



Εύξεινος Πόντος Στοκχόλμης EVXINOS PONTOS STOCKHOLM - SWEDEN

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First world conference for young Pontians

December 17-18 in Frankfurt, Germany

During the weekend (December 17-18), our association Evxinos Pontos Stockholm took part with two delegates, Konstantinos Fraggidis and Dimitris Pilpilidis, at the first world conference for young Pontians which took place in the German city of Frankfurt. With few words, you can say that the conference was fantastic, incomparable and hope giving for the future.

The first day of the conference

Our delegates arrived in Frankfurt and after some detours they arrived to the conference centre Kolpinghaus where they also lodged in the center's hotel. After a lot of mingle with the other delegates from all parts of the world the conference started with many welcome speeches by the European Union's president, the organizing committee, local politicians and many more.

The afternoon was continued with a long lecture by the Pontian professor in history Kostas Fotiadis where he presented his work about the Pontian holocaust and the importance to strive for international recognition of it, something that has still not been done. Of course Mr. Fotiadis was the same interesting and knowledge rewarding as always. The lecture was completed with questions and comments by the delegates and everyone was astonished by the well put, fine and direct comments that were expressed, especially from the journalist Georgios Georgiadis (born in Germany but working for ET3 in Greece) who received standing ovations! A really inspiring Pontian!

After some refreshments, "wild" discussions and many new contacts in the lobby, the conference continued by a lecture from Mr. Theodoros Sakelaropoulos, professor at Pantion University in Athens, which was about the new Pontian refugees from the ex Soviet Union and their new lives in Greece with subject the economy, unemployment and racism. Another great lecture which made all delegates think about today's Greece and the way our brothers and sisters are received by the Greek society. Again the lecture was completed by questions and comments by the delegates and once again Georgios Georgiadis received standing ovations for his comments about racism and the way Pontians (and refugees in general) are treated in Greece.

Pontians to the bone!

The conference ended by a big dinner where more discussions took place but this time in smaller groups by the delegates. It was incredible to see that young Pontians from Australia, northern America and Europe have the same opinions just because we all have the same Pontian background! As soon as everyone had eaten, the real party began with about ten young men playing the "kementze", Kyriakos and his fantastic "partners" played the "daouli" who were accompanied by two girls (!), Michalis from Australia who played the flute and sang and Christos who played the "gaida"... all of the others stood for the dancing, a lot of dancing! It's understood without saying that everyone, no matter where they came from, danced so incredibly and beautifully that some couldn't keep the tears in their eyes by the wonderful sight of (about) 400 young Pontians who sang, danced and played to our amazing Pontian music. The party ended in the morning and everyone went to bed with a BIG smile in their face.

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The second day of the conference

On Sunday the works started again after a good breakfast... the difference this time was that all lectures and presentations were made by the young delegates. All associations, societies and organizations presented themselves, their activities and their suggestions to the conference. A lot of fine suggestions were made and all of them were voted unanimously, among others that the conference will be held once a year to have continuance of our work, the creation of a digital forum (website) so that the communication can be fast and effectual and to build local and intercontinental activities among the associations. Our association didn't take part in the voting because our delegates had to leave for the airport but after reviewing the suggestions we gave the organization committee to vote for us (since EVERYONE agreed in all counts!).

A small epilogue

What once were a dream is now practical possible... we, the young Pontians, can, want to and will take over our organizations and make our voice heard throughout the world. From the beginning this was only a slogan but now we know that we will go through with it. With all the new connections and friends, with the discovery of the Pontian organizations in the whole world it is doable!

We have the interest and the energy and the will to continue the fight to receive an international recognition of the Pontian Genocide, we will stick strong to our traditions, our ancient tongue (our Greek dialect if anyone prefer) and of course our amazing dances, music and instruments. Nothing will be forgotten, everything will stay alive long in to the future because the conference in Frankfurt proved just that... that we young Pontians are above politics and internal conflicts. We are united under one single base and that is our Pontian heritage. As long as we exist and as long as we stay united nothing can stop us! Until the next conference is carried out we would like to wish everybody good luck in your organizations and associations with the extraordinary work that is taking place all over the world!

A big, warm thank you

Evxinos Pontos Stockholm would also like to thank, except all the delegates, the European Pontian Union's organizing committee that organized and carried out this conference with excellence! Thank you all for two unforgettable Pontian days!

Stockholm, December 21, 2005

On behalf of the board

Konstantinos Fraggidis
Secretary

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