

## Declaration of Wellenstein

*Mrs. Fischer Boel,*

*For ninety days twenty people of different nationalities and ages travelled through the European countryside. They travelled through twenty-three countries and it was their intention to discover the countryside and the people who live there. The time they could spend in one place and in one country was very limited. The European countryside to them became a film of impressions.*

*The journey was organised by the movement Cultural Village of Europe that grew on the European countryside from 1996 onwards. The journey now comes to an end. Cultural Village of Europe is very grateful to the European Commissioner Mrs. Fischer Boel that she is the first who is willing to hear a report of the journey.*

On our journey we have seen beautiful regions. We are also impressed by what the various communities and individuals have made and are making of the place they live.

There are people who move to the countryside, either temporarily or permanently. We saw pensioners from England who bought houses in the countryside of France, Spain, Bulgaria and Slovenia to spend the third part of their life there. We saw an explosive increase in the number of apartment buildings, hotels and agro-tourism facilities for urban people who need the countryside every now and then to recharge themselves. The city alone is no longer enough for them. It has become very clear to us that city people cannot live without the countryside.

The care for that enormous countryside is a heavy burden on the people living on it, especially on farmers. We have seen farms and talked to farmers in all countries. They have for centuries worked the land and formed the landscape. The great changes have brought not just progress, but also uncertainty about the future, about who will succeed them in

their company and about the way they have to do their work.

There are various developments. Food production and shaping the landscape are, for example, by some seen as different tasks. Some farmers try to provide a product at the lowest possible price. Other farmers are concerned about the quality of their product and proud of the local product that they think it is worth its price. They make their product a part of the region. The surroundings in which production takes place are connected to the product. Yet other farmers make their living a special place, one where other people like to come. The earth is not just the place where food is grown and where trees grow, but also the ground on which people and animals live. Slowly but surely, the countryside is starting to realise this.

We also saw a group of people that is moving away from the countryside. Young people, after finishing high school, need to go to the cities for further education. Additionally, most jobs are found in the cities. The culture of the city is also very attractive for young people. Some small communities are

thinking about how to get the youth back after their studies. They think of jobs, but also of attractiveness. More and more villages are realising that they have freedom to offer: the space, the campfire, the walk through the forest and along the water. On the countryside, people always have their landscape and horizon with them. This is what we experienced and this is the new attractiveness of the small communities.

We have seen how individual qualities of active and creative people in the countryside can come to prosper. No one has to 'be a number'. There is virtually always a lack of helping hands and people who take the initiative, people who know how to turn a building or a piece of land into an attractive place for many. Nonetheless, on our journey we have encountered several such people. They created places which made villages stand out, and which increased their attractiveness.

People tend to see village culture as something of low value. You don't pay for a ticket to see the performance of the local brass band. In art and culture the most important thing is who can make or do something best. This has stopped many people who have less than excellent voices from singing. In village culture participation is most important. We have seen a lot of music and dance groups on the road who invited us to participate.

The Europatour has met with enormous hospitality on many of its stops. In these places we found not closed, but open communities. This hospitality could go as far as for us to wonder whether the Tour participants deserved such treatment. This was a true revelation for the travellers who before knew the village as a closed community.

Small communities can arrange things in very short order. They are organisations of people and not of institutions. We have had a lot to do with these

during our journey. There is enough social cohesion in the countryside to realise this hospitality, while in other areas of society social cohesion is weakening. We have also seen initiatives to improve the relationships between generations. This theme we consider so important that it was the subject of one of the four workshops the Tour attended.

The movement Cultural Village of Europe will continue the road it has taken, strengthened by this trip. Last year the Estonian village of Killingi Nõmme was cultural village of Europe. Next year it will be the German Schachdorf Ströbeck. At the same time we will use our experiences from the tour to start up an internet magazine. This magazine will not only bring villages across Europe closer together and strengthen them, but also explore the different themes that are important to small communities – and therefore to society at large. The magazine will be called The Rake. This is a tool that collects. The aim of the magazine will be to collect different voices, rather than to trumpet one.

As speaker from the Europatour I would like to thank you, Mrs. Fischer Boel for hearing our story. As ambassador of Cultural Village I would like to ask you to support our initiatives, on the one hand to start the internet magazine and on the other to recognize the importance of international exchange at the level at which we work.

