



Maastricht Graduate School of Governance



E-Gazette

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DEMOS study trip to Brussels: The European Institutions and Beyond

With the beginning of the new semester and the arrival of the new cohort, the first days of February provided the perfect frame for the long awaited Brussels trip. Early in the morning of the 10th of February, at 7:45AM, a group of almost 50 students gathered at the Vrijthof to catch the chartered bus. Sleepy eyes and yawning were dominating the sphere at first, but once the lunch packages had been distributed and the bus was getting closer and closer to Brussels, the excitement took over.



Upon arrival, the big group was split in two – with one of them going to the European Commission, and the second to the European Parliament. Both groups enjoyed

interesting presentations and some even got the chance to talk to MEPs. After lunch, all students gathered to be split up into new groups again. Flutteringly chatting, the newly formed groups left for their destinations. For group 1, this meant visiting the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, The International Crisis Group and the Dutch representation at the EU. Group 2 went to experience the GTZ, Carnegie International Endowment for Peace and finally, Advocats Sans Frontiers. Thanks to the diverse and varied choice in NGOs and institutions, everybody took pleasure from this intriguing and motivating day.

To conclude the day, an optional evening session was offered. While some preferred to round off the day by enjoying a beer and getting to know the new fellow classmates better, others took the opportunity to learn (more) about the ongoing conflict in the Western Sahara, while enjoying a yummy couscous prepared by the representatives of the Western Sahara themselves! Around 8PM, the bus left for Maastricht, taking 50 exhausted, but satisfied MGSOG students home. Even though the weather of the day can best be described rainy, windy, and everything but nice, the trip proved to be a big success!

What happened to... Eleni Abraham? (MPP Graduate 2008)

Hello everybody, I am Eleni. I graduated from the MPP programme with a specialization in social policy financing in July 2008. Before I started my master's at Maastricht Graduate School of Governance I had a BA from Addis Ababa University and worked as a microfinance supervisor at the National Bank of Ethiopia.



After my graduation, I moved to Ethiopia and got a chance to work as a research assistant on a research "impact of regional power trade to the poor communities in the Nile basin countries" by the World Bank. Currently, I am working at SNV- Ethiopia that is working on the capacity building and is implementing activities in the fields of networking, policy dialogue and value chain development as economic development advisor. SNV-Ethiopia is working to ensure tangible impact in poverty alleviation and offers capacity development services in different sectors.

It is common to think that there is a huge gap between academic researcher and aid practitioner because the former is responsible to formulate theories regardless of the complexity in the ground and the latter are mandated to implement practices that are intended to improve lives. By being part of SNV-Ethiopia I think I am able to fill a gap between the two parties by participating in research, implementation and providing capacity building activities to policy makers. My study at school of governance takes most of the credit to give me a chance to be a part of SNV. Moreover, being a part of dynamic environment of school of governance with students from all over the world enable me to easily adapt with my colleagues who came from different countries and professional background. I have a short term plan to start my PhD and Hope to see you around...

School of Governance blog featuring Johannes Heickmann (MPP student)

My name is Johannes Heickmann and I am originally from Germany. I say originally because I haven't been living in Germany for more than five years now. During the last years, I was occupied with studying International Economics in Groningen, travelling in South-America and finally I finished my Bachelor in Maastricht. Now I am in my second semester of the MPP programme at the



MGSOG.

This month has been rather busy (though all months in Maastricht are busy), because there was the inflow of the February cohort and, since I am DEMOS member, I helped organising a welcome party. Additionally, we organized an educational excursion to Brussels, where the students could meet their (maybe) future employees, and attend lectures and have a tour through the European Parliament.

This month has also been special for a different reason. Things have changed for us, because we all started our specializations in different fields of public policy analysis. That means that our lovely group is now subdivided into six tracks and we don't see each other that much anymore. Suddenly, you tend to hang out only with the people from your own specialization, which is strange because we have been quite a social bunch of individuals.

Luckily, many of my friends have chosen the same track as I did, and now we are busy studying Social Policy Finance together. While the first week of the course has been a rather slow introduction to the subject, things are speeding up ever more and now, being in the third week of the course, I probably surpass the 40 hours of studying per week benchmark. This was also because this week we had Michael Cichon as a teacher who is the director of the department for social security at the ILO and quite a demanding guy. Fortunately, it has not only been stressful but also very interesting. Actually, it has been so interesting that I started bothering people around me, telling them about how fascinating the design of pension systems is.

While I keep analysing pension, health-care and social assistance benefits, I am also supposed to dig deeper into the topic of my master thesis. As it looks at the moment, I will have to spend most of my carnival holidays next week researching. Of course that is my own choice though, because I have the ambitious goal of being able to graduate in July 2009 and use August for travelling before I start an internship with GTZ in September. The subject of my master thesis will be an empirical investigation of the Dutch education system, which is interesting since I spent quite some time studying in this system. So far I can only say it has been demanding, stressful, interesting and most of the time fun. We will see what my research adds to this list.

Nice to meet you... Allan Tirivayi (PhD Fellow)



I was born and raised in Zimbabwe and did most of my schooling there. I have always had an open mind and a willingness to learn about other people and their cultures and I have a strong belief that the more we learn and know about others, the better we understand ourselves. In this light, my career has tended to drift towards finding ways to promote a learning culture among communities in Southern Africa. Thus, I have carried out literacy projects, Early Childhood Development programmes and recently life-long learning initiatives in my short but growing career.

The need to improve this career, and of course the bad governance and economic collapse back home, is what brought me and my family here to Maastricht. I intend to carry out research looking into the properties or characteristics of the educational experience that derive from computer and text based collaborative learning, exploring ways of ascertaining its rigor and coming up with a predictor for learner performance. This research will be a comparative analysis, investigating socio-cultural as well as situational

factors that can influence the educational experience. The comparison will be between developed and developing countries.

I look forward to working with everyone in the School of Governance and the university.

Upcoming events:

- 11-03 Pizza and Politics: Stephen Paul Heyneman, Professor International Education Policy, Vanderbilt University:
The Educational Policies of the Obama Administration
Kapoenstraat 2, 17.30 hrs.
- 12-03 [MGSOG Seminar Series: David McKenzie, Senior Economist, Development Research Group, The World Bank](#)
[The Impacts of International Migration on Remaining Household Members: Omnibus Results from a Migration Lottery Program](#)
- 29-04 Public Dissertation Defence: Britta Augsburg (PhD Fellow ESPP)
Microfinance: Greater Good or Lesser Evil
- 25 &
26-05 [Research conference: How healthy are our health care policies?](#)
- 5-06 Public Dissertation Defence: Christiane Arndt (PhD Fellow)
Governance Indicators
- 19-06 Career Day for MGSOG students
- 26-07 [Designing and Implementing Social Transfer Programmes \(Capetown, South Africa\)](#)
til 08-08

For more upcoming events, please [click here](#)

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