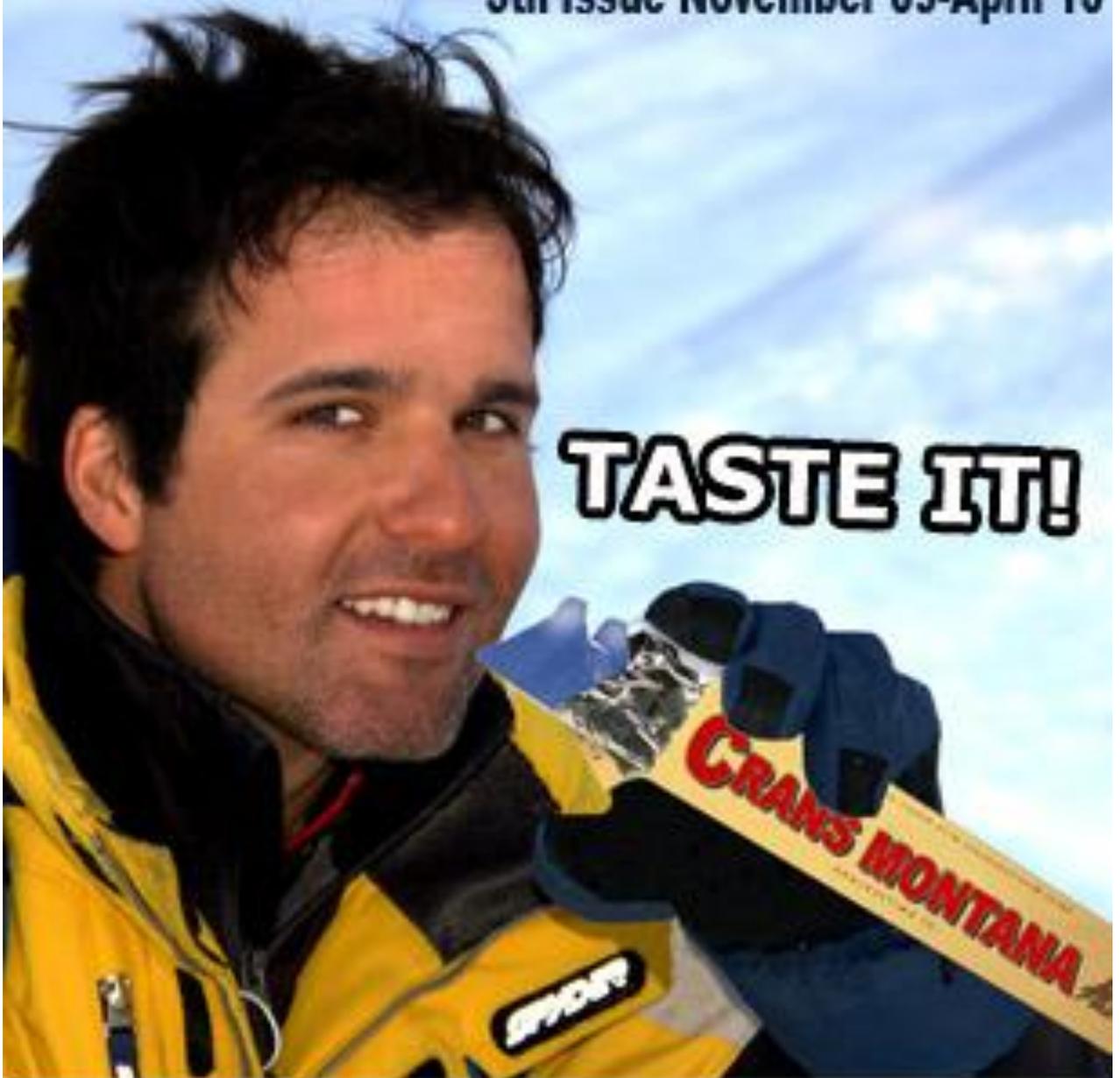


PROEUROPE1

5th issue November 09-April 10



TASTE IT!

Leonardo da Vinci project
New music from theNorth:
Movits!

European Elections 2009
Bratislava and Greifswald

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Editorial

When winter time arrives means is time to practice snow sports. Sport is an educative tool and the same time, is a good chance to meet with friends and do exercise. So, is time to leave sofa away and to enjoy some hours, days or a week from incredible places, spectacular countryside and all surrounded of nature. There are so many options: snowshoeing, snowboard, ski,..., close to home, in the Pyrenees, in Alps, etc.

But we propose you to ski in Crans Montana, Switzerland. This place offers you a range of possibilities to snow lovers and where sport hasn't age. Everyone does sport. In the report you'll find all information you need to plan your trip to Crans Montana and to enjoy of all. Let's taste it, this place so surprising of Switzerland.

Also, in this issue you'll find what is Leonardo da Vinci programme and an experience of one girl who participated it, volunteer with CLONG and more ...

...Proeurope1, your European magazine!

Participation and formation in Europe

Discover and participate in the Leonardo da Vinci project

The Leonardo da Vinci professional mobility project offers an interesting opportunity to all those young people who want to do training abroad, in one of the countries of the European Union.

What is it?

It is an initiative of the European Commission and forms part of the 2007-2013 Lifelong Learning Programme. The Leonardo da Vinci Programme offers European citizens the chance to improve their vocational training through training stays abroad, in countries that are members of the EU and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Young Europeans can also take advantage of an economic contribution to help fund a period of work abroad.

What are the main objectives of the programme?

Within the framework of building a "Europe based on know-how", this initiative of the European Commission seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Contribute to the development of knowledge, competences and qualifications in order to favour the personal and professional development and help young people to enter the European labour market
- Improve the vocational training systems and guarantee a process of continuous innovation
- Promote learning, vocational training and mobility so that they are more attractive for both: beneficiaries and employers.

How do you take part?

At the national level, organisations promoting the programme include: public bodies, universities, professional associations and other organisations from countries in the European Community and EFTA, which are selected, each year, by the European Commission. These bodies publish offers related to the Leonardo programme. To take part in the programme it is necessary to check the activities of organisations involved in the Leonardo programme and to participate in the selection processes that are subject to public calls for participation.

Who is it for?

The programme is aimed at citizens from the member countries of the EU. The main beneficiaries of the Leonardo programme are young people. There are three main categories of beneficiaries:

- Students on vocational training courses who participate in the programme through the school or vocational entity. (training is normally programmed for between three and four weeks)
- University or doctoral students. (with a duration of between three and twelve months)

- Recent graduates, workers or unemployed people. (the duration of the programme could be between two and twelve months)

Whatever the case, the programme calls for participation may seek a variety of different characteristics when looking to award grants: the period of work experience may vary, as may the age limits, language requirements, etc.

Why take part?

It is an opportunity for personal and professional development. This mobility project offers beneficiaries the chance to get valuable work experience where they will gain intercultural experiences and vocational training.

Where does the programme take place?

The programme takes place in companies, entities and other organisms in countries that are members of the European Community, EFTA and/or countries in the process of joining the EU. However, the general idea is for beneficiaries to undergo a period of training in the country of origin before the programme organised by the promoting entity begins.

When?

The national organisations do not follow precise time schedules when they publish their calls for participation associated with the Leonardo programme. For this reason, it is a good idea to regularly consult the organisms interested in the project or to ask for information from the organisations that are engaged in promoting European and international mobility in the national or local territory. In their respective calls for participation, all of these organisations specify: the duration of the training period, the participating countries, the personal and professional requirements of the candidates, and the final date for presenting the application.

How much?

The programme offers a financial contribution that seeks to cover the costs of travel, accommodation, and the stay and also provides insurance cover. The grant does not, however, cover 100% of the costs. In general terms, the grant covers about 80% of the real expense.

For more information, consult:

European Commission - Education & Training:
ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc82_en.htm

Here is a list of organisations that participate in the Leonardo programme:
eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/index_en.php

SPAIN - Organismo Autónomo Programas Educativos Europeos (OAPEE)

Web: <http://www.oapee.es>

email: oapee@oapee.es

ITALY - Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione e dell'Orientamento Professionale dei Lavoratori

Web: <http://www.programmaleonardo.net/llp/index.asp>

email: leoprojet@isfol.it

AUSTRIA - Österreichischer Austauschdienst - Nationalagentur Lebenslanges Lernen

Web: <http://www.lebenslanges-lernen.at>

email: lebenslanges-lernen@oead.at

BELGIUM/ French Community - Agence francophone pour l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie

Web: <http://www.llp.cfwb.be>

email: llp@cfwb.be

BELGIUM/ Flemish Community - EPOS vzw National Agency for Lifelong Learning

Web: <http://www.epos-vlaanderen.be>

email: info@epos-vlaanderen.be

BULGARIA - Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC)

Web: <http://www.hrdc.bg>

email: hrdc@hrdc.bg

CYPRUS - Foundation for the management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes

Web: <http://www.llp.org.cy>

email:

CZECH REPUBLIC - National Agency for European Educational Programmes - Centre for International Services

Web: <http://www.naep.cz>

email:

DENMARK - Cirius - Agency for information about education and training in Denmark

Web: <http://www.ciriusonline.dk>

email: cirius@ciriusmail.dk

ESTONIA - Centre for Educational Programmes, Archimedes Foundation

Web: <http://www.archimedes.ee/hkk>

email: rait@archimedes.ee

FINLAND - Centre for International Mobility (CIMO)

Web: <http://www.cimo.fi> <http://www.leonardodavinci.fi>

email:

