Cultural Village of Europe Economic Conference in Ströbeck 6 – 9 October 2006



Contribution from WIJK AAN ZEE, NETHERLANDS



A CONTRIBUTION IN THE SEARCH FOR NEW JOBS ON THE EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDE

by Bert Kisjes

Proposal.

In the years since 1999 we accentuated inside the network of cultural villages the cultural side. Its in our name 'Cultural' village.

At least five of the 12 villages have a big problem with economics, that means in the shape of unemployment. We heard the stories in Killingi Nomme, in Palkonya, in Bystré, Mellionnec and here in the Chessvillage. Here we heard the story of a community economically based on the cultivating of its 1200 hectares. Almost everybody had a job in this context. After the political changes of Die Wende it all changed. The 1200 hectares needed only 10 persons to be cultivated. So came unemployment into existence. And it takes many years to overcome the consequences.

The lack of jobs is not on;y an item in the part of the countryside that we know very well. Its one of the mayor problems the governments and the Europen Union see in the countryside. And they do not like to promote a further migration towards the cities on economical reasons.

I think we are able to do something in this connection. We hould not exaggerate our possibilities. But we should also not underestimate our possibilities. We have a knowledge that other experts don't have. We know something of the countryside and together we know a lot more. We trust each other and that makes our talk rather open. One of the conclusions from some people of the Europatour was the openness of the villages we visited. They were used to closed villages. Completely locked for the outsiders. During the Europatour we almost everywhere found an open mind. The language problems we have – eleven different languages in 12 villages - we know somehow to bridge them.

In our villages live also young ambitious people. For them I have a challenge. I think especially on these young people to take a task on their shoulders that reaches further than he own village and further that the network of cultural villages as well. Make it true that the centre of the world is the place where you live. As a network of cultural villages we have an entrance in different ministries of agriculture. We even had a dinner with the EU commissioner of agriculture. That means that we know where to go when find some solutions, when we will come to some results.

What to do.

Give special attention to the search for jobs. We have a lot of young women who organise every year a cultural village. Everywhere are found new young women. And they do it. The surprise everybody. We should ask these women to do it. To find these new jobs. We ask them to do it for three years. No task should be a load for ever. They donot have to find or make these jobs themselves. Let them organize and bring together the people who are able to do so. Their task is to bring the people together. And they put the questions and try to keep the way that leads to a goal.

We have an idea about these ways. We are a bit experienced in talking about this kind of stuff on our conferences.and meetings. We can use the knowledge we got since we in 1999 started to meet each other.

We know about the importance of Local knowledge.

We know about the attractivity of the countryside in relation to the attractivity of the cities.

We know about the importance of the relation with the cities.

We will find the experts and we will be able to seduce to cooperate and work with us.

We will need some money to realize this idea.

First we need money for travelling and communication of the people who are going to do it. The commission should be able to function without being a load for the villages. There will be money needed for publication and dissemination o the results. It will be a good task for The Rake but for printing you need money.

And if we need international meetings, there will be needed money as well.

And it would be good to find some money as well for the work of at least one person. To be sure that the work that should be done has rally be done. Even within a time limit..

In 2010 we should have our conclusions.

For this plan I ask your support

Bert Kisjes