

European Youth Voice



Participation and Journalism

www.EuropeanYouthVoice.eu



An international online newspaper for young Europeans by young people

Launched by aktuelles forum nrw, Germany





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Directly from the USA Briana enjoys her stay in Gelsenkirchen for a whole year abroad. She studies Communications.

About Us

aktuelles forum nrw e.V., Germany

The project Participation and Journalism 2011/2012 was initiated by the aktuelles forum nrw e.V. in Germany. It's a nonprofit association for civic education. Aktuelles forum was founded in 1968 to offer a forum for political discussions.

In seminars and projects we talk about controversial issues of politics, society and culture. We are committed to social justice and more democracy. Aktuelles forum isn't party-political oriented. Rooted in the Ruhr area in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, we work nationally and internationally for a european dialogue und understanding.

The title of our program in 2013 is called: „Europe: economic, ecological and socially fair?“ On the website www.aktuelles-forum.de you will find all informations on our seminars and projects. The current European projects are:

- EuropeanYouthVoice (www.EuropeanYouthVoice.eu)
- young workers for europe (www.youngworkers.de),
- network of villages of Nazi crimes (www.aktuelles-forum.de)

The Project

The idea of the internet newspaper EuropeanYouthVoice was launched in 2006. The

main intention of this project is to create a 'Young European Public' and to promote peaceful living in Democratic Europe. It is a platform for a new European youth contemporary journalism. Each year the project has a different topic.

This booklet

This booklet contains a selection of articles that have been written during the project period of the young authors independently. Young people from 11 European took part. The website www.EuropeanYouthVoice.eu is open to everybody. You only need a login.

Your words, your opinions, your text online

This is the slogan of EuropeanYouthVoice: Your words, your opinion, your text. Authors can write their own articles about young people and for young people in Europe. Meanwhile it is also possible to publish video clips and radio reports on the website.

Supporters

This project is financed by the EU – youth in action program and the land headquarters for political education in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.

Contact

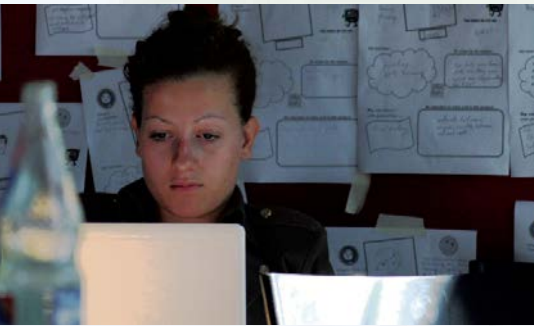
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Hohenstaufenallee 1

Different Bundesland, different cultures

Leaving the sheltered south for studying in the wild wild west

It's no secret that there are differences in cultures in the countries of the European Union. The Italians love pasta and pizza, the Greek's sanctuary is gyros and their syrtaki and the German are always in time, when they get their sausages and beer. But when I moved from the south of Germany into the Ruhrarea I realized, there are differences even in one country you never expect!

New city, new life, but new country? Not necessary! I arrived all by my own in Gelsenkirchen for my studies. And I must confess, I wasn't free from prejudices and questions from relatives and friend like: 'Are you sure? Leaving beautiful Stuttgart for Gelsenkirchen?!



Yes, it was my decision and I was convinced to force the new adventure. I arrived late at night in the new city. Alone in a new environment. The first days weren't easy. I needed to discover everything. Engraving was my first grocery shopping, I stood in the line for the cashier and waited for my turn. An old lady stood behind me and just asked me what's going on. I was surprised because at home no stranger would ask you so curious.

I got in similar situations in the last years and learned to cherish them. I made experiences I would never have made when I stayed at home in my child's room and I'm thankful for those. Of course I love to come home and see my family and friends and Stuttgart will always be my hometown, the city with the biggest place in my heart, but there's space for other places. I learned for myself that wherever you go, you'll be a stranger but when you open yourself to the people and their behaviors you learn so much for your life.

Tanja Hilpert, Germany

Virtual Bullying

The Internet has nowadays become one of the most influential and essential medium of communication. Although it has its positive aspects, the Internet is, more than anything, a necessary evil as it has opened up a new form of violence: virtual bullying.