FRANCE - Agence Europe Education Formation France

Web: <http://www.europe-education-formation.fr>

email: contact@2e2f.fr

GERMANY - Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa

Web: <http://www.na-bibb.de>

email: na@bibb.de

GREECE - Vocational Training SA

Web: <http://www.ep-katartisi.gr>

email:

HUNGARY - Tempus Public Foundation

Web: <http://www.tka.hu> <http://www.tpf.hu> <http://www.studyinhungary.hu>

email: gabriella.kemeny@tpf.hu

ICELAND - Landskrifstofa Menntaáætlunar Evrópusambandsins

Web: <http://www.lme.is>

email: lme@hi.is

IRELAND - Léargas the Exchange Bureau

Web: <http://www.llp.ie>

email: lifelonglearnin@leargas.ie

LATVIA - Valsts izglitibas attistibas agentura - VIAA

Web: <http://www.viaa.gov.lv>

email: info@viaa.gov.lv

LIECHTENSTEIN - Agentur für Internationale Bildungsangelegenheiten

Web: <http://www.aiba.llv.li>

email: leonardo@llv.li

LITHUANIA - Education Exchanges Support Foundation

Web: <http://www.smpf.lt/webukas/index.php?id=58>

email: info@smpf.lt

LUXEMBOURG - Agence pour le Programme Européen d'Apprentissage Tout au Long de la Vie

Web: <http://www.anefore.lu>

email:

MALTA - European Union Programmes Unit - EUPU

Web: <http://www.leonardomalta.com/index.htm>

email: eupu@gov.mt

NETHERLANDS - National Agency For Lifelong learning

Web: www.na-lll.nl

email:

NORWAY - Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education - Senter for Internasjonalisering av hojere utdanning - SIURUEGA

Web: <http://www.siu.no/llp>

email: siu@siu.no

POLAND - Foundation for the Development of Education System

Web: <http://www.frse.org.pl>

email: kontakt@frse.org.pl

PORTUGAL - Agencia Nacional do Programma "Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida"

Web: <http://www.proalv.pt>

email: agencianacional@socleo.pt

ROMANIA - National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training

Web: <http://www.anpcdefp.ro>

email: agentie@socrates.ro

SLOVAQUIA - SAAIC - National Agency of the Lifelong Learning Programme

Web: <http://www.saaic.sk/llp>

email: llp@saaic.sk

SLOVENIA - CMEPIUS - Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes

Web: <http://www.cmepius.si>

email: info@cmepius.si maja.mihelic-debeljak@cmepius.si

SWEDEN - Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet

Web: <http://www.programkontoret.se>

email: registrator@programkontoret.se

TURKEY - The Centre for EU Education and Youth Programmes

Web: <http://www.ua.gov.tr>

email: bilgi@ua.gov.tr

UNITED KINGDOM - UK National Agency ECOTEC

Web: <http://www.leonardo.org.uk>

email: llp@ecotec.com

Work and cooperate in Europe



Volunteer with CLONG

If you are thinking of leaving your country and bringing help to people with fewer opportunities, and you are looking for a professionally reliable and ethically responsible NGO, you should get in touch with CLONG.

What is CLONG?

CLONG is a committee that links together non-profit-making organizations affiliated to the French foreign ministry. It's a place for exchanges and actions related to the question of international charity and it enables its members to keep in touch with government. CLONG has several roles: an information provider, counsellor and animator. You can take part in charity work as well as attend informative meetings. In the latter case, you'll have to sign in on CLONG's website, whereas if you want to volunteer to work abroad, you'll have to contact the non-profit-making organizations directly. You can find the non-profit-making organizations which are members of CLONG at <http://www.clong-volontariat.org/admin/fichier/TableauONG2009.pdf>. This table was last updated in May 2009.

Who?

The volunteers who work with CLONG are called VIS (Volunteers for International Solidarity). They can choose from three types of work: humanitarian emergency, rehabilitation and development work. A person who wants to become a VIS doesn't need any particular skills but he/she needs to be at least 18. However, there are different ways of participating, according to the NGO in question. Some associations require applicants to be at least 21 years old, whereas others prefer young graduates. One very important characteristic of any Volunteer for International Solidarity is to be highly motivated and committed. People of all nationalities can work with CLONG.

What are the main goals?

CLONG has three main goals:

- to promote volunteers' commitment and rights;
- to present voluntary work as a fundamental way of expressing citizenship;
- to improve the status of volunteers and reinforce the quality of voluntary work.

Where?

NGOs can send VSIs to Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Some NGOs are active in North Africa and South America, others in Southern Asia, and others in Africa. Where they operate largely depends on the activity of each NGO, its history, and its mode of action. During their missions, the VSIs will live and share the daily life of local people with other volunteers.

How long?

This period varies according to the NGO in question and the type of activities that they undertake. The average duration of a contract is one or two years. Some NGOs offer shorter assignments. In the case of emergency missions, they often rely on experienced and qualified personnel. It is also important to take into account that the time required for research and preparation is 6 months, on average (sometimes more, sometimes less). The length of the recruitment phase depends on each NGO. Some prefer to recruit from general applications, while others put their offers online on websites such as that of Coordination SUD (www.coordinationsud.org - Employment). There are usually several selection stages:

1. Screening of the CV and covering letter
2. Selection of applicant
3. Selected via interview or internship recruitment
4. Selection tests and possible technical trials
5. Proposed mission
6. Pre-departure training
7. Out on a mission.

There are also both short courses and long courses at different levels. These are provided by specialized agencies to train volunteers for international solidarity. For example, if you click on the Bioforce website, you can find several types of training programme. This is an important period which helps to mature the project volunteer and to make him/her think about the reasons for and consequences of his/her mission.

How much?

The voluntary agreement signed between the association and the volunteer is not an employment contract; the volunteer does not receive wages. However, following a law passed in 2005, associations approved by the state must pay their voluntary staff enough to allow volunteers to fulfil their mission under decent living conditions. In fact, VISs have a status that grants them specific allocations. The NGO will pay their return ticket to and from the host country, pay for their accommodation, food, and social security and also give them some pocket money.

Every year, about 2000 men and women volunteer to go abroad with these non-profit-making organizations. If you are interested in the idea of getting involved as a volunteer, try it! You can offer and get experience in a large number of trades. It would be impossible to list them all, but they include: the medical and paramedical professions (nurses, doctors, therapists, psychologists, physical therapist), managers, logistical planners, administrators, coordinators, educators, social workers, teachers, trainers, socio-economists, veterinarians, agronomists and agricultural engineers, agricultural technicians, hydraulic engineers, animators, hydrologists, auto mechanics, building professionals, and engineers. Some profiles are less typical and they are sometimes sought for specific tasks (for example, musician).

So, what are you waiting for? If you need more information, don't hesitate to visit the CLONG's website at www.clong-volontariat.org!

Discoverings



Report realized by
Juraj Cik

Bratislava – The Little Big City

Although at the first glance, the name “Little Big City” does not really make much sense, the meaning becomes clear when you know the whole background. “Little” stands for its relatively small size and relatively small population (around half a million) compared to the huge metropolises of Europe. “Big” refers firstly to the fact that despite its size, the city has a lot to offer, not only to its inhabitants, but also to all its visitors and travellers. Moreover, it’s the capital and the biggest city in Slovakia, which makes it the huge, beating heart of this small Central European country.

Slovakia as a country is most famous for its breathtakingly beautiful natural environment (and women?), but what more has Bratislava got to offer?

Since its very origins, it has enjoyed a rich history, which dates back to Roman times. For two centuries it was the capital and crown city of the Kingdom of Hungary in more modern times. That is why there are many interesting buildings (Bratislava castle, St. Martin’s cathedral), museums (Slovak National Museum, Bratislava City Museum), art galleries (Slovak National Gallery) and other exciting places. Also, there are plenty of theatres, cinemas, opera houses and festivals and exhibitions frequently take place here. Furthermore, its geographical position gives Bratislava a unique appearance as it stands on the lower slopes of Male Karpaty mountain range and is crossed by river Danube. The city is also a close neighbour of Vienna (less than 60 km away). Last but not least, Bratislava is the cultural, political and economic centre of Slovakia and has many universities and institutions.



See <http://visit.bratislava.sk/en>

How to get there:

- **By air:** There are two international airports at your disposal. Firstly, you can use Bratislava Airport, which is right next to the city and is easily accessible by public transport.
www.airportbratislava.sk/index.aspx?lang=1033.
Secondly, there is slightly more complicated, but often appreciated choice: Vienna Airport. As already mentioned, Vienna is near Bratislava and there is a direct connection from its airport to Bratislava.
<http://www.viennaairport.com>
- **By train:** Bratislava is located at a crossroads of international railway lines and is easily accessible by train. There are two international train stations: (Hlavna stanica (the main station) and Petržalka. You can also use InterCity or EuroCity routes. Here is the web page of a Slovak transport company that organises rail transport in Slovakia. You can use it to search for connections with other European cities.
www.zssk.sk/en

- **By bus:** Many companies have bus connections to Bratislava, including the well-known Eurolines organisation. www.slovaklines.sk/index_en.html.
- **By car:** There are direct road connections with Vienna, Brno and Prague, but if you are travelling from the east, be careful, because the highway that connects the east (Kosice) and west (Bratislava) is not finished yet.

Transportation:

There is a relatively good public transport system which is easy to use and get used to. There are buses, trams and trolleybuses, but no underground system. Passengers must buy tickets in advance (not from the driver) and they must mark them in the machines on the vehicles. There are different tickets that are valid for up to 15 or 60 minutes and several-day cards for tourists. There is also the option of buying SMS tickets.

Taxis are also available.

