

Students and EU policy makers envisioning a confident Europe at Yale

By Mike Cummings

February 2, 2016



One hundred undergraduate and graduate students from 52 universities across the United States and Europe will gather at Yale University on Feb. 5 and 6 for a conference organized by the Yale-based, student think-tank, European Horizons. Students will propose solutions for some of the major issues confronting the European Union (EU), including the wave of migration that has challenged European societies and stirred debate about integration, human rights, foreign policy,

and security.

Funded by the European Commission through a Jean Monnet grant, the European Student Conference 2016 at the Yale School of Management (SOM) will engage leading academics and EU policy makers with students. Speakers include Kristalina Georgieva, the vice president of the European Commission; Joao Vale de Almeida, the EU representative in the United Nations; David O'Sullivan, the EU ambassador to the United States; Klaus Welle, the secretary general of the European Parliament; and Pierre Vimont, the former secretary general of the European External Action Service. David Cameron, Yale professor of political science and director of EU studies, is among the featured academics.

"In today's connected world, we will only find the best solutions to challenges we face if we look for them together. The European Student Conference at Yale University is an excellent forum for this — a place to connect the United States and Europe and discuss how to improve the global response to humanitarian crises, poverty, and migration," said Georgieva of the European Commission.

Building on its success in 2015, this year's conference will focus on formulating an integrated European migration policy as well as designing a future Eurozone treasury, exploring the role of religion and secularism on questions of European identity, enhancing the growth potential of small-and-medium enterprises, and redefining European defense and security strategy. In six thematic workshops students will have the opportunity to analyze the issues in detail with policy experts, devise policy prescriptions, and think about their own contribution to Europe and transatlantic relations through the European Horizons.

A team of 40 Yale students, under the leadership of Yale College seniors Nasos Abuel and Olga Karnas,, has been working to organize this conference for a year. The students' enthusiasm for changing Europe and making Yale a forum for change stems from the hope that Europe is a project that can realize human aspirations, as noted in the "Declaration of Principles" of European Horizons: "We believe that European Identity springs from a shared vision of the world: this common worldview consists of the shared aspiration to realize peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and a prosperous social market economy throughout all of Europe,"

"It is a great pleasure to take part in this year's European Student Conference at Yale University, which

brings together some of the best and brightest students from all over the world to exchange views and discuss the future of the European Union and the current challenges it is facing. This conference could not come at a better time as we find ourselves at a point that global issues affect all of us, being in Europe, the US or elsewhere,” said de Almeida of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations.

A new feature of the conference is the entrepreneurship workshop, which will develop ideas for business ventures that can facilitate the integration of migrants into European societies and economies. Participants will present business plans to a panel of judges; the winning team will receive a monetary award to support the implementation of its business plan.

“The entrepreneurship workshop reflects the belief that tackling challenges like the migrant crisis requires innovation and practical business ideas alongside sound public policy,” says SOM student Marco Pau, director of innovation activities at European Horizons.

European Horizons, a nonpartisan, student think-tank, was launched by Yale students last year and founded at the European Student Conference 2015. In addition to the annual conference, European Horizons hosts a Fall Policy Convention and a Spring Forum; publishes research and policy papers through its academic journal, theReview of European & Transatlantic Affairs; and maintains chapters across 19 universities in the United States and College d’Europe in Belgium.

“This conference is a unique opportunity for us young people to weigh in on the many challenges now facing the European Union, including economic issues, identity, migration, and defense strategy,” says Nasos Abuel, executive director of European Horizons. “The conference blends the creative thinking of students with the experience of seasoned decision-makers in order to craft a series of concrete policy proposals that will tackle these assorted challenges and make the EU a role model for other regions across the globe.”

For more information about European Horizons and the conference’s schedule, visit <http://www.europeanhorizons.org>.

(Image courtesy of Shutterstock)



Copyright © 2016, Yale University. All rights reserved. [Privacy policy](#).
[Browse our archives](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Office of Public Affairs & Communications](#)