



CHARTER OF EUROPEAN RURAL COMMUNITIES

(NEWS)LETTER FOR OUR MEMBERS

NUMBER 7

DATE MARCH 2008

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1. WORD OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

In a few weeks, we will meet in Lefkara on Cyprus. The mayor of Lefkara and his committee have made a very interesting program.

For the organisation committee it is very important to receive the good information. So please send them the information they asked for as soon as possible.

For our organisation, it is only possible to work if we do it together. Therefore, I ask you each time to react on questions. So please note the Actions in this newsletter.

I hope that spring will bring you nice weather and that you have had a good Eastern.

Frans Ronnes.

2. SUMMER MEETING 2008 IN LEFKARA (CYPRUS)

From May 14th until May 18th the summer manifestation 2008 will be in Lefkara Cyprus.

The theme is: participating in democracy.

The program is:

Wednesday 14/05/2008	All Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Collection and transfer of flight passengers from Larnaca Airport to Lefkara or other host villages according to time of arrival. ▪ Distribution of information material ▪ Introduction to the host families ▪ Light meal with the host families
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Thursday 15/05/2008	10:00	Mayor's conference in Hotel "AGORA" Theme: Participating in Democracy
	10:00	At the same time for all other quests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sight seeing of Lefkara town
	13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lunch
	15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sports afternoon at Lefkara Stadium
	18:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member Countries introduce themselves in culinary form with typical food and drinks.
Friday 16/05/2008	8:30	Excursion to archeological and other places of CYPRUS
	17:00	Travel to Psematismenos village where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local folk dance groups will present traditional Cyprus wedding
	20:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional diner party with food drinks and dance at the park. (host families are welcome)
Saturday 17/05/2008	20:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free Day with the host families ▪ Entertainment and dancing (closing ceremony) at Lefkara Gymnasium (with the host families)

Sunday 18/05/2008	8:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holy mass in the hosting villages churches (Optional) ▪ Departure of gests (according to flight schedule)
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In October 2007, Lefkara did send the invitation:

The following members have not send in yet their delegation list:

- Czech Republic/ Stary Poddvorov
- Finland / Kannus
- Hungary / Nagycentk
- Ireland / Cashel
- Lithuania/ Zagare
- Malta / Nadur
- Poland / Strzyzow
- Slovakia / Medzev
- Slovenia / Moravce

As you can understand, it's very important for the organisation committee of Lefkara that you send them your list on very short notice.

ACTION 2

For the possibilities of multi annual projects look at

<http://ec.europa/citizenship/index>

3. NEWS FROM BRUSSELS: MULTI ANNUAL PROJECTS

Frans Ronnes and Helma van Drunen went to Brussels to meet the new policy maker of the "Europe for Citizens Program" mr Jim Dratwa. He indicated the possibilities for the Charter in the program "Europe for Citizens" of the European Committee: the multi annual projects.

Multi-annual projects for networks of twinned towns are designed to provide established networks of towns with twinning relationships an opportunity to embark on more sustainable, substantial, strategic and structured co-operation. Allowing them also to focus on important thematic issues which are relevant both in the local and European context, thus bringing a certain degree of new intellectual dynamism and creativity to the town twinning field.

Prospective beneficiaries are expected to present an action plan which integrates a range of activities (such as citizens' meetings, expert workshops and conferences) within the network. This new feature complements and develops further the already existing project models such as thematic networking

ACTION 1

For those who have not done it yet: please send your delegation list as soon as possible to Lefkara

C.Cosma@alphabank.com.cy

between twinned towns. The grant request should contain a general description of what the network wants to achieve (action plan) within a 2 year period, including a detailed description of activities to be co-financed.

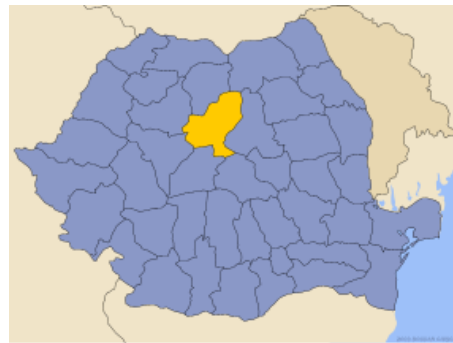
Such a two years action plan could mean for the Charter that we can apply for grants for the big meetings, but also for the small meetings and meetings of professional groups.

During the big meeting in Lefkara we will show a presentation of the possibilities.

Meanwhile you can look yourself at the possibilities on <http://ec.europa/citizenship/index>

4. IBANESTI - ROMANIA

From April 11th till 14th the president and vice president of the Charter and their communication officers will visit the village of Ibanesti in Romania. A representative of Ibanesti was present at the summer meeting in Lasse. The village would like to become a member of the Charter. During the visit the details about the membership will be discussed.



