

Newsletter

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What's Inside

EHTTA's
General Assembly
Page 01 - 03

Task Force EHTTA
Page 03

EHTTA's
Political Declaration
Press conference
Page 04

Meeting with the
DG Tourism
European Commission
Page 05

1st
Task Force Meeting
Page 06

Meeting with ESPA
Page 07

Great Spas of Europe
Meeting
Page 08

4th Council of Europe
Cultural Routes
Summer Seminar
Page 09

Congress
«Roman Thermal
Spas of Europe»
Page 10

EHTTA's
Executive Council
Page 11

Thermal Pass Project
Page 12

EHTTA's General Assembly – Bath 6th March 2015



The first General Assembly of the network for 2015 took place in Bath among the main issues it was discussed and voted the creation of a task-force, that can be considered a real turning point in the management of the Association after the leaving the role of the Delegate General by Mr Michel Thomas-Penette, who was unanimously thanked by the General Assembly for his voluntary three year's work and for his future participation in EHTTA's works as expert.

The task-force appointed immediately operative, and is formed by: **Luca Bruschi**, from Salsomaggiore Terme, in charge of EHTTA public international relations (EU and EICR), **Raffaella Caria**, from Acqui Terme, in charge of EHTTA's executive secretariat, **Marion Vansingle**, from the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central, in charge of managing the EHTTA's financial management, **Hugues Pierre-Lessuisse**, from the town of Spa, in charge of press and communication for the EHTTA.

Moreover the city of Caldas de la Rainha (Portugal) was accepted as an active member and other thermal towns are applied and are interested to become members of the association:

Chaves in Portugal, the **HELLENIC ASSOCIATION of MUNICIPALITIES with THERMAL SPRINGS** and **Chianciano in Italy** following the participation of the Executive Secretary to the Forum of Cultural Routes in Baku sent the dossier to **Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan** interested in our network we received the candidacy of the town of Massali on the Caspian coast and the other towns are interested.

A new candidacy process was presented and approved as follows:

A. to become EHTTA ACTIVE MEMBER, cities should fulfill EHTTA's criteria as stated in EHTTA Statute and recalled in EHTTA dossiers form, following the below recommendations.

Cities that are proposed and recommended by members with a support letter.

They should be examined by the nearest Executive Council and accepted if the application form corresponds to the request

The decision is recorded by the General Assembly. A visit could be organized after the decision if needed for future co-operations, for meetings of EHTTA Board and / or the Staff.

-Cities that are obviously known as regards their high reputation, their history and development. They should be accepted as such by the Executive Council if the application form corresponds to the requests. A visit could be organized after the decision if needed for future co-operations, for meetings of EHTTA Board and / or the Staff.

-Cities that require a visit

1.DOSSIER

2.SUPPORT LETTER

B. As voted in the General Assembly held in Acqui Terme on the 18th October 2014, Association of thermal towns to become EHTTA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS must fill a commitment letter declaring they fulfill the criteria stated in EHTTA Statute.

3.COMMITMENT LETTER FOR ASSOCIATIONS

C. Regions can become EHTTA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS, the concerned cities should fulfill EHTTA criteria as stated in the EHTTA Statute and recalled in EHTTA dossiers form, following the same recommendations as for the EHTTA ACTIVE MEMBER (point A)

The Delegate General presented his work in the frame of CERTESS Interreg IVC project (European Cultural Routes. Transfer Experiences. Share solutions) Meeting on Cultural Routes in the Greater Region (November 2013), Tutoring meeting for CERTESS partners (January 2014), Mentoring meeting for Zlin Region (May 2014). The aim of the contract was the preparation of a Route Implementation Plan based on historic thermal towns Route in the Greater Region.

The implementation of the Commission on Communication and Tourism to be launched in Bursa next October was approved.

It was discussed the organization of a press conference to be held in April 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels to ensure our cultural route an increased visibility and direct participation by MPs representing various European countries, and representatives of National and Regional Governments to highlight the way an international cultural route like ours is able to engage a transversal action linking tourism, culture, health and education.

