

What is ACC?

The ACC is non-governmental and non-profit organisation founded mainly by young Europeans. It currently has 280 members from almost all European countries Mission Statement The ACC is working for the development of a European public realm through the mean of Community College Courses

What are Community Colleges?

The ACC defines Community Colleges as schools that take their starting point in an idea and an objective, which has been defined by a non-governmental group of people running the school, have as their ideal boarding-school courses that last for a longer period of time (preferably at least one month), organise courses on topics of common (European) interest in accordance with the idea of the group running the school, are governed by culture in the sense that life at the individual schools should be influenced by local traditions and culture, have adults as their target-group; adults who are interested in learning and thus also in paying part of the courses themselves

What does the ACC do?

The ACC promotes the idea of establishing a common law supporting Community Colleges, organises Community College events lobbies the authorities to promote the idea of creating and running common European Community Colleges debates common European issues.

The history of the ACC

The founders of the ACC have one specific experience in common. We all took part in an international course at a Folk High School (community college) in Denmark. This special type of school and the common European character of the issue debated –in this particular case European minority issues –inspired us to come up with the term Community Colleges and to the idea of making similar courses on a much larger scale on common European issues. After a lot of debate, the ACC was founded on August 11th, 1999. The statutory meeting took

place on the Internet. The statutes of the association were adopted, and the governing body of the ACC was elected.

The Board/Working group •

Agota Illyes, Budapest, TCC, MA in Public Policy;•Conchi Gallego, Madrid, Spanish Youth Council, EU-Politics, journalist;•EvaValvo, Pisa, FGEL, Italian Youth Convention, ERCC; Jan-Christoph Napierski, Aarhus/Krakow, European Studies Aarhus,Junge Spitzen; John Petersen, Aabenraa, spider, cand.mag., intercultural understanding Laszlo Dani, Budapest, Software Development Engineer; Linda Jakobson, Riga, Latvian EU Integration Bureau, ACC Tautskolas Eiropai; Mjellma Mehmeti ,Skopje, Young European of the Year 2002, AWE World Council; Siebren de Boer, Amsterdam, Frisian organizations;

Transylvania Community College 2003: *Proposal on Minority Protection in a European Constitution*

The idea of this youth exchange is both a continuation of an already tried youth activity and a brand new initiative.

Firstly, it can be assessed as a second stage of a process started earlier, with the successful implementation of the course Transylvania Community College 2001. The idea was to combine the conclusions, which can be drawn from the problematic context of Transylvanian interethnic relations in the perspective of the upcoming European integration applying the special methodology of the community college format. This framework proved to be apt for offering new alternatives in the search for eventual solutions in the complicated setting of minority-majority relations, both on the regional level and in a European context.

Secondly, we thought of developing the course content in line with the recent experience of the organizers and the current political setting of the continent. Both of them point in the same direction. Simultaneously with the emerging need of an eventual political reform of the EU structure and the search for new sources of policy justification, there is a strongly emerging need of offering a possible constitution for Europe, which would both legitimize the current political framework, the institutions, it would democratize their setting and at the same time, it would somehow bring them closer to the people of Europe.

The ambitious Youth 2002 project, planned and implemented in Denmark in July has recognized this necessity and at the same time it has shown that the young people of Europe are willing to dedicate their knowledge and skills to an eventual rebuilding of this structure. From a methodological point of view, the event has also demonstrated that the combination of the *folk high school, or community college format* with this highly actual context is a lucky one. Furthermore, it was proven to be the best pedagogical manner to promote active citizenship among young people through involving them in such multinational/multicultural projects.

The partner groups are in fact regional/national branches of the ACC, which has permanent collaborators in the various European countries. Some of them proved to

be interested in contributing to the organization of the Transylvania Community College 2003 as well. (see the homepage)

Proposal on Minority Protection in a European Constitution

The two organizers went through a brand new common experience, that of coordinating the course Youth 2002 (www.youth2002.org) in Denmark and thereby developed an additional dimension to the idea of a community college course to be organized in Transylvania, which would synthesize their work, enrich the course content and fit it to the actual context and specificity of the slightly different target group.

Therefore this year we thought of slightly changing the methodology of the course. Correspondingly, we have decided that the main priority will be to actively involve the participants and facilitate their drafting a Proposal on Minority Protection in a European Constitution. Therefore we thought of considerably reducing the amount of lectures held during the course, and alter the complete methodological framework of the project.

First of all, we thought of combining the current political developments, the needs of and potential lying in our target group: youth leaders and young people between the ages of 18-25. The first condition assures that they are interested in actual political and cultural developments, e.g. the present state of the process of European integration, the second guarantees that they are not only willing to actively participate in the process of project development, but also requires this as the main condition of their motivation and contribution. We thought that working together for a common aim, a series of decision with a concrete result would be an excellent way of keeping their interest risen all throughout the stages of project implementation. They are supposedly having a common interest in exploring such issues, as minority protection in the current context of globalization and European integration (which is in itself a bit problematic). Besides having lectures on this complicated topic it would be interesting to involve them in drafting a concrete document in the subject, a possible Proposal on Minority Protection in a European Constitution. This highly controversial topic would naturally offer several challenges to the eventual working method of the course. It is an enormous challenge to explore how to benefit of cultural differences in

such a situation, where an agreement has to be reached in a given timeframe in a way that the majority of the participants feels involved in the working out of the result and that they feel dedicated to it. The project is in fact thought of as a major simulation game of participatory democracy.

On the other hand, we firmly believe that by drafting a concrete document, through the submission of an eventual proposal to policy makers and decision taking structures, institutions in Europe they would seize what active European citizenship would mean in practice.

We also believe that through this result the project would highly contribute to the initial aim of the ACC, that of actively involving young people in such fields, where a proven disinterest was previously prevailing, and to promote such values, which will ultimately result in the creation of a European public sphere, a community of citizens.

Through organizing this project in Transylvania we would like to bring closer the eventual results of such an event to the Transylvanian public, to let the inhabitants of the region seize the current and very concrete tendencies an eventual European integration would bring to them, and to prepare them to accept the newly emerging values, ultimately to integrate them to the community of active citizens through a change in mentality. On the other hand, Transylvania as a region has also to be brought closer to the European public, in the sense that the young people of Europe would not only think of it as the land of Dracula –which we must admit is the actual situation- but also consider the youth of Transylvania as a possible and coherent actor in the field of generating political, cultural, civil movements in the European sphere.

We believe –and once has already proven by way of successfully implementing the project in Transylvania- that these kind of courses are effective in letting the population of such remote region, as Transylvania understand what European integration would mean in practice and to actively absorb such notions, which would also define their lives, such as multiculturalism, minority rights, nationalism, intercultural understanding, democratic participation and active citizenship.

Eligible countries: Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Germany, France, Italy, Latvia, The Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain and Sweden.

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Program Coordinators: Agota Ilyes and Barna Kovacs

Address: 1463 Budapest, P.O.Box.: 955

Phone: +40-745-488712, +36/203467471

Webpage: www.acc.eu.org

E-mail: tcc@acc.eu.org

Host Organization: Studium Foundation (Tirgu Mures) www.studium.ro