We are moved by the personal character and colour of so many places in the different countries. We had a name for it during the tour: "special places". The countryside has many faces. Individuality can prosper there. For the national states and for Europe, which unmistakably tend to level things, having a vast countryside can prove to be healthy. We would like to ask you to recognize and appreciate the right of small communities to have their own face.

# Editorial

In this edition we give a first impression of the Europatour that came to an end on the 25th of October in Wellenstein in Luxembourg. We show pictures of places visited, a list with the names of the places and participants and the declaration of Wellenstein in Luxembourg where the Tour happened to meet Mrs Marjann Fischer Boel, the commissioner of agriculture of the EU.

The results of the Tour will be worked out in different ways. Filmers Sonja Kilbertus and Roeë Gazit are working on their film documents about the tour. Cultural Village is working on its responsibility towards the sponsors and on an elaboration of the results. The first result is the Declaration of Wellenstein that is published in this newsletter.

On the website [www.europatour.org](http://www.europatour.org) is a forum for reaction and discussion. The editors of the Rake hope to collect in this way materials for the different items of the Europatour.

In Taraskowo in Poland we met the Wojt and his secretary. He explained how the system works with two 'mayors'. The Solotysz as the mayor of small communities and the Wojt as the mayor of the bigger municipality.



Above: The Oxenroad Inn near Marttila in Finland appeared to be a very special place.

Middle: After passing the Hungarian-Croatian border we saw a bakery with the name 'New Europe'. We had to buy something. The taste was wonderful.

## List of participants Europatour

Alise, Jeroen Besseling, Andy Bertram, Jelle Bruinenberg, Jitka Cupalova, Martina Cupalova, Smaragdi Daliato, Roeë Gazit, Irene Gerlofsma, Ruud Gerlofsma, Kuba Gogolewski, Shahar Golan, Otto Haaijer, Edwin Haakman, Jacqueline Hamers, Herta, Grietsje Hoekstra, Paul Honig, Anke Huisman, Krisztina Kerekes, Sonja Kilbertus, Bas Kisjes, Bert Kisjes, Ivan Kisjes, Elmar Kleijn, Ruud van der Klooster, Yoran Levisohn, Klara Lunackova, Hubert Martin, Sergei Martynyuk, Anna Christien Meijs, Petra Moerman, Carolien van Mol, Leo Nijman, Ben Overzee, Hans Peter Pluim, Leo Probst, Renze Sleeking, Erica de Roever, Bob Roos, Johanna and Evert Schuurman, Josse Sharrard, Jaap Spaan, Helmi Starkenburg, Marjan Stuiver, Atanas Tcholakov, Tomas Tetiva, Vincent Tijms, Martin Velthuis, Margriet Verheijden, Petra Vesela, Paul ten Westeneind sr, Paul ten Westeneind jr., Dalit Wolf, Milada Zhanelova.



# Route

○ villages  
→ route

Wijk aan Zee (NL), in different hotels  
Freckenhorst (D), on a biofarm,  
Schachdorf Ströbeck (D), sport accommodation  
Rot Gutenhausen (D), organic farm  
Tommerup (DK), in Vestfyns efter skole  
Laholme SW), camping  
Söderköping (SW), camping  
Stockholm (SW), parking place  
Martilla (FIN), Oxenroad Inn  
Vojjakala (FIN), around a cultural place  
Killingi Nõmme (EE), sport accommodation  
Kastire (LA), in a school  
Luksiai (LI), cultural place  
Taraskowo (PL) farmers camping  
Janov Lubelski (PL), camping  
Momoty Gorné (PL), as guest on the camping  
Jakubovany (SK), school  
Vavrisova (SK), as guest on the camping  
Bystré (CZ), sport and theatre building  
Nezdrev (CZ) private garden  
Kirchheim (A) around the firestation  
Polana (SLOV), cultural centre  
Palkonya (H), Cultural house  
Koska (CR), sport field  
Lazarevo (SERB) sport accommodation  
Caprinis (RU), garden of the townhall  
Rosiori de Vede, sportaccommodation  
Sable (BUL), camping at the sea  
Glozenski, (BUL), monastery  
Vyronia (GR), sport accommodation  
Métsovo (GR), parking place of restaurant  
Paxos (GR) former school