European calls for proposals and / or interest were presented in view if a specific selection work of the task-force to be submitted to the EHTTA members.

Café of Europe Bath - 5th March 2015

The City of Bath hosted the 8th “Café of Europe”, part of the SOURCE Project, on Thursday 5th March a debate about the role of Bath and European Spa towns as ideal towns of the future. **Bath Spa – a Utopia of the Past Present and Future?**

The Bath Café of Europe comes to our Utopia - Is Bath a Utopia? Is it an “ideal” place to live? Are spa towns the ideal places to live? What makes Bath special compared to towns that were developed in the past for military, trade or political reasons? Why is the city, devoted to leisure, wellbeing and health over the centuries become so different from other places? Is the European spa town model one that should be applied to other towns in the future?

These are some of the questions that were pondered by the Bath “Café of Europe”, a prestigious debate took place in the city as part of the Independent Bath Literature Festival, in development with Bath & North East Somerset Council. The Café took place at Komedia on Thursday March 5th, in the presence of mayors and representatives from the major spa towns of Europe. The café saw the presence of distinguished authors and a panel of local experts, who manage Bath's “Utopia” every day. In the morning of the Café, children from a special project called the “Chancery of Lost and Found”, led by the Independent Bath Literature Festival, presented their ideas of the “ideal city” in a specially-commissioned performance to an audience of European delegates for a discussion of their ideas took part to the debate. Other aspects of the Café included a specially-written “interactive novel”, with characters that can be followed on social media. They “met” some of Bath's famous characters depicted by the Natural Theatre Company at a Civic reception at the Roman Baths after the café.

Taskforce EHTTA – 6th March 2015

To replace the role of the General Delegate,¹ four people coming from active EHTTA members were appointed in order to create a multitasking taskforce for supporting this network in several areas. For each person, a specific agreement was signed between the local council/organization and EHTTA.

Role and responsibility of each Taskforce's person:

Raffaella Caria, from Acqui Terme, in charge of EHTTA's executive secretariat (20h per week and meetings)

Marion Vansingle, from the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central, in charge of managing EHTTA's financial management (20h per week and meetings)

Hugues-Pierre Lesuisse, from the town of Spa, in charge of press and communication for the EHTTA (8 h per week and meetings)

Luca Bruschi, from Salsomaggiore Terme, in charge of EHTTA's public international relations (part-time 12h per week and meetings)

Every single member of the group has a specific job based on personal skills, know-how and expertise; they work autonomously with the support of Michel Thomas-Penette as expert and of the President as an institutional figure.

¹ The General Delegate Michel Thomas-Penette progressively left his position between October 2014 and March 2015. Due to this situation and in order to implement management of the network, from March 2015 a new technical body was proposed in accordance with his decision from the General Assembly that took place in Bath on 6th March.



EHTTA's Political Declaration - Press conference Brussels 15th April 2015

In our position of elected representatives of the European historic thermal towns, we are aware of the importance of working as part of a European network, responsible for a cultural route certified by the Council of Europe, and to combine our efforts with a group of elected representatives and of associational organizations responsible for a leading European program whose Pilgrimage Routes have led the way for almost thirty years.

This practical work that affects the sustainable development of European territories, the harmonious local economic development, the concerted and coherent tourism policy aiming at the discovery of less known heritage, is at the origin of a constructive and continuous dialogue with the European Institutions, both on the territory of the European Union and both in terms of a Greater Europe and extends concretely the role that thermal towns have played for centuries in political dialogue for the reconciliation and peace.

We welcome the enlargement of the parliamentary intergroup devoted to cultural tourism and cultural routes as a whole, two approaches that enable European tourism policies to enrich the diversity of the offer for foreign visitors, such as creating fruitful meetings within the continent for a better knowledge of the Europeans among them, as desired in the beginning from the founders of the Cultural Routes program of the Council of Europe.