Accommodation:

There are a great many hotels and hostels of different prices and offering different services. They are mostly located in or near the city centre.

www.bratislavahotels.com.

Restaurants:

There is also a great variety of restaurants and fast food shops. But there is one well-known restaurant that deserves to be pointed out: the Slovakpub. It's located in the centre of the city and is famous for the traditional Slovak food that it serves. Its interior is decorated with an exciting historical look. www.slovakpub.sk



Events and festivals:

Throughout the year there are various art exhibitions and music performances. Every summer there are many festivals, exhibitions, concerts and work camps that all form part of an event called Cultural Summer. In winter, there is a Christmas Market in the Main Square as well as New Year celebrations. Other interesting events include historical festivals with swordplay, markets, and one special event at which a "Hungarian king" is crowned (as mentioned above, Bratislava was once a crown city of the Kingdom of Hungary). But there are so many cultural events in Bratislava that it is impossible to mention them all. You can find out more at: www.bkis.sk/en/cultural-summer-2009/program/

Shopping:

The main shopping malls are Aupark, Polus City Center, Shopping Palace and Avion Shopping Park.

www.aupark.sk/generate_page.php?page_id=35

www.poluscitycenter.sk/?lang=en

www.shoppingpalace.sk/en/home

www.avion.sk/english

10 things to know (advices, recommendations, place to visit...)

1.- Although you might have no idea where Slovakia is (surprisingly, it is in Europe) **we do not live in trees** and we do have flushing toilets.

2.- In January 2009, we changed our old currency from the “Slovak crown” to the **Euro**. So if you are from country that also uses the Euro, or if you have been travelling in one of these countries, you will not need to change any money.

3.- In the summer 2009, **Bratislava Castle** was reconstructed. That had two consequences: The first was planned: the castle received a new facade, corresponding to historical records and that can light up. The second was unexpected, but that makes it even more valuable: a palace complex was revealed underground that had been built in Roman times by Roman architects for local Celtic nobles. A treasure of golden coins (Biatec) was also discovered. Archaeologists say that these discoveries are a huge breakthrough and will be converted into a standing exhibition.



4.- There are three interesting buildings from the **times of socialism**: The first, which stands high on the mountain range near Bratislava, is a monumental television tower. To date, this is the highest tower (194m) in Bratislava and also in the whole of Slovakia and includes a restaurant at a height of 70 metres. The second is a radio building and its architects were apparently inspired by the Egyptian pyramids because it looks exactly like a pyramid, but upside down. The last, but probably the most important, is the New Bridge. It connects the two banks of the River Danube, has massive pillars and a “UFO-shaped” restaurant on top.



5.- **Bratislava’s location**, bordering on Austria and Hungary makes it the only national capital that borders on two other countries. It is only 62 kilometres from the border with the Czech Republic and it is only 60 kilometres from the Austrian capital.

6.- **Petrzalka**, which is part of the city of Bratislava, is the biggest area with only blocks of flats in Slovakia and one of the most densely populated areas in Central Europe. All of this was the result of the work of enthusiastic socialist architects, but nowadays, it is also called a “**concrete jungle**”.



7.- If you want to have a nice rest in some of Bratislava’s **parks**, I recommend the Medická Garden (Medic’s Garden), which is located in the centre of the city and is well looked after. Another great park is Sad Janka Krala, which is on the right bank of the Danube, which is bigger and more forest-like.

8.- At present, Bratislava is immersed in a “**construction boom**”. Whole new quarters are being rebuilt along the Danube, in the centre of the city, and there are also many new high-rise buildings currently under construction. The city is dynamic and its face is changing from year to year, although this is a common source of quarrels between historians, city councils and investors.



9.- **Contradiction**: Because Bratislava is the economic, cultural and political centre of Slovakia, it is the most developed and richest part of the country. That is also why some people from other parts of Slovakia dislike the citizens of Bratislava and say that they find them arrogant and selfish. On the other hand, most Slovaks are also attracted by the city’s universities, job opportunities and high social standards.

10.- When you get to Bratislava, **do not forget** to eat Halusky,

drink Kofola, and go to see the castle and St. Martins Cathedral and take some nice pictures. But above all, please enjoy it!

Report realized by
Kathrin Polley

Greifswald – a university with a town

Everybody knows Berlin, Hamburg and Munich, but what about Greifswald? No? You've probably never heard of it, but our mission is to change that!

This small town located on the beautiful Baltic Sea, in the north-eastern part of Germany has more to offer than just a bakery and a theatre. Its long history has left its mark on the city, as has the combination of its young spirit and creative mentality. In the 14th century, Greifswald became one of the first members of the Hanseatic League. Trade flourished and laid the foundations for one of the oldest universities in both Germany and Europe. It was, at one time, the oldest university in Sweden and also in Prussia. Sweden could not resist the temptation to go to war against Prussia in the 1630s and Greifswald was to remain part of the Swedish Kingdom until the early 19th century.

Nowadays, the city attracts many tourists due to its proximity to the Baltic Sea. The centre of Greifswald is best experienced on foot or by bicycle. In fact, the whole city is normally swarming with bicyclists. Take a stroll through Greifswald and experience: its numerous charming streets and its many walls and buildings, whose origins can be traced back to its dramatic medieval history.

Bearing in mind its population of just 55,000, Greifswald hosts many events and has lots of museums and exhibitions. The most notable of these is the Pomeranian State Museum, whose exhibits include a history of Pomerania and the arts, including works by Caspar David Friedrich, the city's most famous son.

Greifswald University is truly the heart of Greifswald and this has been so since its founding in 1456. Its more than 13,000 students (¼ of its inhabitants) leave a special mark on the city. Indeed, much of what is typical of Greifswald is based on venerable academic traditions, both inside and outside the classroom. The Greifswald students' theatre, choir and bicycles are just a few key references that conjure up an image of student life and the spirit of Greifswald. This is where many well-known Germans studied and would later rise to prominence in their respective fields: as authors, doctors, lawyers or entrepreneurs.

For further information, check the internet for: www.greifswald.de

How to get there?

By train: Greifswald is a small town but has two train stations: Greifswald Main Station and Greifswald South. It can be reached by train from Hamburg, Berlin and Rostock. There are also train connections from, and to, Stralsund and the popular summer tourist destinations of Usedom and Rügen. To check the timetables or book train tickets: www.bahn.de

By car: Many roads lead to Greifswald. It is well connected to Hamburg and Berlin via the Autobahn 20, and to Bundesstraße by the 105 and 109. Germany's capital city, Berlin, can be reached by car within two hours or less. But you are best advised to use your GPS if you do not want to get lost in Eastern Pomerania, or you should check Google Maps before you start your road trip.

By boat: Greifswald has a port on the Baltic Sea. The city centre is about 3 km from the shore but it can be reached by small boats via the river Ryck.

By plane: Greifswald does not have its own airport. You can fly to Hamburg or Berlin and then take the train to Greifswald. It is not a very easy combination, but you can be assured that the trip is worth it!

Transportations :

Greifswald has good bus connections both within and outside the city. Taxis are also available, but the best way to discover the city is by bike or on foot. If you want to feel the spirit of the city, take your time and go for a stroll alongside the water.

For more information: www.sw-greifswald.de/verkehr or www.vbg-l.de

Accommodation:

Greifswald has a centrally located Youth Hostel greifswald.jugendherbergen-mv.de

We have a wide variety of hotels and private guest houses, with relatively low prices and high standards. Most are well equipped and offer a beautiful view over Greifswald or out towards the Baltic Sea. www.greifswald-tourismus.de

Events and Festivals:

- Nordischer Klang is the largest festival of Nordic culture outside the Nordic countries themselves
- Bach festival
- Eldena Jazz Evenings
- Gaffelrigg summer fair
- Museumshafen: historic ships in the "museum port"
- regular literary events at the Koeppenhaus
- St. Spiritus cultural centre
- Greifswald International Students Festival (GrIStuF e. V.)
- Greifswald Night of Music (Greifswalder Musiknacht)
- Greifswald long-ship festival (Greifswalder Drachenbootfest)

10 Things to know (advices, recommendations, place to visit...)

1.- Greifswald is situated approximately 200 km to the north of Berlin, in the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. It borders the Baltic Sea and is crossed by a small river called the Ryck.

2.- Besides the university, the town is known internationally because of the construction of the Nord Stream gas-pipeline between Russia and Germany.

3.- In medieval times, the salt trade helped Greifswald to become a hugely influential religious centre and it also became a well-known market.

4.- The suburbs of Greifswald are built in the monolithic industrial socialist style (also known as Plattenbau). They still house most of the city's population.

5.- After the German Reunification, the number of students quadrupled from 3,000 in 1990 to more than 11,000 in 2007.

6.- Three of the courts of the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern are in Greifswald:

- the Supreme Administrative Court (Oberverwaltungsgericht);
- the Supreme Constitutional Court (Landesverfassungsgericht); and
- the Financial Court (Finanzgericht)

7.- One of Europe's largest producers of photovoltaic modules, Berlin-based Solon SE, has a production site in Greifswald.

8.- The world's third largest producer of yachts, Hanse Yachts, is based in Greifswald.

9.- Greifswald is one destination on the European Brick Gothic Route

10.- After Sweden occupied Greifswald, Greifswald University became the first Swedish university



Eva Schloer

Student of English and German literature
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Apples, Hip-Hop and Swing.

New music from the North: Movits!

With the sudden success that has followed their appearance on the US talk show 'The Colbert Report', Movits! are definitely one of the most surprising bands to have gained international attention this year. But what is so fascinating about this band?