Location of Ibanesti

5. MEMBERSHIP OF SPAIN

Falset, the Spanish member of the Charter announced at the beginning of 2008 that the new local council has decided not to stay a member of the Charter anymore. The presidium is searching for another village in Spain.

6. REPORT OF THE SMALL MEETING IN KANNUS

From March 13th 2008 until March 16th 2008 Charter members of 6 different countries met each other in Kannus, Finland.

Participants: Frans Ronnes, president of the Charter; Helma van Drunen, secretary of the Charter, Theo van Roosmalen and Arno Leermakers from Esch (the Netherlands), Hermann Vehring and Rolf Pueschel from Hepstedt (Germany), Cosmas Cosma from Lefkara (Cyprus), Marek Sliwinski and Mariusz Kawa from Strzyzow (Poland), Vilija Alkesienė and Raimundas Tiskevicius from Zagare

(Lithuania) and from Kannus (Finland): Terttu Korte, Timo Kalermo and others.

During the meeting on Friday morning, matters about the Charter were discussed.

All participants were asked what the Charter means for them and what they do for the Charter.

Stryzow: became a member through Lasee in Austria. Stryzow likes to help people to travel to other Charter members and they also want to receive guests from the Charter villages. In 2010 they will organise the big summer meeting. Stryzow would like to know more about the possibilities the Charter has to offer, how we can work together and would like to be more involved. There is an action planned between Bucine and Stryzow. Mariusz Kawa is responsible for the international contacts.

Esch: The Esch committee Friends of Europe has a new president: Arno Leermakers. There have been bilateral contacts with Nadur (Malta), Ockelbo (Sweden) and with Holmegaard (Denmark). The Internet site of the Charter is often visited in Esch. The new president wants to involve young people in the Esch committee and in the Charter.

Zagare: Since one year member of the Charter; contacts with Sweden and Poland and of course with Kandava (Latvia), because it's just across the border. With their school, they are involved in a Comenius project with 10 Charter members. Malta is leading. They will also participate in the youth meeting in Bucine in June. They like to participate in the Charter and are planning to organise a small meeting in the future. They often visit the Charter website.

Lefkara is organising the big meeting this year. The municipality is very small; in the future, there will be a reorganisation and more small villages will be put together. For the Charter Lefkara would like to have more information on the Internet site and more reactions on the Internet from the other Charter villages. Lefkara likes to participate in all the meetings of the Charter, but because Cyprus is an island, they always have to fly and that is expensive. Lefkara thinks that every member of the Charter should be active. Lefkara also thinks that the delegations of villages should

not always be the same. Different people from the villages have to participate.

Hepstedt is a very small village, but very strong. They want to participate in as much activities from the Charter as possible, but it is not possible to participate in all activities. Hepstedt organised the big meetings in 1994 en 2004. Now they are organising another activity: a round table conference for members of the committees Friends of Europe. In 2008, there will be a small meeting of Friends of Europe members; in 2009, Hepstedt wants to organise a big meeting with the same subject. Hepstedt would like the Internet site more current; they also would like an archive of the site. Hepstedt thinks it is very important that Charter members approach their local newspapers and when there are articles in the local newspapers, they should be put on the Internet site.

Kannus organised the summer meeting in 1999. They have a lot of experience with the Charter. Kannus has a good contact with Polva, teachers do a lot of things together. Pupils and teachers are going to Polva. Kannus entrepreneurs have contacts with Ockelbo about several businesses. Kannus will participate in the youth meeting in Bucine.



Participants of the small meeting in Kannus

The other Charters matters that were discussed are noticed as separate items in this newsletter.

During the very pleasant and instructive call to Kannus, the participants visited a comprehensive school and the agriculture academy. There were contacts with the local council and entrepreneurs of Kannus and a visit to a factory where water is bottled and to a care centre for veterans. The participants visited an open air church in the middle of in the extended bunches of Kannus and during the hole stay enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Finnish friends. Such a visit gives a lot of new inspiration to stimulate more and intensive contacts between the Charter members. There are so many things we can learn from each other and there are so many things we can do together.

7. SMALL MEETING IN SAMUEL (PORTUGAL)

Because Cisse (France) and Moravce (Slovenia) had to cancel their participation in the small meeting in Samuel that would take place from February 1st till 5th, the date of the meeting was changed. The small meeting in Samuel is now going to take place from April 4th – 8th 2008.

Participants: Moravce (Slovenia), Polva (Estonia) and the vice-president, Karl Grammanitsch and Sandra Hengl from Lasse (Austria) There will also be three people from two different villages in Spain. One of them may become the new Spanish Charter member.

PROGRAM:

Friday, April 4th

- Arrival of all participants: we advise all participants to arrive in Lisbon airport and if possible, to arrive during the afternoon, so that we can organize transportation from Lisbon to Samuel.
- Meeting with the host families.

