

What is TOWN TWINNING?

Town twinning is a concept where towns or cities from geographically and politically distinct areas are paired, with the goal of fostering **human contact and cultural links**. Town twinning represents a unique and dense network and therefore has a specific role to play with regard to the challenges of today's Europe. According to the **European Commission** "Town Twinning provides the opportunity to find out more about the daily lives of citizens in other European countries, to talk to them and exchange experiences, and to develop joint projects on issues of common interest, such as local integration, the environment, economic development, and cultural differences."

Project "CONOCER PARA HERMANAR – SKILLS FOR TOWNTWINNING"

This project is carried out in the context of the European programme "Town Twinning - Active European Citizenship" from the Directorate General of Education and Culture of the European Commission.



Conocer para Hermanar Skills for Town Twinning

CO-BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT

MUNICIPALITY OF **VERIA**. CENTRAL MACEDONIA. GREECE
MUNICIPALITY OF **RAKOCZIFALVA**. HUNGARY
MUNICIPALITY OF **WIERZCHOSLAWICE**. POLAND

ACTIONS

5 SEMINARS - to provide information and raising awareness on the issue of town twinning and its impact in active citizenship, culture and tourism.

STUDY of the current situation of town twinning process in the regions participants in the project.

WEB PAGE - to promote town twinning in European regions and provide partner search facilities for the management of town twinning projects.

DISSEMINATION MATERIAL – brochures, leaflets and roller to promote town twinning processes in the context of active European citizenship and the regions involved in this project.

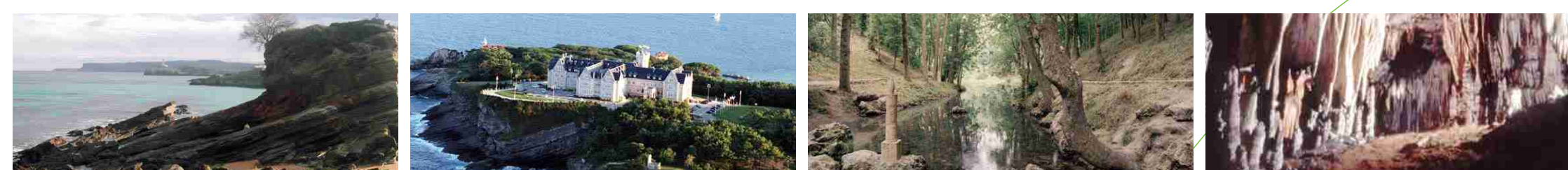
PARTNERSHIP

PROJECT LEADER / COORDINATOR:

DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANTABRIA.

OBJECTIVES

To strengthen the dialogue and the links between the European Union and its citizens with the aim of promoting the emergence of an active **European citizenship**.



WELFARE STATE

Cantabria's welfare indicators are above the Spanish average in terms of income, health, education, culture, leisure, employment and housing. Life expectancy is 75 years for men and 82 for women. Almost all the population (97%) is covered by the Spanish National Health System through the regional "Servicio Cántabro de Salud". School Education is compulsory from 3 to 16 years. Most schools are totally or partially financed by the Regional Government.

SOCIAL FEATURES

Cantabria is endowed with a favourable social environment guaranteed by means of a Social Agreement between Trade Unions, Employers and the Regional Government, which provides a stable social framework. This agreement has been in force since 1999 in order to improve the competitiveness of the industry while fostering the creation of a dynamic region with social stability and economic growth. As a result of this agreement trade disputes are currently almost irrelevant.

ECONOMY

Production in Cantabria is comprised of three main areas:

- The Tertiary Sector: most of the population of Cantabria work in the services sector, especially in the outlying areas of the region's capital.
- The Agricultural Sector: approximately 50% of the population are involved in this primary sector, above all in those areas that are physically more inaccessible such as Liébana, Valderredible and the Pas and Miera Valleys.

- The Industrial Sector: once again approximately half of the population works in industry. This sector of production is to be found primarily in the area of the Besaya and Pisuéña Valleys, Campoo de Enmedio and Reinosa.