Movits! call themselves 'a Swedish swing-hip-hop-jazz Band'. At first, this may seem like an odd grouping of categories. But Movits! manage to combine each element into a mishmash of forms that comes across as both familiar and completely new. Rapped lyrics (in Swedish) span 1920s style jazz and high-energy swing tunes. Maybe it is the high energy that they convey that connects the two styles, but whatever it is, the strange mixture works.



Movits!: Fel Del Av Garden

In an interview recorded a few years ago, the singer, Johan Rensfeldt, said that he, his brother Anders and their friend Jocke Nilsson used to listen to Benny Goodman's 'Sing Sing Sing' and asked themselves why no-one made that kind of music anymore. The rest is history...

Benny Goodman: Sing Sing Sing

But their influences are not only limited to Benny Goodman. Their music also prominently features the Django Reinhardt guitar-style, which is typical of the Gypsy Swing music that Reinhardt invented.



Django Reinhardt: Minor Swing

(this is probably his most famous song and also featured in the movie 'Chocolate' with Johnny Depp and Juliette Binoche)

Both Django Reinhardt and Benny Goodman were pioneers in bringing Jazz to Europe; building a bridge from the US to the old world. And now Movits! have combined their influences with a hip-hop sensibility to create a style that is all their own.

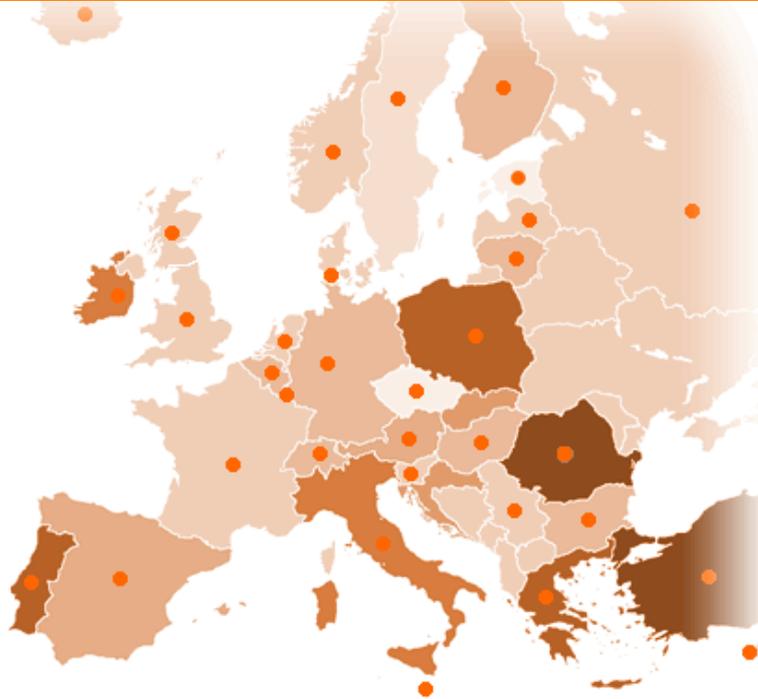
Another factor that helps to explain the sudden success of Movits! is their music videos directed by Axel Söderlund. These videos perfectly reflect the dynamism and humour of their music and would be worth watching for artistic merit alone. The 'Äppelknyckarjazz' video was inspired by the old Nintendo jump-and-run games, as the director Axel Söderlund tells us on his site on the video-portal www.vimeo.com. Another fact he reveals is that the post-production was all done in evenings and at weekends, at his neighbour's apartment. This is a real home-production, which makes it all the more impressive!

As the lyrics are in Swedish, the chances are that you will not be able to understand the words weaving through these songs. However, this is not important. The fast-paced rapped lyrics create a rollicking beat that does not need to be understood in order to be enjoyed. Like the strumming guitar, the steady percussion and the swinging horns, Johan Rensfeldt's voice adds a distinct energy to these songs. And besides, there are so many countries with great music – French hip-hop, Turkish pop, the Balkan Beat, etc. I would hate to miss out just because I do not happen to understand the language in question. To love music despite not understanding the language of the lyrics is, in a way, like loving the world although you have not travelled to every corner of it.

Even if you do not know what is being said, thanks to the videos you can get an idea of what the songs are about: 'Äppelknyckarjazz' means something like 'Applestealerjazz'. And if you want to know more, I can only recommend the [Google translator](#), or learning Swedish.

As the official band T-shirt assures us: "They say Hip-Hop was born in the Bronx but the Bronx was born in Sweden." And now it seems that Sweden is bringing a new kind of hip-hop to the rest of the world.

Eurocalendar



Austria

Salzburg

Salzburg's Christmas market
19th November to 26th December 2009

This year one of the largest attractions of the Advent season opens its doors: the Salzburg Christmas market. It is located in the city centre and is an old Austrian tradition. Here, you can find lots of presents for your loved ones.

For more information visit: www.christkindlmarkt.co.at

Belgium

Charleroi

Salon des arts ménagères
31st October to 15th November 2009

The "Salon des arts ménagères" offers a large range of services and products from different sectors: wines, food, household goods, handicrafts, etc.

If you want to discover the programme of this international showroom, look it up on the following website: www.artsmenagers.be.

Waterloo

Coup de rayon à l'empire

23rd September 2009 to 15th January 2010

This exhibition, organised for the "Year of the Comic Strip", proposes a series of comics about the Battle of Waterloo, the Napoleonic wars and the main protagonists of that period. It is located at the Wellington museum, where you can also see comics, uniforms, weapons and paintings. You will find more information on the website of the museum:

www.museewellington.be

Bulgaria

Pernik

Kukeri Festival

11th January 2010

Every January, an ancient mask ritual takes place in the rural villages of Bulgaria. It is called the "Kukeri" and consists of dances and songs to scare away the evil spirits that are believed to come back every winter. Special attention has to be paid to the costumes the participants wear...they could be considered works of art!

For more information, do not hesitate to click on:

www.abvg.net/Traditions/Kukeri/index.html

Sofia

Sofia International Book Fair

2nd December to 6th December 2009

The Sofia International Book Fair is an event that invites publishers to present their latest titles and hottest authors. In addition, there are seminars, exhibitions, presentations, concerts and discussions and everything takes place at the Grand National Palace of Culture. More information can be found at the Bulgarian Book Association website:

www.abk.bg

Cyprus

Petra tou Romiou, Paphos

Ultra Sports Cyprus Marathon

March 2010

Every year, Cyprus's biggest and best Marathon is open to runners from all over Europe, Israel, Argentina and Cyprus. It incorporates three different distances: a 26-mile marathon, a half marathon and a 10km fun run. The programme also includes traditional Greek and Cypriot music and dance, with the dance group Chorevtico Schima to Kastro. What are you waiting for?

Click now on Cyprus Marathon Website: www.cyprusmarathon.com to get more information!

Czech Republic

Prague

Prague Easter markets

20th March to 11th April 2010

The Prague Easter markets are held in the Old Town Square and Wenceslas Square. They offer traditional Czech products, such as wooden toys, crystal, embroidered cloth, puppets and dolls, etc.

If you want more information about this traditional event, go to:

www.pragueexperience.com/events/easter.asp

Denmark

Humlebæk

The World is Yours

5th September 2009 to 10th January 2010

The autumn season at the Louisiana museum will start with an exhibition of international contemporary art. More than twenty important artists will be presenting their works. The event has a central theme: social awareness.

Visit the website of the museum: www.louisiana.dk/dk/Service+Menu+Right/English

Copenhagen

Munch and Denmark

4th September to 6th December 2009

This fascinating exhibition seeks to show the importance of the artist's relationship with Denmark and its influence on his artistic development. Munch considered Copenhagen a modern place and one in which to meet other artists and come into contact with Europe.

You can find more information at: www.ordrupgaard.dk/emner/forside.aspx

England

London

Bonfire Night

5th November to 14th November 2009

Bonfire Night is an important event in the London calendar, marking the day on which Guy Fawkes tried to blow up Parliament in 1605. To celebrate this festival, London organises many fireworks displays and tasty refreshments.

More information at: www.visitlondon.com

London

London jazz festival

13th November to 22nd November 2009

From 13th to 22nd November, London will be the venue for a huge festival, with the most important names in contemporary jazz, such as Sonny Rollins and Marcus Miller. Lots of concerts will be held at the Royal Festival Hall and London will be the music capital for ten days.

Go to:

www.nozio.com/en/Europe/United_Kingdom/England/London/events/London_Jazz_Festival_2009.htm and look at the programme!

London

Olympia Horse Show

15th December to 21st December 2009

The Olympia International Horse Show attracts the best racers in the world and is considered one of the world's best English equestrian events. At the Olympia Village, visitors can buy gifts, equestrian equipment, food and clothing. On the last day of the event there will be a parade with horses and costume characters.

More details at:

www.nozio.com/en/Europe/United_Kingdom/England/London/events/Olympia_Horse_Show.htm

Estonia

Tallinn

Black Nights film festival

12th November to 6th December 2009

The Black Nights Film Festival is an important event for the world of cinema. It is mainly a Eurasian and Estonian feature film competition.

For more information you can visit the official website of the festival: <http://2009.poff.ee>

Tallinn

Jazzkaar

April 2010

Estonia has decided to designate April as the "jazzikuu" (the month of jazz). During this month there are lots of concerts in the theatres of Tallinn, with many talented musicians and top jazz performers.

