

On Thursday May 2nd, we finally reached number 1 on our weekly Facebook countdown. For many years now, we've been counting down to our annual EUROPEAN ALUMNI MEETING every Thursday.

After visiting Finland in 2022 and Norway in 2023, this year we gathered in Antwerp, Belgium.

Belgium, that little country in between France, Germany and The Netherlands, that is often forgotten when people visit Europe. Well, there is a lot to see and visit and so we did.



We started with our pre-EAM on Tuesday May 7th with a 2-hour boat ride on the river De Schelde and we saw the Port of Antwerp from the waterside. In the afternoon we visited Chocolate Nation, an interactive museum dedicated to chocolate, where we learned all about...of course...chocolate.

Did you know that Belgian chocolate is the best in the world???

We even could try more than 10 kinds of this delicacy. Mmm...

On Wednesday a group of 35 people went underground. A guided tour of the Antwerp sewer system on which Antwerp was built upon.



After a free afternoon to explore Antwerp on our own, Amaryllis Temmerman (A93) gave us a private concert, presenting her new CD full of Carpenters covers.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/0SWRVaojNpLDgxOFtaNpHG?si=m7MqNuOxRzqOy3uuc54PZg&context=spotify%3Aalbum%3A5bEoTAddx58jG3QqELsfKC>

Tuesday morning was a sporty one! About 25 of us took a bike ride that brought them to the most beautiful places in and around the city.



In the afternoon we had a guided tour of the Jewish quarter, and we ended the day with a kosher dinner in a Jewish restaurant.



On Friday the ‘real’ EAM weekend started.

A guided tour in the Fortress 5 in Edegem told us all about the Brialmont fortresses that were built in between 1860 and 1864 to protect the city of Antwerp. We had opening night with a “cheese and wine” dinner.

Saturday morning, we all gathered for our annual EAM meeting and after a healthy lunch (“make your own poké bowl”), we had people visiting the KMSKA (museum) and we had guides bringing us to the most beautiful and hidden gems in Antwerp.





Saturday night is always PARTYTIME. After a real Belgian buffet with real Belgian fries and another show of Amaryllis, the UWP survival band started playing. Singing, dancing and having lots of fun is the recipe for this night on every EAM.



On Sunday morning, it was time for our wrap-up meeting and to say goodbye.



During this EAM we had a fundraiser for the ADINA foundation UGANDA ( [www.adinafu.org](http://www.adinafu.org) ). Hilde Severinsen Sandnes (C91) is one of the founders. They work together with Ability forward ( [www.abilityforward.org](http://www.abilityforward.org) ). Hilde's husband, Eirik (E88), their daughter Marie (B19 &A20) and the rest of the family are volunteering as well. They welcome alumni from all over the world to join them in the work for children with disabilities.

Mark Balsiger (E93) biked from Bern in Switzerland to Antwerp and raised over 2000 euros doing so!



We also created a special EAM gin and no less than 72 bottles were sold!

All this combined with the silent auction, we raised more than 5000 euros for this project.



Time flies when you have fun!!

Will start soon with count down for next year's EAM in Bochum, Germany from May 1st until May 4<sup>th</sup> of 2025.