

Student Photography Exhibition: “European Identity”

Participants:

Shortlisted students of the school photography contest titled “European identity”:

Marina Kougiou, 1st prize - 1st Vocational Upper Senior High School of Moires

Kleana Mourati, 1st Middle School of Heraklion

Antonis Mpourakis, Model Experimental Gymnasium of the University of Crete, Rethymno

Jean-Yannis Lagnel, School of European Education of Heraklion

Eygenia Likaki, 1st Middle School of Heraklion

Kostas Vrouvakis, Lyceum of Nea Kydonia, Chania

Panagiotis Chatziargiros, 1st Vocational Upper Senior High School of Moires

Georgia Drosataki, Experimental Gymnasium of Heraklion

Manolis Sifakakis, Model Experimental Gymnasium of the University of Crete, Rethymno

Students of the School of European Education – Heraklion, photo club:

Dorothea Banks

Elli Zacharioudaki

Ioannis Kanellopoulos

Eleni Samaritaki

Kalliopi Samaritaki

Ioannis Sbyrakis

Maria – Myrto Makraki

Maria Foudoulaki

Jean – Yannis Lagnel

Bugaz Zbigniew

Duration: 21/6 – 02/7/2019

Curators: Panagiotis Charalampidis and Vasilis Garganourakis

How does a young person, and particularly a student, handles the concept of “European Identity” by using the photographic medium?

For photography, the concept of identity seems to be inherent to the medium. We photograph and, through this process, we create evidence of reality, which is usually associated with the true essence of the depicted. Although the latter sounds promising, it is essentially problematic. The approach of complex concepts can rarely be done with a single image. Moreover, the medium itself is extremely subjective and, at the same time, poor in verbal content. An image is just an image and the viewer will always largely contribute to its content.

The concept of European identity is difficult, multifaceted and fluid, and the promise of European integration, while greatly needed, is still in progress. The European Union is not just an idea; it is also a system of governance that includes complex decision-making processes, laws, and institutions. Although these mechanisms are usually invisible, they shape the reality we all experience and simultaneously create a distance from the system itself.

This exhibition is a collection of small stories from students that are also citizens of the European Union. Therefore, we ask the viewer to perceive this exhibition as a bottom-up approach. Europe is a journey to another country and it is an urban, suburban or rural landscape. Europe is the families that we grow up in. Europe is the uniqueness of the traditions of a place. The imagery of Europe includes vistas, ancient monuments, symbols, and codes. Europe is also everything that happens in other countries and makes us feel concerned. Europe is the expectations we have of it. In this exhibition, the personal meaning, which is contributed by the viewer, completes the students’ artworks. In this way, the final result becomes a sum greater than its components.

The exhibition is organized by the **Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Crete** and the secondary cycle of the **School of European Education of Heraklion (SEEH)**, in collaboration with the **Europe Direct of Crete**, the **Parent - Guardian Association of SEEH**, and the **Hellenic Photographic Society of Crete**.