If you are interested in this event, you can go to: [/www.jazzkaar.ee/eng](http://www.jazzkaar.ee/eng)

Finland

Oulu

Oulu Children's Theatre Festival

22nd February to 28th February 2010

This is an annual festival dedicated to Finnish and European theatre for children and young people. The Oulu Children's Theatre organizes exhibitions, workshops, and meetings for professionals in the field.

You will find more details at: teatteri.ouka.fi/festival/english.html

France

Nice

Carnival

13th February to 28th February

The most important event on the French Riviera has reached its 126th edition. This year the central theme of the Carnival will be "King of the Blue Planet", which implies great attention for the environmental issues.

The programme of the Nice Carnival is available at:

www.nicecarnaval.com/programmegb.html

Marseille

DANSEM

27th October to 11th December 2009

DANSEM is the Mediterranean festival of contemporary dance. The artists will perform dances and share their ability to translate the best of Mediterranean culture into dance. Turkey, Italy, Morocco and Marseille will be the main protagonists, together with the bodies of the dancers.

Do you want to know more about this festival? Go to: www.officina.fr/spip.php?rubrique78

Paris

Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese... Venetian Rivalry

17th September 2009 to 4th January 2010

The Louvre museum houses a beautiful exhibition about Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese and other 16th century Venetian painters whose artistic rivalry stimulated the arts, through great innovation and creativity.

More information at: www.louvre.fr

Germany

Cologne

Carnival

February 2010

The Carnival of Cologne is one of the merriest and craziest in the world. It will be declared open on 11th November (11.11) at 11.11, and the festivities will start again in February. You can see people masked in extravagant ways and also meet the Prince of Carnival.

If you want to know more about the city of Cologne and its funny carnival, click on:

www.Koelntourismus.de

Berlin

New Year's Eve Party in Berlin

31st December 2009 – 1st January 2010

Along one of the most beautiful and famous streets in Berlin: the Straße des 17. Juni, which is near the Brandenburger Tor, more than a million visitors and Berliners gather each year to celebrate the arrival of the New Year. The event combines entertainment and good music, creating a truly festive atmosphere.

More information at: www.silvester-in-Berlin.de

Rothenburg

Schaefertanz

Easter

In the medieval small town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, there is a nice traditional festivity: every year, shepherds, their dogs and flocks perform old dances in traditional costume.

You can find more information at the Rothenburg web site: www.rothenburg.de

Greece

Athens

Dionysia wine tasting

February 2010

Over 100 Greek wine producers present their products at the Dionysia Wine Tasting Event in Athens' Zappeion Hall. This is an interesting event if you like to keep abreast of oenological trends.

The event site is: www.dionysia.gr/index1-en.html

Hungary

Budapest

Opera and jazz

30th November 2009

A joint production by the Hungarian Association of Jazz Musicians and the Opera House, this event

invites the most acclaimed musicians to help the public to appreciate both jazz and opera.

Detailed programmes available at:

www.opera.hu/index_e.php?lang=en&module=main_eng

Ireland

Cork

Cork St. Patrick's Festival

March 2010

At Cork, St Patrick's Day hosts more than 50,000 visitors every year with three days of musical performances, street theatre, pageantry and special events for children. In addition, there is also a food market and a parade through the city centre.

Learn more at: www.corkstpatricksfestival.ie

Westport

Easter Walking Festival

April 2010

The west coast of Ireland is a walkers' paradise and Westport has been voted Ireland's tidiest town three times. These are just two of the reasons to book ahead for Easter Walking Festival packages. You can choose from two walks, that are moderate/easy and hard/strenuous, and which also include food and accommodation.

To know more about booking terms and conditions, have a look at:

www.walkingguideireland.com

Iceland

Thorrablót

Mid-January to mid-February

The ancient Viking month of Thor falls between January and February. The Vikings celebrated this mid-winter month with plenty of dancing, singing, drinking and traditional food. For tourists, the restaurants usually offer a Thorrablót menu throughout the month of Thor.

More information about traditional Icelandic festivities at: www.icelandtouristboard.com

Italy

Venice

La Biennale

Until 22nd November 2009

The Venice Biennale is one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world. It promotes new artistic trends and avant-garde activities.

Visit the website of the exhibition at: www.labiennale.org/en/Home.html

Pertosa

L'Inferno di Dante nelle grotte a Pertosa

1st June to 31st December 2009

Every weekend you can explore striking caverns, guided by the poet Dante and meet the protagonists of his Divine Comedy. It is the spectator who moves inside the scenery!

The programme is available at: www.tappetovolante.org

Val di Fiemme

Fiemme ski jazz

4th March to 21st March 2010

This is one of the most keenly awaited cultural events of the winter. The Fiemme ski jazz event attracts some of the most important international interpreters of jazz music to a festival set on a snow-covered mountain.

More information at: www.fiemmeskijazz.com

Latvia

Riga

LNO New Year's Eve concert

27th, 29th, 30th December 2010

The New Year's Eve concert at the Latvian National Opera House is a traditional event which annually gladdens the last nights of the year.

If you want to know when it is possible to watch this spectacle, go to the following web site:

www.culture.lv/en/calendar/9042

Lithuania

Vilnius

Sacral Music Festival

1st February to 24th December 2009

"Vilnius – European Capital of Culture 2009" is this year's location for a special festival dedicated to sacral music. The festival programme presents an open-minded interpretation of this genre, proposing works composed in different epochs and by musicians of different religions.

More information at: www.culturelive.lt/en/2009/eap/2009music/2009art-jazz-5

Luxemburg

Ville de Luxembourg

Crimes de sang - Mord und Totschlag

10th July 2009 to 28th March 2010

This original exhibition is housed at the History Museum of Luxembourg: an exhibition about life and death.

Do you want to know more about this cultural initiative? Visit the website at: www.mhvl.lu

Luxembourg-Kirchberg

La fête des vins et créchants

26th November to 29th November 2009

At the privileged setting of Luxexpo, this fair will present a large series of activities based on a common theme: wine. There will be wine tastings, and also the election of the best wine expert in Luxembourg.

You will find soon more details at: www.vins-cremants.lu

Malta

Gozo

February Carnival

Carnival is a much awaited event in Malta. At Gozo, you will see the most colourful and joyful of the Maltese carnivals, with bright colours and funny masks.

The website of Gozo is: www.gozo.com

Norway

Oslo

Lighting up the Christmas tree

29th November 2009

The lighting up of the Christmas tree in the square in front of the old university building, which is organized by the Salvation Army, is an event that people welcome with music, walks, speeches and readings of the Christmas story from the Bible. The event takes place by Karl Johans gate, in Oslo.

You will find more details if you visit the web page:

www.frelsesarmeen.no/pages/forside.aspx?nr=779

Tromsø

Tromsø Film Festival

January 2010

The Tromsø International Film Festival is Norway's largest film festival and one of the most important in Northern Europe. It includes more than 40 feature films.

More information at: www.tiff.no/?lan=en

Poland

Cracow

Krakow Nativity Cribs

December 2009 to early February 2010

Every year, Krakow's Museum of History celebrates Christmas with a competition for the most beautiful crib. On the first Thursday of December, all the works are displayed in Cracow's main square until midday. They are then moved to the museum, where visitors can see them.

You will find more details at: mhk.pl/wydarzenia_cykliczne

Warsaw

Watch Docs. Human Rights in Film

December 2009

Every year, Warsaw's Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights hosts Watch Docs, a festival that explores Human Rights issues in film. About 70 films are screened that serve as a starting point for debates with the participation of experts in the field of human rights. Entrance for all showings is free.

The programme is available at: www.watchdocs.pl

Portugal

Lisbon

Lisbon Marathon 6th December 2009

The Lisbon Marathon is one of Europe's most popular and it attracts big names to the professional race and thousands who run for charity or for the sense of achievement it offers. The finishing line is in Commerce Square, where you can see the athletes that reach the winning post.

Look for more information on the web page of the event: www.lisbon-marathon.com/index.html

Funchal

Madeira Carnival February 2010

People surge onto the streets of Funchal to celebrate the annual Madeira Carnival. The main street parade takes place on the evening of Carnival Saturday, with music and dancing.

For more information visit: www.madeiraislands.travel

Romania

Bucharest

International Film Festival 19th to 25th April 2010

First held in 2005, Bucharest's International Film Festival, or B-EST IFF, opens the city's Spring Cultural Celebrations, which offer a busy week of screenings, master classes and retrospectives. In addition to the three competitions: for feature films, fictional shorts and documentaries. The festival also features various other sections. Each year, these include a selection of award winners from other big festivals like Cannes, Venice and Berlin, and also from independent American festivals such as Sundance, New York and Toronto. The price of a ticket is 8 RON, whereas 4 films cost 24 RON. All students, regardless of their university, have free access when they show their student ID card.

If you are interested, do not hesitate to click on: <http://b-est.ro/index1.php>

Rusia

Moscow

Golden Dolphin 18th to 21st February 2010

Golden Dolphin is an international diving festival held near the Kremlin. Exhibitors promote a great range of diving equipment, while an underwater film and photography festival documents the interaction between people and the underwater world.

All details are available at: www.goldendolphin.ru/en/index.html

Moscow

Paskha April 2010

Easter Sunday is marked by a ritual procession and a service at the Church of the Ascension: Moscow's Kolomenskoe. This church is well worth a visit, as it even rivals the impressiveness of St Basil's in Red Square.

More details at: www.mgomz.ru

Scotland

Kelvin Hall

Glasgow Music Fair March 2010 (various dates)

Kelvin Hall hosts the Glasgow Music Fair three times a year: in March, June and October. It is a great opportunity for collectors to trade and pick up some prized CDs, vinyl and music memorabilia. It attracts dealers and exhibitors from as far and wide as Japan, Germany, Holland, Scandinavia and the USA, as well as from all over the UK. It is not surprising that this has fast become the largest trading fair in northern Britain.

