

INTERNATIONAL VILLAGE CONFERENCE

May 13th and 14th, 2011, BERLIN

INTERNATIONALE DORFKONFERENZ

13. UND 14. MAI 2011 IN BERLIN

ANNOUNCEMENT

ERCA – the [European Rural Community Association](#) (an association of village movements in Europe) – organises an International Village Conference in cooperation with [Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation](#) in 2011.

It will take place on 13th and 14th of May in the rooms of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation in Berlin.

The conference has two central aims:

First of all, experiences of the village movements from other European countries should be introduced to Germany and will be discussed combined with similar experiences in this country; possibly, new impulses will arise for new activities in the German federal states.

Secondly, this will be combined with an international exchange of experiences about practical village development; an important part of this will be the question how a village community which became part of a bigger municipality of villages can evolve the village and rural quality of life both independently and in cooperation with the municipality and other villages.

Target groups of this conference are in the first place participators and institutions which are mainly active in practical village development and networking among villages; especially those people who act as decision makers and actors in village associations, as chairmen or members of village councils and municipality representatives as well as those who are economically active or work in other areas of village life. Of course, also scientists, politicians, representatives of NGOs and other interested people will be welcome.

The conference will be opened by statements of experts about the change and the future of the village and the social power of village communities.

- p.t.o. -

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Central to the first day will be experiences of the more than 20 village movements in Europe.

Excellent representatives of these movements will demonstrate experiences on different levels of the movements:

- from the viewpoint of the local level: the village, the collaboration of local stakeholders in the village community and with the municipality;
- from the level of regional networks of villages, which mainly aim at exchange of experiences among villages and at cooperation with other regional players and
- from the various forms of national representation of a village movement, their role as lobby for the villages which work towards country-wide meetings of village stakeholders and meetings with politicians, so as so-called Rural Parliaments.

An extended discussion about the benefit and options of application of this international experience will follow.

On the second day, four working groups will discuss about various aspects of vital village development (more working groups are possible):

- "Self-organisation" of the village: how local actors work together to plan the development of their village, to make their own responsibility and civic participation? How can local self-determination in the village and municipality participation to be strengthened and better connected? How can the local identity of each village to be preserved?
- Regional Networking: village and region, village and LEADER, regional exchange of experiences between villages, the village and the world: "global" village by virtual networking with the region and the world, the village economy and broadband; influence of virtual networking on the change in the rural way of life?
- Meeting the demographic changes actively: youth and village; potential of the "elderly" for the village development, integration of newcomers.
- Sustainable Community Development: Agricultural and alternative job opportunities in the village economy, sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy, experience of ecovillages.

The conference will conclude with a panel discussion with politicians about options for the transfer of presented experiences into reality.

Conference languages will be English and German; simultaneous translation during the plenary sessions, consecutively in the working groups.

Participation and catering during breaks are free of charge from May 13th to 14th. Costs for travel and lodging will not be reimbursed.

Preliminary registrations are possible and wished for from now on (Krambach@rosalux.de); details on the programme of the conference, the organisation etc. will be handed over right afterwards.

For further information see:

<http://www.rosalux.de/themen/nachhaltigkeit/specials/gesprachskreis-laendlicher-raum.html>