

Outcomes of the small meeting with European youngsters in Naestved

We proudly present the outcomes of the workshop with youngsters from Danmark, Latvia, Cyprus, Portugal, Italy, Austria and the Netherlands in Naestved. The small meeting was held from March 13 2009 to March 18 2009.

We developed four main topics:

1. Information
2. Share experiences
3. Meet local youth
4. More responsibility

Information

We think it's very necessary that the youth gets more information about what the charter is, what it does and why it's so important for them; what value adds Europe to your life? We started thinking about the ways that could be used to reach this goal.

- Mouth-to-mouth advertisement
- Posters
- Brochures / Flyers
- Billboards
- Signs
- Website
- Facebook
- Articles in local newspapers / media
- Presentations
- PowerPoint
- Movies

We think that it's a good idea to develop one PowerPoint and / or promotion movie that could be used all over Europe. The only thing the local Friends of Europe / Community (Youth Coordinator ???) has to do is to adapt the presentation to the local situation.

Then, we started to discuss about the contents of these promotion materials.

- Not too much information
- Short general information
- Local and International contact information
- Experiences
- Pictures
- Catchy and attractive Lay-out
- Catchy phrase
 - Meet Europe for Free

Free could be interpreted in many different ways: it's free to discover Europe, it's free to discover new experiences et cetera. So free mustn't be necessarily be interpreted in a financial / economic way, although it's much cheaper to discover Europe via the charter because of the contributions of the European Union itself.

Share experiences

In our opinion, sharing your experiences is very important. Of course this should be done in the way we just mentioned under the title information, but we think it's very important to mention it as a separated topic either because of its importance.

Meet local youth

When there's a meeting of the charter in your town / community, invite local youngsters. It's interesting for the participants to meet people from the host country, but inviting local youngsters could be seen as one big promotion for the charter too. They will discover how nice it is to meet other European youngsters and they'll get comfortable with the charter. They could be invited as performers (music / dancing clubs or something), spectators or participants.

To promote the charter, it would be valuable to invite local media as well so they can write something in the local newspaper about the meeting and the charter.

Finally, the participants asked for more contact with local families. It's great to stay all together in one building; you could meet several youngsters from several countries and you learn to know many different cultures. But it would be nice to meet the local, host culture too. Maybe it's a good idea to split up the whole group in several smaller groups that go to have dinner at local families' places or something.

More responsibility

In order to involve more youth in the charter, we agreed that if you're chosen to participate in one of the charter meetings you'll carry the responsibility to share your experiences with it when you're returned.

By appointing youth contact persons, we've already increased the influence in the local Friends of Europe / organizations. (we hope that at least!) But the participants (especially the participating youth contact persons) would like to know what the responsibilities of these youth contact persons are. We came to the following list:

- Take care of an active communication with the youth coordinator.
 - *This is necessary to discover difficulties on local level early. So if it's for instance difficult for a member to find youngsters to participate, we could discuss it and exchange experiences. Or if there's a local festival where the member would like to invite other European youngsters, the youth coordinator could connect them to other countries and, when necessary, to the presidium / daily board.*
- Pass on information to the local youth; inform them about what's happening in the charter.
- Pass through valuable information to Gunther (one of the webmasters who's responsible for the youth part of the website).

- *For instance, the community of Bucine and Diversi Uguagli are organizing the youth festival ne pas couvrir. The youth contact person could send a little piece of information to promote the festival which will be placed on the youth part of the website.*
- Depending on the system the local community / Friends of Europe is using, the youth contact person should be able to search and appoint participants for the meetings or give some advices to the responsible one(s).

We also think that it's necessary that the youngsters have regularly contact with the presidium / daily board of the charter to inform them about what the youth wants, thinks and means. That last thing is very important, because the 'adults' shouldn't interpret the proposals / ideas / thoughts of the youth in a different way than they were meant to be interpreted. This contact could be done by the Youth coordinator or a little group of youngsters, which would be the youth coordinator's personal proposal.

Lastly, we would like to give some advices for the meeting in Stary Poddvorov:

- Organize a workshop where the youth can work on the promotion materials we mentioned earlier.
- Organize a workshop where could be talked about the dvd that has to be created.
- Organize a moment where the participants of the meeting in Naestved could explain this to the mayors of the member communities.

We agreed that all the participant will send a short comment about the meeting to Gunther, so he could put something on the webpage. We'd like to do this after the future meetings as well; collect some comments and put them with some pictures on the webpage. We'll also put some pictures on the facebook community page.

Boy Scholtze, 18-03-2009