To know more about it, have a look at: www.vip-24.com



Serbia

Belgrade

FIST 12th November to 15th November 2009

Serbia hosts an International Festival of Student Theatre, organized by the Faculty of Theatre Arts of Belgrade.

If you are interested in the programme of events, go to: www.fistbelgrade.com

Slovenia

Bled

World Winter Masters Games 25th January to 31st January 2010

These games consist of multi-sport competitions that take place against the wonderful alpine backdrop of Bled. Held shortly before the Winter Olympics of Vancouver, The World Winter Masters offers an 'Olympic atmosphere', even if the athletes do not represent their countries but only themselves.

If you want to take part, or simply have more information, here is the website of the competition: www.2010mastersgames.com

Ljubljana

Tango Festival April 2010

Tango enthusiasts and performers from all over the world flock to Ljubljana for the annual Tango Festival. It is an opportunity to see this dance performed at the highest level.

All details can be found at: www.tangoslovenia.com

Spain

Barcelona

Fira de Santa Llucia November to December 2009

The Fira de Santa Llucia is a Christmas fair held outside Barcelona Cathedral. Market stalls sell seasonal goodies, while nativity scenes, musical parades and exhibitions add to the fun. For children there is also the giant caga el tió, a huge log that gives out presents when kids beat it with a stick.

The web site of the cathedral provides more information about this celebration:

www.catedralbcn.org

Barcelona

Palau 100 Concert Series

8th October 2009 to 1st June 2010

The Palau 100 Concert Series is an annual season at Barcelona's Palau de la Música Catalana. The 2009/2010 season includes twelve orchestral and solo recitals featuring José Carreras, Chinese pianist Lang Lang, the New York Philharmonic and London Symphony orchestras and much more. You will find the programme at: www.palaumusica.org

Sweden

Stockholm

Skansen Lucia Day

13th December 2009

Stockholm's huge Skansen open-air museum is the venue for the festivities to mark the traditional Lucia Day. A young girl, representing Lucia, arrives in a procession, all dressed in white and accompanied by her maids in waiting. The event ends with a spectacular fireworks display.

Here is the web site of Skansen: www.skansen.se

Stockholm

The Nutcracker or Petter's and Lotta's Christmas

28th November 2009 to 9th January 2010

A production of The Nutcracker has become a winter tradition at Stockholm's Royal Opera House. This show combines the classic ballet of Tchaikovsky with the popular Swedish tale of Petter and Lotta. This adaptation is a must-see for all ballet enthusiasts. Performances are not held every day, so check days and times on the website of the Royal Opera House www.operan.se for up-to-date information.

Switzerland

Zermatt

14th Patrouille des Glaciers

21st to 25th April 2010

The biennial Patrouille des Glaciers is an international ski-touring race that is open to both military and civilian competitors. It covers 53km on foot and on skis, along the Swiss-Italian border from Zermatt to Verbier. With a variation in altitude of over 7000 metres along the way, this is the ultimate test for European outdoor sports enthusiasts. This international ski-touring race is open to both military and civilian competitors. Mountain experience and a high level of fitness are essential for this competition, as is survival equipment to counter potential hazards.

Further information about inscriptions and more details are available at:

www.pdg.ch/index.cfm

The Netherlands

Groningen

Noorderslag Weekend Groningen 14th to 16th January 2010

EuroSonic Noorderslag is Europe's most important live music industry conference and a showcase festival for new talent. It is the ultimate platform for the European music industry.

The website of the event is: www.noorderslag.nl

Amsterdam

Van Gogh's letters 9th October 2009 to 3rd January 2010

The Rietveld palace of the Van Gogh Museum will house the letters of Vincent Van Gogh. These documents have been exhibited on rare occasions because of their photosensitivity. So, if you are in the Netherlands, this is a good opportunity!

For more information go to: www3.vangoghmuseum.nl

Turkey

Istanbul

Flash Mob Istanbul by Artist Intervention October-November 2009

The second "c?u'm,a* Ertesi (Saturday) event, Flash Mob Istanbul by Artist Intervention, which is supported by the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency, will present four Flash Mob events that follow the directions and ideas of four artists, two of whom are Turkish and two of whom are French. Flash Mob is performed by a large group of people who come together in public places, making unusual actions in a kind of choreography and then quickly dispersing. It is a way to consolidate the sense of rapprochement, unity and togetherness between individuals who are normally alienated from each other in the community.

For more information click on: www.en.istanbul2010.org/PROJE/GP_545540



Martina Braggion

Degree in International and Diplomatic Science
Specialization in International Relations

European elections 2009: Did you really hear us, Europe?

Between 4 and 7 June 2009 European citizens chose the Parliament that will represent them in the next five years. The right-center of the European People's Party won, proving itself to be the first group with a wide advantage. The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats was still at the second place but it lost ground. Finally, there was a Green surprise in different countries. Regarding the turnout, it fell by about a point and a half compared to 2004. In fact, for about thirty years now, that is since the Parliament was elected for the first time, little by little the turnout to the polls has reduced. It seems to be a paradox if we think that the European Parliament has increased its abilities in these thirty years, becoming more important for its decisions which concern directly citizens life! Apart from the advancing of the Right, another facet to remark is the Euro-sceptics achievement. An example is the Dutch Euro-sceptic and xenophobic Party of Geert Wilders, well-known with having done a short film against Islam. His extreme right Party progressed with 17% of votes, while it had just 5,6% in the European elections 2004.



The problem of the scarce participation can be found for example in political debates, given that worries concerning citizens are often treated in a not very clear way. Moreover, I think it's important to give room for MEPs on the national level, too, so that the national country is not exclusively dominated by national themes and to be sure that the European Union could play an ampler role. It's also important for citizens to understand that Europe still plays an important role and what it can really do to change certain things in the national political life. Unfortunately, the space devoted to the European public debate stays marginal because national problems appear more urgent and numerous decisions the European Union makes still remain on the European level. The truth is that the vote for Europe results less interesting than the vote on national level in the eyes of the public. More, lots of young people don't see the advantages of Europe because they take too things for granted and like this they can't understand that the European Union has a direct influence in the life of each of us. Maybe some of them simply don't know the European Parliament is directly chosen from citizens and it is the only legitimacy of the European Union! On the one hand, I think it's too simple to complain about the present situation remaining seated on our sofa! If we abstain from the vote, we can't even think of changing something! On the other hand, I can understand the disappointment of the greatest part of young people. In fact, looking at politicians, we often have the feeling that nothing really changes. About the youngsters vote Regis Dandoy, a political pundit, says that the school and the parties must do more for young people. In fact, the youngsters vote is very unstable, it often moves from a party to the other because they are not aware of everything and they don't know the candidates and the parties very well. Therefore political parties are in part in charge of youngsters indifference to politics because they don't invest too much money, time or energy into young voters. According to Dandoy, if they fail to motivate them today, they risk losing their vote for good when it comes to the European elections. In Belgium, as in Greece and in Luxemburg, the vote is obligatory and the continuously abstaining is punished. Anyway, there is a total indifference to politics, and even more to the European elections, here too. Maybe, Belgians youngsters have more difficulties to admit they don't intend to vote but it always deals with a lack of information. They also lament the European elections should be a subject of general interest and should be part of every class.

Different campaigns were underway across Europe before June's elections in order to understand what young people really want from Europe and to motivate voters. The European Union made agreement with MTV to give a voice to youngsters suggestions. The initiative, launched on 30th April, joined together many young people in Berlin, Prague, Milan and in other cities to shout "Can you hear me, Europe?". Another campaign was "Y Vote 2009", thanks to which people from all 27 EU member states were brought every two weeks to a different city in Europe to talk their issues for a week. In the end, this collection of youth opinion on all these topics, which was called Youth Agenda 2009, will be presented to all members of the new European Parliament to try to make these ideas become realities. Another organ of diffusion of the political participation among young people is Café Babel, a webzine in 5 languages. Moreover, the European Parliament turned to social networking websites like Myspace, Twitter, Youtube, Flickr and Facebook, in a bid to reach out to young people. Finally, another group of

activists is Politikfabrik. It has been founded seven years ago by students of Political Sciences in Berlin and before European elections it challenged students to clear up their reasons to vote or to not vote. Despite that the eighteen-twenty-four-year-old people only voted at 29%, that is fourteen points less compared to the EU average and four points less compared to 2004.



But, in which subjects are youngsters really interested? The most important themes for young people are education, especially today with the Bologna process that allows students and researchers to move through Europe, and jobs. In fact, the most of population graduates without the assurance of getting a job afterwards. Other subjects are climatic change, environment and energy and the European Parliament has its say on almost all the fields young people interest in. The problem is that the European elections, instead of being an occasion to discuss these themes, too often are reduced to a test of middle term for national or regional governments. More, they turn into a boring arena of clash among political personalities but, in fact, what's at stake is very high. And how could we explain that more important the European Union is, less prominence electors give to it? Maybe, it also reflects a certain tiredness towards the European process of construction, a tiredness the European politicians should try to analyze.

The manager of the Center of European studies in Brussels gives mass media a sense of responsibility. Citizens are not supplied with information about the European Parliament's activity, even if, as I explained before, it discusses very important matters for citizens today, from health to environment, from economic crisis to social one. This lack of information could be explained with difficulties to follow the parliamentary chronicles, high prices to cover the parliamentary sessions taking place in two different cities (Strasbourg and Brussels) and a media over control from politicians.

