

EFILife

Magazine



VSS flower has arrived safely in Latvia!

The sunflower, the symbol of EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit, has safely arrived in Latvia, where it will be taken care of by the volunteers and staff of AFS Latvia until next year's fifth edition of the VSS.

Last July, more than 160 enthusiastic and motivated volunteers from 29 countries gathered in Zambujeira do Mar in sunny Portugal for the volunteer event of the year. It turned out to be a magnificent 5 days of learning and sharing under the Portuguese sun in a most inspiring environment. Participants enjoyed a wide range of high quality workshops, the traditional bazaar, a Portuguese evening, a much appreciated community project, fun events of all kinds, and most of all: each other's company!

Read more about the 4th edition of EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit in Portugal on page 2

EFIL trainings and projects

- Portugal hosts fourth edition of EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit
- AFS EuroNet supports Balkan volunteers
- Countdown to Intercultural Dialogue Day
- ECTP 2011 has been launched
- Testimonies of travelling trainers

EFIL

- Goodbye message Charlotte

Partner news

- Vincenzo Morlini new President and CEO of AFS INT
- Partner News
- Spectrum of Education teacher conference - registration still open!
- AdAm+EvA: AFS Germany offers handbook in English, Spanish and German
- Call for an EVS volunteer for the Father Siemaszko Foundation in Piekary / Krakow, Poland



EFIL advocacy

- 2011 European Year of Volunteering
- United Dreams of Europe project
- News from our Platforms
- Policy developments in Europe

EFIL Calendar

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 4-8 September | ECTP strategic meeting, Brussels, Belgium |
| 11-19 September | EFIL Training for Trainers, Krakow, Poland |
| 13-22 September | Bulgaria & Romania feasibility visit (Partner Development) |
| 29 September | Intercultural Dialogue Day 2011 |
| 29 September | AFS EuroNet meeting, Brussels, Belgium |
| 13-17 October | EFIL Training Taskforce-based Volunteering, Riga, Latvia |
| 17 October | EFIL Heads of Office meeting, Riga, Latvia |
| 18-19 October | ICL Workshop, Riga, Latvia |
| 21-23 October | EFIL Board meeting, Prague, Czech Republic |
| 3-4 November | EYV Thematic Conference, Athens, Greece |
| 14-18 November | Poland (Partner Development) |
| 27 Nov - 1 Dec | EFIL European Citizenship Trimester Programme Brussels Camp, Belgium |
| 5-9 December | EFIL Support Staff meeting, Evian, France |



european
federation for
intercultural
learning aisbl

EFIL - The European Federation for Intercultural Learning
is the umbrella organisation of AFS offices in Europe

Portugal hosts 4th edition of EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit

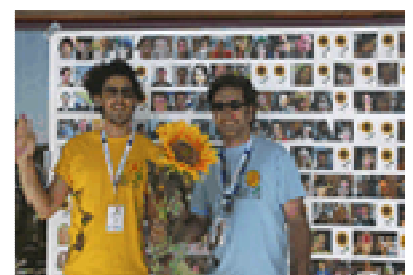
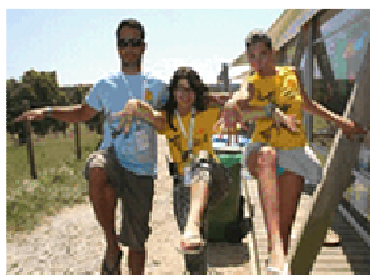
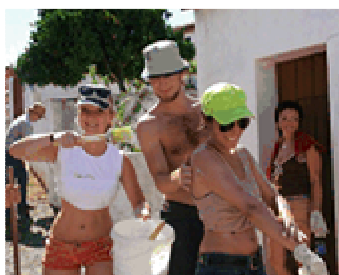
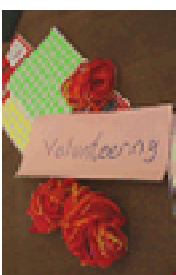
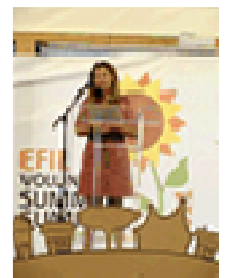
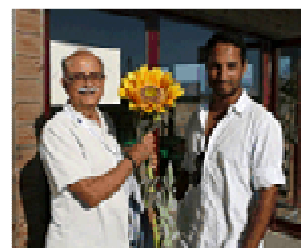
ZAMBUJEIRA DO MAR - PORTUGAL

For months volunteers all over Europe have been looking forward to this: the fourth edition of EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit! More than 160 enthusiastic and motivated volunteers from 29 countries gathered in **Zambujeira do Mar** in sunny Portugal for the volunteer event of the year. It turned out to be a magnificent 5 days of learning and sharing under the Portuguese sun in a most inspiring environment. Participants enjoyed a wide range of high quality workshops, the traditional bazaar, a Portuguese evening, fun events of all kinds, and most of all: each other's company!

This year's **Community Project** – a now classic component of every VSS – took place in the parish of Sao Martinho das Amoreiras, and proved to be an unforgettable encounter with the local population of the village. The wall with our hand prints and names will remain a lasting proof of our presence on that marvellous 23th of July, when 160 volunteers "white-washed" the charming little village.

