



YES 2008: Migration. Living Diversity.

The Young Europeans' Seminar (YES) 2008 will gather about 410 European Youth for Understanding (YFU) exchange students, who have spent a year in another European country, where they got to know and experience a culture different from their own. The seminar will offer a unique opportunity for all of them to gain further intercultural understanding and awareness through focusing on the topic "*Migration. Living Diversity*".

During their year abroad, the students have been living, learning and immersing themselves in another culture, which has broadened their perspective of the Europe that they live in. We believe that many of them have realized that the Europe they are growing up in today is not the same Europe that their parents or their grandparents lived in. During the last decades, Europe has gone through a lot of changes, including significant migration of people within Europe and to Europe.

Migration is one of the most strongly debated topics in society, politics and media today, and not without controversy. Changing the demographics of many European countries, it has also challenged the notion of nationhood and citizenship. Today we live in diverse and multicultural societies. It is not enough for people from different cultures to simply coexist – they also need to actively and consciously work to narrow the gap between them. Sometimes conflicts arise due to a lack of understanding or even willingness to understand what is different from their perceptions of each other.

During their year abroad, exchange students had an opportunity to get to know a different culture and ways of living in Europe. They had to struggle with problems similar to those that immigrants have to face, such as learning a new language, understanding a different society, and finding a new place in it. Exchange students not only learn to adapt to a different culture – they also learn to understand it. This enables them to see their own society with new eyes, and to participate in the intercultural dialogue between people of different cultures.

YES 2008 Mission

To introduce the topic of migration and provide background knowledge on the topic of migration in an interactive, self-learning and fun way and to create the bridge between students' experiences in the host country and their return back home.



YES 2008 Goals

During the YES 2008 the participants will explore the topic of Migration, the role it plays in Europe as well as reflect their own role in fostering a multicultural Europe. The goals of the YES 2008 are:

- ✓ To strengthen YFU's mission: to prepare young people for their responsibilities and opportunities in a changing, interdependent world;
- ✓ To encourage participants to discuss and understand migration within the context of the EU and Europe;
- ✓ To explore the challenges and difficulties migrants face in Europe;
- ✓ To prevent prejudices and discrimination against migrants;
- ✓ To stimulate the curiosity of participants on the subject and give them tools and ways of finding answers to questions that may arise in the future;
- ✓ To empower participants to act as multipliers in the future, inspired by ideals of intercultural learning, understanding, tolerance, solidarity and peace.

The YES 2008 will create a dialogue between young Europeans from all walks of life. At this seminar we want to give exchange students an insight into the topic of migration and relate it to their own experience.

Various activities will be offered at the YES 2008. "Mind", "body" and "art" workshops, led by people with personal experience and / or background of migration, Plenary sessions, the YES Parliament (which is a simulation of an international parliament), "The Migration Exercise" (migration simulation game, where participants will be experiencing living migration themselves) and free time activities will stimulate students to get more involved with the topic through different means of non-formal education and to exchange their views and ideas with each other.

We believe that in today's multicultural societies it is of utmost importance to foster understanding and integration among people of different cultures – and YES 2008 aims to do just that.

YES 2008
International Organizing Team