We solemnly wish to affirm that historic thermal towns are the main stone, because of their essential historical role related to early experiences of public health policies, for the creation of gathering places of entertainment venues from the birth of modern tourism, of innovation that they constantly introduced in terms of alternative medicine, of their essential role in answers to the need for well-being of older generations, and finally experimental places regarding social inclusion and sustainable development.

Moreover by reason of this long and outstanding history, they are now an essential driver for the European Policy of HORIZON 2020, and therefore they want to commit themselves even more strongly together with the European Parliament, the European Commission and Council of Europe in an integrated development plan, linking the voluntary policies of cultural cooperation related to intercultural dialogue, of the development sustainable cultural tourism and of public health related to generational change.

They will contribute, thanks to their experience and their historical achievements, in a voluntary way to a coherent policy plan aiming at an integrated innovation policy and dialogue, having as their main objective the economic development in a protected environment and well-being accessible to everyone.

Meeting with the DG Tourism European Commission Brussels 15th April 2015

After the EHTTA press conference held at the European Parliament, an EHTTA delegation composed of the President Giuseppe Bellandi and the Taskforce's members was also officially presented in the DG Tourism of the European Commission, at a meeting with the Head of Unit Mrs Francesca Tudini and her team.

On that occasion the EHTTA Association was presented as well its activities and future perspectives. At the meeting the delegation was informed about the European COSME calls to be released in 2015 and the actions and events of the European Commission in support of the itineraries and sustainable tourism.





1st Task force meeting 6th May 2015

The first official meeting of the task force was held on May 6th in Paris at the premises of the Federation Thermale Climatique Française (EHTTA associate member). The meeting aimed to the preparation of EHTTA Executive Council, scheduled on June 25th, had in the agenda some main issues as:

1. The revision of the Masterplan document prepared by the former Delegate General Mr Michel Thomas-Penette, to identify the axes for EHTTA's development strategy
2. Evaluation of EU Programmes
3. Revision of the Dossier form and the follow up of EHTTA's candidacies
4. Implementation of a potential EHTTA members list and method of recruitment
5. Future meetings and attendance for the TASKFORCE
6. Stock of press conference and of the appointment at the European Commission
7. Implementation of Benefits Pack for EHTTA Members and a newsletter
8. Implementation of EHTTA Commission on Tourism
9. Financial statement

The meeting also saw the participation of Michel Thomas-Penette, with a mandate of expert, the Honorary President Christian Corne and Jean-Francois Beraud, treasurer of the Federation Thermale Climatique Française who organized the meeting with ESPA, the European Spas Association an industry organization representing 20 members from 19 European countries.

Afterwards the Taskforce has ESPA - European Spa Association's - delegates at the premises of the **CNETH the French National Council of Thermal operators** for a get to know meeting, a mutual exchange of experiences, an update on current activities and mostly to envisage a collaboration in future projects. The ESPA global objective is to promote spas and balneology in Europe and to ensure that the natural remedies based on mineral water, landscape and climate will be available to as great a number of citizens and visitors as possible.

The meeting was mostly focused on the EU funded programme: "**In the footsteps of the Romans**" a project they coordinate involving thermal spas with Roman roots, that brought together thermal spa destinations with Roman roots from eight European countries and experts from travel industry and quality management, as this could interfere with EHTTA's activities, a collaboration could be envisaged to work together on developing future tourist packages and promotion of the "destination spa towns in Europe".

Meeting with ESPA – Paris 6th May 2015

Following the meeting of the Task Force, held on May 6, 2015 in Paris, the delegation EHTTA, composed by the Task Force, by Mr. Michel Thomas Penette² and by Mr Jean Francois Beraud³ took part in a meeting with the officials of European Spas Association (ESPA) at the headquarters of the National Confederation of Thermal Operators (Cneth).

The European Spas Association, an umbrella industry organization representing 20 members from 19 European countries has among its goals the promotion spas and balneology in Europe and the safeguard of the natural remedies based on mineral water, landscape and climate will be available to as great a number of citizens and visitors as possible, was represented by the General Secretary Mr Joachim Lieber, by the Legal Advisor Reinhard Petry and by Claude Eugène Bouvier - Cneth Delegate General and ESPA Treasurer.