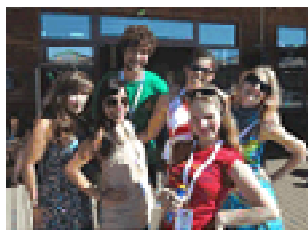
A big round of applause for AFS Portugal as our host, and to all teams involved (prep-team, support team, trainers – you were all amazing!) who helped turn this event into the unique experience it was for all present. There are no words to describe the commitment and dedication of the teams involved in putting together an event of this size. A big hug for all of them! No doubt they will all crash now that the Summit is over, and sleep for the rest of the summer to recover.

Following in the footsteps of the 2008 pioneering event in Vigy (France) and the Summits in Istanbul 2009 (Turkey) and Zanka 2010 (Hungary), the VSS in Zambujeira do Mar has once more confirmed the EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit as a not-to-be-missed event for the active AFS volunteers across Europe and beyond.





Once again, the Summit has shown that there is an absolute need for volunteers to share their experiences and challenges, and indeed their whole AFS life, with their peers, and what better than to meet in a superb summer setting, once a year.



At the EFIL office we are saying goodbye to Charlotte, our intern who's name will be forever linked to the Summit 2011 in Portugal (see also article further in this edition of EFILife). In Portugal we were happy to introduce Gizem from Turkey as the new EFIL VSS intern, starting her work and life in Brussels

in September. Welcome Gizem! We can't wait for the VSS 2012 to start. Already now volunteers are making plans to be there. And for those who weren't present in Portugal to witness the announcement of next year's VSS venue: our partner organisation to host the hottest event in Europe in 2012 will be... AFS Latvia!!



AFS EuroNet supports Balkan volunteers

AFS EuroNet project sponsors Balkan volunteers at EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit

In the previous editions of EFILife, we have reported on the launching of "AFS EuroNet", a group of enthusiastic AFS Alumni in Brussels, many of them with positions at the European Commission, the Parliament and the Council of Europe, who together with EFIL, have managed to revive the network of AFS people with international activities in Brussels. Close to a hundred names have been listed so far, and we are appealing to all our readers to spread the word and trace more Brussels-based AFS alumni!

In May an AFS EuroNet dinner raised substantial funding, enough to sponsor the participation of three volunteers of some of EFIL's new member organisations in the Balkans in EFIL's largest volunteer event of the year, the Volunteer Summer Summit in Portugal (for an update on the events in Portugal last July, see

elsewhere in this issue of EFILife). Attached to this text you can find short testimonials of the volunteers: Tanja Dabic from Serbia, Meliha Muradbegovic from Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Corrina Rus from Croatia.

Next on the agenda of the AFS EuroNet group was a drink on Thursday evening 7 July 2011 in a bar in Brussels. Some 40 people met that day to have a drink, socialize and exchange ideas. Another event is planned for September. On 29 September 2011 we will be having our annual Intercultural Dialogue Day, a day which is dedicated to the promotion of intercultural dialogue across Europe.

In the spirit of this day, we are planning a gathering of the EuroNet to discuss the future of our alumni group in terms of activities, governance, etc. More information will follow.

...testimonies follow on page 4



Maybe you know of Brussels-based AFS Alumni, who would be interested in joining AFS EuroNet? Please send their names and e-mail addresses to the EFIL office, so that we can add them to the growing list of enthusiastic AFS EuroNet members!

Let's **WALK TOGETHER, TALK TOGETHER.**

Hello!

My name is Tanja Dabic, and I am 25 years old. I have joined the AFS organisation in Serbia (Interkultura Serbia) just a few months ago. I'm responsible for our official website and newsletter. Also, I was part of the pre-



paratory team for our pre-departure orientation camp this year.

The sponsorship by the **AFS EuroNet group** has given me the great opportunity to be part of the wider AFS World. During EFIL's VSS in Portugal, I have met many wonderful people from all over the world. I enjoyed every second of my time at the VSS. It has helped me to understand what AFS really is, and it has convinced me that I want and need to be the part of this organisation and of this motivated group of young people who believe in the mission to create a more just and peaceful world.

I have returned to my country Serbia with plenty of new ideas, newly

gained knowledge, and an even higher motivation to carry the AFS message forward and make our young AFS programme in Serbia stronger and broader. Attending the Summit in Portugal has meant a lot for me! Thank you.

Greetings from Serbia!



Hi!

I'm Meliha Muradbegovic, 24 years old, and Sarajevo is my home town. It was so special to be a part of EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit in Portugal. The places I visited in this beautiful country were really exciting, but what really touched me was the AFS spirit of togetherness which made this summit for me an overwhelming experience.



It's not possible to identify just one single highlight, everything was so well organised.

I enjoyed meeting AFS vol-



unteers from all over the world, I learned a lot from the workshops I attended, the Portuguese food was great, and for the first time in my life I've seen the Atlantic ocean! I particularly liked the well-chosen community project.

I will share my experience and ideas with my AFS friends in Bosnia-Herzegovina, so that they too will benefit from the new ideas, the moti-

vation and inspiration I gained in Portugal, so that we can all help AFS in Bosnia-Herzegovina to move forward and grow.

Thank you AFS EuroNet group. Regards from Sarajevo.



Hey!

My name is Corrina Rus, I'm 18 and I live in Zagreb.

I'm very grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate in EFIL's Volunteer Summer Summit in Portugal. At the Summit I learned a lot about what volunteering in an AFS context really means, and most of all I have learned to understand and appreciate that AFS is a lot more than 'just' an organisation for sending and hosting students. I took part in discussions about human rights and peace, I learned about other countries (including places in Africa!) and what intercultural learning means over

there, and I heard about EFIL's annual Intercultural Dialogue Day.

