

What is Student Forum Maastricht?

Student Forum Maastricht (SFM) is an annual student conference that offers international students the possibility to discuss European Union related topics. In cooperation with the European Commission, the students draft policy proposals for relevant policy fields presenting their ideas and suggestions. SFM is part of the European Studies Association Concordantia which is based at the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASoS) of Maastricht University. The team organising SFM consists of fourteen undergraduate students partly from Maastricht University and elsewhere. With the support and advice of team members from previous conferences continuity and experience-sharing in preparing the event is ensured.

SFM 2015 edition

SFM 2015 took place at the Maastricht University Campus in Brussels from 15th to 19th April. In total, 50 students from all over Europe participated and contributed to a successful event. Five different working groups, each with 10 participants, were offered dealing with the following topics: Energy Union, Independence of regions, Data protection, Minimum wage and Asylum. While the Commission provided the groups with a problem statement which constituted the starting point for the proposals, several experts working in the relevant field gave their input and shared insights with the participants. Each working group was guided by an academic tutor who accompanied the students in the process of drafting the policy papers. The work in the groups was complemented by an inspiring and diverse lecture programme.

Achievements of SFM 2015

SFM has brought together 50 students from Europe and beyond with policy-makers of today. In this way, the participants were offered an innovative and enriching learning experience outside their regular studies at university. Additionally, SFM offered an interesting access to the EU and made the students profit from the experience and insights of the visiting experts and speakers. Finally, all five policy proposals have been presented to the respective Commission representative in the form of a follow-up meeting. The students received feedback on their papers and were able to once more exchange with the EU officials. Some of the proposals are now being forwarded to EU policy-makers following the advice of the Commission.

Towards SFM 2016

In line with the success of the 2015 edition the concept of the conference will largely be maintained. Four working groups will be open for 40 participants in total with the aim of designing policy proposals for the European Commission. However, SFM is also continuously trying to improve the set-up of the conference. One major objective for 2016 is to expand our partner network, establish SFM as a visible and recognised student conference at the heart of Europe and to strengthen the ties with the European Commission.