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ADULTS MEETING REPORT

**BIG MEETING
OF THE CHARTER OF EUROPEAN RURAL COMMUNITIES
IN NADUR – MALTA
19/07/2018 - 23/07/2018**



EUROPEAN CHARTER OF RURAL COMMUNITIES ANNUAL MEETING – NADUR (GOZO, MALTA)

Participation: The event involved 213 citizens, including:

8 participants from the city of Lasseo (Austria),
6 participants from the city of Bievre (Belgium),
6 participants from the city of Tisno (Croatia),
6 participants from the city of Lefkara (Cyprus),
8 participants from the city of Stary Poddvorov (Czech Republic),
8 participants from the city of Naestved (Denmark),
12 participants from the city of Polva (Estonia),
8 participants from the city of Kannus (Finland),
8 participants from the city of Cisse (France),
8 participants from the city of Hepstedt (Germany),
2 participants from the city of Kolindros (Greece),
8 participants from the city of Nagycenk (Hungary),
6 participants from the city of Cashel (Ireland),
6 participants from the city of Bucine (Italy),
8 participants from the city of Kandava (Latvia),
8 participants from the city of Zagare (Lithuania),
8 participants from the city of Troisvierges (Luxembourg),
23 participants from the city of Nadur (Malta)
8 participants from the city of Esch (Netherlands),
5 participants from the city of Strzyzow (Poland),
7 participants from the city of Samuel (Portugal),
8 participants from the city of Ibanesti (Romania),
8 participants from the city of Medzev (Slovakia),
8 participants from the city of Moravce (Slovenia),
6 participants from the city of Bienvenida (Spain),
8 participants from the city of Ockelbo (Sweden),
8 participants from the city of Desborough (United Kingdom).

Location / Dates: The event took place in the city of Nadur, in the island of Gozo (Malta), from 19th July 2018 to 23rd July 2018.

Description:

The aim of the event was to have delegations from EU member states participating in this Annual Meeting of the European Charter of Rural Communities, at the municipality of Nadur, to discuss the official theme of the programme *"Solidarity. Realization of the idea of solidarity in times of crisis. Responsibility in the context of common challenges faced by Europe"*.

The meeting was held on a span of 5 days as explained further below, and it built upon the previous Charter meetings held in other member states.

The day of 19/07/2018 was dedicated to the arrivals of all the delegations from the EU member states, whereby a dedicated group of organisers welcomed the delegations in Gozo, led them toward the Municipality of Nadur for a warm welcome and to meet their host families, provided a welcome pack with several items about the islands of Malta, met the Municipality representatives and administration, and were given a brief about the activities to be held. All delegations were able to spend some time with the respective host families, orientate themselves, and then a get together was organised at Nadur main square during



the evening to serve as an ice breaker and for all delegates to meet and get to know each other.

The day of 20/07/2018 was dedicated to an official ceremony as well as separate activities and culinary event. In fact, the morning started with a breakfast with the host families, followed by a gathering at the main street in Nadur at the Band Club. There we welcomed the Honorable Minsiter for Gozo as well as the Chairman of the Valletta 2018 Foundation and other distinct members, and a parade was held including local marching band and flags towards the main square. The Official opening ceremony included ceremonial speeches by the Minister for Gozo, V18 Chairman, Mayor and President of the Charter amongst others, as well as local dancing groups. Another parade followed along Nadur streets towards Kenuna Botanical Garden for the inauguration of the commemorative monument made by a local mosaic artist, whereby each mayor or representative had to attach an orange with the respective flag to symbolise the fraternity between states. The monument represented the rurality and agriculture of Nadur. This was followed by an organised lunch at Nadur where local pizza made in old bakeries was served. Then the group was separated in three parts, having a Mayor's meeting at the Municipality, sports activities for the youths at Ramla Bay, as well as Culinary and Traditional Produce Visit at Magro Brothers Factory and Xewkija Rotunda for the adults. In the evening, the ever popular Culinary Night was held at Council Garden where each country had its own traditional food and drinks stand. Local families were invited to participate.

