

JCI European Conference 2022

June 8 to 11

The report



EC Bruges



Food by Generations

"To inspire a brighter food future"

An European conference where the theme of food issues and gastronomic delights were highlighted. During the conference there was time for attending numerous trainings, workshops, company visits and not to forget, in the evening the JCI parties.

It all started on Tuesday, June 7 2022, when the jitters started coming up in the afternoon: **the start of my very first JCI conference!** It was in Belgium, but it was an unforgettable five days. After the time with Corona, an ideal moment to get to know a lot of other JCI departments and this on an European level.

Tuesday evening, the Bavarian Night, a pleasant gathering, where I had a first introduction to our twinning partner, JCI Tartu. Together with Tanel, Eva Maria, Mariel, Ago Täkker a toast was made to the start of the conference. Besides our twinning partner I met some familiar faces. With a beer in hand, there was chatter and laughter: the first note was set.



Due to the late arrangement of my program, I unfortunately did not have room in certain options for Wednesday, June 8. With Bart Neckebroek, JCI Oudenaarde, we visited the brewery 'De Halve maan' where they produce the 'Brugse Zot'. With a small group we entered the brewery to listen to the story about the barley grain to the beer. On the roof, we took some time to enjoy the view of the city of Bruges. With pride we pointed the BMCC-building and mentioned that we are from JCI and that this year's European Conference was in Bruges.

In the afternoon I had the First Timers Session where we came into contact with many other JCI departments and JCI members. Arriving alone and leaving the room at the end chatting with a lot of people. I was amazed how quickly contacts can be made.

A quick change of clothes and then the Opening Ceremony. What an overwhelming event was that! People everywhere with flags and in the national colors. To the rhythm of the music the National Presidents came on stage. The moment Laurence Schuurman entered the stage, the Belgian flags flew around. **IMPRESSIVE!** As keynote Dominique Persoone came to pamper us with his chocolates. With the words '*amazing*' and '*me moaten*' he told a fascinating story about his business, his goals and his family. With amazement I watched how he had everyone along. In addition, we were given some chocolates to taste after the explanation of the chocolate and where he got the inspiration to make that praline from.





EC BRUGES
2019 EUROPEAN CONFERENCE



Thursday morning started my day as a volunteer. With an event like this, there is quite a bit of dragging back and forth with materials, chairs, drinks,... During the morning, the setup of the Tradeshow had to be built up some more.

Marjolijn Beckers gave me instructions on what had to be done. Moving chairs, bring water to different floors,...



After a few hours of help, I toured the Tradeshow and enjoyed a snack and a drink with the members of JCI Estonia, JCI Oudenaarde and JCI Ronse. During Loïc Van Himpe's demo cooking I came into contact with crickets. In the afternoon I attended a training given by JCI Netherlands, namely "*To flirt or not to flirt, in business and bars*". How close can you get to someone you don't know, does it feel appropriate? How do you shake hands? These questions were answered during the training. The training was full of laughter and entertainment.

Thursday night was German & Suisse night. Upon arrival we could eat raclette and/or a sausage. A good layer for a super party. After a few Jägermeisters with the twinning partner JCI Tartu and a lot of ambiance, the dance floor quickly filled up.



After a short night, Friday had arrived. Friday morning I had not done much, but in the afternoon a farm visit was planned; 't Reigershof. We met a lot of goats and got to know how cheese was produced. After eating an ice cream based on goat's milk we all returned to Bruges to get ready for the Romanian night. Saturday I followed two workshops on nutrition: healthy appetizers and recipes for the BBQ. In the afternoon it was more about the daily meals. Afterwards we went out for a drink with JCI Ronse and enjoyed the sunshine.

In the evening we were expected in gala dress to enjoy the last evening. We enjoyed the Award Ceremony where Eva Maria from JCI Estonia received the award of Public Speaking Champion.

JCI Belgium, UgenTec, was also honored with the award of Creative Young Entrepreneur 2nd place. What a wonderful moment I think when you can go to the front and receive such an award. From JCI Ronse, I was elected as the best member 2019 - 2022, which was handed out at our "machtsoverdracht" at the end of June, and this was already amazing for me. What must it be like when you can go to the front during an European Conference, a blissful feeling I think! After the Award Ceremony, a three-course meal was provided followed by another amazing JCI party.



EC BRUGES
JCI's European Conference



After this intense week it was time to return to the 'normal' life. It took some getting used to get back into the daily routine, but I experienced a lot!

A quick recap... Beautiful moments with my roommate Eugénie Carrez for one half of the week and Pélagie Carrez for the other half, as well as interesting training sessions, getting to know new people from different countries. I will not forget our twinning partner JCI Tartu, but also people from JCI Aalst, JCI Norway, JCI Germany and JCI Switzerland.

What is also apparently typical of conferences is the exchange of pins. That is how I became a few pins richer: JCI Japan, JCI Volunteer EC Bruges and JCI Norway.

During these five unforgettable days I enjoyed every moment and it certainly tastes like more. A pure magic to connect with so many people from all over the world.

The purpose of this report was to share my experiences, but in this report I would like to thank the JCI departments, JCI Bruges and JCI Houtland for organizing this European Conference. A magnificent event where I have opened my eyes, where I have learned a lot and where I have come in contact with different cultures.



EC BRUGES
JCI's EUROPEAN CONFERENCE