Social media is constantly growing, and with it, so is this form of violence. Perhaps, the most recent and well known case occurred on October of 2012 when Amanda Todd, a 15-year old, committed suicide as a result of cyber bullying. Prior to her death, the young victim posted a 9-minute video entitled "My Story: Struggling, bullying, suicide and self harm" which revealed her experiences with regards to bullying through the use of a series of flash cards. Todd stated that in Grade 7, she utilised video chats so as to encounter new individuals and claimed to have received numerous compliments directed to her physical beauty. Unfortunately, she was coaxed into exposing her breasts on camera which gave the opportunity to the tormenter to blackmail her into exposing even more. People thoroughly reacted to the video post causing it to become viral in a matter of minutes. This is just but one

of the endless list of cases in which cowardly bullying triggers a fatal ending.

Adolescents do not appear to understand that actions have consequences; thereby hateful words may affect a person more than they would ever imagine. Raising awareness should be the basis to prevent cyber violence; however, it does not fundamentally solve the problem. A clear distinction between innocent fun and brutal belligerence within wall posts should be made in order to stop such harassment.

Kim Gregory, Malta

History – why is it important for young people?

Many young people are absolutely tired about history. For example in Germany. In German schools, you get bombarded with facts about the German history. With a special focus on the German history between 1933 and 1945, of course. In Germany, there is nearly nobody who didn't see a movie about the Holocaust like Schindler's List for example. And even nearly seventy years after their rule, Hitler, Goebbels, Göring and other Nazis are still very present in German media. On TV, there are documentaries every day. Most of them are about serious topics like the Holocaust or the war, but even documentaries about secret Ufo-projects of the Nazis or Hitler's private sex life are quite popular.

But why is it important to be interested in history? History is a very important part of the European soul. We always have to keep in mind what happened in history, the causalities, freedom and democracy causes in the past to understand how important Europe is. Even in times of crises, like the financial crisis at the moment, it is important to look back and remember our darkest hours. That will remind us that there is always a chance to deal with problems peacefully and –

even more important – to solve problems together in one community – Europe.

Max Niklas Gille, Germany

On The Germans and their Daily Bread

Wessen Brot ich ess, dessen Lied ich singe.

- whose bread I eat, his song I sing.

(German Proverb)

When most people think of Germany, probably the first things that come to mind are beer, sausage, and maybe Lederhosen. Not for me, however. During my first few weeks living in the small city of Gelsenkirchen, in North-West Germany, I was entranced by the innumerable amount of shops selling baked goods everywhere. Dotted here and there, on corners, near bookstores and bus stops, there seems to be one every fifteen metres. Waiting for the tram with the tempting aroma of hot, crusty bread fresh from the oven wafting up my nostrils, I decided to investigate.

The first thing that you should know about bakery stores in Germany is that there are two different kinds of bakery stores; the first being the Bäckerei, where one can find many different kinds of breads, ranging from small white bread rolls to large rye loaves. They usually have a small 'sweet' section with some cakes for sale, but usually, if you want something sweet, go to the Konditorei, which means 'confectioner's'.



The word ‚Konditor‘ originally comes from the Latin, meaning ‚the candying of fruits‘, and this came to be during the 15th century, when the original Medieval bakers had mastered the art of baking bread. Then they began to experiment on baking bread made with honey, dried fruits, and spices, hence, ‚confections‘, which eventually became an artform on its own.

Becoming a ‚Bäckermeister‘ is like a ‚master baker‘. During this two-year course, they must pass four exams dealing with education, theory and chemical processes, mathematics and one practical exam, which includes preparing a display of their products with a theme. Once a Meister they are allowed to take on apprentices of their own and teach the trade of bread making to other young apprentices.



Real bread Meisters also tend to follow the philosophy behind the Slow Food Movement (www.slowfood.de) where the bread is kneaded by hand, made from real ingredients with no additives and the dough is made daily (not baked from frozen), so it is really fresh! Bread from bakery chain stores like Kamps, Backwerk, and Brinker, usually tastes different than from an artisan bakery or a biobäcker – an organic bakery.

All in all, I hope you feel a little more informed

about where the bread on your plate comes from. Now excuse me, but it's 7:30am and the local bakery has been open for half an hour, and I have a date with a Brötchen and some Gouda.

Guten Appetit! ©

Natasha Sing, Malta

From East to West and back!

How a young girl found her home where her roots are

Lisa was only a few months old, when her parents came from East Germany to Stuttgart. It was in 1990 the borders were open just for few months. They were free to travel and leave the DDR, but it felt strange anyway. Her parents Thomas and Sabine had to learn, that they can decide on their own now, how they want to live. They could buy what they want to; they could go where they want to.