SANTANDER – THE CAPITAL

Santander is a coastal city that grew in 19th century thanks to a flourishing commercial activity and also throughout the 20th century thanks to tourist activity promoted by the Spanish Royal Family. It currently offers a friendly atmosphere within a very beautiful natural setting with large beaches and attractive promenades.

www.cantabriaeuropa.es



NATURAL-DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Veria is the capital city of the Prefecture of Imathia, which is located in the northern borders of Greece and belongs to the region of Central Macedonia. It is 362600 Km² in size and its population amounts to 43.638 inhabitants. Veria constitutes an important crossroad connecting the region of Eastern Macedonia with the region of Western Macedonia and it possesses a central position on the axis of Egnatia highway. The Municipality consists of 11 municipal departments.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FEATURES

The organization of the economy of Veria has a traditional character with a weak productive base, low degree of extroversion and a majority of small and medium size enterprises. 8.76% of the financially active population is occupied in the primary sector, 21.99% in the secondary and 66.78 % in the tertiary sector. The economy of Veria is mainly based on agriculture and trading. The fertile grounds of the region produce a variety of fruits and vegetables which are exported all around the world. Veria is also a very active export center, the main exported goods being fresh and preserved agricultural products, threads and cotton. Many of the goods exported through Veria come from other regions of Greece.

CULTURAL-HISTORICAL FEATURES

The city of Veria is ancient in origin and appeared in historical texts around the 5th century BC. Veria grew rapidly and kept its importance through time. Nearby are the ruins of the Vergina palace used by King Philip and his son, Alexander the Great. During 154 BC, the Romans took it over and it lived through a period of great splendor. Its prosperity in the Byzantine period is still obvious by the large number of churches, still preserved. In the 15th century it was conquered by the ottomans and in 1912 was joined with the Greek state. The Municipality owns a number of cultural enterprises, such as the Center for

Cultural Initiatives and Communication, the Municipal Peripheral Theatre, the Cultural Enterprise of Veria, the Municipal Library, the Center of European Studies and the Institute of Balkan Architecture. Last but not least, the Public Library and the institution of Historic Archive, which have a vigorous presence in the town, organize many cultural activities, while different communities present important cultural events during the year.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND GOALS

The Municipality of Veria has implemented various projects within the framework of Communal Programmes and Initiatives, such as urban recreation of the historic center of the town, installation of broadband networks, interventions to the east part of Vermion Mountain, projects for training and advisory, programs of employment, and programs of employment with emphasis to the distribution of social services. Veria cooperates with the Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki for the function of different university departments in the town, as well as at the elaboration of proposals for the development of the area (Model Innovative Plan for Development). The Municipality of Veria participates also to the following networks: Network of Historic Towns, Greek Network of Towns with Rivers and through this to the European network "Union de Terres de RivièreSres" and National Cultural Network of Towns

www.veria.gr



Rakoczifalva is situated 106 km to the east of Hungary's capital. By car it can be reached by road 4 via Szolnok, then road 442. The best route by train is to travel to Szolnok and then take a scheduled bus from there. There is an excellent bus service with a 20-minute journey. Szolnok and Rakoczifalva are also connected by a bicycle track as part of the EUROVELO network. Rakoczifalva is situated in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, south of Szolnok, on the left bank of the river Tisza. Its distance from the river is 3 km. Neighbouring towns and villages are: Szolnok to the north, Kenygel to the east, Rakoczifalva to the south, while its western border is formed by the river Tisza.

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The area of Rakoczifalva is 3.594 hectares. Its population is 5.612, of whom economically active: 3700. The population density is 153 persons/km², which is fairly high even compared with national and county figures. Contrary to the national trend of decreasing population, the population of Rakoczifalva has been rising steadily since 1997.

THE LOCAL ECONOMY

After the democratic changes, there was an explosive rise in the number of entrepreneurs, especially in agriculture, industry and trade. In 2006 local business tax revenues were collected from 310 businesses. From these 234 worked as private entrepreneurs, 36 as limited liability companies, 4 as shareholder companies and 1 as a cooperative. Businesses work in the following areas: 64 in industry, 42 in agriculture and 204 in trade and services.

