEGEE-Salerno were taking care of the organisational part with the main organizer Sonia Della Sala, treasurer Luigi Avino, including Giancarlo Mennillo, Federico Melella, Guilia Sabini, Francesco Barbarito, Raffaele Brillantino, Rosa Mennillo, and many others helping during the conference.

The conference was very successful, the content team, the local organisers and participants were very happy about this chance to learn, exchange and discuss about election system.

Opening ceremony



The conference was opened by the City Councillor Domenico Mazzeo, Professor Virgilio D'Antonio who is the International Mobility Delegate of the University of Salerno, and Marie-Hélène Caillol and Marianne Ranke-Cormier, the



president and vice-president from AAFB. The president from AEGEE-Salerno Giancarlo Mennillo and the main organiser Sonia Della Sala welcomed the participants to the city of Salerno. Then, the content manager Dorothea Harles gave an outlook to the content to be discussed. Lastly, through a video message Brando Benifei, member of the European parliament, welcomed the participants and introduced his view on the topic and the proposal discussed recently in the parliament.



Introductory Lecture

by David Carayol



In the first thematic part of the conference, David Carayol, who ran for the Newropeans party in the European Elections 2009, gave an introduction to the European Election system and its complex rules and structures. Right now, for the European Parliament elections, every of the 28-member state uses different voting systems according to their national legislation, with results summarised at European level. This is very complex, especially looking into the details.

Y European Parliament Workshops

by Maria Ballesteros Melero and Elitsa Hadzhieva

In the parallel workshops, with basic and advanced level, the participants could improve their knowledge on the history of the EU, the competences of different European institutions and their connection with the citizens and an interactive way. They critically analysed the current system and its connection with the people and suggested and discussed changes to it.



The current situation in Italy after the elections

By Sara Di Matteo



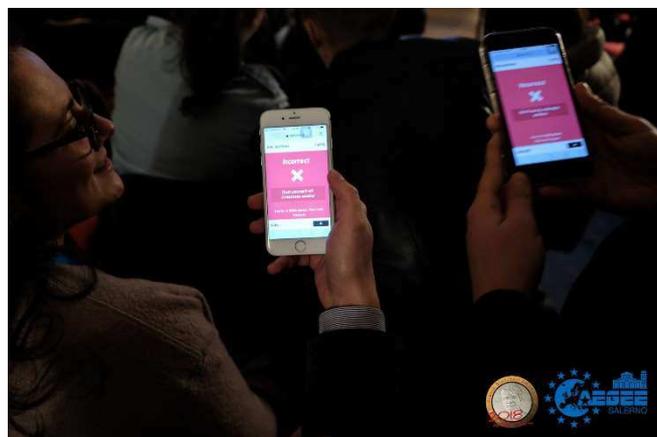
On the 4th of March the Italian election took place. Afterwards followed long discussions about government formation. An interpretation of the results and the following steps were given by Sara Di Matteo who is a member of "Forum dei Giovani", an organization for youth policies, and a journalist writing for the newspaper "l'occhio di Salerno". She explained the division of Italy between different parties, the role of

Europe in the election campaign and the impact on the upcoming European Elections in 2019. During the discussion, there was a lot of interaction with the participants in different languages. They expressed their view on these questions and were also analysed the role of newly created parties in Italy compared to other countries in Europe and if they can be compared.

Kahoot Quiz on European Elections and Franck Biancheri

by Maria Ballesteros Melero & Dorothea Harles

The evaluation of the day was done via a Kahoot quiz which was a lot of fun for the participants. There were questions included about the European elections and institutions, about the history of AEGEE and about the life and work of Franck Biancheri. Through this, Franck Biancheri's work and vision was introduced to the participants.



Simulation Game

By Maria Ballesteros Melero, Gianni Dibiase & Dorothea Harles

created by the Content Team



The morning of the second day was dedicated to a simulation game to make the European Elections and transnational lists easier understandable. There were two parts: In the first round, normal European Elections were carried out, and in the second round, transnational lists were introduced to try out how they could work in reality.

The simulation game is only a model of the European Election and was designed by the Civic Education Working Group who tried to keep it as close as possible to reality. There were only three countries Germany, Italy and Malta. The participants were divided into the countries and into different roles per country. There were politicians from different parties whose roles were taken from actual MEPs, and citizens with different interests. Not all the politicians were able to enter the parliament, as it only consisted of 10 seats: 5 for Germany, 3 for Italy and 2 for Malta according to their amount of “population”.

Therefore, in the first part of the game, the politicians had to make a campaign for themselves. Afterwards, the elections took place in each country separately. The votes were counted with the (nearly actual) systems, which is in Germany the Sainte-League method, in Italy the Hare/Niemeyer (but in our case only with two constituencies North-South) and in Malta single (transferable) vote. You can see the distribution of the parliament in the table on page 9.





Then the parliament formed itself and discussed upon three different proposals on how to create a transnational list which they needed to vote upon so one system would be implemented in the following round. They had the choice between either having a transnational list with three seats and everyone could get voted in, or a transnational list with four seats and not

more than two MEPs from the same country from it in the EP, or a transnational list with three seats and one seat goes to each country. For each proposal a politician could only be on one list, national OR transnational. The parliament decided for the last proposal. A poll of the citizens showed, that they were happy with the decision, however they felt not well represented by the MEPs which was felt the same by the politicians.

After a break, the second round started with the creation of the transnational list. All politicians and citizens who wanted to be on the list put their name on it. Then the campaign took place again. The people running on the transnational list presented themselves in front of everyone as everyone could vote for them now. The elections happened on the one hand separately in each country and on the other hand with all three nations together for the transnational lists (see results in the table).