Ferry Igoumenitsa – Ancona on the boat  
Pergine Valdarno (I) Agro tourism accommodation,  
former factory  
Seborga (I), in the grass of the town on the hill.  
Les Beaux (F), between the rocks before a cave  
Le Caylar (F), as guest on a camping  
Lavaur (F), on a farmyard  
Baranain (ES) in the theatre of a suburb  
Porrúa (ES) in a guesthouse  
St Pee (F), on a recreation place  
Naujac sur Mer (F) Chess camping  
St Lévin (F) private house  
Mellionnec (F) private families  
Abbeville (F) F1 many in one hotelroom  
Aldeburgh (GB) private families  
Charleroi (B) F1 hotel  
Wellenstein (LUX), house of the community

## CULTURAL VILLAGE of EUROPE

### Colophon:

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# How do you live with nature?

*Summary of the workshop on the 19th of October in Locarn (Bretagne)*

To lead the discussion, we found three topics :

- nature as a natural area to preserve
- nature as a resource for activities
- nature as landscape, living environment

Then we brought out a common issue :

Concerning the sustainable development of rural territories, how can rural villages play their part ?

## **General summary of the workshops :**

In general, a first assesment makes it difficult for the participants to foresee the future.

Through the three topics, we identified a common issue: Nature has to be systematically seen as including mankind.

Mainlines to develop are :

- 1 a education  
b training  
c transmission of knowledge  
declaring: 'you cannot do without nature'.
- 2 a to share and capitalize on experiences  
b use shared resources to put in place local and mutual policies.

This mutualization and capitalization should enable us to :

- Reestablish a positive image of the countryside
- Develop the idea that economic and social activities can have human dimensions, show solidarity, be environmentally friendly and be linked to the territory.
- Innovate and create space for freedom of mind.

## **Role of Cultural Villages of Europe**

To achieve the above objectives, we must :

- Work through the alliance of territories: Cultural Villages of Europe is a set of alliances of territories, a sum of abilities and resources.
- Give impetus to and support individual and collective plans which are innovative, create added value and which fuel our shared resources.



Above: The floating sauna was a big attraction during the closing party of the last village festival in Killingi Nömme on the 7th of August.

Below: Monica explains her 500 ha. foresting company in Vaxtorp, Sweden.







## *Personal Reflection on Europatour, Sonja Kilbertus, Nov. 2005*

*For me the proposal of joining the Europatour to document it on video was extremely appealing, because people with basic values and ideas seemed to be confident enough to formulate and promote them in a unique way. Coming from an Art Academy, where never anything can be good enough., the thoughts and practices about culture were fascinating and refreshingly different. When I really experienced them embodied in villages like Mellionec (France) , Palkonya (Hungary), Luksiai (Lithuania) and last but not least Wijk aan Zee, they developed to be healing and nurturing for me.*

*Agreeing with the charta of villages, the process of creation – be it food, products of daily use or art and culture, should be more or at least equal important to the outcome. I have been experiencing the opposite in making films in my surroundings. But can the creation of art be so important, that you neglect basic human or social values while “producing” art? Thought further: Can a dress be regarded as beautiful, if an indian child sew it? Can a Tafelspitz be acknowledged, if the cow had to “produce” the meat in a factory?*

*Being on Europatour confronted me in an impressive way with the broader consequences of our daily actions; be it production, consumption or communication with the people around you.*

*This text is not a commercial: We did not only see the beautiful mediteranean light stroking smooth hilland, but also the rocky and scarce canyons, lashed by heavy rain. Wherever there is light there is shadow and I think we all experienced, how narrow the path, we are walking on ourselves, is. Do we really want to be social, look at other people and create a community? Individual forces are strong, luckily, but the boarder to egocentrism is only one step away.*

*Group dynamics develop before one even realises, exclusion of individuals and scapegoating is the easiest way to define and to close a group. Communities are strong, but strength can also be a danger. As long as there is a heart, awareness and open eyes this can be reduced to a minimum though, and I saw a lot of open eyes and hearts throughout those 3 months on the run.*

*Sonja Kilbertus, Vienna, 14th of November 2005*

Reception in the Bolera of Porrúa in Asturias.  
The filling of a glass of cider is a special art over there...



A farmer shows his sizeable farm in Tommerup in Denmark.  
A less fertile piece of his land he makes accessible for everybody. People can freely go there.



The director of the school (in the middle) in Vojjakla in Finland teaches us the history of his country.