CULTURE

Rakoczifalva is famous in the region for its colourful cultural and heritage-based activities. The municipality undertakes an important role in the village's cultural life. The village's Integrated Leisure Centre is home to various cultural and sports activities, a library and a museum. It also provides accommodation and organises training courses and adult education courses that provide various vocational and other qualifications. The library welcomes readers with a collection of around 22,000 books.

LOCAL TRADITIONS AND EVENTS

The village organises several annual programmes and events. These include the February Carnival, the BEROE Summer in June (organised by the local branch of the National Association of Patients with Internal Diseases and Disabilities), the Harvest Feast and the World Kuruc Meeting in July. The village is home to many craftsmen and artists, including several wood carvers. Our artist-residences are internationally famous.

TOURISM RESOURCES

As part of the Szolnok Subregion, the area is rich in cultural and historical values. The Tisza plays a crucial part in the region's tourism, with important holiday and recreational facilities alongside the river. The Tisza runs 3 km from the village, encircling it with a "large bend", where a public beach is in line for further development. There is a willow and poplar floodplain forest by the river and an oak forest along the road that runs towards the Tisza. The fresh air and the untouched natural environment represent a unique potential. The riverside is part of the Middle-Tisza Landscape Protection Area. The floodplain forests and grassland, the clay pits and the native fauna, especially the avifauna, represent local values that need to be protected. From this summer, all these can be viewed from the Study Path, a 6,000 metre hiking route, built within the framework of the LIFE-SUMAR programme and financed from grant applications. The thermal and medicinal water supply underneath the village is a significant and unexploited investment opportunity, where a regional therapeutic centre could be built to utilise the benefits of the 95 °C degree thermal water. The military airbase in Szolnok will be turned into a civil aviation terminal, providing easy access for European passengers and tourists (by an 8 km journey) to the therapeutic centre, which could be developed with the use of investment capital.

www.rakoczifalva.hu



GEOGRAPHY

Wierzchoslawice commune is situated in the valley of the Dunajec River, in the southern corner of Sandomierska Valley, in the malopolskie voivodeship, near the city of Tamów. The commune covers the area of 74.8 km² which is approximately inhabited by 10.6 hundred people. There are 11 villages included in the commune: Bobrowniki Male, Bogumilowice, Goslawice, Kepa Bogumilowicka, Komorów, Letowice, Mikolajowice, Ostrow, Rudka, Sieciechowice and Wierzchoslawice.

HISTORY

The first historical information of the origin of Wierzchoslawice village dates back to the second half of the 12th century, when this area was a part of territory of Wislanie tribe. Wierzchoslawice was a base of Sulima family who played a great centuries. The Sources indicate that a Cracow judge Wawrzyniec had three sons: Jakub, Krystyn and Wierzchoslaw. Wierzchoslaw was named after his ancestor from whose name Wierzchoslawice derived its name. The most famous historical figure coming from Wierzchoslawice is Wincenty Witos (1874-1945), a peasant movement activist a politician, the Prime minister of Poland, who held this office three times. Although he held many political functions, from 1908 to 1931, he was an elected chair of a village council in his home village Wierzchoslawice. There is a museum in Wierzchoslawice devoted to this great man. In Wierzchoslawice commune there are several historic structures, which are willingly visited by tourists.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND INDUSTRY

The natural resources of the commune are forest, located in the western part of the commune and covering approximately 40% of its area, that is almost 3000 ha. Beautiful forests are favourable to tourist industry, they are the most favourite place for those who practise horseback riding. Hunters are frequent guests in the commune, for the forests are rich in animals that can be hunt: roe deer, foxes, badgers, martens, polecats, hares, pheasants, partridges.

CULTURE

Dwudniaki is one of the most popular place in the commune, where there are very popular among the inhabitants, artificial water reservoirs. The neighborhood is developed and prepared to give tourists a warm welcome. In the neighborhood there are: a beach, a guarded parking space, cafes and pubs. In 2003 our commune was placed among one "Golden" Hundred Local Governments 2003 which was ranked by The Centre of Local Researches and "Rzeczpospolita" daily newspaper in the local development in the years between 2000 and 2002.

www.wierzchoslawice.pl

