

ESCH 2005 – 4 / 8 MAY

Meeting of the Mayors at Saturday, May 7th.

1. **Reception of the participants (Mayors and translators) at 8.45 a.m. in the Town Hall of Haaren (Esch).**
2. **Opening of the meeting by Mr Frans Ronnes, Mayor of Haaren (Esch), in the presence of Mr Van Nistelrooij, Deputy Dutch European and examination of the files on the agenda**

Presentation of the plan of "the Friends of Europe" by the members of the delegation of Holmegaard (Dk) that in 2006, wants to organize a meeting of "the friends of Europe", on the occasion of the 200th date of death of Andersen, as a contribution to the unification of the twinning municipalities of the Charter.

Welcome to the new villages from the countries which recently became a member of the European Union.

Mr. Ronnes invites the members to report about the progress by the search for villages in the remaining countries.

Ocana (Spain) is replaced by Falset, commune located between Barcelona and Tarragone. Concerning Malta, attempts of Bucine (Italy) and Desborough (GB) must lead to contacts. Lastly, Mr Grammatisch, Mayor of Lassees (Austria) informs the members of the twinning that 2 communes of Latvia and Lithuania would be interested by the Charter of Rural Communities of Europe. In principle, all 25 countries should be represented at the time of the next meeting of the Mayors envisaged in Nagycenk (Hungary).

Communication: Mr Ronnes requests all members to name a referent within each community, charged with passing on all relevant information of its municipality. It concerns mail addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses and Internet sites. As soon as possible after the festivities of Esch 2005 the data of all municipalities must be updated.

Meeting of the Mayors in Nagycenk (Hungary) 23 to 25/09/2005: the organization of the meeting of the Mayors is ensured by the Hungarian delegation; each delegation will be composed of 2 members. Arrival at the airports of Bratislava and Vienna is possible preferably Friday at the beginning of the afternoon. A program of cultural discovery will be proposed to the delegations present at this occasion.

Meeting of the young people in Bucine (Italy): A program of work and visits is being prepared for a period of 4-5 days probably in October 2005; the file is refined and should definitively be born during May.

The exchange of work for the young people: the aim of this initiative, that it is conducted by the municipality Bucine, is request the participating municipalities to find employers likely to accommodate young graduates and/or workers who would wish to know new and rich professional experiments. The Commune of Holmegaard already undertook to organize this type of exchanges, but on a less scale, with Hepstedt.

Finances of association:

Mrs Savin tackles the problem of finances under 3 angles:

- **Contributions:** She recalls that the amount of the contribution is € 400,-- for each community and distributes to each community the call with contribution for 2005,

stressing that the communities of Cissé, Hepstedt and Strzyzow already discharged it. For 2004, she stresses that the communities of Bievre, Kolindros, Samuel and Ockelbo are always indebted of this contribution.

- **Assistances with the exchanges:** She points out the principle of the exchanges between the communities of the charter: to facilitate the exchanges to discover on administrative, cultural, sports or professional level, the practices of the sistercommunities over one 2/3 days period on the spot. She proposes that a help of € 2 500 is allocated for this type of exchanges.
- **Assistances with the organization of the meeting of the Mayors or the European Manifestation:** finances of the Charter make it possible to finance this type of exchanges, provided the corresponding costs are sufficiently detailed and in connection with the exchange in question. Precise rules are to be envisaged and could be discussed during the meeting of the Mayors in Hungary in September 2005.

Théo Douma will give a progress report on the request for financial assistance formulated by the organizing Commission of the festival 2005.

3. Intervention of Mr Van Nistelrooij, European Deputy of the Netherlands.

A very remarkable intervention of a Dutch deputy of the European Parliament.

- Remarkably: the charter uses only one language, English, whereas in the European Commission everything are translated in all languages of the Member States.
- Reflexion: the campaign for the European Constitution beats its full and the Charter finds its place there by supporting the meeting between people.
- Prospects: the charter has chosen durable agriculture as a topic, important topic within the European Commission, which wants deploy more resources on the financing of original initiatives in the field of cooperation in agriculture, particularly in the creation of a 3rd fund to stimulate the rural development and the initiatives

4. Work of groups about the expectations of the new members of the Charter.

Five working groups were made with the aim to answer several questions which will have to be discussed in Nagycenk (Hungary) in September.

- On the topic of the partnership within the twinning, the reactions related to the need for being concrete in the projects so that each new member knows what it can find there and what it can bring. It appeared also necessary to re-examine the drafting of article 1 of the Charter.
- Concerning the contribution of the new communities to the twinning, the answers relate to the discovery of each others traditions and cultures.
- As for associations Friends of Europe, not all the communes are equipped with it; their possible creation results in fact more on the will of citizens than of a political good-will. However, without political good-will, it is difficult for a group of people to make adhere a group widened citizens to the idea of Europe.
- Lastly, in connection with the exchanges of young people or groups of professional socio categories, it appears that the exchanges exist, but often it is difficult to implement them.

5. Conclusions

The different communities are asked to think about the possible organization of the next meetings. The known dates are:

<u>Year</u>	<u>European Meeting</u>	<u>Meeting of the Mayors</u>
2005	Esch (The Netherlands)	Nagycekk (Hungary)
2006	Cissé (France)	
2007	Lasseo (Austria)	

Frans Ronnes, President of the Charter, requests the members of the Charter to sign the text of the agreement again, because of the extension of the charter. Also he requests each delegation to think about the application conditions of the European Constitution.

The meeting of the Mayors was closed with a photograph as a memory and a toast on friendship