



## EU-COUNTRIES PASS

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### THE PROJECT

#### AIMS

Amongst the primary aims of the EU are establishing a community of peace and solidarity between its member states and people. These targets can only be reached through reciprocal empathy and interaction between the EU citizens. More could be done in this respect even amongst the member states of the EU. The intention of this project is to address this perceived need for further progress in these aims.

#### METHODOLOGY

The promoters of this project consider that

- a. better reciprocal KNOWLEDGE by EU citizens of other EU member countries and societies,
- b. better PERSONAL CONTACT of the EU citizens from different EU countries with each other and
- c. better reciprocal UNDERSTANDING by EU citizens

are the basis for greater reciprocal empathy and sympathy. Fostering greater interpersonal relationships with EU citizens from the different societies, would also promote the same aims. The proposed EU-Countries Pass is intended to further catalyse these exchanges and motivate EU citizens to increase personal contact with other EU societies, by promoting travelling to other EU countries, other than their own.

#### THE EU-COUNTRIES PASS

The EU-Countries Pass is based on the idea that travellers record their visits to EU countries on the said EU-Countries Pass by a stamp available at the post offices ("cancellation to order") of the country visited (self controlled version). It is also intended that the EU-Countries Pass will highlight specific information about the different countries visited and its peoples, such as sights of particular interest, culture, history and traditions.

#### THE EU-COUNTRIES PASS BADGE

For participants in the EU-Countries Pass Project who would also wish to obtain an EU-Countries Pass Badge, recognising that they have visited all the 25 EU countries [currently, more later], registration at the homepage of EU-Countries Pass Project will be required. The registrant would have to fulfil any specific criteria some countries might require as proof of the visit (outside controlled version).

#### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project is internet based. One main aspect of the internet page of the EU-Countries Pass Project will be the enabling of the citizens of each EU country, to vote for what they consider are the sights of particular interest, cultural activities, historical milestones and traditions that characterise their particular country. Once some form of consensus is reached on these, the favoured ones might be included in the EU-Countries Pass. Thus, the citizens of each country will promote their vision of their country to visitors.

All participants in the EU-Countries Pass Project would be able to download for free without obligation to register, the EU-Countries Pass from the internet at the home page of the EU-Countries Pass Project. This need not be any bigger, when folded, than the standard EU Passport and could be clipped to the last page of said EU Passport.

#### INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION

Many travellers would be interested in documenting their trips to foreign countries, if for no other reason. The stamp at the post office ("cancellation to order") would replace the customs stamp now no longer required between EU countries. Offering an EU-Countries Pass Badge for those that have visited all EU countries, would be further motivation. It would signal that the holder is a person of varied cultural interests, with an international orientation and widely travelled within the EU. Because travel is now not restricted to the very rich, it would engender the growth of a more easily recognisable group of European Union citizens that are more interested in each other and the EU.



## GROUP MOTIVATION

This project itself could engender further motivation by the publication on the EU-Countries Pass Project Internet Page, in press and TV reports, of rankings indicating the numbers that have completed the project in, say, different age groups, different countries, different professions or employment and others.

## ECONOMIC EFFECTS

The EU-Countries Pass Project would promote travel within the EU and act as a disincentive to travel outside the EU. It would therefore strengthen tourism within the EU, with benefits to the likes of the hotel industry, transport, arts, restaurants, sporting centres and others. By stimulating internal tourism within the EU, it would help the EU balance of payments with the outside of the EU and assist in the improvement of the standard of living in economically weaker regions of the EU.

## SPECIFIC ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Those countries currently having a low number of tourists would clearly benefit from the EU-Countries Pass Project. However, even those having a strong tourist industry would benefit, because of the diversification of the countries of origin of their tourists. There would be a greater incentive to visit countries at the periphery of the EU, who might not be otherwise included while en route to somewhere else.

## A RARE WIN-WIN PROJECT

The EU-Countries Pass Project offers a WIN-WIN-scenario. It promotes positive outcomes at EU, country and societal levels and furthermore would have positive economic outcomes with relatively little capital input.

## POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS

The potential supporters or sponsors for the EU-Countries Pass Project would be expected to come from its main beneficiaries. These would include:

The EU

Individual EU-member countries

The Tourism industry

Industries and institutions, sharing the social and political goals of the project

Individual supporters

## IDEALISTIC SPONSORS

The proponents of the EU-Countries Pass Project respectfully and heartily welcome the patronage of their Excellencies, The EU-commissioners Dr. Benita Ferrero-Waldner and Vice President Margot Wallström, and are grateful of being allowed to use EU-logos and to link the web page of the EU-Countries Pass Project to EU internet sites and would consider media support from EU institutions as essential elements for the success of the project.

This project should be seen as A PROJECT BY EU CITIZENS FOR EU CITIZENS. The proponents would gratefully acknowledge any help, support and patronage they would receive from EU Institutions but do not wish or ask for any substantial financial support from the central EU Institutions in Brussels. The project should be a close parallel to but relatively independent from EU Institutions.

PR support from EU institutions and organisations would be very helpful to and of great importance for this project's success. Specifically, each tourism organisation or tourism related industry (agency, carrier, etc.), cultural association or movements in the arts, could help the project to succeed, if only by just a link to their respective homepage.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The financing of the EU-Countries Pass Project could be addressed by sponsors from all public or private institutions and industries that share the social and political targets of the project:

Countries and/or national institutions

Primarily tourism organisations of EU countries and tourism related industries. However, companies not directly involved in the tourist industry but having international interests within EU countries or in the social aspects of the EU-Countries Pass Project, could be motivated to help finance the project. The primary aims of fostering peace and solidarity could also engender sponsorship.



The EU-Countries Pass Project recognises the financial support from sponsors by offering advertising possibilities at the EU-Countries Pass itself and the Project Internet Homepage.

#### PROJECT SUCCESS

The criteria for judging the project's success will be the fulfilment of the aims the EU-Countries Pass Project, namely the fostering of peace and solidarity between EU member states, initially, through reciprocal empathy and interaction between the EU partners. Positive political and economical effects are anticipated.

#### ECONOMIC SUCCESS

Calculations suggest that, if only 1% of EU citizens who currently travel to EU countries other than their home country (about 125 Mio. EU-citizens) were to participate in the EU-Countries Pass Project, there could be as much as, say, a 10 % increase of incoming tourists for a country like Malta. A higher percentage of participants than 1%, would obviously deliver a greater increase in tourism.

The support required to motivate participation in the EU-Countries Pass Project, could not be estimated at this time. Because of this, and because of the primary social aims of the project, no figures are being proposed in this context.

#### THE PROPONENTS

The project was initiated by Mmag. Corinna Häsele, Austria, and Dr. Armin Bawart, Malta. They invited a group of supporters informed of the project from the beginning, to form a proponent committee. The founding of a legal body will follow. An association based on Maltese law is planned.

All EU citizens are invited to assist with their ideas for the internet-based project.

#### A MALTESE-AUSTRIAN PROJECT

The seed for the concept of the EU-Countries Pass Project was the situation of tourism in Malta.

All project related steps were closely related to Malta and Austria.

Austrian and Maltese governments will be informed - ahead of other national institutions - by the Her Excellency, The Ambassador for Austria in Malta.

The proponents consider that a positive reaction of both governments - the Austrian because of the EU presidency and the Maltese because of the expected benefit situation - will be of high importance for the further development of the project.

#### A NON PROFIT PROJECT

Any monies accruing from the EU-Countries Pass Project will be reinvested in furthering the project. Intensive high marketing efforts will be necessary for greater success of the project. It is not planned to gain profit from the project.

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