



Local Councils' Association MALTA

NEWSLETTER | July 2009

COVENANT OF MAYORS



The Local Councils' Association has signed an agreement with the EU Commission to become a supporting structure of the Covenant of Mayors. In the meantime the following Local Councils have already signed the Covenant of Mayors:

- Balzan
- Ghajnsielem
- Hal Gharghur
- Iklin
- Kalkara
- Marsaskala
- Mosta
- Naxxar
- Pembroke
- Santa Lucija
- Xaghra
- Xewkija

The above mentioned Local Councils are also mentioned in the Covenant of Mayors website <http://www.eumayors.eu/> by following the following weblink: http://www.eumayors.eu/covenant_cities/list_en.htm?cc=mt

The Local Councils' Association continues to urge Local Councils in Malta to become members of the Covenant of Mayors. The Association is holding discussions with the CIP focal point in order to access EU funds that will enable the Association to prepare basic studies for the implementation of renewable energy strategies at the local level. This initiative continues to confirm the commitment of the LCA, under the leadership of its President Mr. Michael Cohen and Executive Secretary Mr. Jimmy Magro, to transform the Committee of the Regions vision into action.

The Association believes that all stakeholders should engage into an active programme to enable local communities deliver strategies to reduce the impact on climate change.

Modernisation Continues

The Local Councils' Association modernisation programme is on the move with the setting up of a medium sized meeting room in its offices at Balzan. The entrance hall will be converted into a medium sized meeting room, media room and IT learning centre. The latter is being done with the assistance of the Malta Communications Authority and will also offer FREE broadband access to the community. This is based on the programme to make broadband access available to all and to work against the digital divide.

Furthermore, it is also planned to install an electric chair in order to make the offices more accessible. This project depends on the financial backing of the Government if and when there is a second call for accessibility financial assistance.

ENPI-CBC PROJECTS



The Local Councils' Association and the National Rural Development Agency have started a programme of co-operation to propose two projects on the ENPI website. These projects are:

- the setting up of the Mediterranean Relational Tourism Institute, and**
- the setting up of the Mediterranean Online University for Local Government.**

The two projects have attracted a substantial number of organisations who would like to join as partners in the the projects. The process is under evaluation and more progress will be registered during the coming weeks. The LCA will finally has to make a decision on the number of partners and the partners to join the projects since the number of organisations that expressed interest has beyond our expectations.

The LCA also encourages the local authorities to look into the NRDA's applications for the transfer of property so that these two projects can be implemented in the coming months.

Positive meeting with Parliamentary Secretary Hon Chris Said

The Executive Committee of the Local Councils' Association held a meeting with the Hon Chris Said on Wednesday 29th July 2009 at his office at Castille. The meeting discussed the following points:

1. **elections of the Executive Committee:** it was agreed that the regulations will be updated to reflect the new legislation that will be approved by Parliament after the summer recess. Elections will be held in October 2009.
2. **Co-Financing Fund:** Hon Said agreed to review the criteria established by the Board and he also agreed to look into the matter for the co-financing of the Philoxenia project that the LCA is undertaking as a partner under the MED programme.
3. **LCA Budget:** Hon Said agreed to consider the original proposal made by the LCA that involved a direct contribution by the Local Councils; the contribution will be incremented in the annual allocation of Local Councils and paid to the LCA in order to be able to implement new initiatives such as policy research, thematic conferences, polling, communications, participation in international meetings etc.
4. **MEDINS project:** A presentation of the deliverables of invisible heritage will be made to Heritage Malta whereby the Hon Said will be present. The Parliamentary Secretary also agreed to favourably consider the co-financing of the local content of this project that has been implemented through the INTERREG programme.
5. **Regulations:** The LCA proposed that action should be taken on the updating of the legislation/regulations of the Local Councils' Association and the Tendering Appeals Board.
6. **TV Programme:** Hon Said supported the request made by the LCA to PBS to have its own TV programme as from October 2009. The programme is intended to create awareness about local governance and act as a communication tool to inform the general public about new initiatives in the local governance sector.

E-communications



In the past two years the Local Councils' Association was able to make maximum use of e-communications through the setting up of its website and the distribution of a monthly e-newsletter to more than 5000 email address held in Malta and abroad. In a globalised environment, communications have become a strong tool to deliver our message. With its important role as the leading advocacy institution for local government in Malta, the LCA has been able to communicate its plans, positions and active participation to a wider audience and stakeholders.

The LCA believes that Local Councils should be more active in their e-communications strategies since internet penetration in Malta is increasing at a very fast rate.

The LCA has also been spearheading its participation in Competitiveness and Innovation EU projects regarding e-democracy and e-participation. Once these projects are approved, the local councils in Malta will benefit from the transfer of know how of these projects.

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