During the formal meeting, EHTTA and ESPA explained how they work and their strategy. Together they have pursued points of convergence; however, they could meet for a possible future collaboration.

We can consider this meeting fundamental as both the associations are working with determination and professionalism in promoting and safeguarding thermalism and they could therefore take advantage one from the other by exchanging good practices and knowing each other's programmes and jointly take part in EU calls.

² EHTTA's Expert and former Delegate General

³ President of the National Association of Mayors of Thermal Towns (ANMCT) and Treasures of the F.T.C.F

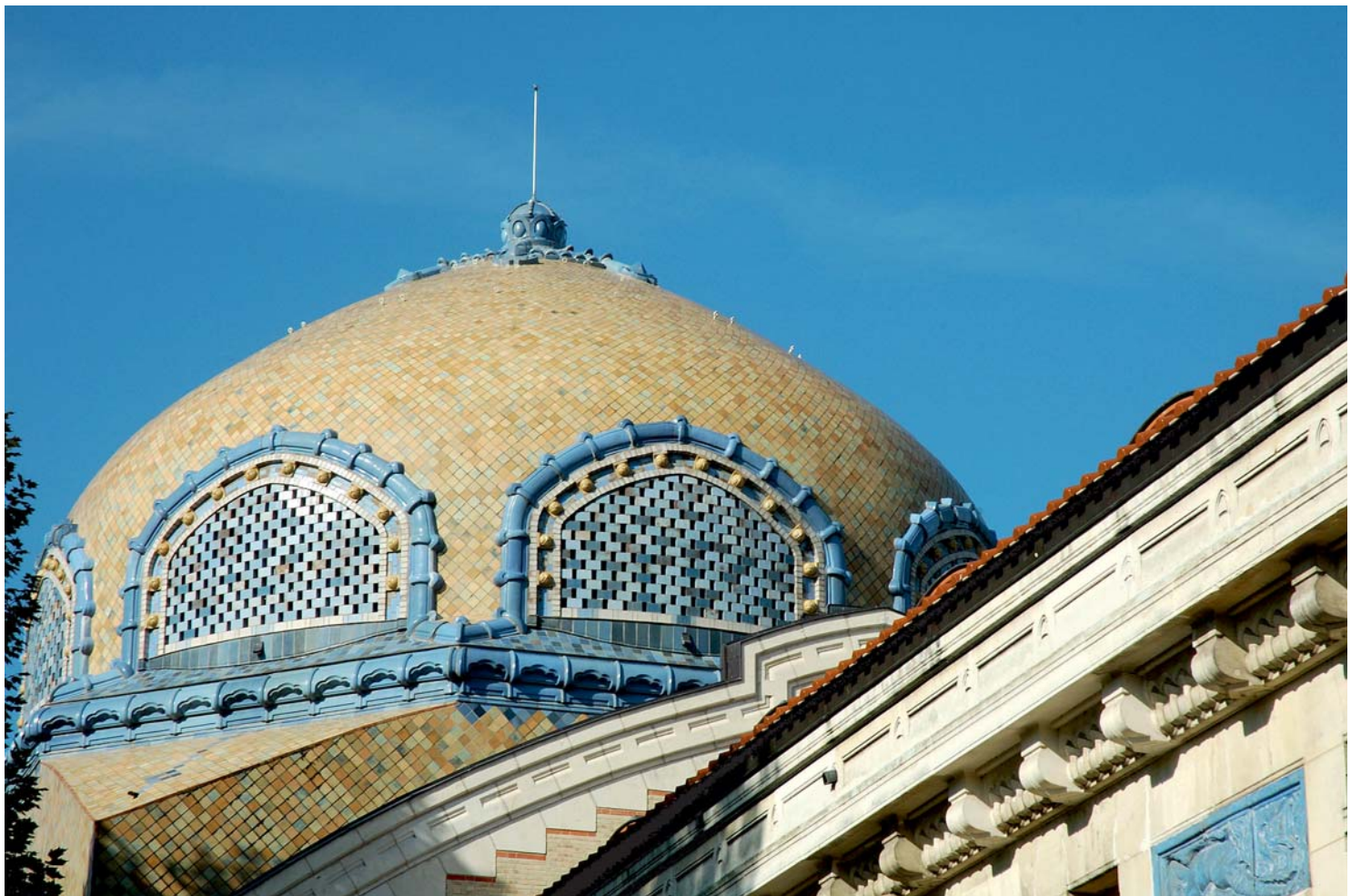


Great Spas of Europe meeting – Vichy 18th May 2015

EHTTA was invited by Paul Simons in the Great Spas of Europe meeting in Vichy in order to create a link between the approach "Great Spas of Europe" and EHTTA.

It was the opportunity for Marion Vansingle as a representative of EHTTA:

- to present, to the Great Spas of Europe experts, EHTTA and the Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif Central actions,
- to propose the visit of the exhibition presented at the Médiathèque Valéry Larbaud of the city of Vichy "Dans les pas de Valéry Larbaud à Vichy et dans d'autres stations thermales" (In the footsteps of Valéry Larbaud in Vichy and other thermal towns). This exhibition follows on from the work engaged in the framework of the European SOURCE project,
- to explain the objectives of the International Resources Centre of Thermal Heritage lunched by the Médiathèque Valéry Larbaud of the city of Vichy, the Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif central and EHTTA in the framework of SOURCE project.



4th Council of Europe Cultural Routes Summer Seminar Osnabruck 1st – 3rd June 2015

From the 1st to 3rd June 2015 the 4th Council of Europe Cultural Routes Summer Seminar was held in Osnabruck, at the headquarters of the Megalithic Cultural route (certified in 2013), in cooperation with the HECTOR Erasmus+ project, coordinated by the European Institute of Cultural Routes.

Fifty participants, representing 16 certified routes, new projects from all over Europe, students, universities and organizations partners of the Erasmus+ HECTOR project attended the seminar. Luca Bruschi took part in representing the European Association Historic Thermal Towns.