Meeting so many interesting new people from all over the Europe and the world, made me realise how happy and lucky I am to be part of this wonderful organisation AFS. I'm looking forward to future AFS/EFIL events, and meanwhile I'm going to



help AFS grow in my home country Croatia.

Hugs from Zagreb.



Countdown to Intercultural Dialogue Day



This year's Intercultural Dialogue Day (29 September) is approaching, and we have introduced some brand new features that will make the event more visible, interactive and attractive!

BEST IDD EVENT 2011 Contest: IDD brings you to VSS12 !

The team of volunteers organising what will be voted as the "Best IDD event 2011", will get three free entries (registration fees) to the next EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit 2012, taking place in Latvia! At VSS12 these three creative volunteers will participate in an interactive workshop, promoting the IDD event and sharing it with the other VSS volunteers.

Moreover, EFIL will look into the possibility to develop the three best projects into 'IDD kits' that will be replicable by volunteers across Europe in the next edition of our IDD.

The contest will take place on the Intercultural Dialogue Day Facebook Page where volunteers will post IDD event proposals, post pictures, vide-

os and comments and vote for their favourite projects!

(<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Intercultural-Dialogue-Day/164137283653840>)

Check the **website** for more info on how to join the contest!

(<http://www.efil.afs.org/projects-and-programmes/intercultural-dialogue-day/2011/idd-2011-contest-guidelines/>)



Everyone on the web can see it and everyone who has a Google account can edit it. Volunteers and staff members can add the planned IDD events putting a bookmark in each city where an event takes place, providing also a short description of it. Add your events to show that IDD is a truly European event!

You can help us promote IDD and the contest by spreading the news of the contest and the Google map in the AFS Volunteers network. You can "Like" Intercultural Dialogue Day Page on Facebook, and add the IDD logo and the link to the FB page in your e-mail signature.



MAP OF IDD IN EUROPE

This year we also have a tool which will give us the big picture of IDD as a pan-European event. Intercultural Dialogue Day has a public interactive Google map

(<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msa=0&msid=215631990725281514471.0004a6ae9fc416e63227e&hl=en&ie=UTF8&z=19>>).



ECTP 2011 has been launched!



The European Citizenship Trimester Programme 2011 has been launched! Students have left their home countries for their Trimester Exchange in another European country, before they will all meet in Europe's capital Brussels for their end-of-stay camp at the end of November. EFIL and the preparatory team are working hard on the preparation of this big event. Sixteen Support Team members and fourteen Trainers have been selected, they come from fifteen different European countries and they are all looking forward to make their contribution and help turn the Brussels Camp into the highlight of the trimester exchange for the close to 200 young participants!

For details about the programme and the teams, have a look at the ECTP 2011 website www.ectp2011.eu which will be regularly updated with more information!

Meanwhile EFIL is focusing on the future of this increasingly popular programme, with several representatives from the network partners meeting in Brussels in the beginning of September to brainstorm on ways to improve the programme in order for it to more effectively convey its special European active citizenship content.

Note also the new logo, which has been created by Charlotte Klinting and Alberto Pagani.



Testimonies of travelling trainers

BY EDOARDO LAURENTI AND
JANA HOLLA

This is a short summary of my two experiences as an EFIL Travelling Trainer: in Stockholm, a couple of years ago, with AFS Sweden, and most recently in Zagreb, in support of AFS in Croatia.

Although in the first case the audience was a significant group of volunteers, while in the second case it was a small group of high school teachers, both have been quite rewarding opportunities.

In personal terms I can only remember a lot of AFS spirit right from the start in both organisations, with people I had never met before, but always smiling, energetic, friendly and extremely motivated.

In EFIL terms both were give & take situations: I was trying my best to deliver what was expected from me, but conversely I received, di-

rectly and indirectly, many messages about the local "state of affairs", which is certainly one of the main motivators for me: to learn how sister volunteer associations work, which are the priority problems / opportunities at the moment and how they face them.

Quite frankly I enjoyed both opportunities a lot, as I felt useful and part of the group. Travelling abroad has always been one of my favourites, but it does make a difference when you fly back home with a feeling that it was time well spent, for a valid purpose and for valid persons.

I am grateful to all of those friends for this.



By Edoardo Laurenti

A traveling trainer? Who/what is it, you might ask?

It is yet another way how EFIL facilitates the sharing of experience and knowledge within the AFS network? The idea



behind the Traveling Trainer (TT) concept is that EFIL member organisations can ask for a trainer of the European Pool of Trainers or EPOT (once a year) to train or co-train at a national event they organise. EFIL's budget covers the TT's travel expenses while the local AFS office takes care of lodging and boarding.

To put it into perspective, for the EPOTees TT presents a prospect of visiting and (co-)training at a national event of another AFS organisation. And for the hosting AFS organisation it's an opportunity to bring more diversity into their national event and enable a volunteer meeting between different AFS partners.

For me personally, it is a wonderful opportunity to enlarge my horizons as an AFS trainer and volunteer: to meet staff and volunteers from different AFS offices, to explore their local reality and experience their hospitality. And to meet new friends. J

So far, I have been fortunate to be a Traveling Trainer twice. As coincidence would have it, both times I went north to a training event attached to a General Assembly - first time to Finland, then to Sweden. Both times, the local AFS staff and volunteers went out of their way to make me feel welcome. And both times I had the privilege to meet a wonderfully diverse group of highly enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers and board members who were keen to learn and share and a lot of fun to work with.