Soon the small family felt arrived in their new home, Thomas and Sabine found jobs, and the small Lisa went to the kindergarten and got some friends. They were happy, but something was missing even if no one of them could say what. Lisa got to school, and so the first six years passed in the new town. She passed the primary school and enjoyed her vacations before the next big step, high school. Behind Lisa's back something went on, what no one had expected. Thomas and Sabine decided to go back, back to East Germany where they came from, where their home is. Lisa's world broke down, to leave her friends, her home, everything she loved.

The first time was hard for her, but soon she found also positive things in the new life. She got a dog, new friends and felt comfortable. When she turned eighteen, finished her school and could decide on her own, where to go, she stayed. She stayed at the place where her parents flew 18 years ago in the west with the

hope of a better life. Time changes and places where years ago fear and terror rule could turn into the beloved home of someone!

Tanja Hilpert, Germany

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a neglected problem suffered worldwide and is also one of the most sickening violations of the basic human rights. This illegal trade of human beings occurs for commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour or the extraction of organs. Several hundred thousands of people are estimated to be trafficked within Europe.

The EU is unable to define concretely the term 'human trafficking' as in certain countries; the crime may imply that sufferers have been bought whereas in others they merely require to cross borders. When such conditions are not satisfied, then cases are classified as illegal prostitution as opposed to sex trafficking. Evidently, one of the greatest problems lies in the fact that only but a few rare cases are investigated and presented in court. In 2006, a mere 1500 cases were filed; thus exposing that a rather low number of traffickers are actually punished for the crime.

The facility with which a person may cross national borders aids fundamentally in easing the process of transporting people illegally for exploitation. Interestingly enough, one of the most common forms of human trafficking in Europe revolves around domestic trafficking. It appears to be a difficult task to categorize this issue due to certain countermeasures applied, for instance identifying an irregular migration victim or training work members of an Embassy.

Europe has the advantage over other continents as it is rather well informed with regards to the dangers and suffering caused by human trafficking. In comparison to non-European countries, it has the most organized data collection techniques for trafficking individuals. Moreover, the ultimate number of criminal measures in most European countries is superior in comparison to the rest of the world. The only way for the globe to move forward is to act more and talk less because after all, actions speak louder than words!

Kim Gregory, Malta

Christmastime in Germany

Being a foreign exchange student studying in Germany for a year, gave me a chance to witness Christmas time in Germany. I had the opportunity to visit a few Christmas markets which was a completely new experience for me. I have heard of imitation markets like this within the U.S. but I was in awe of how the Germans celebrate with their markets the entire month of December. These markets were decked out with lights and rides for children and adults. Plus, the streets were filled with people in booths selling different types of food, homemade crafts, and another German seasonal tradition, Glühwein.

It seemed to me that Christmas was a really special time for the people living here whereas





I'm used to the hustle and bustle of Christmas time within the United States where it's all about the shopping and decorations. Upon some research, I found that the Germans celebrate Christmas for three days whereas I am used to celebrating for only one day. Children here get to open their presents from Santa on the night of the 24th which must save them from the anxiety children face in the U.S. not being able to sleep when they have to wait until the morning of the 25th to open their gifts. The 26th is also a legal Christmas day.

The main similarities in traditions that I noticed were decorating the Christmas tree and decorating the house inside and out. In the U.S. advent calendars are also a tradition in certain families. Overall, I think that I found Christmas to be more enjoyable here. It was less about the spending of money and more about celebrating with family and friends. I am glad that I had the chance to experience Christmas in a new way.

Briana Maddalena, USA

The Student's Guide to Travelling:

How To Extend Your Boundaries Without Extending Your Wallet

To put it simply, travelling is one of the greatest joys in my life. When I was a young girl, I always dreamed of becoming a journalist who travelled to all the corners of the Earth for her

stories. Living in the midst of war, poverty, natural disasters, visiting jungles, mountains, deserts, oceans – you name it. Ten years later, my passion for travelling has still not subsided, and as an Erasmus student living in Germany, you can be sure that I'm doing my best to make the most of it.