The Plenary session was focused on heritage and cultural European projects: 1) building bridges and broadening horizons. The mission of Heritage interpretation for Europe (Patrick LEHNES from “Interpret Europe”); 2) Experience of Faro from Marseille to Venice and elsewhere (Prosper WANNER, “Marseille/Provence Capital of Culture 2013”). Within this common session, Eleonora BERTI summarized the state of the art of the European HECTOR project⁴ (Heritage and Cultural Tourism Open Resources for innovative training schemes related to the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe), funded by the programme Erasmus+ Key Action 2, “Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices”. This action aims at supporting the development, sharing and transferring of best practices and innovative approaches in education, training and youth fields.

The certified routes worked together during two days of workshops on different key issues:

- 1) networking and leadership (governance and network management; management plans for European Cultural Routes; capacity building and support to entrepreneurship; laboratories; funding sources)
- 2) sustainable cultural tourism product development (how to develop a cultural tourism product; how tourist and local community interaction contributes to the construction of the cultural tourism product)
- 3) funding and crowd funding (what to learn from the best practices; modern funding models; crowd funding)
- 4) heritage interpretation and storytelling (analysis of the interpretation of Cultural Routes; evaluation grid of the interpretation of different Routes)

Representatives of the certified routes held a peer-to-peer exchange and empowerment session with the candidate routes, sharing their experience on a day-to-day implementation and practices of the Council of Europe's certification criteria.

⁴ HECTOR project, coordinated by the European Institute of Cultural Routes, involves three universities - IREST, University Paris 1 Sorbonne (France), LABPACT, University of Barcelona (Spain), CAST, University of Bologna (Italy) - and a research center - Fondazione Federico II (Italy).



Congress “Roman Thermal Spas of Europe” - Dax 13th June 2015

EHTTA was present on June 13th 2015 in Dax during the presentation of the project “**Roman Thermal Spas of Europe**”.



Roman Thermal Spas of Europe is the first European health tourism project that unites spas and health resorts across Europe that share a common Roman heritage.