Afterwards, the parliament was created again. This time, it discussed on raising the budget of Erasmus+ by ten times. This was rejected with 50% no, 40% yes and 10% abstention. Another poll of the citizens revealed their dissatisfaction with this decision, they did not feel well represented by the MEPs and were overly not very satisfied with the work of the parliament. This



stands in opposition to the politicians' point of view who were satisfied with the decision of the parliament, felt to represent the citizens well and were mostly satisfied with the work in the parliament.

The simulation increased the knowledge of participants about European Elections and the functioning of transnational lists. It showed how complicated it is to create a fair system for transnational lists. Looking at the results of the second voting round as there was only one person per country allowed to get a seat in the parliament, the system led to not choosing the three candidates with the highest number of votes but the one with the highest number of votes per country which was not the same.

	Germany (Sainte-League)	Italy (Hare/Niemeyer)	Malta (single vote)	transnational list
Voting system	5 seats	3 seats	2 seats	-
Parliament Voting Results First Round	3 CDU 1 Grüne 1 AfD	North: 2 Lega South: 1 Movimiento cinque Stelle	1 Partit Laburista 1 Partit Nazzjonalista	-
Parliament's Decision for transnational list: maximum seats + system	max. 4 seats	max. 2 seats	max. 1 seat	max. 3 seats, 1 seat per country, all citizens can get elected
Parliament Voting Results Second Round	2 CDU 1 Grüne 1 AfD	North: 1 Lega South: 1 Movimiento cinque Stelle	1 Partit Laburista	Germany: 1 CDU Italy: 1 Lega Malta: 1 Partit Nazzjonalista

Note: even though the same number of members from one party were elected in each round, there were elected different people.

Vision of Franck Biancheri on trans-european elections

by Marie-Hélène Caillol, AAFB

Franck Biancheri, the founder of AEGEE/European's Student Forum, took a great interest in trans-european politics. His whole lifetime, he pushed this idea, for example by creating two trans-european parties running for elections: the first one was IDE in 1989 and the second Newropeans in 2009. Marie-Hélène Caillol, president of AAFB, gave a memorial speech about Franck and his trans-european vision, his life achievements and how he put young people at the centre of political decision making which should be continued with in AEGEE, a laboratory of trans-european democracy.



Workshop: E-voting and how to create a trans-european party

by Régis Jamin, Marianne Ranke-Cormier and David Carayol



In the workshop different tools for alternatives in the European elections system were introduced. Firstly, Régis Jamin talked about e-voting as a tool to increase low voter turnout, foster participation on politics and legitimise parliaments. The technique to carry it out is already existing and only must be used, however the quality and security need to be taken care of. Participants were very interested in

this topic and discussed lively about it. Afterwards, Marianne Ranke-Cormier and David Carayol introduced the two parties Franck Biancheri created and how the campaigns happened in the European elections. In groups, participants created transnational parties on their own which tackled burning European topics.

Panel discussion: The future of election systems in Europe

During the panel discussion *Marianne Ranke-Cormier (AAFB)*, *Jens Baganz (We are Europe e.V.)*, *Pier Dastoli (EMI-Italy)* and *Stefano Vetrano (JEF)* discussed about the future election system in Europe, moderated by David Carayol. The main points of the discussion were that national debates should be overcome for a



transnational project and that a common European election law is very much needed looking at the complex and not transnational system right now but that there are many barriers to overcome. The speakers discussed on ideas how to change the current status. Jens Baganz expressed a very radical view by saying, if nothing changes the next elections should be boycotted. However, most of the speakers were positive about a change in the future, they were mainly divided on how to introduce it.

Projects Presentation



Three existing projects were presented to the participants. The two AEGEE projects are examples how youth can get engaged in politics. The Y Vote project is a Europe-wide campaign designed to encourage young people to make informed choices at the European Parliament elections. The AEGEE Election Observation Project is organising election observation missions to specifically assess youth engagement

with the aim to increase the interest of young people in democracy and democratic processes. The #CitizensRoute2019 project wants to promote the emergence of a trans-European political offer until the next European Elections and connects various stakeholders in this.



Drafting of ideas for future changes & Fishbowl discussion

By Maria Ballesteros Melero & Dorothea Harles

In the drafting session, the participants could formulate their ideas on the future election system of Europe. After a brainstorming phase they split up into five small groups and chose the topic they wanted to work on the most and created a concrete proposal how they as young people can put their ideas in practice. The groups presented their ideas, as well as David Carayol the proposal from Newropeans for a new election law, and two of them were

discussed more in depths in a fishbowl discussion to see the impact we can have on the election system.

Here are the ideas the participants developed:

- AEGEe-vote: improving participation via e-voting inside AEGEE to use it at AGORA
- MEPs should represent youth issues and take responsibility for them: conduct interviews with young people on their wishes, make a conference after the EP 2019 elections with MEPs to discuss how they represent youth in the future
- Platform for schools to communicate with each other in different languages about their ideas for Europe
- Non-formal education via simulations: increase the participation of young people and teach them how the democratic participation and institutions work (Lila, Antonio)
- Push for an election law change: involve civil society stakeholders to push for an election law change for the EP elections in 2024.



Closing ceremony

The conference was closed by Marie-Hélène Caillol and Marianne Ranke-Cormier, president and vice-president from AAFB. A video of Franck Biancheri and his vision of Europe has been shown.

The founding president of AEGEE-Salerno, Fabrizio Moscati, introduced the participants to the history of the Antenna. He also explained the motivation which pushed him to found AEGEE-Salerno.

The main organiser Sonia Della Sala and treasurer and co-organizer of the event Luigi Avino thanked the speakers, participants and organizers for the interest showed and the hard work. Then, the content manager Dorothea Harles gave a summary on what have been discussed in the past three days.





Co-funded by the
European Union

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