In Finland, the workshops I co-facilitated with Anna - my co-trainer from AFS Finland's pool of trainers - focused on Education in an AFS context. I would like to thank the organisers, especially Satu and Anne for tak-

ing such a good care of me - and for arranging the first snowflakes of the season (since I moved to Egypt, snow is a rather precious commodity for me). My only regret is that I didn't organise my time well enough to get the proper Finnish sauna experience... I guess I'll have to pay AFS Finland another visit.

In Sweden, I was asked to focus on Intercultural learning - theory and practice. I also had lunch with the recently formed Swedish pool of trainers - when I say "highly dedicated and inspirational group of volunteers", I mean it! My thanks go to Marcel and Mart from AFS Sweden's office and Anna and Dan for their wonderful hospitality. And here's a small tip how to (instantly) win over the AFS Sweden office on your next visit: do bring some sweets, preferably pastry!

In conclusion, let me just say: being a Travelling Trainer is an experience I highly recommend. So, dear EPOTees, next time you see a call for a traveling trainer, do apply!

By Jana Holla,

Volunteer AFS Egypt



Jana as trainer at the EFIL Programme Directors meeting in Slovenia, March 2011

Vincenzo Morlini New President and CEO of AFS INT

Dr. Vincenzo Morlini will be AFS Intercultural Programme's first European president.



"My own experience as an AFS exchange participant from Italy to the US in 1966 taught me the immense value of intercultural education. I acquired English as a second language, a skill that has provided me with many advantages in my career. But perhaps more significantly, my host family in the US became part of my extended family and remains so to this day. The mission of AFS, to create a more just and peaceful world through intercultural learning, is as valid today as it was in 1947 when the

AFS exchange programmes first started. The immense benefits provided by immersive intercultural experiences that allow people to connect and enable them to share their cultures cannot be overstated."

Dr. Morlini was born in Reggio Emilia, Italy and brings to AFS international the experience from the business world as well as an outstanding track record as national partner director of AFS Partner in Italy, Intercultura, one of the most successful organisations in the AFS Network.

Partner News

In each edition of EFILife, we dedicate some space to partner news, including personnel changes as well as relevant events that have taken place over the past month.

AFS Turkey

AFS **Turkey** has completed the successful class exchange project "Tell Me Your Story" in May with 110 participants from Italy, Germany, Czech Republic and Finland. A new project "Spectrum Of Education" is planned to take place between 23 - 26 November 2011 in Istanbul, and aims to get together educators from around the world for a series of conferences, workshops, on the job co-training opportunities, Teacher's Day Celebration activities and educational best practice sharing sessions on various subjects including intercultural learning in class and international co-operation possibilities (for more information: see separate article in this edition of EFILife).



AFS Germany

From 1-12 August the second "Summer Academy on Intercultural Experience" took place in Karlsruhe, **Germany**. In cooperation with Karlshochschule – International University, AFS Germany once again offered an academic programme at university level, tackling both theoretical and practical issues. 54 participants, 12 trainers and 6 faculty members came from 27 countries and 5 continents. The different tracks acknowledged the different levels of both prior intercultural experiences and academic background. Academic evening lectures and several excursions added value to the programme and enabled the participants to get further insights in intercultural issues and understanding the German and European culture. The Summer Academy was a great success and AFS Germany is looking forward to its next edition in 2012.

AFS Germany

And there's more news from AFS **Germany**. The final report of the "Weltwärts accompanying measures 2009-2010", actions for programme support of 18+programmes and trainings for AFS-volunteers and staff, has been completed. Between June 2009 and December 2010, activities were conducted in 11 countries worldwide. About 136 Events (workshops, trainings for volunteers and staff members, conferences with CPOs etc.) took place. More than 1.770 people took part. The international STEP trainer exchange facilitated visits of 25 trainers in camps in Germany and in the host countries. STEP stands for "Sustainable Trainer Exchange Programme" and consisted of an exchange of voluntary and staff trainers among the AFS-weltwärts-partner countries.



The class of 2011

AFS Italy

In **Italy**, Intercultura is preparing the second Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange "The other side of exchange: intercultural learning through hosting", which will be convened at the Intercultural Center in Colle di Val d'Elsa on 28- 29 October 2011. Sponsoring organisations are Fondazione Intercultura and IDRI - International Development Research Institute. The purpose of the two days session is to explore and discuss the intercultural learning that takes place in families that host foreign pupils for extended periods of time, on a structured exchange programme. The first Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange took place two years ago (October 2009)

AFS Serbia

Our partner organisation in **Serbia** did it again! Twice even. They got a few minutes on the 07:30 national TV news. In the following link, the message about AFS is at 07:58.

<http://www.rts.rs/page/tv/ci/story/17/%D0%A0%D0%A2%D0%A1+1/916838/%D0%94%D0%BD%D0%B5%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA.html>

In another news coverage, the meeting of host families and students was shown on Serbian national TV on the morning news.

<http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/ci/story/124/%D0%94%D1%80%D1%83%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE/943494/%D0%A8%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%9A%D0%B5%20%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%20%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BB%D1%82%D1%83%D1%80%D0%BD%D1%83%20%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%83.html>

Time to have a look at staff changes in the AFS offices around Europe...



Caroline Steyaert

AFS BFL

AFS **Belgium Flanders** has announced a change of leadership in the national office. For two years Marcel Kerff was heading the office in Mechelen. He has now moved on to become head of the regional branch of the Center for Adult Education for Dutch as a second language. After a swift selection round, the Board of AFS BFL has appointed Caroline Steyaert to take on the position of National Director of AFS in Flanders. Welcome Caroline!