Finally, the European Union is a global actor, we are the first commercial power in the world, the second economic power after the United States and EUR is the second world currency, after dollar. All that shows how much the European Union is considered as actor in general, but not as a global political actor. Moreover, Europe is going through a crucial moment for its future and if it wants to exist on a political level, it must engrave, influence, count. If not, it will fated to demote. First of all, the new European Parliament will have to face different challenges as the economic crisis, the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the negotiations on the climate in sight of the Climate Conference in Copenhagen and a test-bed to start a real European politics; it deals with great challenges but above all the EP will have to work to affirm unity and concreteness. The continuously abstaining at the last European elections could be read as a demand for a EU's change from Europeans (especially, from youngsters). Sure that the European Union changed since the first elections but it have "to risk" more, reinventing itself, being even more democratic and leaving itself open toward European citizens. It sounds like a little "revolution" and this is why we have to keep on shouting!

Six months in brief...

May 2009: The Council of the EU has announced that Guimarães (Portugal) and Maribor (Slovenia) will be the European Capitals of Culture in 2012, followed by Marseille (France) and Košice (Slovakia) in 2013. From this time on, the European Commission will help these cities during their preparation period and ensure that their commitments and the recommendations of the selection panel are followed. If this happens, these cities may also receive a reward. Following Vilnius (Lithuania) and Linz (Austria) this year, the next European Capitals of Culture will be Essen (Germany), Pécs (Hungary) and Istanbul (Turkey) in 2010, and Turku (Finland) and Tallinn (Estonia) in 2011.

June 2009: The European Commission and Europa Nostra have opened a call for entries for the 2010 European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage: The Europa Nostra Awards. Each year, they reward the best cultural heritage achievements, celebrating excellence and dedication by architects, craftsmen, volunteers, schools, local communities, heritage site owners and the media. Moreover, through the power of example Europa Nuova stimulates creativity and

innovation. Every year, up to six monetary awards of €10,000 are awarded to the top laureates in the various categories. Entries can be anywhere on a scale ranging from small to large, local to international, but should display a standard of work considered outstanding in a European context.

July 2009: On 14th July, Polish MEP Jerzy Buzek (EPP) was elected as the new President of the European Parliament for the next two and a half years, succeeding the German Christian Democrat MEP Hans-Gert Pottering. Buzek was born in what is now Smilowice in the Czech Republic on 3rd July 1940. He was elected with 555 votes, becoming the first person from the former Eastern Bloc and the first former Prime Minister (he was the Prime Minister of Poland between the years 1997 and 2001) since Emilio Colombo to hold this position. He has pledged to make human rights and the promotion of the Eastern partnership two of his priorities during his term of office.

August 2009: From 28th August to 11th September the KlaraFestival 2009, the most creative festival in Belgium, took place in Brussels. Once again it was a real triumph! Its advent was trumpeted in Brussels' underground, stations and squares, rousing commuters from the torpor of their daily routine. Classical, jazz and traditional music reached the public in ways and places that they had never heard before. This year's festival retained the original slogan – *forza musica !* – as a way of communicating just what a marvellously bracing antidote to self-absorbed isolation and the numbing daily routine music can be.

September 2009: The outgoing president of the EU Commission, José Manuel Durao Barroso, has been reappointed to the Steering Commission by 382 yes votes, 219 no votes and 117 abstentions (among the abstainers were some Social Democrats who consider "Barroso's line" an inappropriate way to respond to the world crisis). As stated in the Nice Treaty, the approval requires a simple majority, without taking abstentions into account. After the vote, the President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, stated that it is a very positive result for Europe: "a victory for European democracy and for the European Parliament" and he reaffirmed the need for strong and secure institutions which can work in the interests of citizens.

October 2009: The Treaty of Lisbon, which was officially signed by the Heads of the Member States on 13th December 2007, will have to be ratified by each Member State in order for it to come into force. Ireland held a referendum on the Treaty of Lisbon on 12th June 2008, in which the population rejected the proposal by 53.4% to 46.6%. Thanks to consultations with other EU Member States, Ireland obtained a satisfactory agreement to change the Treaty of Lisbon so that it takes into consideration the Irish concerns voiced at the June 2009 European Council. With certain guarantees now in place, the Irish citizens will go back to the polling stations to vote on the Treaty of Lisbon on 2 October.

You Talk



Report realized by
Flavia Bortolini

Leonardo da Vinci in Seville

Hi everybody!

I am Flavia Bortolini, a 24-year-old girl who has experienced one of the most exciting and valuable European projects so far: the Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

Actually I am one of ten lucky girls who spent 13 weeks in Seville last winter. The Leonardo da Vinci Programme is sponsored, and partially financed, by the EU. It helps young people to find a way into the European labour market.

How was my experience? Well I turned to a non-profit-making organisation in Padua which handled out more than 40 grants to fund internships in the UK, Spain and Portugal. My country of choice was Spain, because I wanted to improve my Spanish, and after several interviews, I won one of the 10 grants available. The non-profit-making organisation of Padua, called the "outgoing organization", helped me and the other winners with the pre-departure procedures and after several meetings I had the chance to meet my travelling partners.



Then, on 18th January, we took the plane to Seville! Once there, we met one of the people responsible for the incoming organization at the airport, who welcomed us and took us to our flats. Then, on the second day, we had the very first meeting, in which it was specifically explained what we were supposed to do for the following 3 months. First, we attended a language course in Spanish, just to refresh our linguistic skills, and in the meantime, each of us had an interview with the hosting company/organisation in which we would serve our internship. Due to my studies, I asked for an internship in the field of tourism and they offered me a placement in a travel agency. I worked there for 2½ months and I learned a lot of things. I was alone with my tutor who taught me lots of things every day and helped me to improve my Spanish too. Fortunately, I have never given up and from the beginning I was really motivated to show my interest in whatever I was introduced to. After the first 2 days, when I was mainly tidying up some



shelves and the shop window, I started to do a few more relevant tasks like booking hotels and flight tickets, checking with T.O back-office hotels and monitoring last-minute availability. Finally, I ended up planning an entire one-week trip to Rome for a customer. I had the possibility to discover the main tasks of a travel agent, to manage customers, and to practise another language! Moreover, thanks to this experience, I have become more independent, met a lot of new people, and faced some ordinary life problems that made me feel more self-confident. What is more, at the end of my internship, I received a certificate (Europass) that is recognized all over Europe and which testifies the work done and my improved skills and provides value-added remarks that I can add to my CV.

According to the EU topic in question, I think that there are still a lot of stereotypes that people believe in and that, in certain cases, must be corrected. Therefore there is nothing better than a personal approach towards what is new and this is the best way to get a deeper knowledge of the European Union and what we could call "European culture". This is why I really recommend taking

part in this project. There are many calls for participation every year which you can apply for, so watch out and do not miss the chance of a lifetime!!!



Reporte realized by
Magdalena Meusburger

The Sound of Europe!

Hi, I'm Magdalena Meusburger, a graduate in International Business Administration from the Vienna University of Business and Economics and I am currently manager of KNOX REVOLUTION BIKONscious in Johannesburg (South Africa). Last year I had an experience with the European Voluntary Service at Cazalla Intercultural in Murcia. During that time, I also participated in a youth exchange programme: two weeks of "Boom Tschaggalagga" (Music) – "Ritsch Risch" (Totem Sawing), "Ping Ping Ping" – (Hammering stones for the Mosaik) –Szzzzzz Szzzzzz (Glass Painting) & "DRRR D RRR DRRRR DDAADAA" (Western Movie Making) in a small town in Germany. Does it sound strange? It was not really so strange. It was wonderful and is very easy to explain.



In mid July 2008, youngsters from Spain, Germany, Croatia, Bosnia and Poland got together to spend two weeks filled with creativity at the Jugendakademie in Walberberg.

The aim of the camp was to achieve a sense of belonging to the European family, with different countries, cultures and languages. During this special time (with rainy weather) 50 teenagers jumped all the stereotypes and communication problems and formed multinational workshop groups. "Creativity is right inside us – we just have to let it out!" and there it meant sharing ideas and working together for a positive result for everybody.



Besides that, sports was on the program each day: they battled in difficult Olympic Disciplines like throwing a stone as far as possible, or HULA HOOP while holding a pint of water in the hands. Moreover, they climbed their way up the steep climbing wall, trusting a person they just met one week before.

Finally, a bit of COOLture could not be missing! So, some participants had the possibility to visit Cologne, where they took a boat tour on the big river (especially the Spanish group) to blow their minds away. Meanwhile, others dived into the World of Chocolate or explored the historical treasures of the beautiful city. Each nation also had one night on which to present their country. I am telling you friends, it was always a delight for the eyes, ears and taste buds.



A group which was very shy and distant in the first two days turned into a powerful team with strong ties between them. Big crocodile tears ran when the time came to say Good Bye! But the friendship continues from the east to the west, from the north to the south of Europe.

Europe has a dynamic youth population today. The youngsters are more mobile, technologically aware and proudly culturally diverse. The Youth in Action Plan of the EU supports youth exchanges like this one to build a strong, proud European identity without borders.

Links

Youth in Action Program: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm

Participants

Jugendakademie Walberberg (Germany)

<http://www.jugendakademie.de>

Cazalla Interculatural (Spain)

<http://cazalla-intercultural.org>

Elementary School "Ivan Goran Kovacic", Slavonski Brod (Croatia)

<http://www.stagesb.org>

Putevi Mira (Bosnia)

<http://ec.europa.eu>

More Pictures

<http://www.stagesb.org/08germany/gallery/index.html>



Snow Zone

Fidel Badia
Guía

CRANS MONTANA, SWITZERLAND



A look at the world



Report realized by:
Hyoeui Park

Come and join us in the great city of Seoul

Seoul is the capital of the Republic of Korea and is one of the biggest cities in the world. Now, I will introduce you to this gorgeous city! Seoul has been the centre of the country throughout its long history: from prehistoric times to the present day.