When it comes to student travelling, money tends to be the number one concern. Flights, trains, trams – it all adds up – so ask around for local sites where you can get a lift with other people travelling in the same direction and you pay something towards their petrol. Here in Germany we use <http://www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de/>, and usually the difference between using public transport and liftsharing ranges from 5 to 20 euro! Also, when using cheap airlines like Ryanair or Easyjet, if they don't fly directly to your desired destination, check out whether they fly to another airport which does, and compare prices with the cost of the local public transport and see which is cheaper.

For example, when I visited a friend in Malmö, Sweden, it was cheaper to book flights from Düsseldorf to London, then from London to Malmö (and back) than to take a direct flight to Stockholm and catch a train from there, the same one, but that's how it works at the moment. If you play your cards right, like waiting for the off-peak season for travelling or looking out for when there are sales, you can really save a lot of money – and travel more!

Another of my favourite ways of travelling is using the ingenious concept of Couchsurfing. Basically, to couchsurf means to sleep on someone's couch for the night. This is fine if you have friends in another country – but if you don't, check out the website www.couchsurfing.org. This site is run by a company in San Francisco, and basically all you do is create a profile and then start looking at the profiles of people in the place you want to visit. You then contact them and see if they can offer you a couch. A lot of the time people have spare rooms or mattresses, so you can look around for what you prefer. Don't be worried that you might be staying with an axe murderer or a rapist. This is the conditioning of the media on your brain. Most of the time you meet people just like you and me, who love travelling themselves. I promise you that is a great way to travel as you meet a lot of new, fascina-



ting people, who love being a tour guide and enjoy showing you around their country. You also get a real look at what that country is like when you stay with someone who lives there, as opposed to the dry, 'touristy' hotelrooms, which can cost you over 60euro per night. Couchsurfing is free, and you can simply buy some wine or bake something as a thankyou to your host, but even this is not obligatory.

So, I hope you found these tips useful. Later I will be writing a more detailed version (such as the best way to pack your luggage) on my blog: <http://thegirlontherock.blogspot.de> so you can check it out if you are interested, and also contact me with any questions that you might have. Until then, I wish you happy travelling!

Natasha Sing, Malta

Traveling in Europe

While studying abroad this year, I have gotten to travel a bit and I have noticed some things that at first I found bizarre but are actually quite typical for Europeans. It is standard in the U.S. to have a car unless you live in a city because then public transport is many times much cheaper than owning a car. However, if you live in the country side like I do, having a car is your only chance for transportation. I've noticed that the system for trains, trams, and buses within Germany is far more extensive than that within the U.S. so not owning a car, even if you live in a smaller city, isn't a big deal. At first, I was shocked at the number of people I had met that didn't have a car but then I realized it's not a practical for them.

The biggest difference in transportation that I have encountered was flying. I decided to fly from Belgium to Ireland for a trip. I was so very confused when I arrived at the airport at night and everything was closed. Every airport I had ever been to (within the U.S. of course) never shut down at night. There were always people and shops open but it was dead and everything was closed in Belgium. That wasn't even the most bizarre part of my trip. In the morning when I have to catch my flight, I was standing in line with my tickets and then following the crowd to what I thought was the jetway bridge. I was sadly mistaken and stunned when I

ended up outside on the runway and still following the crowd walking up to the plane.

My eyes were in disbelief. I swore that there was some sort of mistake. I felt as if I had been transported back to the 1950s, or that I was cast in the final scene of Casablanca. Never in my life I ever have had to walk outside on an airport runway and then walk up stairs onto a plane.

After that incident, I talked with some European students who informed me that it was perfectly normal to board a plane that way and that it is typical for flying. In the end, it really was a cool experience. I will always find it a little strange but it's definitely one for my history books.

Briana Maddalen, USA



www.EuropeanYouthVoice.eu – How to join!

How do I change the auto-generated password?

The password can be changed when logging into your profil page (see right side-bar, under Welcome! sign).

How do I post an article?

In order to post an article one has to:

1. Join European Youth Voice and Login
2. Click 'dashboard' (right side-bar)
3. Click on posts (left side-bar)
4. Add new
5. Write text, embed video, pictures etc.
6. Publish (left side-bar)

How do I include my picture in the slideshow?

Before you publish click on 'Set Featured Image' (Bottom left side-bar)

Feel free to leave suggestions for more FAQs on our Facebook Page!

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/147065788672468/>

The website: www.EuropeanYouthVoice.eu

The website is open to everybody. Everybody can write independently articles, share photos, produce small films or upload audio files. You can put contributions on the side yourself. You only need a login.





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