The day of 21/07/2018 was dedicated to the workshops, historical tour and local summer event and food. In fact, following the breakfast with host families, the group was separated in two, whereby adults met at the Band Club Hall while the youths met at the Museum Boys Hall for the workshops to discuss the programme's theme. Both workshops were led by social policy experts with the assistance of local participants, and in both workshops, the groups were divided into smaller groups to discuss different topics, after which presentations were made followed by further generic discussions. The workshops were followed by an organised lunch at the Parish Hall whereby traditional local food was served. The afternoon was dedicated to a historical and cultural visit around Gozo, where the group was given the opportunity to visit three UNESCO heritage sites being the Temples of Ggantija, the Cittadella, as well as Dwejra Bay. In the evening, a special local BBQ was organised for the delegations and host families at Dahlet Qorrot Bay – fishing port.

The day of 22/07/2018 started by a gathering at the Main Street followed by a parade with the Nadur marching band till the main Square, using the country flags and meeting locals on a Sunday morning. The group then attended for a Roman Catholic Mass Service at the Basilica of Nadur, during which representatives from each member state participated actively during the mass. Following the mass service, a vintage and military car show was held at the Nadur main square. In the afternoon, all delegates were free to spend their time with the host families. The evening included the Closing Event and Dinner for all delegates and host families, as well as the organising team, during which local and folk music entertained, and presentations were held by all delegations.

The day of 23/07/2018 involved an early breakfast for all delegations, and then the group was split as some of the delegations had to leave due to flights. The remaining participants were hosted by Valletta 2018 Foundation for a walking tour at Valletta City, followed by a light lunch at Fort Saint Elmo in Valletta, before heading towards the airport.



Workshops:

The workshops were held separately for Adults and Youths in order to be able to discuss the theme from a different perspective. The organisers also ensured that the discussions are held in small groups, and different topics were discussed. The theme related to “Solidarity. Realisation of the idea of solidarity in times of crisis. Responsibility in the context of common challenges faced by Europe” and following pre-discussions with the experts, the organising team selected four topics to be discussed during the workshops, being, Demographic Challenges and Brain Drain, Economic Growth and Divide, Participation and Citizenship, as well as Migration and Extremism/Populism. All these topics were discussed by different small groups during the workshops, in relation to Solidarity and Tolerance. All delegates were advised in advance about the topic they will be discussing to ensure preparedness, and the organising team ensured that participants of same delegations discuss all topics. The moderator for the Adult discussions was Professor Andrew Azzopardi – Dean of the Faculty of Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta, while the Youth Discussions were led by Mr. Joseph Bruno Vella – an expert in European Public Policy and Public Policy and Management and works as Chief of Staff at one of the Government Ministries.

The aims of the workshops were to have a mixture of ideas and views, discuss the current situation in the different countries and rural towns, assess how the problems and realities are affecting people and towns, and to discuss how the EU may come up with solutions. The discussions were very fruitful and went into detail especially from a rural town perspective.

Publicity on Local Media:

<https://www.newsbook.com.mt/artikli/2018/07/18/nadur-to-host-the-charter-of-european-rural-communities/?lang=en>

<http://gozonews.com/72201/nadur-to-host-meeting-of-the-european-charter-of-rural-communities/>

<https://valletta2018.org/news/150-delegates-representing-the-european-charter-of-rural-communities-visit-valletta/>

<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180729/gozo/eu-event-in-nadur.685572>

<https://www.tvm.com.mt/en/news/nadur-residents-to-host-200-participants-from-european-countries/>

<https://www.pressreader.com/malta/the-malta-independent-on-sunday/20180722/281762745043938>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICAHVUIsW4E>

<http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-07-22/newspaper-opinions/Gozo-takes-centre-stage-6736193788>