



## "EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP: A TRANSNATIONAL STUDENT'S ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVE"

- ECC DISSEMINATION CONFERENCE AND OPENING OF THE GLOBAL ECC EXHIBITION -

25<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015, Antwerp, Belgium

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# DECLARATION



Studierenden  
Werk Mainz



Instituto Politécnico  
de Viana do Castelo





## **Antwerp declaration for a stronger promotion of student culture**

The European universities and student service organisations participating in the "European Citizen Campus" project consider the success of this project as a starting point for an even stronger promotion of student cultural projects both at European and national level. They call on the countries of the European Union to systematically promote cultural student projects and to install a permanent cultural platform for the exchange of students in Europe.

In their joint "Antwerp Declaration for a stronger promotion of student culture" the Deutsches Studentenwerk, DSW (DE), the Studierendenwerk Freiburg (DE), the Studierendenwerk Karlsruhe (DE), the Studierendenwerk Mainz (DE), the Centre national des œuvres universitaires et scolaires - Cnous, Paris (FR), the Centre régional des œuvres universitaires et scolaires - Crous, Strasbourg (FR), the Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool - AP, Antwerpen (BE), the Azienda Regionale per il diritto allo studio universitario – ESU Padova (IT), the Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo, IPVC (PT) and the Université du Luxembourg (LU) declare:

*"We expect that the strong artistic impulse arising from the European Citizen Campus project will be taken up, and that the transnational cultural exchange by creative means will be further promoted by follow-up projects. The artistic interaction between students of different nationalities and academic disciplines as well as their close cooperation with professional artists is a blueprint for a continuous development of this idea in the European Union.*

*In all countries the project encountered a high student response. The distinctive feature of the project is the fact that it was open to students from all academic disciplines and was not limited to art students.*

*We, in our function as student service providers and universities, have a broad, comprehensive concept of academic studies. We believe that non-curricular activities such as the promotion of the artistic potential of students are important and can make*



*a decisive contribution to the students' personal development. Students are very keen on expressing themselves artistically and to contribute to the general political discourse via their art work. The high student response to our invitation to participate in this project has shown that we are right with this approach.*

*The "European Citizen Campus" must be transformed into a European Students' Cultural Campus. To this end, a European network has to be created. "*

## **The European Citizen Campus Project**

On 2 September 2013, the "European Citizen Campus" (ECC) co-funded by the European Commission under the EU Culture Programme was launched.

The project core was the establishment of an international art mobility and exchange programme that gave students of all disciplines from the six participating countries the opportunity to visualize their approach to European citizenship. The focus of the project was the implementation of six interdisciplinary artistic laboratories lasting a week.

These laboratories were successfully carried out in the participating countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal) in July / August 2014. They were dedicated to the themes of "identity", "roots", "home", "conflict", "freedom" and "dialogue". In total, 144 students from various disciplines participated in the six laboratories led by 12 internationally well-known artists.

The innovative and diverse art works created in the laboratories were covering different genres such as fine, visual and performing arts, as well as cross over. In the autumn of 2014 they were shown in six national exhibitions. An overall presentation of all works of art was part of the project final conference on 25 and 26 June 2015 in Antwerp/Belgium.

The two year lasting "European Citizen Campus" (EEC) project was carried out by 10 universities and student service organisations, from six different countries, which all possess a long-term expertise in the promotion of student cultural activities.



### **The final dissemination conference in Antwerp (25 to 26 June 2015)**

The final project conference in Antwerp/Belgium, entitled "European Citizenship: A Transnational Student's Artistic Perspective", was attended by around 100 international participants from 10 different countries. The event featured knowledgeable and well known experts from the European Commission (Barbara Gessler, Acting Head of Unit, DG Education and Culture) and the European Parliament. Some of our professional artists such as Thé van Bergen, Prof. Dr. Klant und Gianfranco Celestino presented and discussed the concepts of the laboratories which had been led by them. The conference included a keynote address by Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, former Luxembourg's Minister of Culture and Higher Education as well as an artistic music and dance performance by Michael Denis, Salvatore Russotto and Valérie Reding who participated in the laboratory "dialogue" in Luxembourg. Furthermore, a scientific analysis of the ECC project was presented by PhD, MA Katja Mäkinen (Post Doctoral Researcher supported by the Finnish Kone Foundation). Prominent members of the project advisory board shared their impressions on the project at the final discussion round with the broader public. The conference also included the opening of the main exhibition which was held at the Aula Rubens of the Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool Antwerp. The results of all created art works and performances were presented to the general public.

At the conference, the importance of the project and its objectives were made clear: The project highlights the personality-promoting effect as well as the encounter and integration character of student cultural projects. Above all, it shows the value of campus culture as a medium of political discourse and its potential to enrich the cultural life of a city. It contributes to a stronger interaction of student service organizations, universities, university cities and their citizens and has thus - at both national and European level- a very widespread impact and a high social penetration.

- **Political statement:** Within the ECC project 144 students dealt with and reflected on the issue of identity and European citizenship through the medium of art. This form of engagement enriched the ongoing political discourse and created an emotionally-personal level, without it the EU citizenship would have remained an abstract construct.



- **Holistic approach/ whole person' development:** The ECC project illustrated the contribution of higher education institutions and student service organisations to the development of a European identity among students through the targeted promotion of cultural student activities and student culture. This corresponds to the holistic approach, to which these organizations have committed themselves.
- **Identification with the higher education institution/ vitalization of city life:** The ECC project highlighted how the promotion of student art and cultural activities stimulates cultural campus life and enhances the relationship with the universities and its citizens. Campus culture "lends a face to a university" and helps citizens to perceive their university from another angle. Thus, opening up student cultural activities and art to a broader public not only allows an interactive dialogue between different groups of society, but also enriches cultural city life as such.
- **Networking:** It is our goal to achieve with this project a stronger "Europeanisation" of our activities: On the one hand, we would like to expand the existing network to further partners. On the other hand, we would like to raise awareness on the necessity that the promotion of student cultural activities should become more central in the European Union cultural programming.

In general, the project contributed to a widening and deepening of cooperation with similar institutions at European level and is therefore explicitly supported by the European Council for Student Affairs (ECStA) as the European Association of Student Services. Already the joint submission of the application had intensified the existing relationships. After the project completion its results should be spread beyond the radius of the existing consortium. They will be made accessible to other members of the "European Council for Student Affairs" and networks in order to secure the transfer of results and expand the cooperation. The significance and broad impact of the project was also underscored by other European umbrella organizations such as the European Student Union (ESU) and the "University Network of the European Capitals of Culture" (UNeECC) in their role as supportive partners.



### Our demands/requests:

- **Agenda Setting:** The promotion of student culture should be better recognized and more prominent within the field of the European funding agenda
- **Entanglement:** The uniqueness of the ECC project is the artistic approach/treatment of the topic "citizenship" from a student perspective. Students from different European countries developed in cooperation with renowned artists their personal, private, artistic view on EU citizenship. This fruitful interweaving of the political and artistic discourse is a model which should be further developed and adapted for other policies and issues.
- **Continuity:** The promotion of student culture must be institutionalized. A financial, organisational and conceptual framework needs to be created in terms of an enduring platform.
- **Networking:** The organizations involved in student culture should form themselves a pan-European network. Students and their artistic potential should be recognized as a resource for political dialogue in Europe and therefore promoted.

Antwerp, June 2015



Deutsches Studentenwerk



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