Now, in its 600th year of official history, it is a city where Korea's traditional and modern cultures coexist and it is an extraordinary example of how a good location, with features such as mountains, rivers and urban spaces, can all combine to produce a picture-perfect city. Come and join us in this great city!

How to get there

In-Cheon international airport (ICN) is located near Seoul. When you arrive at In-Cheon international airport, you have various choices for getting around. You can take one of the limousine shuttles that connect the airport to the metropolitan area, including Seoul itself; trips take about 1 hour. The subway train is a relatively good way to get to Seoul; you can arrive in the centre of Seoul in about an hour or so. Finally, you can take buses from the airport to various different places. There are many bus services from the airport.

If you want to check the bus routes, visit this web-site.
www.airport.kr/airport/traffic/bus/busList.iiia?flag=E

Transportation

In various metropolitan areas, including Seoul, the transportation system is very well-organised. There are 3 types of transport vehicles: subway trains, buses, and taxis.

Subway trains and buses are very common means of transport in Korea and many people use them every day. Subway train and bus fares range from approximately 1000 won to 3000 won (about 1 to 3 US dollars) depending on the distance travelled. If a transfer is necessary between subway train and bus, you can get a discount if you have a transit card.

As in Europe, taxis are expensive but offer a very convenient method of transportation

Accommodation

Seoul offers many types of accommodation, including hotels, hostels, and motels. You can enjoy it in line with your own particular budget. Below are a few websites that will help you to find accommodation in Seoul.

<http://english.visitseoul.net/>
<http://innostel.visitseoul.net/eng/main/main.php>

Restaurants

In Seoul, you can try various types of cuisine, ranging from traditional Korean food to that of other nations.

1. Traditional Korean cuisine



- **Sanchon:** Located in Insa-dong, Sanchon is a well-preserved hub of Korean tradition and culture. It offers traditional museums, art galleries and shops. You can enjoy well established traditions in its numerous alleys.
Address: 14 Gwanhun-dong Jongno-gu SEOUL,
Tel: 02-735-0312
- **Samcheong-dong's The Tea Garden (Cha Masineun Tteul):** This is a beautiful tea café. People come here because they love tea, beauty and stillness. They also come here to savour all that this place promises and delivers.
Address: The teahouse is located in an alley behind the Jeongdok Public Library, on a hill overlooking Samcheong-dong Road.
Tel: 02-722-7006

If you need more information about restaurants, please visit the site below.
<http://english.seoul.go.kr/cav/do/restaurant.php>

2. Street food



- **Tteokbokki:** Spicy tteokbokki (a rice cake called tteok that is broiled with a hot pepper paste called gochujang)
- **Toast:** The toast sold on the streets is made with two slices of bread, which typically contain a filling of eggs mixed and fried with chopped vegetables, such as onions and carrots.
- **Gimbap:** Korean gimbap is similar to the Japanese rice roll, but it is more nutritious as it contains a lot more ingredients, such as pickled radish, egg, eomuk, beef, carrot, and spinach.
- **Chicken Ggochi:** This is reminiscent of the Thai food "satay". Chicken ggochi is a form of grilled kebab that is seasoned with a unique Korean hot red pepper paste called gochujang.

You can easily find low priced Korean street food in Seoul.

Activities and Nightlife

What do you want to find in Seoul? Seoul may have everything you want.



- **Lotte World:** Lotte World is one of the most important amusement parks in Korea. It includes "The Adventure" for indoor attractions and "Magic Island" which features outdoor ones. Laser shows are held every day and it will be a fantastic experience. It also has a shopping mall, folk culture museum, water park, ice rink, sports centre, luxury hotel and department store.

If you want to go there, the green line on the subway system is the easiest way to get there. The Jam-Sil subway station is connected to Lotte World.

- **Cheonggyecheon (stream):** Cheonggyecheon is a stream that flows into Seoul. It is not just a beautiful night sight, but is also one of the most historically significant places in Seoul. In fact, it was covered with asphalt and concrete for the urbanization of Seoul until 2003. However, they were subsequently removed in order to reduce the urban-heat phenomenon and to offer people a more scenic view. Now, many travellers visit the restored stream and many people focus on the stream as an example of sustainable development.

If you want to get there, visit the site below.

<http://english.seoul.go.kr/cav/att/chenggye.php>

- **N Seoul Tower:** N Seoul Tower is probably Seoul's main landmark and is one of the most famous sights in Korea. It is located on Nam Mountain in Seoul. There is a sky view area with a nice restaurant. If you go there, you can enjoy a beautiful night view of Seoul. The Blue House and the Presidential Residence can also be seen from here.

For more information, see the following web site:

<http://english.seoul.go.kr/cav/att/namsan.php>

10 things to know

Seoul has been the capital of Korea for 600 years. There is a precious historical heritage with old palaces and gorgeous modern skyscrapers in Seoul.

1.- Royal Palaces: Palaces in Seoul exist in harmony with their surrounding environment. The five major palaces of the Joseon Dynasty are Gyeongbokgung, Changdeokgung, Changgyeonggung, Gyeonghuigung and Deoksugung. They were built without destroying or disturbing their natural environments and as a result, these palaces still boast an unspoiled natural beauty around them, just as they did 600 years ago.



<http://english.seoul.go.kr/cav/att/palaces.php>

2.- Myeong-dong: Myeong-dong is the fashion street and is a prominent area in Korea. There are numerous clothing stores, beauty salons, 5-star hotels, and restaurants. It is considered to be the beating heart of Seoul to most foreign visitors. You may feel energetic and dynamic there.

Location: Exit 6, Myeong-dong Station, Subway Line 4/Exit 7, Euljiro-1(il)-ga Station, Subway Line 2

3.- Han-gang (River): Han-gang is the biggest river in South Korea. Many people exercise alongside the river and many events are held there. The river offers people relaxation, fresh air, and beautiful surrounding sceneries. Also, the office of Han-gang runs a cruise tour everyday.



4.- Buk-Chon Hanok village and Sam-Cheong-dong Hanok village: Hanok is the name for traditional Korean houses. Buk-Chon and Sam-Cheong area is a traditional residential area in Seoul that boasts 600 years of history. There are 920 Hanok, small museums, and various craft shops. The Buk-Chon area is an exceptionally popular spot for busy tourists that want to catch a glimpse of the 600-year history of Seoul in a few hours.



5.- Hong-Ik University neighbourhood area: It's natural that this area is for college students. Hong-Ik University area refers to the area stretching from Hongik University Station (green line) to the main entrance of Hongik University. It is lined with unique coffee houses, small venues for indie rock concerts, live music bars, jazz and dance clubs. The last Friday of each month is "Club Day" when clubbers can visit many different clubs in the area with a single ticket. The annual street art festival in October is another popular cultural event that attracts a stream of young art lovers to this area.

6.- COEX and Gang-nam area: Gang-nam area is considered as the new center of Seoul. Every year, more than 200 exhibitions and 2,500 international meetings and events take place in COEX, the leader of the Korean exhibition and convention industry. In addition, COEX Mall, which consists of a shopping center, large-scale meeting rooms and performance halls, is the biggest shopping mall in Asia and is always crowded by tremendous amounts of people.

Website: <http://www.coex.co.kr/eng/main/main.asp>

7.- In-sa-dong: Almost every visitors to Korea make a trip to Insa-dong. This is because it is the place where "HAN," the traditional culture of Korea, can be found. At the heart of HAN is the intangible nature of culture accumulated over a long course of history. In addition, various traditional events happen and tourists can buy traditional Korean crafts. When you feel tired during your visit in the area, you can rest at a small tea café.

8.- Daehak-ro (street): Daehak-ro has some 100 theatres of all sizes staging performances throughout the year, and it is oftentimes referred to as the "Broadway of Asia." The outdoor theatres in Maronnier Park and Pungryu Square are full of passions of youth expressed in street performances and the drawn portraits. This dynamic neighborhood is the very origin of the Korean Wave culture.

9.- Itaewon: At Itaewon, you may question yourself, “Where am I now?”. This is because Itaewon is the area with the atmospheres of North America and Europe. It is also well known for its abundance of restaurants offering a wide variety of authentic cuisines from other parts of the world – many of these restaurants have even hired chefs from the countries of their specialties. In addition, The Central Mosque and War Memorial of Korea are close to Itaewon’s busy commercial district and are worth visiting.

10.- World Cup Park: Located near the World Cup Stadium, World Cup Park is comprised of various small parks including Peace Park, Haneul Park, Noeul Park, Nanjicheon Park, and Nanji Hangang Park. Peace Park, which represents the World Cup Park, was created in commemoration of the first World Cup Finals of the 21st century held in Korea, and symbolizes world peace and harmony. Many Koreans said that the World Cup Park is the fruit of a miracle. Before the World Cup Park was created, Nanjido was known as a home for mountainous piles of waste and garbage. However, it was World Cup 2002 that led to the rebirth of Nanjido as an eco-friendly area. The construction of the World Cup Stadium here was accompanied by the area’s transformation into an “eco-park,” beyond the measure of anyone’s imagination. Now, the clean air and refreshing waters of the Hangang (River) and Nanjido is called the “Environmental Regeneration of Korea”.