AFS Iceland

The Board of AFS **Iceland** has informed the network that the National Director, Snorri Gissurarson, has stepped down as National Director. The position will temporarily be filled by Jóna Fanney Friðriksdóttir. Jóna has been active with AFS for many years. She was on the National Board of AFS Iceland where she will leave her current position as a treasurer to become the National Director. Jóna represented AFS Iceland at EFIL's General Assembly in June in Vienne.

AFS Croatia

From AFS in **Croatia**, one of the new partner organisations that recently joined EFIL, comes the news that Marija Bevanda is handing over her position as National Sending Coordinator to Pavica Letica, Board member and EVS Coordinator until now.

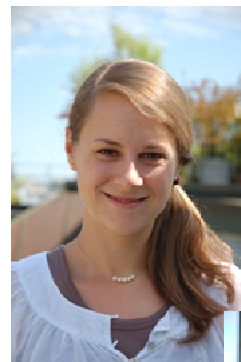
AFS Denmark

AFS **Denmark** is waving goodbye to Lene Godiksen, Programme director with 8.5 years of service with the office in Copenhagen. The new Programme Director, Lis Jensen (who has been with the Danish office before) will start in her new position on 1 December. In the meantime, Annelise Bech, National Director, will combine her tasks with those of the Programme Director.

AFS Norway

The AFS office in Oslo is glad to share the news that Siri Bolstad has returned to AFS **Norway** in the position as Programme Director. Marthe Broendbo has left AFS Norway after two years of dedicated service.

Valerie Brockmann



Mireille Grädel



Stephan Wineker



AFS Switzerland

There are some staff changes in AFS **Switzerland**, where Mireille Grädel has started her job as Programme Director, a position that was taken up ad interim by Martine Schall for the past six months. Among other things, Mireille was Board member and Chair of Intermundo, the Swiss umbrella organisation for youth exchanges, between 2001 and 2009.

AFS Switzerland's new Hosting Admission Coordinator is Valerie Brockmann, taking over from Lara Hauser (and Simona Giarolo and Fabienne Oettiker who both worked at interim in this position). And last but not least, Stephan Wineker is the new Director of Organisational Development, taking over from Monika Bühler. After a three year break, Stephan is back with AFS Switzerland, and together with his team, he will be responsible for Volunteer Development, School Relations, Marketing and Communication, and IT.



Mick Petersmann and
Katharina Schaefer

AFS Germany

AFS **Germany** informs the network that Heide Pusch has resigned from her position as Director of the Regional Office South in Stuttgart, after 3.5 years of service. Her position will be taken over by Constanze Klug. Meanwhile, AFS Germany welcomes Katharina Schaefer as National Vice Director. In her newly established position Katharina will work closely with Mick Petersmann, National Director, and support the organisation in all management topics especially regarding school-related programmes, in particular development of new programme formats.

AFS Russia

And last but not least, AFS **Russia** wants to share the happy news that their Programme Director Kristina Pribora has become the happy mother of a healthy boy on 21 June. Congratulations!



Spectrum of Education teacher conference... registrations still open!

ISTANBUL-TURKEY

AFS Turkey – Türk Kültür Vakfı and FMV Işık High Schools Ayazağa Campus have joined together to organise the first Spectrum of Education Conference in Istanbul between 23 and 26 November 2011. The conference will bring together educators, teachers, school officials and volunteers working on education (especially on high school level) from all around the world to share their best practices, to inspire and learn from each other, to discuss solutions to common challenges and to create new international networks and co-operations.

In 2011 the main theme of Spectrum of Education is set as “Intercultural Learning at Schools” with exploration of related best practices, innovative approaches and projects. The project programme will include debates with expected attendance of local and international experts, workshops delivered by attendees from all around the world, on the job co-training opportunities at FMV Işık Schools, educational best practice sharing sessions, visits to educational institutions, Teacher’s Day Celebration

Ceremonies and optional city tour to Istanbul’s historical sites.

The organisers will cover all costs for full board accommodation in double rooms, meals, workshop logistics costs and transfers in Istanbul during the conference dates for all participants (there is no participation fee). The international travel expenses have to be covered by the participants or their organisations.

Applicants are asked to fill in the online application form at http://www.afs.org.tr/tur_tu/link/7685 and submit a letter of support from their AFS organisation via e-mail to turkey@afs.org with soeducation@fmv.edu.tr in copy. The deadline for applications has just been prolonged till September 20th 2011. Do not hesitate to spread the message about the conference to the relevant audience in your country!

AdAm + EvA

AFS Germany offers handbook in English, Spanish and German

BY ANNIKA WOLFGAM

The AdAm + EvA Programme, invented by Belgian AFS volunteers nearly two decades ago, has been successfully implemented by volunteer groups in a number of AFS countries ever since. The programme aims at giving elder women and men the chance to have

their own intercultural learning experiences, live in a host family, immerse into a new culture and share with others some of their own culture.

(...continues on the next page)

A project group within AFS Germany has compiled a handbook to help organising this programme. At first the handbook was only intended to help German volunteers to get to know more about the programme and set up the exchanges. But since the manual has proved to be a very helpful tool, AFS Germany is now also offering a translation of the text into English and Spanish to facilitate the communication of the basics between the exchange partners.

If you are interested in using the handbook AFS Germany will gladly send it to you as a PDF file. Please contact adam+eva@afs.de.



