



## Press Release



*Brussels, 31 October 2007*

### **Time for a NEW EU PROGRAMME: „Multicultural citizen“**

**Supported by youth and students organizations, but also by the business sector, the European Students' Forum (AEGEE) officially proposed to set up an EU programme on "multicultural citizenship".**

The European Students' Forum (AEGEE) is one of the leading NGOs organizing activities that foster multilingualism during the summer period. While presenting the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Summer University Project to European Commissioner Leonard Orban, the Commissioner requested AEGEE to submit a "language education" proposal.

Within the European Union there is an obvious need to have more people being able to speak a foreign language. This interacts with other European Union policies, such as culture, education, communication, social policy, employment, justice, freedom and security.

Theijs van Welij, President of AEGEE-Europe, underlined: "In order to complement the current programmes, we propose to set up a new European Union programme on "multicultural citizenship" to foster multilingualism and intercultural dialogue during the summer period."

On 11 October 2007, AEGEE-Europe hosted an expert meeting with representatives from youth and students organizations, but also from the business sector: European Youth Forum, BEST Europe, BusinessEurope, Eurochambres, UEAPME and ECAS. During this meeting, the objectives of the proposal received a nice "welcome" and the participants were glad to see such a project.

"This proposal has been created through the voluntary work of a student association, a work that we believe in. We are not doing this for us – we already have a structure in which we can achieve these "mobilities". We try to help other students and especially young Europeans to find an easy way to discover what they have: a place with peace, a place full of culture, a place where languages are an added value, not a problem", mentioned Laure Onidi, Project Director of AEGEE-Europe.

AEGEE is currently waiting for the feedback of the European Commission in order to continue their work on this initiative and to be able to have a budget line for these activities by 2009.

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