In the arched cellars of this very old farm on the plateau of Larzac in southern France you will find the nicest sheep shed in the world.





During the workshop about village culture in Killingi Nõmme several groups with a camera were sent into the village with the task of making a short film. So we tried to experience how even the art of filming can be used for village culture.



The firemen volunteers in Schachdorf Ströbeck cooked for the Europatour.



The fire place is the heart of the cultural centre in Lukšiai in Lithuania, situated in the buildings of a former Kolchoz.



A retired soldier in Rusona in Latvia makes a bit money by growing ¼ ha of berries. But he likes it better to make sculptures of the wood he finds. You'll find them anywhere on the farmyard.



Vincent speaks to the participants of the workshop about nature in Mellionec in France.



Traces of the recent war we found also in Koska in Croatia.



In Velika Polana in Slovenia we were surprised by a group of singers. They came to the place where the Europatour stayed.



The whole village Caprinis in Rumania is engaged when there is the celebration of a marriage. So you can celebrate it on the street as well.



This church has been built illegally and without any design in the communist time in Momoty Gorné in Poland.



Strotz, the mayor of Wellenstein, Bert Kisjes of Cultural Village and Jan Hartholdt representative of the Dutch ministry of Agriculture in Wellenstein before the conclusive dinner with the EU Commissioner for Agriculture.



Keeping snakes and turtles makes it better to live in village and not in Budapest. So his family moved to Palkonya and is an attraction over there and not a burden in the city any more..



The Greek orthodox chapel of the Glozenski monastery high in the mountains of Bulgaria.



The Principality Seborga on the top of a mountain at the Italian Riviera wants to be independant. From the window of the mayors office in the evening you see the lights of Monaco just after the French border.







On the left from top to bottom:

Elderly people on Paxos tell us their story about Paxos. They are also involved in a meeting a few days later about the relation between generations a few days later in Tuscany.

Our hosts in Pergine Valdarno in Tuscany prepare pizza's in one of the community kitchens. This kitchen was built by the community for associations and families . Cooking on a big scale is the main ingredient of every party in Italy.

A visit to Julius Armas' Chess camping in Naujac sur Mer near Bordeaux. On the left Julius Armas who won the first Sonnevanc Master Tournament in Wijk aan Zee in 1987.

In Lavaur near Toulouse we were the guest of a farmers family. The farm was on the top of a hill. Together with the family we ate in the farmyard.

Mrs Mariann Fisher Boel speaks in Wellenstein to the participants of the Europatour.



In Kastire in Latvia we were received by a whirling dance group.



In Vavrisovo in Slovakia 70 farmers made a tractor themselves. Buying one is too expensive for farmers with only a few hectares.



In Serbian Lazarevo a lot of children came to the camp of the Europatour to make drawings on the big role of paper where children of the other villages





In Sweden and Slovakia a terrible storm destroyed many forests. In both countries it was a national catastrophe. The picture is from Sweden.



Above: The mayor, her predecessor and the youth listen to the national hymn played by Hans Peter on his trumpet on the occasion of the departure of the Europatour. The youth organised a music festival in Bystré.



Middle: Reception in the French Village Le Caylar.

Middle below: The Czech participant Petra Veselá is friendly received by the chair of the Cultural association of a village of Slovakian emigrants in Croatia. In the 18th century they moved into this place. Now they are a close and active community.



Visit to a family house in Sabla in Eastern Bulgaria.. In the outside kitchen the family prepares the winter stock.



Right below: At of the farmyard of the organic farm in Gut Rotenhausen in Germany..



'Cirque de Navacelles' a phenomenon of nature on the border of the plateau of Larzac near Le Caylar.



Above: Johanna from Paxos teaches the youth of the island modern dances.

Below: The cows of Franz in Kirchheim get good food. His family tries to keep a small farm alive. Ten years ago he renewed his small stable after the best advise he could get. And now the ideas about what is good changed again but he does not have the money to build a new stable again. He does not have a child either to take it over.







Above: Near Vryonia stands a copy of the famous Athos monastery.  
Athos is only for men. This monastery is for women.

Below: The parliament of Aaland that is independent with its 20.000 inhabitants, under the sovereignty of Finland..

Below: Biohof in Freckenhorst in Germany.



The village pub in South Bohemian Nezdrev.  
Here we met the people of the village.  
On the background the building of the village administration.