German and Russian volunteers from Bremen/Hamburg and Nizhny Novgorod/Cheboksary at their EvA Exchange in 2009

Volunteers of AFS Germany who worked on the handbook



Call for an EVS volunteer for the Father Siemaszko Foundation in Piekary/Krakow, Poland

PIEKARY / KRAKOV - POLAND

The Father Siemaszko Foundation – the organisation implementing AFS exchanges in Poland – is looking for an EVS volunteer, preferably with strong AFS volunteer background, who is eager to contribute to the development of the future AFS organisation in Poland.

The timing of the programme should ideally be 9-12 months, starting from February 2012. The main function of the volunteer will be supporting the international programmes run by the office of the Father Siemaszko foundation, focusing mainly on AFS programmes (Year Programme and European Citizenship Trimester Programme - ECTP).

The main tasks of the volunteer will include promoting the AFS programme towards young people and host families, supporting the work of local Polish volunteers (including camps and social events) and the general office support in running the AFS programmes.

The volunteer should have an AFS background, preferably as an experienced volunteer. The competence sought above all is related to the promotion of AFS programmes. A basic computer competence is expected, experience with website management would be an asset. At least a basic knowledge of English is required. Eagerness to learn the Polish ways of living and language is a must (the Polish language course will be provided).

Interested volunteers should send a CV and motivation letter to magda.porebska@gmail.com and izabela.jurczik-arnold@afs.org by 6 October 2011. Following the choice of the volunteer, the application for funding will be submitted on 1 November and the final confirmation of the project is expected by the end of December 2011.

Goodbye message from Charlotte

"In September a young Danish girl came to the EFIL office. She was short, she was blond and she talked a lot"
– Paul Claes at the VSS closing.

Well, that was it! A year has passed since this short, blond and talkative girl arrived at the EFIL office in Brussels and yet it seems like yesterday.

This internship was an opportunity for me to get some more work – and life – experience after finishing my Danish high school, and a way for me to figure out what to do next when real life would come knocking on the door! And I honestly didn't know what to expect when I came to EFIL. Would I be the intern that got all the tasks of copying and making coffee and would I actually be able to contribute? – Well, it turned out that I was quickly given a lot of responsibility and many opportunities to learn and work on different projects, for which I am grateful. I knew immediately I wanted to be treated as a part of the staff, not just another intern. And ironically, I am now the one who knows most about EFIL's past in the entire office, as I went to visit Intercultura Italy to research EFIL's history for the 40 years anniversary booklet, which was a really interesting and original project. I have worked on many things during the year; the AFS EuroNet initiative; the anniversary booklet, the Biennial Report of EFIL, the ECTP DVD; the preparations for the General Assembly. But most importantly, there was the Volunteer Summer Summit, the most gratifying of all my tasks. When I think of the standing ovation I received at the VSS, when it was "Good bye to the EFIL intern", I still shiver and become more emotional than I care to admit. The volunteers were so wonderful and grateful for the work done and I left feeling that I had really made an impact and an impression.



Now real life has come around – almost, anyway. From being at EFIL I have gotten another opportunity to explore the world and I will soon be going to Kenya to volunteer for AFS (OFIE). Afterwards a Bachelor programme at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, is waiting for me.

I am so happy I took the chance and applied to be an EVS volunteer at EFIL. Not just because of the work, but because of the wonderful people at the office, in AFS and in Brussels, that I have been lucky enough to meet – including my wonderful boyfriend who will accompany me to Kenya for a new adventure!

2011 European Year of Volunteering



EFIL has been involved in the activities related to the European Year of Volunteering (EYV 2011) at different levels through our membership of the EYV Alliance and of the European Youth Forum.



EFIL's newly created European Pool of Representatives (EPoR) has already significantly supported the EFIL secretariat in making use of opportunities offered by this European Year of Volunteering. Three EPoR

members took part in the EYV Working Groups aimed at collecting input for the EYV 2011 Alliance European Policy Agenda on Volunteering. And on 23-24 May, another five volunteers participated in the Second Convention on Volunteering "Volunteers: the difference they make and the challenges they face".

In the meantime the European Youth Forum had launched the process of drafting the Charter of the Rights and Responsibilities of the Volunteer, and EPoR members have been involved in the consultation process. EFIL's input was largely taken into consideration in the second Draft of the Charter and we have also been involved in an additional consultation on its content, together with other Civil Society Organisations. The Charter has been further discussed during the Stakeholder conference on the Rights of Volunteers on 7-8 September where EFIL again was represented by an EPoR member. EFIL believes that the Charter will be an important outcome of the Year and all volunteering organisations in Europe will be encouraged to advocate for its implementation at national level. This European Year has offered EFIL and AFS volunteers great opportunities and it is laying the basis for further policy developments in the field.

Meanwhile, the themes for the upcoming European Years have been announced: next year will be the "European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity", and for 2013 the European Commission has just made a proposal to call it the "European Year of Citizens", an interesting topic for volunteering organisations like ours promoting active citizenship!

United Dreams of Europe project

BY PROF. DR.
ULRICH REINHARDT



As AFS'ers we all know the importance of friendship, community and common interests. The independent German Foundation for Future Studies has just launched a

new project called "United dreams of Europe". This project focuses on the fears and hopes as well as on the

dreams of the people for Europe. A book will be published with this title for which Commission President Barroso wrote the foreword a big event will be hosted in Brussels with the goal to develop a common vision for Europe. On the website www.uniteddreamsofeurope.eu you can watch a two minute movie about the whole idea.

You are invited to take part in this online project by posting your dream for Europe. By collecting ideas and impressions from all over Europe and maybe even the world the "United Dreams of Europe" project could really become a success and help – just a little bit – to create a better future for Europe.