Saturday, April 5th

- 09.30- "Childhood and Old Age support in Samuel"
- 11.00- Coffee - break
- 11.30- Visit to the existent equipments in Samuel.
- 12.30- Lunch
- 14.30- Presentation of the situation in the country of each participant commune. (At this point, we invite all participant countries to present the situation they face in their community. This way, we have available for every members, audio and visual means and material that can support the presentations they eventually want to bring)
Dinner with the families

Sunday, April 6th

- 10.30- Holy Mess in Samuel Church
- Lunch at the families
- Visit to Coimbra/ Figueira da Foz
- Dinner at the families

Monday, April 7th

- 10.00- Discussion about possible projects to work out together, within Childhood and Old Age matters.
- Meeting with members of Europe Direct- DRABL.
- 12.00- Soure
- 14.30- Visit to some regions of our council
- Dinner with all delegations and families.

Tuesday, April 8th

- Departure of the delegations

8. ROUND TABLE MEETING OF FRIENDS OF EUROPE COMMITTEES

The friends of Europe in Hepstedt have invited the presidents of the Friends of Europe Committees of Esch, Cisse and Bievre for a "Round Table Talk" in Hepstedt from 01.05 till 05.05.2008. The topic for this table talk is the organisation of a meeting with all Chairmans of the friends of Europe Association and those, who would like to establish such a association in their country. The Date for the meeting should be in Autumn next year.

9. YOUTH MEETING IN BUCINE (ITALY)

Date: June 12th till 15th 2008.

Object: FESTIVAL OF ARTS "NE PAS COUVRIR", exchange between European young people interested in different kind of arts.

Several Charter members will participate in the Italian youth meeting. Within a few days

Bucine will hear if the European Committee has granted the subsidy.

10. SMALL MEETING IN MEDZEV (SLOVAKIA)

from September 18th to September 21st 2008.

Program:

September 18th 2008

- At 1pm: welcome of the representatives of countries at the municipality of Medzev and then to the host families.
- Dinner at host families.

September 19th 2008

- Breakfast at host families
- At 10am official reception at The municipality of Medzev with the mayor of Medzev and town representatives
- 12am - ceremonial lunch at USSteel training facility in Medzev
- 2pm conference about social help issues and unemployment in the condition of autonomy
 - Homecare service
 - Care about pensioners
 - Pensioners' houses in the area of the town and their administration
 - Activation work
- 6pm end of the conference. Ceremonial dinner

- 7.30pm cultural program provided by Elementary art school, Elementary school Grundschule, Kindergarten. Reception and informal meetings of the delegations

September 20th 2008

- Breakfast at host families
- Viewing of Slovak Red Cross social facilities in Medzev and Social Service Home in Medzev Sugov
- 1pm lunch in Social Service Home in Medzev Sugov
- 2pm visit of Kosice city
- Dinner at host families

September 21st 2008

- Breakfast at host families
- 8am visit of historical hammer mill with the presentation of forging
- 10am ceremonial saint mass
- 12am ceremonial lunch
- 1pm ceremonial end of program, meeting
- Transport to the airport

The deadline to accede to the Small meeting Medzev 2008 is April 30th . So please react as soon as possible to mesto@mezdev.sk.

ACTION 3

If you want to participate in the small meeting in Medzev, react before April 30th 2008 to:

Gerhard Ballasch:

ballasch@medzev.sk or mesto@medzev.sk

And send a copy to Helma van Drunen:

11. SMALL MEETING IN BIEVRE (BELGIUM)

Bièvre will organise a small meeting **from September 26th till September 28th 2008** at the occasion of the start of the cultural season in Bièvre. Program and details follow in the next newsletter.

12. NEW LEAFLET OF THE CHARTER

At the occasion of the village day, the municipality of Haaren (Esch) had the opportunity to develop and print a new Charter leaflet. Participants of the small meetings have already seen and got the flyer. The other members will get it at the meeting in Lefkara. The leaflets are available in the English and German language. There is an opportunity to receive the framework of the leaflet on CD and to add the text in your own language. You can ask Helma for such a CD

ACTION 4

If you want a CD with the framework of the new Charter flyer, react to Helma van Drunen: h.van.drunen@haaren.nl

13. EUROPE DIRECT

In every European Union country there are several information centres from "Europe Direct" that can give you information and especially a lot of materials about the EU.

Interested? Look at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europedirect/>

14. INVOLVE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND EUROPEAN COMMISSIONERS.

To make the Charter known at the decision makers in Brussels, it's important to involve your local members of the European Parliaments and national European Commissioners in the work of the Charter. Let them know what we are and what we are doing, invite them to meetings. It is a good way to make Brussels familiar with the unique character of our Charter.

15. INTERNETSITE www.europeancharter.eu

www.europeancharter.eu is *your* internet site!

Pay a visit to the site, but also very important: send information and pictures. The topicality and attractiveness of the site depends on your input.

ACTION 5

Send information and photographs to the Internet site of the Charter:
info@europeancharter.eu

Helma, March 25th 2008