

Giovani Idee 2016 Bergamo

After a long-long journey at night, we arrive in Lovere for a gloomy early morning, with mist in the streets and fog above the hills around the lake.

Our hotel is cosy, clean and most importantly, the beds are comfortable – understandably, we do need some stretching out after 12 hours on the bus. We get delicious breakfast and can't take enough photos of the view through the window of the cosy little breakfast area. It overlooks a bay with sailboats and a hill on the other side of the lake.

The eighteen of us are representing our school at the Giovani Idee competition in the conference hosted by the Bergamo University, invited by *Mr Gianpetro Benigni*, president of the conference.

We are here to perform a short version of our dance performance, film and magazine and to take part in the conference held at the wonderful and partly-restored auditorium, which used to be a medieval church.

The building itself makes a great impression on us, not to speak of the ideas and stimulus we receive throughout our two-day stay.

It is now our opportunity to talk about key contemporary issues which we have been thinking about for a long time. It is the opportunity to exchange ideas with our peers and listen to adults, who actively participate in politics, economy and the European society, talking about the future of the European Union. We feel that we are heard, acknowledged and appreciated by these adults. This event is broadening our horizons and we are gradually thinking more positively about the European Union. We can see cooperation and commitment at first hand, and we are increasingly getting aware of the issues within the European Union.

We are listening to speeches by Mr Antonio Villafranca, Teacher of International Relations and Economic Policy, Bocconi University, Milan, about the American elections and its effects on Europe. Then Mr Giancarlo Borra, responsible for culture Giovani Idee Association, is talking about why to believe in the EU. Further speakers are Mr *Fabrizio Spada*, Director of the European Commission Office, Milano Mr *Gianluigi Viscardi*, President of the National Technological Cluster Smart Factory CEO Cosberg Spa and Mr *Tadeusz Konopka*, Press reporter Ansa from Varsavia and lastly Ms *Rosa Thun* European Parliamentary Representative, Poland, who also mentioned our dance performance in her speech.

We were taking photos, listening to speeches, and our hearts were full of solidarity.

And now, after the conference, what are we bringing home with us? Definitely, the scent of freshly baked cakes and Italian coffee from the hotel, the cheering and smiles of the Italian technical school students we were driving on the bus with, the memories of the beautiful Citta Alta in Bergamo, where we walked around and

listened to interesting stories about the history and culture of the city. But most importantly, a strong belief that we are the creators of our own future.