News from our platforms



Education Europe: the EU funding programme for education, training, youth and sport for 2014-2020

European Youth Forum to secure funding for youth, non formal and informal learning, and especially for youth organisations!

On 29 June 2011 the Communication from the European Commission on the "Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) communication - Budget for Europe 2020" was presented. In the MFF communication the European Commission proposes to integrate the currently



separate programmes in the field of education, training, youth and sport into one programme called **Education**

Europe and proposes 15.2 billion euros for the 2014-2020 period for this joint package. This increase is a good sign, however it has to be ensured that the youth dimension in the new integrated programme, which is currently encompassed especially in the "Youth in Action" programme, will have strong support, will not

be marginalised and will benefit from the same percentage increase as the previously independent programmes, now merged under Education Europe programme.

The new Education Europe programme should be the way for the European Commission to implement the Treaty article 165 and the complementary political agendas like “**Youth on the Move**” flagship initiative in the “**Europe 2020 strategy**” and the “**Framework on European cooperation in the youth field**”. Moreover, Education Europe should build on the past and have a strong post-Youth in Action dimension.

The EU funding programme Youth in Action 2007-2013 (YiA) is providing around 1,000,000 young Europeans with valuable non-formal Education (NFE) experience and mobility possibilities. YiA is the only programme of the European Union supporting non-formal education and addressing all young people and youth organisations, regardless of whether they are in formal education or not. It supports European youth work and European youth participation. It is furthermore unique in that it is implemented directly by the young people it addresses. Young people within their youth organisations are both

actors and beneficiaries. It is extremely important that these aspects are adequately addressed in the new Education Europe programme.

Unfortunately, while EVS and youth exchanges are secured, there are some uncertainties for the maintaining of the action 4.1 “Support for bodies active at European level in the field of youth” which is vital for EFIL. Youth organisations are the main providers of non-formal education and informal learning opportunities and as volunteer-based and youth-led organisations they are best placed to help implement the Commission’s own proclaimed goals of ensuring opportunities for all young people.

In order to secure funding to youth organisations in Europe, the European Youth Forum and its Member Organisations (incl. EFIL) are approaching decision makers to explain through an advocacy letter the importance of this funding line. If you feel you can help in these advocacy efforts and spread the letter among Parliamentarians in your country, please contact Elisa at EFIL (elisa.briga@afs.org).

Platform for Intercultural Europe (PIE) advocates for keeping issues of interculturality in the new Culture funding programme and on the focus of EU institutions!

The Platform supports the ble Culture and Intercultural Dialogue” in the frame of the so-called “WeAreMore” campaign, which will exert maximum influence on the legislative procedure to ensure that a fair share of the new Culture programme 2014-2020 is dedicated to not-for profit culture (as opposed to support for the cultural and creative industries). Intercultural Dialogue is likely to disappear as an objective in the new programme. Any references to cultural diversity in the ‘policy fiche’ accompanying the new EU budget proposal is immediately linked to the potential of the cultural and creative industries.

The Platform cooperates with the EU Council’s “Expert Group on Accessi-

come in 2012 when the focus will shift from cultural access and the participation of children, the disabled, the elderly and socio-economically disadvantaged people, to cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

At the Annual General Assembly of PIE, members asked for the creation of an “Advisory group on the Open Method of Coordination” process and of an exchange group on intercultural education. The asset of the Platform is that it “gets people out of their silos”, e.g. allows people from youth organisations to test their ideas with people from cultural organisations or gets the latter into touch with Roma organisations.



Policy Recommendations on Multilingualism have been published!

Brussels, Press release

The EU Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism (CSPM) was set up by the European Commission in October 2009 to promote multilingualism in Europe in the areas of culture, media and non-formal education. Members are non-governmental organisations committed to promoting multilingualism, operating at a trans-national or European-wide level. EFIL is one of the 29 members of the CSPM.

The Platform has now published its policy recommendations to the European Commission, member states and regional authorities. Education and public services must go multilingual to boost Europe's language skills, sustain Europe's economies and cater for increasingly diverse societies, says the EU platform. The recommendations are available on the website of the European Commission's multilingualism portal (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/news/news5090_en.htm).

There are still unacceptable gaps in support for multilingualism and language learning throughout the EU. Even where good policies exist, implementation is often inadequate; some countries and regions show a much stronger commitment to multilingualism than others.

To make language teaching and learning more efficient, and enhance the ability of public services to meet the needs of their users, the CSPM urges European policymakers to:

- **make plurilingual education** (i.e. mother tongue plus two) **the norm**: content-based language learning should be introduced more widely, and extensive informal learning outside the classroom created; early language learning and lifelong learning opportunities should be developed;
- **strengthen learning support for immigrants**: for integration and social cohesion purposes;
- **improve language skills of public services** across Europe: to offer adequate services to newcomers, foreigners, migrant workers, as well as to disabled people and citizens with communication difficulties.

Multilingualism is also crucial to the preservation and ac-

cessibility of the common European cultural heritage. In this context, translation can make existing texts cross linguistic and cultural borders, and is an essential tool for communication and intercultural understanding. Working conditions for translators should thus be substantially improved, and sound degree programmes and opportunities for mobility developed.



