

“European Solutions to European Problems” – Program description

18/01/19

Three seminars in three European cities over the course of one year: In the following, we will present you what to expect from the “European Solutions to European Problems” seminar series in 2018.

The goal of the series is to get to know the participating countries, their political state and society. This shall foster motivation to stand up for values like democracy, freedom of speech, media plurality, and human and citizens’ rights as well as to stand against corruption, mismanagement, arbitrariness and violence. This can lead to a new evaluation of one’s own thinking and prevent xenophobia through a cultural exchange.

From April 11 to 15, 2018 a journey to Stuttgart, Germany will mark the beginning of the series. During your stay in the German state capital of Baden-Württemberg, you will get to know the other participants and ease into the program. In this first section, we will throw light on Europe’s history, the French-German reconciliation, federalism and the media. You will learn about the German federal system at the example of the German state (or *Bundesland*) Baden-Württemberg and the impact that the European Union has on the sub-national level. The media’s role in a well-functioning democracy will be discussed during a visit at the SWR (Südwestrundfunk) studio. What defines a democracy? And why is it so essential to be confronted with democratic structures? A workshop with contemporary witnesses of the *DDR* (*German Democratic Republic*, also known as *East Germany*) will get to the bottom of these questions. Situated close to the French border, you will not only learn about wars fought on both sides of the Rhine River and civil society’s contribution to the reconciliation. It will also be discussed in how far the French-German reconciliation can be a blueprint for South-Eastern European countries.

You will meet again from September 12 to 16, 2018 in Chisinau, Moldavia where you will learn more about the republic’s history and its difficult journey towards EU membership. It will be organized by our Moldovan partner *young European federalist*. By examining the “association agreement”, “anti-corruption campaign” and “election monitoring”, you will get to know a transformational state outside of the EU still searching for its place within the European community. This will be facilitated by visits of NGOs, meetings with representatives of the European Commission and talks at the German and French embassies. Workshops and discussion groups will further deepen the experiences made and the knowledge passed on.

The final seminar will take place in Strasbourg, France from November 14 to 18, 2018 and will be organized by our French partner *Maison de l’Europe de Strasbourg et de l’Alsace*. The focus will lie on the Alsatian history and the French-German cooperation. Additionally, you will visit the European Council, the European Parliament, and the European Court of Human Rights. Following presentations and talks, you will get a chance to discussions in workshops to think more deeply about the following question: How can young people get engaged to defend democracy, freedom of speech and other basic democratic rights? An essential part of the evaluation of this question will be taken up by the role of the media.

The course of the seminars will be a mixture of presentations, talks, and visits with extensive workshops. In analyzing European values, transformational systems, and stabilization mechanisms for the Balkan you will learn about the values that the participants share, over which they disagree and what they’re willing to stand up for.