

## Newsletter 2018

2018 has been a strange year – globally as well as in our own backyard – Trumpism, the rise and gradual fall of it? after midterm elections, Putin’s authoritarian expansionism, the rise of right-wing nationalism in Europe, Brexit – all are examples of a very complex world, in which the EU is needed more than ever. Necessary is a stronger and more proactive leadership, efficient cooperation and not least visions for our continent. IUC has always, since its origin way back, been engaged in the integration process in Europe working with young people in DK and abroad on activities, projects and in networks. We will continue to set up progressive cross border European agendas, discuss scenarios for the future and create links between civil society organisations and the political establishment in several ways.

2018 has unfortunately seen some of our international networks being forced to shut down – EUNET (European Network for Education and Training, [european-net.org](http://european-net.org)) did not get the expected EU funding and had to close its secretariat, at least for the time being. The members will meet in Frankfurt, Germany, in December to have the annual general assembly and discuss the future of the network. IUC was one of the founders of the network and will of course participate.

Also, Baltic Development Forum ([bdforum.org](http://bdforum.org)) a network for business, media, academia and politics, established by former Danish Foreign Minister, Uffe Ellemann Jensen, as a Nordic World Economic Forum, had to finish activities earlier this year. Sad developments when international organisations and their work are needed more than ever.

## Project activities

In IUC, among many activities, we have been working on developing our Waves of Democracy projects, which began in 2007 in Rhodes and DK, took us to Serbia in 2010 and 11, and twice to Sønderborg in Southern Denmark – many meetings took place in Berlin this year with our key people Andreas Guidi, Christin Knüpfer, and Ifor Molenhuis. Also, in cooperation with EAB (European Academy Berlin), who planned to host the summer seminar – the projects are laboratories for developing tools to work with European integration, discussing innovative and stimulating ways to talk about and live in Europe today. Unfortunately, and most surprisingly, we didn’t get the expected funding and had to cancel the summer seminar. But many elements of the seminar, which was almost fully planned, were taken into new project activities, e.g. related to the “Youth on the Move” seminar in Sønderborg in October. (please see below)

IUC acts as administrative coordinator for the MEP BSR organization ([mepbsr.org](http://mepbsr.org)), which consists of schools/institutions in the Baltic Sea Region/North of Europe. It

now has members/contact schools in 12 countries, also including Iceland, Norway and Kaliningrad/Russia. The sessions are important training ground for talented young people, future leaders, who take an interest in discussing current political issues in the region. MEP BSR is represented in the international MEP organization, seated in Madrid and Vienna. The iMEP recently took place in Toledo/Madrid and will next year celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Paris and Strasbourg.

In the MEP BSR context “Youth on the Move” in Sønderborg was a wonderful event, which included an opening ceremony in the famous castle, workshops at the local high school, excursions, lobbying at the new culture house on the harbour and general assembly in Alsion – a cluster building for culture, education (University of Southern Denmark) and businesses in the border region of DK and Germany. During this session we experimented with creative elements from the Waves workshops – to be developed at our alumni/vision seminar in April.

### Heading towards 2019

2019 is European Parliament election year, and along with many organisations in DK (and abroad) IUC will take part in developing tools/methods to raise interest and persuade especially young people to vote at this very important election. Young people are generally interested in politics, not party politics, but overall issues, especially climate/energy and immigration policies – and their knowledge of the EU/Europe is quite high in DK. Here is a list of important Danish organisations working with European issues, some of whom we have worked with, others to follow hopefully. Only by combining forces, developing strategies and visions together can we hope to put the EU/European matters firmly on the agenda.

*Nyt Europa* [nyteuropa.dk](http://nyteuropa.dk)

*Europabevægelsen* [europabevaegelsen.dk/DEO](http://europabevaegelsen.dk/DEO) <http://de0.dk/om-deo/about-deo-in-english/>

*Tænketanken Europa* <http://english.thinkeuropa.dk/>

*Globale Seniorer* <https://globaleseniorer.com/>

On IUC’s spring agenda in 2019 will be participation in the MEP Europe jubilee in Paris, meeting and planning with Nyt Europa, preparations for a study trip to Krakow for Globale Seniorer, and preparations and implementation of the MEP BSR’s alumni/vision seminar, where the organization will be developed, and alumni/teacher networks be established more firmly. And not least active participation in activities preparing for the elections in May.

We thank board, staff and IUC volunteers for valuable input and work – in particular Magdalena Tashkova, our head of secretariat.

We are looking forward to an interesting and rewarding year as always with partners, colleagues, volunteers and friends.

Nina Nørgaard, Executive Director /Copenhagen Nov 2018