The goal of the project is to explore the entire potential of the common heritage, to bring services to an even higher level and to draw interest of new guests from Europe and overseas to the unique combination of health and cultural tourism.

- The three main partners are:
- The European Spas Association (ESPA),
- FIT Reisen,
- EuropeSpa, an international quality and certification system for medical spa and wellness.

There are eight national spas, health resorts and associations from Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Portugal and Romania. The project is co-funded by the European Union.

EHTTA's Executive Council – Paris 25th June 2015

EHTTA's Executive Council held June 25, 2015 in Paris, in the premises of the Federation Thermale Climatique Française, can be considered an important step for the association.

The majority of members of the Executive Council and the new TASKFORCE of EHTTA, established at the General Assembly of Bath in March 2015, have worked at the following strategic points, to be presented and voted (if compulsory) at Bursa General Assembly of the next 20th of October.

The MASTERPLAN proposal: a "light" version of MASTERPLAN originally written by Michel Thomas-Penette, has been proposed by the TASKFORCE and is going to be implemented with the members' suggestions.

European projects proposals for the period 2016-2020. That EU proposals have been submitted to EHTTA's members attention for a feedback.

A new calculation basis of EHTTA contributions from 2016 that could be sensible for every EHTTA member and at the same time could allow a reasonable increase of our budget.

This basis for calculating the membership fees considers several criteria, namely the typology of members, the population, and geographical location of historic thermal towns in Europe.

The election of the Executive Council for the next 2 years

As EHTTA's Executive Council, has decided to have a better representation of the countries of the cultural route, and therefore to open the Executive Council to EHTTA members whose countries are not yet represented, for the next 2 years' mandate.

Reactivation of the EHTTA Scientific Committee : EHTTA's Executive Council members proposed to the President of the Scientific Committee, Mr Paul Simons, to carry out the following tasks by the end of the year:

- The evaluation of new applications,
- Drafting of the Blue Book by the end of the year,
- Developing a strategy for future years to assist the TASKFORCE in his work.

Commission Communication / tourism EHTTA's Executive Council proposed during the General Assembly in Bath last March 2015, the establishment of a Commission "Communication and Tourism". The commission will start functioning in October 2015 in Bursa for an indeterminate period.

EHTTA Benefits Pack created by the TASKFORCE to show the potential members the added value in order to join EHTTA.

Next Executive Council meeting is scheduled in September to prepare more scrupulously the General Assembly to be held in Bursa in October. Bursa will offer EHTTA's members and to a wider public a relevant cultural event, namely the 9th Café of Europe.



Thermal Pass Project – Royat – 30th June 2015

The Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif Central coordinated a new proposal, in partnership with the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA), in the framework of the new COSME Call: COS-TOUR-2015-3-04-1 of the European Commission on the theme 2: “Diversifying the EU tourism offer and products - Promoting transnational thematic tourism products”.

Our “Thermal'Pass” proposal was submitted on 29 June 2015. The “Thermal'Pass” project is a European project whose objective is the creation of a transnational tourism offer in order to market the destination Europe through “Wellness & Heritage” tourist packages in spa towns.

The results of the evaluation by the European Commission will be made available in November 2015.

The 15 partners situated in 8 countries are:

- Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif Central – coordinator of the project (France),
- Visit Europe, a European Tour Operator (France),
- EHTTA (Belgium),
- Consorzio Terme Euganee, a consortium of 140 tourist operators in Abano Terme and Montegrotto Terme (Italy),
- Wiesbaden Marketing GmbH (Germany),
- Daruvar Spa (Croatia),
- City Council of Ourense (Spain),
- Tourist Office of Enghien-les-Bains (France),
- Iter Vitis France, an association of vineyards with the mention of Cultural Route of the Council of Europe (France),
- European Association of the Vie Francigene (Italy),
- City council of Salsomaggiore Terme (Italy),
- Thermal society of Bourbon Lancy (France),
- City Council of Caldas da Rainha (Portugal),
- Tourist office of Spa (Belgium),
- Governorship of Bursa (Turkey).