As the Chairman of the Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism, Uwe Mohr, points out: "Europe needs to develop a language poli-

cy that monitors language use and ensures that languages are treated equally. We also highly recommend that the Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism be continued on a permanent basis to act as an instrument of dialogue between the EU policy level on the one side and the national, regional and local language policy levels and social reality on the other side." To advise policymakers in designing and implementing successful policies for multilingualism, nine CSPM members have committed to setting up an on-line Language Observatory. The observatory, part of the ongoing Poliglotti4.eu project funded by the European Commission, will conduct research, capture and disseminate good practice; it will be launched in the autumn. The ultimate goal of the project is to raise awareness for the importance of multilingual education and training in Europe. Because, as Mohr puts it, "only as multilinguals can we fully enjoy the benefits of our culturally and linguistically diverse Europe and live a richer, more interesting and more successful life in the Europe of the future."

Poliglotti4.eu is on Facebook and Twitter. Please "follow" and "Like" it!

TWITTER: <http://twitter.com/Poliglotti4eu>

FACEBOOK: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/POLIGLOTTI4EU/204310119609940>

Policy developments in Europe

This compilation is based on information collected by EFIL from the daily newsletter "Europolitics - the European affairs daily" and from the European Youth Forum's "Youth Policy Watch", a bi-weekly bulletin. You can subscribe to the Youth Policy Watch directly from the Youth Forum website: <http://www.youthforum.org> and press@youthforum.org

EU Enlargement

On 30 June the EU member states closed accession negotiations with **Croatia**, that is set to join the EU on 1 July 2013. To meet this target date, Croatia's Accession Treaty has to be signed by the end of the year. Only afterwards, the ratification process in the 27 member states is expected to start, while Croatia plans to do it after holding a referendum on accession. This decision marks a successful end to six years of negotiations during which Croatia has been asked to adopt new laws and regulations to comply with EU standards. The Polish Presidency that started on 1 July, has been tasked with finalising the drafting of the Croatian Accession Treaty, and it also aims to bring other Western Balkan countries a step closer to membership. Given their current progresses in meeting EU requirements, FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia are the most likely candidates to move to the next stage. However, Serbia needs to "normalise its relations"

with Kosovo in order to make progress in its EU accession talks.

The second half of the 33 chapters in **Iceland's** accession talks are to be opened in the second half of 2011, including the two most difficult ones: fisheries and agriculture. Most progress is expected on ten chapters, which are fully in line with the EU acquis due to Iceland's membership of the European Economic Area (EEA).

Prospects for progress in talks with **Turkey** are rather bad. Due to Turkey's failure to normalise its relations with Cyprus, some chapters have been blocked by the Commission, Cyprus or France. Only three chapters remain free from any political obstacles, but are highly complex (competition, public procurement and social policy and employment).

Youth



Volunteering at the heart of democracy

The European Youth Forum, with the patronage of the European Parliament, organized the II Youth Convention on Volunteering, the biggest civil society event during the European Year of Volunteering. The Convention, celebrating the work of young volunteers, took place in Brussels from 7 to 11 September. All political actors and more than 50 youth organisations from all over Europe were gathered in an open village with more than 70 youth and volunteering organisations promoting more than 100 workshops, training and interactive debates on the theme of volunteering.

In the framework of:



Millions of young people volunteer every day contributing to Europe's social inclusion and active citizenship, but still today there are many

different issues to be faced to ensure equal opportunities for volunteers and their organisations. Therefore, during the Convention, European decision-makers, youth organisations and civil society will work on the development of a *European Charter of the Rights of the Volunteer*.

EU-China Volunteer Bridge

Within the II Youth Convention on Volunteering, the EU-China Volunteer Bridge programme gathered over 100 Chinese volunteers in Brussels. This one week-long programme is a flagship event of the 2011 EU-China Year of Youth that aims to offer an important experience of dialogue and volunteering to the Chinese participants. The Chinese delegation is led by Mr Pi Jun, Deputy Secretary General of the Chinese Young Volunteers Association. The Volunteer Bridge is organised in partnership with the European Commission's European External Action Services and DG Education and Culture; and the All-China Youth Federation.



Education

"Erasmus for all"

The post-2013 multi-annual financial framework has brought a new name to the EU programme for education. The programme for education and lifelong training, as well as the international programmes in higher education, and Youth in Action, will be grouped under the umbrella of the "Erasmus for all" programme. The European Commission's DG Education reached a consensus on 12 July and will proceed to determine the legal framework of each programme by November, before proceeding to

allocating the funds, which totals 15.2 billion euro for Europe Education. The choice of this name is justified by the notoriety of the Erasmus programme, to demonstrate that it is not limited to higher education. Indeed, the programme will now take over the four sub-programmes of the programme for education and lifelong training - Comenius (school education), Erasmus (higher education), Leonardo da Vinci (education and professional training) and Grundtvig (adult education). It will also offer a programme for the guaranteed allocation of loans to master's candidates (Erasmus Master) in collaboration with the European Investment Bank (EIB) in order to allow them to follow a complete cycle of studies



Editor: Paul Claes

Layout: Stefania Francescon

Contributions by: Paul Claes, Elisa Briga, Stefania Francescon, Charlotte Klinting, Jana Holla and Edoardo Laurenti, Annika Wolfgram, Ulrich Reinhardt

Pictures by: EFIL, AFS Latvia, AFS Germany, AFS Turkey, AFS Switzerland, AFS Russia, AFS France, AFS Belgium Flanders, Caroline Steyaert

We welcome your contributions! If you would like to subscribe to (or unsubscribe from) this newsletter, please contact the EFIL Secretariat at: stefania.francescon@afs.org

Reproduction of texts and pictures is authorised provided the sources are quoted.

To receive further information about EFIL, please check our website www.efil.afs.org



Education and Culture DG